

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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“SEPARATING THY BEING”

“Thou shalt not separate thy being from Being, and the rest, but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.”

“So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother.”

The Voice of the Silence.

In the article *The Humble Seed* which appeared in the September issue, the question was asked ‘What would have been the effect if in spite of all provocation, all groups had remained in the one Society, each quietly and firmly maintaining its own independent approach and contributing ideas to the whole body?’ After the magazine had gone to press we were glancing through an old volume and came upon a letter which Mr. Smythe had published on the front page under the title, *Weighty Words From Britain*. This was so apropos of the point that extracts from the letter are re-printed below:

“Do you remember the passage in the *Mahatma Letters* (p. 20), where the Master speaks of a Universal Brotherhood as ‘an association of affinities of strongly magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities centred around one dom-

inant idea, . . . necessary for successful achievements in occult sciences.’ H. P. B. seems to have worked consistently with this in mind, for she brought into the Movement all sorts and conditions of men and women—Christians, Spiritualists, Agnostics, Hindus, etc., as well as convinced Theosophists. The Movement was to derive its success from the union in bonds of brotherhood of these diverse elements. If this were the case, then the first split should have been avoided at almost any cost, for a split does not merely divide into parts, mechanically separated, but actually sets up a process of decomposition by tending to segregate people into groups of similar types. I picture the ideal T. S. as a perfectly balanced, and very complex compound built up, like a chemical compound, of atoms of different and dissimilar elements. *Once decomposition sets in and these elements become segregated, the mass loses its original character altogether, and there is left a number of homogeneous groups, which while thus isolated, are quite sterile and unlike the body of which they once formed a part.* In the T. S., as originally conceived, the various types of members—devotional, critical, practical, philosophical, and so on, would have tended to keep each other in bounds; but once separated, the devotional people became

fanatical and credulous; the critical, skeptical and negative; etc., etc. Their qualities, so valuable in combination, became vices when isolated and unchecked. The moral of all this seems to be that, for Theosophists, brotherhood is even more important than correct opinions; and such brotherhood must start with Theosophists of other groups than one's own. This is the most difficult kind of fraternity to cultivate. It is easy enough to feel kindly about people you never see or contact; but to accept the man who disputes your own pet views about Theosophical matters is much harder — and more important. Our greatest and most urgent need, as it seems to me, is to get the critical and devotional types into combination once more. Can it be done, do you think, or have we drifted too far?"

The above extract and particularly the italicized portion should receive careful consideration; the anonymous writer has directed attention to a point which has been overlooked or disregarded in many of the rationalizations which have been employed in explaining the various separations which have taken place, and in justifying the continuing non-recognition of other Theosophists outside the 'own-group' of Universal Brotherhood. A psychologist would doubtless regard the whole situation as evidence of some inner disorder and would seek for the subtle causes of such irrationalities. But whatever the causes, the outer bodies of the Movement do reflect the effects of the segregative impulse referred to by the writer of the above letter. How true is the old rhyme,

For, alas, it is seldom if ever
That people behave as they should;
The good are so harsh to the clever,
And the clever so rude to the good.

The Theosophical Movement, i.e., the whole spiritual impulse of the last cen-

tury has suffered from this separative tendency. Theosophists whenever any serious difficulties arise within their ranks, seem to emulate the man in Stephen Leacock's story who, 'rushed out of the house, jumped upon a horse and rode off madly in all directions'. But it is not as funny as Leacock's story; with each separation there were recriminations, bitterness, pride and the unrelenting closing of doors. True there were many words concerning the high and noble aspirations, the dedication to the ideal of Brotherhood, on both sides—but there was little actual practice of charity, patience, humbleness and a willingness to wait quietly for the turn of the cycle.

The writer of the above letter states that 'the first split should have been avoided at almost any cost.' The first separation took place in 1895 and followed the setting up of an independent government for the newly formed Theosophical Society in America. This is not the place to discuss the pros and cons of that earlier episode; the events leading up to it can be reviewed if desired in *The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925*, *The Theosophical Movement 1875-1950*, *Old Diary Leaves*, and other Theosophical histories. Mr. Judge apparently did not expect that this action would lead to the isolation of the Society in America from the main body of the Theosophical Society. Mr. A. E. S. Smythe writing on this point said, "I was in the office at 144 Madison Avenue (Mr. Judge's office in New York) when Judge received a letter from Olcott postmarked Spain, and Judge remarked, 'Now everything will be all right.' But the letter was not what Judge expected and his disappointment was very obvious. This phase of the situation has never been explained and I have never been able to learn whether Judge counted with warrant on Olcott's support, or whether it was really a right-about-face

on Olcott's part, for Judge certainly expected Olcott to support him . . . Judge had expected that the Colonel would recognize the autonomous T. S. in America and affiliate it with Adyar. . ."

