

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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## THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

There is little to report at present on the election. We understand that five candidates have been nominated, Mrs. Sydney Ransom, who was nominated by the Society in England; Mrs. Rukmini Arundale, nominated by the Society in America together with Mr. Sri Ram and Mr. Sydney Cook. Mr. Sri Ram was also nominated by the Society in England. Mr. Ernest Wood was nominated by the Societies in Scotland and Canada. If all five candidates consent to stand, two will be eliminated at the count of the nominations, as only the three who receive the highest number of nominations will be voted upon by the members. Possibly other Societies have nominated candidates, but no word has been received up to the time of writing.

Professor Wood's Election Manifesto which was published in last month's issue, was sent to all General Secretaries and to members of the General Council, with requests to the General Secretaries that it be published in the official journals of their Societies. We have not seen any statements from the other candidates, but if they are sent in, or if they appear in the sectional magazines, they will be published for the information of the Canadian members.

The election issues do not appear on the surface to be as sharply drawn as they were in the last election (1934) but

these issues still exist. The election of Professor Wood would ensure that the Society would be set upon the path of return to its original programme and purpose. If this could be accomplished the Society would then occupy a much more significant place in the Theosophical Movement and active co-operation with other Theosophical Societies might well result. Time is moving swiftly toward the year 1975 around when the next impulse in the Movement may start. Whether or not there will be one united body of Theosophical students at that time may depend upon the result of this election.

It is to be hoped that each of the other candidates will issue statements of the policies which he or she would adopt if elected. All members should have the opportunity of examining and thinking over the proposed policies before the members are required to mark the election ballot slips. Because of the change in Rule 10, there will be uncertainty until the nominations are counted, as to who the three candidates will actually be. Just how much time will elapse between the date of announcing these candidates and the election date is not known, but the latter date should be advanced sufficiently to permit each candidate to present his platform to all members of this world wide organization.

# THE FIVE REGULAR PLATONIC BODIES

BY GRAHAME W. BARRATT, F. T.S., Blavatsky Lodge, London

The whole Secret Doctrine of Nature is locked within the five Platonic Solids. They contain the sacred mysteries of the hebdomad or the seven, and he who succeeds in assimilating even the minor truths behind them is fortunate indeed, because their final canon, as far as our cycle is concerned, is comprehensible to the adept alone. The most the average student can hope for is to assimilate the researches of older students and to await those intuitive flashes which come to those souls who are really intent upon interior knowledge.

This sounds a little severe, but in truth one may say that to approach one's Theosophy by this route is to tread one of the most fascinating paths of learning possible to the occult student. The ordinary plane symbolism of *The Secret Doctrine* becomes wonderfully illumined so that things which were once mere academic assertions, etch their powerful meaning on the interior man; one passes from brain mind concept to interiority. The function of the astral light takes on new meaning; one sees how 'The Three falls into the Four' into the lap of Maya, in a way not previously imagined—and Theosophy reveals to the seeker just one more of those shining facets of its endless wisdom.

Let us fairly assume that the student will make himself tolerably familiar with the outward form of the solids themselves, noting the number of faces, points and angles which endow them with their inherent harmony. The S.D. *Proem* establishes the fundamental proposition that our universe is "pervaded by duality", and this, of course, means, polarity, opposites, contrasts and the

like. The solids reveal this law in an astonishing degree when they are halved and quartered — a thing the Pythagoreans well knew when they called these polarities, syzygies, — and this idea was woven into the whole kosmos.

H.P.B. in *The Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* 1889, states, "The Duad doubled makes a Tetrad, and the Tetrad doubled forms a Hebdomad." How can two fours make seven? This at first seems absurd. The diagram shows two tetrahedra standing on their points which is the point of origin of both—the Jiva; the three upper corners are Atma-Buddhi-Manas, reflecting themselves in the lower tetrad as Physical-Astral-Lower Manas. Kabalistically, this lower tetrad is Malkuth, while the upper tetrad is the sacred tetractys of Pythagoras—the Sacred Four of the Pythagorean oath. The number seven is only a factor number in the economy of nature—it is the number of manifestation.

The five Platonic Solids are, respectively, the Tetrahedron, the Cube, the Octahedron, the Icosahedron, and the Dodecahedron, all divisible by two, either in their points or facets. "In occult and Pythagorean geometry, the tetrad is said to combine within itself all the materials from which Kosmos is produced" (H.P.B. *Transactions* p. 71). It should be clearly understood that each of the five solids can be generated geometrically from combinations of two or more tetrahedra, in fact, the tetrahedron is the true origin of the swastika and is in itself a spiral. Quoting further, "The truth, however, of Nature

ever 'geometrizing' is easily ascertained. Here is an instance; heat is the modification of the motions of particles of matter. Now, it is a physical and mechanical law that particles or bodies in motion of themselves, assume a spheroidal form—this, from a globular planet down to a drop of rain.

Observe the snowflakes, which along with crystals, exhibit to you all the geometrical forms existing in nature. As soon as motion ceases, the spheroidal shape alters, or as Tyndal tells us, it becomes a flat drop, then the drop forms an equilateral triangle, a hexagon, and so on: . . . he observed that the first shape the particles assumed, was triangular or pyramidal, then cubical, and finally hexagonal, etc. Thus, even modern physical science corroborates Plato and justifies his proposition." (H. P. B. *Trans. Blav. Lodge*, p. 109).

In the South Kensington Museum, London, there is a magnificent specimen of this natural geometry in the shape of a perfect octahedron of alum, several inches long. There is a small diamond of the same shape, while in the Geological Museum there is a magnificent array of crystals of all kinds fully bearing out the statements of H.P.B. and Theosophical doctrine. It becomes abundantly clear that the tetrahedron is the first three dimensional figure one

can construct; all the other forms are adumbrations of it, and it is well to hold firmly in mind the polarities exhibited in its construction. In the diagram of the Hebdomad, one can clearly see that the tetractys (tetrahedron), "leads forth the image of itself". This is the origin also of the myth of Narcissus, who seeing his desirable reflection in the astral light, falls into the spell of ahamkara (selfhood) in the lower tetractys. It is a cosmic as well as a paradigmatic symbol, and H.P.B. uses an adaptation of this diagram in her article on "The Mineral Monad." This is quite useful and, although arranged sideways, the principle is the same—Jiva has become Kingdom. The student is urged not to take any of these statements for granted without checking and verifying them for himself; this can easily be done by making a simple tetrahedron from notepaper—construct a plain equilateral triangle first, then fold its points down to the base line, and a solid figure will result. Should two of these figures be made they can be quite usefully arranged with a wire running through the centre, making a model of the hebdomal diagram.

This is a most occult figure, symbolical of the powers ruling in the individual man as the paradigm of kosmos. He is the congress, or occlusion, of the seven hierarchies or powers which later become an eighth, the ogdoad. In the Initiate, the point (Jiva) divides, making him conscious at the level of antahkarana of both an inner and an outer man. The Mason would say, 'the perfect ashlar is formed', or Kabbalistically, 'Tetractys has descended on tetragrammaton', whereby the cube is the eventuation of the exact occlusion of two tetrahedra.

The Egyptian Pyramid of Cheops is the representative upper half of an Octahedron (higher Manas). The struc-



The Author and some of his Models. The five interlaced tetrahedra (near hand) is coloured red, green, orange, violet and indigo.

ture was modified for astronomical purposes as regards height and angles, while one of its uses was to check the Sothaic Cycle, for Sothis, Sirius, rises as the rising of the Nile commences. It still has the original flat platform at the summit about thirty feet square, having upon it the glyph of the Hotep, whereby the candidate was reminded of his incompleteness, and of his mission to occlude in himself the tetrad of matter and the tetrad of spirit. Entering the structure at the seventeenth course of masonry, he observes the only two hieroglyphs in the whole pyramid which are near the entrance. One is an empty cartouche and the other an inverted glyph of the rising sun—the glyph of the hidden horizon. It demands of him, "What is your horizon? What is your motive for entering here?", before he is confronted with Anepou. This is the ancient 'Octad of Light' the fane of Shoo, who in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, meets Osiris on the stairway of the 'City of Eight', a hint of the sacred ogdoad.

The Pyramid rituals of the Hinge Rite and the Arch Rite have their origin in the systole and diastole of the Platonic Solids. Our immediate means of approach to these truths is through an acutely intelligent appreciation of the powers residing in occult symbolism. The ordinate powers which underlie the geometry of the solids must be studied in meditation, then powerfully interiorized so that they become one's own symbol language in the mind itself. Take up the paper tetrahedron again, folding it gradually into its solid form and back again to the flat triangle. We discern here a power of three, and this particular power of three is enabling us to objectify and make manifest. The opening commentary to Stanza 1 of *The Secret Doctrine* mentions a certain X power, this X power "varying according to the nature of the cycle in the subjec-

tive or real world." Our knowledge of this power and its effective use depend upon the measure of our occult progress in taking advantage of such hints coming to us in the simplest acts of daily life.

Returning to the polarities of the solids themselves, it is of value to note that not only are they formed in polar aspects, but they are polar one to the other in certain groups and categories. The icosahedron and the dodecahedron are good examples of one solid being the polar inversion of the other, while the geometric function of both is either projective or recessive. To externalize a thought picture from our own personal 'astral light', so to speak, is to automatically bring into operation the geometrical power of projection inherent in our human principles. That which we can only symbolize in the solids is the inherent natural tendency of the stuff of our vehicles; it is the impounded experience of those myriad Dhyanis constituting the very fabric of those vehicles.