Later when a convention of the T.S. had confirmed Colonel Olcott's stand and had rejected the friendly overtures of the Society in America, Mr. Judge wrote his important editorial for *The Path* dealing with the organization of the T.S. This was entitled "The Theosophical Movement" and in it Mr. Judge said, "But the real unity and prevalence and the real internationalism, do not consist in having a single organization.

They are to be found in the similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethic . . . When the Theosophical Society was young and small, it was necessary that it should have but one government for the whole of it. But now that it has grown wide and strong, having spread among nations so different from each other as the American, the Spanish, the Swedish and others in Europe, and the Hindu, it is essential that a change in the outward form be made. This is that it become like the Freemasons—independent in govern-

ment wherever the geographical or national conditions indicate that necessity. *And that this will be done in time, no matter what certain persons may say to the contrary, there is not the slightest doubt.*" (italics ours).

H.P.B. and Wm. Q. Judge worked for the end that the Masters had in mind. When a crisis arose after the death of H.P.B., Colonel Olcott apparently precipitated the 'first split'—and from that first division, other separations followed, and the fragmented parts have not re-united. Reunion might call for drastic revisions of constitutions and bylaws and the acceptance of the idea of the complete autonomy of national groups and of groups within the national boundaries. It might require the sacrifice of titles and the giving up of cherished dreams of world headquarters and of centralized control. But it would cleanse the Movement and would make its body a practical symbol of Universal Brotherhood, 'one united body of workers' dedicated to the service of mankind, co-operating and helping one another to be ready for the next impulse from the Masters towards the close of this century.

"This should never be forgotten, nor should the following fact be overlooked. On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission—namely to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labour with selfish motives—on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man. This will be a wonder and a miracle truly, for the realization of which Humanity is vainly waiting for the last eighteen centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish."

H. P. Blavatsky.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

BY ROY MITCHELL

IV.—DISCREPANCY

Earlier in these articles I have suggested that no esoteric truth is explicitly written down. It is to be derived by inference. The moment esoteric truth is written it must cease to be esoteric. What is esoteric, therefore, in our literature is not in the words but between the words, and is to be found by filling up the gaps in the fabric and in the reconciliation of contradictions.

The hypocritical reader who comes to a theosophical book with his mind closed in a bristling shell of resentments and denials, might as well lay the book down and get on with something else for which he has a sympathy, for the contradictions in theosophy will seem to him like falsehood. The uncritical reader is in just as bad a way. He will gobble up the contradictions as if they did not exist. Sympathy without intellect is as incompetent as intellect without sympathy.

When the two are conjoined the student follows the secure middle way. He rushes neither into denial of what he reads nor yet into blind acceptance of it, but fixes his attention on the inferences to which the words stir him. These inferences are born of the union of the new ideas with ideas already in his mind—the gleanings of previous reading or experience. We commonly think of an inference being derived from one idea. It never is, but is the offspring of two, an earlier one which for lack of fertilization had become inert and a new one which possesses no virtue whatever for us beyond its power to fertilize the old. It is the business of the student to fix his attention neither on what he already possesses—for that will only close his mind—nor yet upon what he has just acquired—for that makes him the victim of externals and is psychic in

its nature—but on the offspring of these meetings which is the fruit of true creative function in mind.

This, of course, we do unconsciously all the time, but I suggest that the student who is not familiar with the process try it consciously, because it is with conscious use of the power that study becomes most fertile. It will seem as if mind were working simultaneously on two levels. While on the lower level it is taking in the sense of the words, on the higher it is fixing attention on the new-born derivatives. Our word assimilation does not describe it, because assimilation implies that what we already have is not changed but is merely added to by something that has been made similar to it. Neither is it distillation of the new idea. That implies that only the spirit has been drawn off. It is a true transmutation in the alchemists' sense and the power by which we do it is intuition, the elixir of the old philosophers.

When the theosophical student acquires the habit of doing it consciously he achieves a new power over books, and instead of judging them by their imputed authority he judges them by their demonstrable fertility, their power to fecundate the inert elements in his consciousness. He finds as he goes on in his work that while identities in study reassure and fortify him, discrepancies activate him most. He finds that instead of being contradictory these discrepant factors are really complementary, and that each goes to explain something that lies between them. It is as if he had taken outside and inside measurements of a room and, finding they did not correspond, was forced presently to the conclusion that there was a secret room whose measurements accounted for the difference.

Theosophy is full of such secret rooms. These are the genuinely esoteric parts of our tradition, and they are ours to find. The gobbling reader proceeds unconscious of them; the measuring reader is sure of their existence; the transmuting reader may enter them.

When he reads, for instance, of the long slow process of the unfolding of the powers of the soul, of the inflexible rhythm of evolution, of globes, of rounds, of races, of great cycles, of mineral and plant and animal kingdoms to be passed, he derives one concept. Then on the next page perhaps he reads that the Self can attain to liberation in a few lives; the discrepancy leads him to suspect a secret room. He takes measurements.