How can this shed any useful light on our Theosophical problems, or dispel some of the anomalies which confront us today? The untrained psychic continues to see the conventional fairies of approved story-book pattern, in blissful oblivion to the fact that he is projecting his desires and unconscious urges through his own etheric substance. The phenomenon is not disputed, nor even its ability to affect a sensitive plate in a camera, but we would respectfully assert that they are purely wishful human creations manifesting themselves unconsciously through the geometrical principles within and behind the Platonic Solids. Investigators of the Cottingley fairies were questioned to discover if they actually saw the fairies personally. The reply in one instance was, "Oh no, but the little girl saw them." This indicates the purely

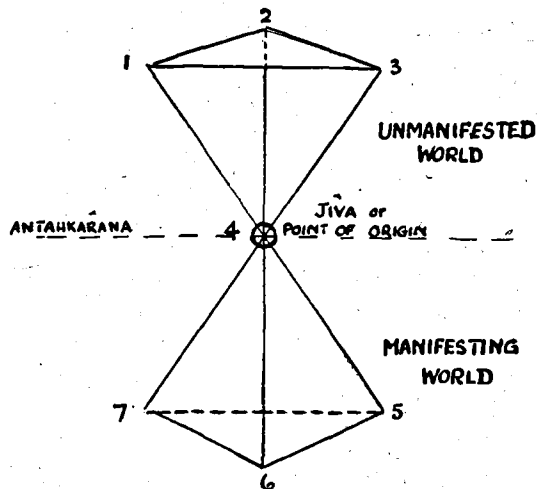
human and subjective source of the phenomenon, which, like 'spirit' photography, is mainly unconscious projection. Adepts consciously use this power to precipitate letters while the geometrical principle involved is that which we try to symbolize intellectually in the Platonic Solids.

From her vast personal experience, H.P.B. repeatedly warned her pupils of the disruptive snares awaiting the inflated vanity of untrained psychics. She could use this projection, while knowing full well the maya of its unconscious emergence. This was evident in the production of the 'Louis' picture in America. She wrote, "Consequently unless the clairvoyant or seer can get beyond this plane of illusion, he can never see the truth, but will be drowned in an ocean of self deception and hallucination," *Trans. Blav. Lodge*. The psychic investigation into the geometrical arrangement of the chemical elements are of intellectual value only. If a caterpillar crawled over all the seats, windows, organ, and pulpit of a great cathedral he would have experienced the vast array of detail contained in the building itself, but would glean nothing of the intended use of the objects examined. The principles behind the Solids do, of course, govern every type of substance, but there is no immediate value in discovering these endless details in caterpillar fashion. When the true spiritual significance of the Platonic Solids dawns in the inner man, this vast world of multitudinous facts can be made to parade before us automatically and without much effort when required. Furthermore, the age-old science of Theosophia and its glorious Adepts are not waiting on tiptoe for the latest scientific discoveries, many of which would rather give them cause for sorrow or mild amusement.

Returning to the octahedron, it will readily be seen that eight imaginary

### THE HEBDOMAD

The hebdomad expression of everything manifesting whether Cosmos or Atom, Macrocosm or Man.



1—2—3=ATMA · BUDDHI · MANAS

4=EGO CENTRE OF JIVA  
(selfconscious 'I')

5—6—7=L. MANAS · ASTRAL · PHYS.  
—Soul expression.

points equally apaced in three dimensions must be a cube; similarly, six points would establish the octahedron, and so on. Form is seen to be dominated by number, and what are such numbers but powers or regents. Let it not hastily be assumed that as the solids have a numerical basis, therefore any competent mathematician could dispose of the subject, quickly and with nonchalance. Until a mathematician can tell us just what he means by "One"—the basis of all his reasoning—we shall be obliged to respectfully accept his efforts with reserve. Mathematics is a language only, confined to the horizons of the brain mind elemental. It is no more able to reveal noumena than are its students able to jump off their own shadows. The Platonic Solids have become associated with the rather flimsy theories of 'Flatland' fourth dimension- alists, but how futile it is to speculate about a two-dimensional Flatland, which to be flat at all must cut its own

throat by being at least one three-dimensional atom thick!

The true Theosophical approach is via the Higher Manas, to be experienced in states of consciousness, and as such, one effectively turns off the tap of spurious intellectualisms. A revision

of our books in the light of this Platonic mode of approach would not only vindicate the great power and dignity of H. P. Blavatsky as a messenger—whose message has already been vandalized out of recognition—but also bring back to a sorry world the healing power of the Ancient Wisdom.

## WHAT ARE THE MAHATMAS DOING?

BY CECIL WILLIAMS

WILL THE ATOM BOMB DESTROY CIVILIZATION?

Toward the end of the last century the veil hiding the activities of the Mahatmas was briefly lifted. But only briefly; the discriminating have good reasons to disregard subsequent alleged communications through spiritist mediums. Yet many must wonder what the Masters are doing in these terror-fraught days.

As the time nears for the possible, if not probable, return of the Mahatmas to the ken of ordinary man, it may not be inappropriate to indulge in a little speculation on the subject of their activities. What parts *are* the Mahatmas playing in current history?

A sceptic, chancing to read these lines, will scoff at the very idea of Masters. But he will be more ready than I am to believe that there are impossible hiatuses in Nature, that between man and the Ineffable Deity, within that awful depth of Space around us, there exist no intermediate grades of being whatsoever, that the ideas of saints, angels and arch-angels of the Catholic Churches, Roman, Greek or Anglican, and the parallels of these ideas in other religions, are hallucinations and not the more or less distorted reflections of facts.

The scoffer may affirm such incredible negations, deny the existence of "adepts" or "saints" living outside the hurly-burly of objective life, yet com-

passionately concerned with man's welfare, but if he does he has not examined the evidence, critically, yes, but patiently and dispassionately.

For what earnest searcher into the early teachings of the Theosophical Society has not been amazed at some anticipation of scientific discovery or marvelled at an uncanny prevision of human destiny since fulfilled?

Yet these communications are but sparks from the fires of knowledge of Men who are above men, beings guided in their sympathetic aid of mankind by profound prescience; to the insight of whose Maha Chohan, or Great Master, the future is said to lie as an open page (*Letters From the Masters of Wisdom*, I, 47).

Such awareness is but the development of a faculty latent in us all, as has been surely shown by J. W. Dunne, the Irish philosopher and practical aeroplane inventor (*vide, An Experiment With Time*) and others. This is the ability to read in the so-called Astral Light the pictorial and other effects of the past thrown forward onto the screen of the future (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 236, *facsimile edition*), a faculty neither more nor less mysterious than that of memory and requiring for its better comprehension no fictional dimensions either of space or of time.

Seership has infirmities of distortion

and confusion, akin to those which trouble the use of memory, but the Mahatmas, as I shall show later, have means of checking their "visions" of the future.

Prevision does not imply fatalism. Within limits, man has freewill and the forecasts of the future may be altered by the decisions of the present. "We cannot interfere with Karma," was a constant assertion of the Masters in the Society's early days. But they can and do influence *agents* or creators of Karma, namely human beings (*Mahatma Letters*, p. 271), which is a more effective and rational activity.

Reflecting on these things, pondering remembered hints in the primary Theosophical writings and observing the rushing events of the day, there developed in my mind the sense of historic trends, whose description may not be without interest to other students.

My ideas clustered around three questions, here taken in turn, which are prominent or else suppressed in all our minds:

Will civilization be annihilated?

Is western culture doomed to destruction from the east?

How, in Kali Yuga, the present Iron Age of strife, can dreams of the Golden Age be more than a mirage?

It was my business, in the thirties, to study the international scene with strict attention. I saw the rise of fascism and naziism with increasing apprehension for it was easy to foresee, from the intensity and direction of the forces manifested, that another European war was inevitable. This I wrote many times.

In view of early Theosophical warnings, made in one case by a mysterious Turkish effendi, as early as 1880 (*Theosophist*, I, 156), that science might destroy civilization, the pre-war years were for me a time of tense anxiety. The Fraternization Movement offered the opportunity to introduce a counter-

force through the re-establishment of Theosophy as a united world influence, so I took an active part in the Fraternization Conventions. But it seemed as if Karma mocked the effort.

The Detroit convention was awakened by newsboys crying the declaration of the European war. My prediction at Cleveland that in another imminent conflict America would be struck first was followed swiftly by Pearl Harbour. There was a day in May, 1940, when Columbia university announced the mysterious new power, U235, of which the world heard nothing more until the bomb bursts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the Atomic Age advances Theosophical warnings of threatening disaster appear to increase in significance.

My forecasts of international events were based upon a study of what may be called the vectors of national, economic and ideological forces and were always liable to be modified or nullified by unforeseeable developments. Thus, a prediction that Otto Strasser, former collaborator with Hitler, would attain power in post-war Germany has not been fulfilled because the Canadian government compels him to remain in exile.

Occasionally, I was moved to make statements which had no basis in conscious reason. I just *felt* it would be so. When the Pacific war opened I warned that the headquarters of both the Adyar and Point Loma societies were menaced, although I had no idea in what way. Subsequently, I watched with surprised concern the Japanese army sweep through Burma to within striking distance of Madras and the economic forces of war wipe out the popular name and site of the old Judge society.

It is easy to mistake an unconscious desire for an intuition, and for what it is worth, whether insight or groundless hope, I here report that the strained  
(Continued on page 122)

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## OFFICE NOTES

We have been requested to draw the attention of our readers to a Correspondence Course of the Faculty of Astrological Studies sponsored by the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society of London. Tuition will begin in January and will continue for three terms of twelve weeks each. A second year course will be available for those who successfully pass the tests of the first year. The fee for a year's tuition in either course is 10. 10.0. Further details may be obtained by writing to, Mrs. M. E. Hone, Director of Studies, 122 Beaufort St., London, S.W.3, England.