Liberation implies imprisonment, a being caught and held in something alien, from which the Self must be set free. But nowhere in the religions is liberation described as a triumph over cosmic law, a condensation or hastening of processes. It is described as a release, as the finding of something that was lost, as the return of a prodigal to his Father, as the means by which a light-bringer regains his former high state, as the ascent into his heaven by a redeemer who has had a work to do here—a work he can do in a long time or a short one, as he chooses. It is a work he must do or return again and again till he does it. It involves his crucifixion. It involves, as in the bridge story, his making himself into a bridge over which some other can pass. It involves, says another version, the learning of something which, if he had been an evolving entity, he would have known all along. Plato says each Self has a knowledge of a higher state which is its true place of being, but that a lower, half man half animal creature has held him here.

So by a process of critical reading we

measure our secret room. Then by transmuting all the factors we enter into it. Not very far, perhaps. Just far enough to let us glimpse the fact that what we call man is two-fold, a dualism, and that the lower half plods along the slow course of evolution; the superior and redeeming half, which is our true Ego, is bound here until it completes its redemptive work, after which we may rise to our full stature as recapitulating in a short space a journey which we have made slowly and laboriously long before. There is vastly more in the room, but this is our means of finding it.

So also there are many more rooms to be found and entered. There is that room of our animal nature, with all the measurements to be taken in physiology, psychology, the Satan traditions, the satyr traditions, transmigration, magic, totemism, insanity, the *pitris* and a host of others. There is the room that contains what is not told us, but what is hinted at about the subtle body, the body of the resurrection here upon earth. It too can be mapped by measurement and entered by this transmuting process.

I have mentioned these three because they are the three most important in occultism, the three upon which all the Gospels of mankind converge; the three whose secret is the great preoccupation of the Teachers wherever they appear. We are constrained at first to think of them as separate compartments, but I think at the last, when we have learned our trick of transmutation, the very walls with which we surround them will vanish, and they will prove to be one great Temple.

I have written this to indicate a method, which if the student follow it will give him a new theosophy, a theosophy of provable things. The application of it to his immediate work I shall leave until the article on Catharsis.

“SO LONG”

Henry S. Saunders—artist, musician, author, internationally known authority on Walt Whitman—who was for many years associated with the Toronto Theosophical Society, passed away in his 88th year on October 25th, 1951.

Mr. Saunders was very active in the Lodge during that colourful period between 1910-1918 when Roy Mitchell, A. E. S. Smythe, Charles Lazenby, and Sam Beckett were in their prime. Mr. and Mrs. Saunders kept ‘open house’ in their home on Harbord Street and later on Neville Park Boulevard for their numerous friends and acquaintances and all manner of men and women would drop in to take part in the animated discussions which went on there. Both Mr. and Mrs. Saunders were, of course, in the Canadian Whitman Fellowship whose membership included Mrs. Flora MacDonald Denison, F. M. Bell-Smith, Dr. A. D. Watson, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Bain, Peter McArthur, Dr. George Locke, Dr. Stowe-Gullen.

Mr. Saunders was born in London, Ontario, and was a member of a distinguished Canadian family. One of his brothers, Sir Charles Edward Saunders, brought to completion the work started by his father, Dr. William Saunders, in the development of the famous Marquis wheat and other strains of rust resist-

ant and early ripening wheats.

Mr. Saunders was an accomplished ‘cellist and came to Toronto on his appointment to the Faculty of the Conservatory of Music. He was also a member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He was a fine craftsman in the art of bookbinding and three years ago he conducted a class at the Theosophical Hall for the benefit of the Library workers. Last year a collection of his wild flower studies was displayed in the reception room.

Mr. Saunders was a gentle, lovable soul, a true comrade of the way. For him, “the dear love of man for his comrade” was “as base, and finale too, for all metaphysics.” Of his quiet passing at a ripe old age we can only echo the words of his beloved Walt Whitman, “I do not commiserate, I congratulate you.”

“At the last, tenderly;
From the walls of the powerful fortress’d house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks,
from the keep of the well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.
Tenderly,—be not impatient,
(Strong is your hold, O mortal flesh,
Strong is your hold, O love.)”

HENRY SAUNDERS: AN INTERNATIONAL LITERARY FIGURE

Henry Saunders, who died on October 25th, was highly regarded in Toronto musical circles as a ‘cellist. His fame, however, extended far beyond his native land. He had achieved a large measure of international distinction, not for his musical gifts, but rather for his contribution to literature. For many years

he was a student of the poetry of Walt Whitman and a collector of books by Whitman and of books, poems, and magazine articles about Whitman and, in 1932, his famous Whitmaniana collection—the result of over twenty years of devoted labour—was purchased by Brown University, Providence, Rhode

Island. In an address on "Whitman Scholarship and the Saunders Collection" delivered in the library of Brown University, on March 7, 1949, Professor Charles B. Willard of Southern Illinois University appraised the collection as follows: "It is one of the four or five most important Whitman collections now available for scholarly use, ranking with those held by the Library of Congress and by the libraries of Duke University and the University of Pennsylvania . . . Nearly all the books that might be of any use to the Whitman Student are in the collection. . . . It is unquestionably the most extensive collection of Whitman references in the world. Its inclusiveness is almost incredible, especially with regard to books and pamphlets by or about Whitman." He referred to Henry Saunders as one "recognized throughout the world as an authority on Whitman bibliography."

It is difficult for the layman to imagine the extent of the collection or of the labour involved in its preparation. Two items alone may serve as an adequate indication. There are sixty-five volumes bearing the title *Whitman Magazine Articles* in which well on to three thousand newspaper and magazine articles were carefully selected and preserved. There is a 219 volume set of *Whitman Notes*, hand-made loose-leaf notebooks of 50 to 100 pages containing a vast index of Whitman information arranged alphabetically. Mr. Saunders' well-known hobby of book-binding in which he excelled was a valuable asset in the execution of the task to which he committed himself many years ago, and for which posterity must always be grateful.

Saunders was the author of several books associated usually with Whitman and also edited many books concerning the poet. In 1939, the Whitman Collection of Harriet Sprague of New York was shown at the Library of Congress, Washington and the great National Library issued a handsome illustrated, descriptive catalogue. Several pages of the catalogue were required to list the Saunders items.

Books which he wrote include *Happiness* with many Whitman references, *Robert G. Ingersoll* which contains the address he gave at the funeral of Whitman, *Some Notes on Whitmaniana Collecting*, *An Introduction to Walt Whitman* and *The Higher Consciousness*, an introduction to Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness*. The philosophy of Henry Saunders himself is revealed in the following passage:

"The effect on our race of a more general acquisition of the Higher Consciousness would be a spiritual upheaval such as the world has not had, at least in historic times."

A year ago still another volume was published about Whitman. It was entitled *Whitman's American Fame* and written by Professor Charles B. Willard, the distinguished American scholar. In his preface he writes: "I am primarily indebted to Mr. Saunders for the work he has done, as no man could hope to amass this necessary basic material in less time than he has devoted to it. I am grateful for having been able to use the products of his extensive and diligent labours." Henry Saunders has indeed earned an enduring place in the realm of world literature.

Elsie Pomeroy.

"I believe in you, my Soul—the other I am must not abase itself to you;
And you must not be abased to the other."

Walt Whitman.

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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.



Two issues of *Theosophia*, May-June and July-August, 1951, reprint from *Lucifer*, questions and answers by H. P. B., on "Hypnotism and its Relations to Other Modes of Fascination." Those in-

terested in the magnetic forces will find these articles of value. *Theosophia* is published at 136 North Catalina Street, Los Angeles 4, California, six times a year; Price \$1.50.



That *The Secret Doctrine* is the text-book of the twentieth century is ably proclaimed by an excellent article in *The Theosophical Movement*, July, 1951, a magazine published by Theosophy Company (India).

The Secret Doctrine "has been doing its work indirectly these 60 years . . . So far, so good, but the time has come, it seems to devotees of this great work, to bring it forward for wider study for what its contents offer to mankind . . . *The Secret Doctrine* is the book *par excellence* for developing intuition in the educated mind today. . . Intuitive men or mystics will be the true leaders and guides in the coming cycle—not men of mind, but men of intuition. A new era has been opening in the affairs of humanity; the Sun of intuition will follow the Dawn which has been upon us since 1877, the year in which was published *Isis Unveiled*, the precursor of *The Secret Doctrine* . . . To save the modern global civilization an attempt was made by the Immortal Lovers of the Wisdom and They gave out all that was necessary for the 100-year cycle which dawned in the last quarter of the last century. . . *The Secret Doctrine* contains seed-ideas and shows their lines of growth. It indicates how ideas can and should unfold in the entire sphere of modern knowledge. To the aesthete and the artist, the ritualist and the religionist, the metaphysician and the mathematician, the scientist and the sociologist, the mystic and the occultist—to all, *The Secret Doctrine* reveals the immediate step of advance and the distant whither. This, among other reasons, justifies the claim we make for *The Secret Doctrine* as the text-book of the 20th century."

Theosophy (U.L.T.) in its 'On the the Lookout' section in the August issue featured an interesting commentary on Dr. J. B. Rhine's article in the June *American Magazine* on the 'sixth sense' in animals. Dr. Rhine cited an experiment which indicated that a trainer could issue orders to his dog without speaking, merely visualizing in his mind the task he required the dog to perform. The ability of animals to travel great distances to rejoin their masters was mentioned and several instances given. Dr. Rhine ascribes this power to 'extra-sensory perception' and rejects the recent theory that animals are guided by the earth's magnetic field. Examples were given of animals' 'psychic' awareness of the illness of a distant master, and of dangers imperceptible to humans. Very interesting quotations were included from the writings of H. P. B. on the subject of animal awareness.