A Reuters' despatch from New Delhi, India, tells of the discovery of a three thousand year old treatise, *Vymanika Shastra*, 'the Science of Aeronautics', attributed to a Hindoo sage Bharardwaj, who is said to have lived sometime between 1000 and 3000 B.C. The eight chapters describe the building of three types of planes and list the metals considered suitable for their construction. It is reported that an aviation expert said that in a section dealing with plane wings, the curve needed to give the plane lift had been correctly described. Other manuscripts were reported discovered dealing with the making of artificial rain and the manufacture of artificial diamonds. ". . . and there is nothing new under the sun."

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Another interesting item comes from Hamburg, Germany. Reverend Juergen Spanush, who is described as a clergyman-scientist, believes that he has found the remains of an Atlantean building thirty feet beneath the surface of the North Sea, off the north west coast of Germany and southerly of Heli-goland. His diver reports that the wall upon which he stood was built of rectangular stones seven feet long and three feet high. Reverend Spanush said that he made his discovery through studying the writings of Plato. Despite all the books which have been written on the subject of Atlantis, there has not been found, up to the present, any tangible evidence of the remains of an Atlantean civilization, although the existence of the continent is conceded by many students of science.

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*New York Times Book Review* reports that E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, has brought out an edition of *A Buddhist Bible*, edited by Dwight God-



dard, 677 pp., price \$6.00. This is probably an indication of the growing interest in Buddhism in America. Previous editions were published by the late Mr. Goddard at Thetford, Vermont.

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We regret that a line was dropped in the first paragraph on page 107 of Mr. Weaver's letter in the September issue; the sentence should have read, "They evidently know enough about symbolism to get sarcastic about an upside-down pyramid balanced on the flat top—but perhaps are not aware that there is an upside-down pyramid—underneath the visible one."

## CORRESPONDENCE

Sept. 20, 1952.

Editor,

*The Canadian Theosophist.*

Dear Editor,

The Editors of Theosophical Notes, as quoted in your issue of August, 1952, p. 89, are incorrect in stating that the *Bardo* "finds no mention. . . in H. P. B.'s or the Master's works."

As far as the *Mahatma Letters* are concerned, *Bardo* is specifically defined (p. 105) as "the period between death and rebirth", after which follows a description of its sub-divisions.

As far as H.P.B.'s own writings go, *Bardo* is again defined and otherwise spoken of in her essay on "Tibetan Teachings", namely, the second instalment of this article (*Lucifer*, Vol. XV, October, 1894, p. 99), where she quotes a high Tibetan Occultist whom she had asked to explain certain doctrines.

I would appreciate it if you found it possible to insert the above correction in an early issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*.

With every good wish for the continued success of your courageous work in the Theosophical Movement,

Cordially yours,

Boris de Zirkoff.

## HAPPENINGS IN MONTREAL LODGE

The Spring Session was a very active one and we list below some of the special activities which took place.

Feb. 22—Mrs. Shelley Newcombe lectured on "East Meets West—in Emerson".

Feb. 29 )  
Mar. 14 )—Dr. R. G. Katsunoff delivered inspiring talks on "The Spiritual Message of Dante's Divine Comedy".

Mar. 21—"What Do We Know and How"—An Integration of Ancient Teachings and Modern Physics—was ably presented by Mr. Phillips Newcombe.

Apr. 18—"How To Solve the Problems of Everyday Life" was dealt with by Dr. William Vrythoff.

Apr. 25—A revealing demonstration on "The Art of Mobile Colour" (with music) was given for the second time in too many years by Mr. Albert Routledge.

May 16—Mr. E. E. Bridgen, a former president of the lodge, gave a most uplifting talk on "The Bhagavad Gita".

The following new members are welcomed into the Society: Miss K. M. Fraser, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. T. Green, Mrs. M. Larsen and Miss Alice Teichtner.

A number of friends and former members of the T.S. in Europe are greeted from time to time at our meetings.

As we intend to issue shortly a news communique to members and friends of Montreal Lodge, to be published about every two months, we would appreciate hearing from past members, members residing outside Montreal or who do not have the opportunity of attending meetings regularly, and friends everywhere.

M. R. Desrochers,

September 9, 1952.

Secretary.

## WHAT ARE THE MAHATMAS DOING?

(Continued from page 119)

anxiety I felt before and during the opening of the second World War, began to lift at the very moment the blitzkrieg was placing Europe supine beneath the heel of the Nazis. Years of horror were ahead of us then and may be before us still.

*But the great crisis for western civilization is past.*

To me, somehow, 1940, the year of the announcement of atomic energy, the year of the emergence of the Soviet threat by the seizure of the Baltic states, was the great turning point of the crisis.

On the surface, this may not seem rational, yet I later became convinced that this was a true intuition, my reasons (or rationalizations, if the reader will) for this growing conviction I now venture to outline.

Every reader of early Theosophical literature was aware that the doom of war overhung Europe, for it had been briefly hinted at in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 646). The first war justified the prediction but it left unfulfilled the prophecy of a coming *terreur* that was to affect all Europe (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 287 St. Germain).

Originally applied to the cruelty of the French Revolution, the word *terreur* had a strictly leftist sense, and if this meaning is intended in the *Glossary* prediction of 1891, then we may expect a communist triumph in Europe. But if the word is used in a polar sense, and applies also to a tyranny of the right, then we have witnessed already the fulfilment of the prophecy in the concentration camps and mass murder of the second war.

That Theosophy is opposed to tyranny need not be said. But it is not generally remembered that the *Society* in its early days was described by Blav-

atsky as hostile to communism and socialism, as "disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour." (*Theosophist*, I, 7).

The Theosophical Society could not dabble in politics, but to live up to its early principles it had to pronounce on political *philosophy*. The distinction between thought and act is not made by the Brothers of the Shadow, who were active both in the France of the tumbrils and the Germany of human vivisection. In both these countries there existed centres of black magic with political tendrils. Against these sorcerers, their most cruel and powerful enemies (*Mahatma Letters*, p. 42), the Masters oppose white magic.

In one of his books (*A Search in Secret Egypt*, p. 275) the romantic writer, Paul Brunton, skilfully conveys the suggestion of the power of thought by leaving the reader with the word-picture of an adept, sitting motionless against an Eastern sky. It is no fantasy. "We Buddhists," Tai Shu, late president of the Chinese Buddhist association, told Dr. Felix Valyi, (article, "The Significance of Buddhism to the Western Mind," *The Maha Bodhi*, magazine, Vol. 60, p. 11) "believe that a man meditating under a tree, a solitary soul concentrating upon the highest good, can change the course of history."

If a Mahatma alone can achieve so much, a group of less powerful minds, centred around a positive idea, may not be ineffectual (*vide, Mahatma Letters*, p. 20). The society centred around the idea of a League of Nations did not prevent war, but it may have helped to hinder the victory of tyranny. The Theosophical Fraternization conventions, by adding their mite of concentrated thought upon the idea of Theosophical brotherhood to the world's mental forces may have helped to preserve civilization. Was it not a Master who said that no effort is absolutely

wasted?

Naturally, one of the aims of the Mahatmas is to prevent wars. We are told they stopped a Russian invasion of Tibet which would have involved Britain. (*Mahatma Letters*, p. 11).

The adept known as Count St. Germain tried to avert war between England and the American colonists, and when that effort failed he urged Lafayette to lend his sword to the revolutionaries. For once war is declared, the Mahatmas must do what they can to humanize the conflict and to try to ensure an outcome favourable to human evolution.

Had wisdom then prevailed, the whole of North America might well today have been part of the British Commonwealth, a confederation powerful enough to deter ambitious nations from wars of conquest.

When St. Germain failed, the second best course was taken. This was the establishment of a democratic state in America by men with occult affiliations, through the creation of a constitution difficult to change. Thus the Mahatmas' activities in the eighteenth century helped to make the United States, in the twentieth, the stronghold of human liberty.

The Masters' concern for human happiness and spiritual progress could not have left them inactive in 1940, the year of the fall of Europe, the year of the announcement of atomic research, the year of the preliminary march of the Russians. The two first events I purpose looking at now more closely, leaving the Russian menace for later consideration.

The first, the fall of Europe was accompanied by an historical mystery. The German panzer corps had the British army at its mercy. The way of escape through Dunkirk could easily have been closed. But, against the be-

wildered protests of his generals, *Hitler himself* held back the blitz. (*The Other Side of the Hill*, by B. H. Liddell Hart, p. 139).

This extraordinary happening, affording material for speculation by those acquainted with occult psychology, held open the door to the salvation of Europe, though the horrors of invasion and genocide continued to shock the civilized world.

The *terreur* predicted by Blavatsky was to be accompanied by the return of St. Germain, who would not easily be recognized (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 287). If the nazi tyranny was meant, if no Soviet-inspired mass cruelty is yet to come in western Europe, St. Germain must have already appeared. If so, who is he?

I have the temerity to suggest that he was a boy in his teens when she wrote her prophecy, that his disguise took that of a genius with sufficient human frailty to allay the hostility of the mediocre and the masses; the great man of action of the century; the man of the hour at Dunkirk; the only living man with the gifts necessary to inspire and save Europe—Winston Churchill.