* * *

Miss Pomeroy's tribute to Henry Saunders gives us an understanding of the esteem which is now freely granted to the genius of Walt Whitman. Universities are collecting his works; new books about him and his ideas appear almost yearly; first editions of his poems have sold as high as \$10,000—and yet it was only a little over forty years ago that booksellers in Toronto were forbidden to sell or display *Leaves of Grass*. This book which breathes a cosmic spirit, was regarded as immoral and unclean! Geniuses utter their messages in the generation in which they are born; several generations must pass before the world has moved into a maturity which is capable of appreciating that message.

* * *

We regret that a line was dropped from the report published in the October issue of the Quarterly Meeting of the Executive held on September 30th. The opening lines in section 2 of the Resolution relative to the Annual Reports of General Secretaries should have

read, "The general principle should be established of publishing the Reports in full, to the end that open, uncensored communication . . .", etc.

* * *

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a new magazine, *Sunrise*, edited by Mr. James A. Long, Leader of the Theosophical Society of Pasadena, California and published by the Theosophical University Press. This magazine, like all other publications of the University Press, is beautifully printed; the cover design of an Egyptian column against a light clouded background is most striking. We assume that this magazine will take the place of the Forum. This issue has a lead article by Mr. Long and interesting articles by other writers; we noted particularly an article on the writings of Antoine de Saint-Exupery, author of *Wind, Sand and Stars*, *Night Flight* and a posthumously published work, *Citadelle*, or, in the English version, *The Wisdom of the Sands*.

FAREWELL

Word has just been received from Mr. Emory P. Wood of Edmonton, of the sudden death of Mrs. Emily Brunton on Friday, October 26th, following a stroke which she suffered on the previous day. Mrs. Brunton was a member of the West End Lodge in Toronto, but resided recently in Edmonton where she attended the meetings of the Edmonton Lodge. Mrs. Brunton joined the Society when she was living in Nelson, B.C., and where she met the late Mr. Felix Becher on his visit to the Lodges and centres in Western Canada. Mrs. Brunton was a staunch upholder of the Secret Doctrine tradition in her approach to Theosophy. A Theosophical funeral service was held in Edmonton on October 30th and the body was cremated at the Calgary Crematorium.

Our deep sympathy is extended to her son in Edmonton and to other members of her family.

THEOSOPHY IN EUROPE

The meeting of the Council of the Theosophical Society in Europe attended by 65 persons was held from July 27 to August 2, 1951, at Camberley, Surrey, England, on the eighty-acre Tekels Park estate which is largely controlled by theosophists. The English Section has helped to set up certain permanent buildings for a camp site on the estate, and it is hoped that this will form a new centre for the younger theosophists not only of the British Isles but from abroad. Highlights, as reported in *Theosophy in Action* for September-October, 1951, follow:

England As it is the custom to change executive officers every four or five years, no less than four ex-General Secretaries attended. 500 copies of their advanced study course have been sold; 350 of the latest one issued.

Sweden A Russian-speaking group of about 20, meeting in Stockholm, are studying Theosophy. Their summer school at beautiful Lake Malar was well attended.

Holland is enrolling so many new young members that the average age of the Section is steadily declining.

France has passed through a crisis, lost a number of members but is now recovering. The Regional summer school at Nice was unusually happy and successful. Sixty were present.

Finland's General Secretary visited all the lodges during the year and reported steady work with strong youth activities. A week-long summer school near Helsinki was attended by 100 persons.

Switzerland also has excellent work amongst young people, [including a shadow theatre.]

Norway has a new headquarters opened this year and great things are hoped for this as a permanent centre of the work in that Section.

Denmark At the beautiful private property, Gammel Praestegaard, on the Island of Fyn, there has been, ever since the war, an annual gathering of Scandinavian members, and this year 59 attended of whom 10 were children.

Germany A summer school was held at Rendsburg where 100 members gathered. "The meetings went with enthusiasm, and useful discussions regarding the work took place. One of the remarkable aspects was that eight newspapers sent reporters for a press conference and a broadcast was arranged for Rukmini Devi."

Italy Preparations are going forward to hold a congress in Florence in 1952. The dates fixed tentatively are October 3-10. The Italian Section will, at that time, be celebrating its 50th anniversary as a Section of the Theosophical Society.

Summarizing reports from the European Sections for the year, the Council of the T.S. in Europe found that there had been a noticeable loss of membership, and that there was no doubt a need to make a special study of the reasons for the decrease. But gains are marked amongst the young people in various countries, and co-operation between old and young is developing well, especially since the meeting at Arnheim in the Netherlands last year, of which this meeting at Camberley was a sequel. Young theosophists are concentrating effort on their new magazine, *Enthousiasme*, largely made possible by the devoted efforts of Phan-Chon-Ton, a young member from Vietnam, in Paris.

The Council noted "a clamorous need for lecturers of better standard than we now have, people who have delved deeply into their theosophical studies and can speak from experience as well, and above all who bring inspiration." And,

the report continues, "some of the most significant work of the Council had to do with the Regional Committees and their activities." Attention of the delegates was drawn to the importance of emphasizing the work of the United Nations, and of making and keeping a good contact with local UN societies.