The times called for unusual efforts. Tremendous, world-changing projects were under way. One of these was nothing less than the development of our astounding modern science, in which, unknown to the world, the Mahatmas are the protagonists.

For we are told not only that Crookes and Edison were influenced by them, but that, indeed, all invention and discovery is in their debt. Men of science but reap where the Masters have sown (*Mahatma Letters*, p. 51).

This is the rationale of divine leadership, of the tradition that in ancient days science and art were taught by the gods. Then such education was open to be seen. Now it is secret, so it is not

realized that every advance in science and art is inspired by the Masters from the inner planes. (*vide, Mahatma Letters*, p. 49).

Thus the developments of electricity, radio, television, chemistry, physics and mathematics were negatively made possible by Karma but positively initiated by the Mahatmas.

*And so was the development of atomic energy.*

As it is a Mahatmic activity to advance science so it is a Mahatmic duty to try to prevent dangerous knowledge getting into the hands of the wrong people. (*vide, Mahatma Letters*, p. 341). Hence, we are allowed the inference that atomic power being permitted mankind *it is not likely to destroy us.*

It is my intuition (or wild guess, if the reader wills) that to save civilization from the soul-destroying ideas of

fascism and communism, the Mahatmas in 1940 took a calculated risk (*cf. Mahatma Letters*, p. 39) in permitting the discovery of atomic power *by the democracies.* Better physical death than spiritual degradation! To avoid the greater evil, the Masters risked the collapse of all they are actively and painstakingly building up.

I judge that from their foreknowledge they calculated that the atom bomb discovered in the second world war would not be used in the third, any more than poison gas discovered in the first was used in the second. Even for stupid humanity, the risk of using it is too great.

If, therefore, our civilization is to be destroyed, it is not likely to be by the atom bomb. We have yet to consider whether it will be overwhelmed by an invasion from the east.

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## AN OUTLINE OF THEOSOPHY

BY W. B. PEASE

(Continued from page 112)

To return to the above questions: Complete answers can only be gradually approached by continued study of the whole system, but it may be stated at once that the purpose of life on this earth, as of the whole of the manifested universe, is for the *evolution of consciousness*; and it serves the One Life of which every individual life is a part, a spark of the Flame, or a focal point in the ocean of universal consciousness.

**Consciousness and Unity:** Theosophy teaches that all life, all intelligence, all force and all matter have their origin in The Absolute — the One Reality of which it is said in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky:

‘An Omnipresent, Eternal, Bound-

less and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought—in the words of Manduyka, ‘un-thinkable and unspeakable.’

From this it follows that notwithstanding the irresistible sense of separateness produced by the working of our minds in separate forms, we are in reality all bound together in one unbreakable unity in which our true interests are identical. This is the basis upon which rests the FACT of the brotherhood of man; it is not a mere sentimental aspiration, but a fact which

cannot be ignored with impunity by men in their dealings with each other, or by nations in their policies affecting other nations. And in this unity all animals must be included, for the life animating their forms, though less advanced in evolution, cannot logically be excluded from the One Source. Therefore, every act of justice or kindness on the one hand, or of injustice or cruelty on the other, must inevitably react not only to the benefit and happiness or to the injury and unhappiness of the doer in particular, but also on humanity as a whole.

Consciousness is all-pervading; not only every animal and plant, but every particle of matter is animated by it in the way and degree commensurate to its stage of development; and it guides its own evolution through an age-long progression of ever changing forms.

A distinction, of course, must be made between consciousness and self-consciousness. The latter is fully awakened first in man. It has been said: "The *Breath* becomes a stone, the stone, a plant; the plant, an animal; the animal, a man; the man, a spirit; and the spirit, a god." *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 107. At the time, in the last century, when the scientific materialism, which Mme. Blavatsky made such strenuous effort to combat, was most rampant, Prof. Tyndall said: "In matter I saw the promise and potency of all forms of life," but more recently Sir Wm. Crookes replied: "In life I see the promise and potency of all forms of matter."

**The God Within:** Man may be regarded primarily as an immortal intelligent being endowed with unlimited capacity for evolving powers, and extending his range of consciousness. This is the real man, the god within, the ego who by linking himself with an animal soul and a physical body in numerous incarnations, gradually through count-

less efforts, struggles, failures, successes and all the joys and sorrows and lessons of life, evolves his attributes into potent powers.

While no dogma is propounded thereon, it is, on the other hand, no outcome of sentimental devotion, but its antithesis to postulate a spiritual evolution that is progressive instead of the entirely illogical assumption which, ignoring all process of becoming, holds that man, immersed in the interests of earth-life, can be at death instantly translated into an immortal being of spiritual purity.