CORRESPONDENCE

Adyar, Madras 20, India,
28 September, 1951.

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist,
52 Isabella St.,
Toronto, Canada.

Dear Sir,

On returning early in September from my six months' visit to Australia and New Zealand, I have found a large accumulation of magazines, and it is only just now I have seen your June issue, with the letter of Mrs. Emily Brunton.

I do not know of any official statement anywhere to the effect that Liberal Catholicism, Co-Masonry, etc., are associated with the Theosophical Society, or ever have been¹. Certainly I have never made any statement of that nature.

From 1880, individual Theosophists in their personal capacities have certainly been associated with various religious (and other) movements. H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott formally became Buddhists in Ceylon in 1880, and Colonel Olcott did a wonderful piece of work in Ceylon to revive Buddhism. Later he worked out a common platform of Buddhist ideas between the Buddhist sects of Ceylon, Burma and Japan. But he did not involve the Society in these activities.

It has never been construed that a President of the Theosophical Society

must keep his mouth shut about his own personal beliefs, so long as he does not speak officially as the President. My convictions concerning the Liberal Catholic Church are purely my own, as an individual, and as such I claim the right to express them, so long as I do so only in my personal capacity.

Under the general influence of the Theosophical Movement, groups of religionists have been working to bring a new spirit into their religions. Thus, in 1925 some of the Hindu Theosophists organized a new form of congregational worship, called the Bharata Samaj Puja. This worship is performed in many places in India, and is done every day at the Hindu Temple in the Adyar Estate. In our Estate there are the religious shrines of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism, and periodically certain ceremonies are held in each. The General Council of the Society has accepted the principle that groups of Theosophists in their own shrines may conduct their worship, and that such action does not in the least involve the Theosophical Society.

Speaking personally, the services of the Liberal Catholic Church appeal to me, for they give me a certain element of inspiration. That is likewise the case with the Bharata Samaj Puja, and I would go there every morning, except for the fact that the ceremony takes place at 6:00 a.m., far too early for my physical convenience. In the large house in Sydney, known as The Manor, (I am the Head there and acted in this capacity prior to being elected President of the Theosophical Society) a community of Theosophists resides, all dedicated to the work of the Masters. In that building there is a Temple for ceremonial work, a Shrine Room for E. S. members, and also a small oratory for such as are devoted to the Liberal Catholic Church. On Monday evenings in

this oratory there is the service of Solemn Benediction, at which I was often present, simply because the service gives me inspiration. Not all residents of The Manor attend, as some do not care for that aspect of religion. But each person is perfectly free to develop his own temperament.

Occasionally when I visit a Buddhist Temple, I repeat the usual Buddhist phrases and do the reverence to the Lord, as a pious Buddhist.

Our Parsi Theosophists in Bombay have, at my suggestion, created what is new in their religion—a form of congregational worship. They performed this ceremony at the Adyar Theatre during the 1950 Convention, and a large number of delegates witnessed it.

In the Muhammadan Mosque at Adyar, built to my plans, not infrequently some Muhammadans from Madras have a meeting on the birthday of their Prophet, and usually they ask me to preside, which I do gladly, as I have a profound recognition of the wonderful monotheism taught by the Prophet Muhammad.

I know much about the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to the Theosophical Society. That Church realizes that our Society is in many ways the strongest opponent of some of their ideas. Throughout my two lecture tours in Latin America in 1928-29 and in 1939, in every place the priests warned their people not to attend my lectures. In 1929 after I had given four public lectures in a theatre in Lima in Peru, on the morning of the fifth the Archbishop of Lima published a denunciation of my lectures, and threatened to excommunicate those Catholics who might attend. What he particularly objected to in my presentation was my saying that "Each man is to himself the way, the truth, and the life," whereas Jesus Christ had proclaimed that He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the

Life. As a result of this denunciation by the Archbishop, that night the theatre was packed, and after my lecture a large crowd insisted in taking me in procession from the theatre to the hotel, as a sign of protest against the attempt of the Church to suppress free expression of ideas. In every country, in spite of the activities of that Church against Theosophy, our philosophy is steadily gaining ground.

Finally, I believe if you were to take a referendum, there will be very few who would vote and say that during my fifty years as an International lecturer on Theosophy I have not taught "Theosophy as taught by the Masters".

Yours sincerely,

C. Jinarajadasa.

- 1 If the Liberal Catholic Church, Co-Masonry, etc., were never associated with the T.S. why was it necessary to announce disassociation? To disassociate' surely means 'to sever association from'.

Adyar, Madras 20, India,
18 October, 1951.

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist,
52 Isabella Street,
Toronto 5, Ont., Canada.

Dear Sir,

In the August issue of your magazine, in commenting on the letter from Mr. Frederick E. Tyler, the General Secretary¹ says, with regard to my belief in the Apostolic Succession, "but when, as President, he defends this claim, the spirit of disassociation is threatened."

Will you point out to me where, *in my capacity as President*, I have ever done anything of the kind?² In the Watch Tower notes of *The Theosophist* I write on many topics, expressing my individual views and opinions thereon, but

certainly not in any way committing the Theosophical Society, as such, or any member of the Society, to my views. *The Theosophist* is the journal of the President, not an official journal of the Theosophical Society, and, as you know, each issue of the magazine carries the following words at the top of page one:

"The Theosophical Society is responsible only for its Official Notices appearing in 'The Supplement'."

The Society, as such, has no official organ, as was pointed out in 1915 by Dr. Besant in Watch Tower Notes of *The Theosophist* for June of that year:

"The Society has no official organ, and has no responsibility, as is said every month, for opinions expressed in this magazine . . . Were it an official organ, the T.S. would be responsible for all that is said in it, and it would be impossible for anyone to express in it any opinion at all, without committing the Society, whereas I put in all opinions. Criticisms attacking the President could not appear, as they would then involve the whole Society. Critics do not complain that official decorum is violated when I put in the most violent and abusive attacks on myself; they only complain when I express my own opinions!

The Theosophist is a magazine which is the organ of the President of the T.S., through which he reaches the Society primarily, and then the outer world, giving to both the benefit of his wisdom or his folly. Colonel Olcott and Mme. Blavatsky, who founded it, used it for this purpose, and most certainly Mme. Blavatsky's vigorously expressed opinions did not coincide, on many occasions, with those of the more timid and conventional members of the T.S. But they interested most of the members and many in the outside world. What she said counted, and people wanted to read what she thought on passing events."

It has been a principle or policy of the Society, from the days *The Theosophist* was edited by H.P.B., that no member of the Society is committed to any belief or statement made by the President (or any teacher or writer).

It is a fundamental mistake which the Canadian Section has made for several decades—to hold that whatever is said or written by the President for the time being (be it Dr. Besant, Dr. Arundale, or myself) must therefore be regarded as the official opinion of The Theosophical Society³. No other National Society has taken such a standpoint. As Dr. Besant clearly pointed out, the Society, as such, has no official organ, and that is still the position.

In the International Constitution, which binds all National Societies together, the very word "Theosophy" is nowhere mentioned, nor is any definition given as to what constitutes Theosophy. Under this Constitution, therefore, every member, from the President down, has a perfect right to assert what, to him, is Theosophy. And no one has the right to assert that he is not expounding Theosophy⁴.

Yours sincerely,

C. Jinarajadasa.

¹ The comment was made by the Editor, not by the General Secretary.

² See letter partly quoted in the article *Theosophy and Religion* by Captain R. Lloyd Jones in the April 1951 issue of the C.T. Mr. Jinarajadasa as President of the Society doubtless corresponds with individual members using for that purpose the official letterhead of the Society. The letter printed above was written on this letterhead and printed across the top are the words, "President:

C. Jinarajadasa." During his term of office Mr. Jinarajadasa performs many duties as President including the conducting of correspondence—many arduous duties, let us hasten to add as we are not unappreciative of the many tasks and responsibilities which are laid on the shoulders of the President. The letter printed above certainly cannot be considered as an official opinion of the Society but it does set out the views of Mr. Jinarajadasa, President.

- 3 We are not conscious of having fallen into this error. Mr. Jinarajadasa must recognize that any statement made by the President of the Society, even though he is speaking as an individual is regarded as being of greater significance than if it were made by an ordinary member.
- 4 We agree with this, but would point out that it is within the right of every member to state that such and such a teaching is not in accord with Theosophy as set forth in the Secret Doctrine and the Mahatma Letters.

Ingleside,
Holt,
Trowbridge, England.

Editor,
Canadian Theosophist.

Dear Sir,

A day or so ago the April number of *The Canadian Theosophist* came into my hands. I hope I may be allowed to reply as a Theosophist and also a priest of the Liberal Catholic Church to the article "Theosophy and Religions". It is a great pity I think when people become distrustful and full of hatred towards their friends owing to misunderstanding of their aims and of facts.

The Liberal Catholic Church is and

wishes to remain entirely separate from all other churches and organizations, including the Theosophical Society, and does not wish to dominate them. It has no official teaching or dogma whatsoever, although it has a generally accepted viewpoint to which I will refer later, which however is not in any way binding on either its priests or its lay members. Its priests are all or nearly all members of the Theosophical Society, and as such believe in Universal Brotherhood and they try and practice the three objects of the society. Unlike nearly all other churches they are all entirely unpaid, and have therefore no wish to dominate any one, or any Society, not even in Australia. It certainly is a ritualistic church and goes in for ceremonies. Now here I think we are up against a great mountain of ignorance and prejudice on account of the general public not understanding the nature of ritual and ceremonial. They are things we cannot escape and which we all constantly practice although we may not realize it. When meeting a stranger we mutually say to each other, "How do you do?" A useful but almost meaningless ceremony. We all know, although we may not have realized it how effective are the rituals and ceremonies of the concert hall, the military band, the boxing rings, etc. (that makes quiet inoffensive spinsters shout and gesticulate). The very absence (wrongly presumed absence) of ceremonial and ritual of the non conformist churches fairly reeks of it. Finally I would observe that ceremony and ritual means the employment of gestures, words, music, etc., to effect feelings and thoughts. They really are effective whatever people may say. To test this, let anyone place themselves in front of the looking glass and take up a stance say of anger and violence, and let him then in such a position try and feel benevolent, or let him try and look

sad and distressed and feel hilarious.

Now earlier on I said we have no dogmas. The Liberal Catholic Church is entirely free of any compulsion, yet its members so far all teach freely and all the time the Immanence of God. "Christ crucified in us and in all creation" (in every plant and stone). "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Surely all Theosophists should realize the extreme danger to humanity of a nation basing its actions on a philosophy of materialism and opportunism. It is the duty of religion to interpret the finding of science and theosophy to the man in the street. Few people realize what is the intention of church service. They should not be to save our souls or to further our evolution, but by the unselfish employment of ceremonies and ritual, to step up our spiritual potentialities and thereby call forth spiritual forces for the benefit of others. It is precisely here, where the employment of ritual is so useful and its justification lies. If a person were to be so mistaken as to try for long years, to rely on himself alone and by contemplation (on his own) to attain perfection, (which is possible) he would have chosen the harder way, but also he would most lamentably have failed to be of anywhere near as much help to his brother man.

Finally about the controversy of the Apostolic succession. The only authority on that subject is ourselves. Do catholic priests create by means of sacraments a feeling of contentment and of the presence? A true priest (good or bad) is like a bank clerk (good or bad) or a judge. He has to observe the rules. A judge cannot privately condemn even if he himself saw the crime. We cannot prove to a blind man that light and colour exists. Nobody can prove or disprove anything. We are either conscious or unconscious of events.

Lastly might I remind all theosophists of Dr. Besant's words, "The-

osophy does not ask you to leave your religion. Theosophy asks you to live your religion". Alas many of us act as if she said, "Theosophy allows you to live your religion, but Theosophy gives you an excuse to leave your religion."

Vincent R. Heckmeyer.

This is the first letter we have received from a priest of the Liberal Catholic Church. While we respect our correspondent's obvious sincerity, we remain unconverted. The sponsoring of a new church by leaders of the T.S. has always appeared to us as strange indeed, particularly in view of the Master's words written as early as 1884, "*Far from our thoughts may it ever be to erect a new hierarchy for the future oppression of a priest-ridden world.*"

Mahatma Letters, p. 407.

For some perverse reason the above action reminds us of a story concerning a millionaire who purchased a yacht and hired a captain and crew to take part in the annual yacht races to Bermuda. After they were several hours out, he was horrified to find that the yacht was headed in the wrong direction. He was not a sailor but he knew—*he just knew*—that Bermuda lay in that direction and not in this direction. The captain endeavoured to reassure him but he was not satisfied. That night he surreptitiously altered the set course and went to his berth with that satisfaction which one feels after a good deed well done. In the morning the yacht was off the coast of Long Island. The race was lost. "And yet" the story concludes "I feel a warm sympathy for that staunch fellow and I often think,—'what a wonderful Bishop he would have made'."

Finally may we assure our correspondent that no one feels any hatred towards him; it is a bit silly to speak of hatred when the subject under discussion is a criticism of ideas.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York in 1875. It has three objects:

1. *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*
2. *To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*
3. *To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.*

The Society affords a meeting place for students who have three aims in common, *first*, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood; *second*, the search for Truth, and *third*, a desire to associate and work with other men and women having similar aims and ideals. The acceptance of the First Object is required of all those who desire to become members; whether or not a member engages actively in the work contemplated in the Second and Third Objects is left to his or her discretion.

The nature and purposes of the Society preclude it from having creeds or dogmas, and freedom of thought and expression among its members is encouraged. An official statement on this point; “. . . there is no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which a member is not free to accept or reject.” The statement calls upon the members “to maintain, defend, and act upon this fundamental principle . . . and fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.”

Theosophy or ‘Divine Wisdom’ is that body of ancient truths relating to the spiritual nature of man and the universe which has found expression down through the ages in religions, philosophies, sciences, the arts, mysticism, occultism and other systems of thought. Theosophy is not the exclusive possession of any one organization. In the modern Theosophical Movement, these ancient truths have been re-stated and an extensive literature on the subject has come into being. The teachings are not put forward for blind belief; they are to be accepted only if the truth that is in them finds an echo in the heart. Each student should by ‘self-induced and self-devised’ methods establish his own Theosophy, his own philosophy of life. The Movement encourages all students of Theosophy to become self-reliant, independent in thought, mature in mind and emotions and, about all other things, to work for the welfare of mankind to the end that humanity as a whole may become aware of its diviner powers and capabilities.