It is only here, on this earth, that man as we know him, can make progress towards perfection; hence the necessity of reincarnation. Human consciousness begins at a stage barely removed from that of the animal; for a long period his higher self, the ego, is little more than a sleeping partner, and his mind is used almost entirely to plan and scheme to supply his physical needs and to gratify his animal appetites. The latter are now greatly encouraged and stimulated by the memory of past pleasure, and by the lure of imagination. The mind becomes enslaved by desire; consciousness is centred in the lower self; and the god within is slighted, forgotten, and its powers stolen and misused. At length, however, after many disappointments the man begins dimly to realize that happiness is not to be found in the mere gratification of earthly desires; conscience—the still small voice of the god within—is heeded, and then begins the age-long battle between the higher and lower self, in which every principle and attribute of human nature is sooner or later involved, and which has given rise to innumerable myths, legends, allegories and symbolic dramas from time immemorial. Is it not absurd to suppose that this long-drawn combat, in which first one and then another of the human principles becomes dominant, could be begun and concluded in one life-time?

And if, as it has been suggested, evolution is continued after death, then how unfair, how unjust it is that while one soul is born with a good and strong character, with few lower tendencies to fight against, and, perhaps, amid surroundings conducive to good thought and action, another soul has to begin at the very beginning with no evil lust or desire conquered, but on the contrary with every enemy to spiritual development either fiercely rampant or waiting to be aroused in its turn. Surely it must be more reasonable to suppose that the struggle commences in every case with the first dawn of aspiration towards an ideal a little higher than mere personal gratification, and that it continues through a long series of lives until the lower self becomes the willing servant of the higher; illumination dispels ignorance and a glorious new phase of spiritual evolution is reached.

**The Cycle** On the subject of the re-  
**of Rebirth:** incarnating individual, Mme.  
 Blavatsky writes:

“We distinguish between the simple fact of self-consciousness, the simple feeling that ‘I am I,’ and the complex thought that ‘I am Mr. Smith,’ or ‘Mrs. Brown.’ Believing as we do in a series of births for the same Ego, or re-incarnation, this distinction is the fundamental pivot of the whole idea. You see, ‘Mr. Smith’ really means a long series of daily experiences strung together by the thread of memory, and forming what Mr. Smith calls ‘himself.’ But none of these ‘experiences’ are really the ‘I’ or the Ego, nor do they give ‘Mr. Smith’ the feeling that he is himself, for he forgets the greater part of his daily experiences, and they produce the feeling of *Egoity* in him only while they last. We Theosophists, therefore, distinguish between this

bundle of ‘experiences’ which we call the *false* (because so finite and evanescent) *personality*, and that element in man to which the feeling of ‘I am I,’ is due. It is this ‘I am I’ which we call the *true* individuality; and we say that this ‘Ego’ or individuality plays, like an actor, many parts on the stage of life. Let us call every new life on earth of the same *Ego* a *night* on the stage of a theatre. One night the actor, or ‘Ego,’ appears as ‘Macbeth,’ the next as ‘Shylock,’ the third as ‘Romeo,’ the fourth as ‘Hamlet’ or ‘King Lear,’ and so on, until he has run through the whole cycle of incarnations. The Ego begins his life-pilgrimage as a sprite, an ‘Ariel,’ or a ‘Puck’; he plays the part of a *super*, is a soldier, a servant, one of the chorus; rises then to ‘speaking parts,’ plays leading *roles*, interspersed with insignificant parts, till he finally retires from the stage as ‘Prospero,’ the *magician*.—*The Key to Theosophy*.

Theosophy teaches that these arduous earth-lives are not lived closely one after another without intermission. On the contrary each is separated from the other by many centuries spent in the invisible realms by which this earth is interpenetrated and surrounded. These may be divided into two groups also, and so may the states of consciousness appertaining to them. One of these groups is called the astral plane, or kama-loka, which means desire-place. The other group will be referred to later on.

**The Astral Plane:** I shall say very little about the astral plane, because to give any fair idea of its important place in the scheme of things, its immense variety of inhabitants, their influence on the affairs of this plane, and many other matters pertaining to it would in-

volve many difficult and complicated questions which could not be adequately treated here. Some reference will have to be made to it on another page, but for our present purpose it will suffice to say that just as the physical body at death is left to disintegrate on this earth, so the astral body, together with the lower desires and passions inherent in it, must be left behind in kama-loka before the ego is free to pass on. These lower desires, attributes and impulses are not finally disposed of by being left behind in kama-loka, for they will be taken up again by the vehicles of the re-incarnating ego on the threshold of re-birth, and will hold sway over one personality after another until fought and conquered during earth-life.

Sojourn in kama-loka differs as to length of time and also as to the amount of suffering involved, according to the way in which the life just over has been spent. Thus a very sensual or passionate man or woman may be held there, earth-bound, for many years, for the simple reason that a great deal of vitalizing force has been put into the lower principles by a life of unrestrained self-indulgence and the gratification of the lowest desires. But ordinarily decent people who die natural deaths need linger there but a few days, and in a state of more or less unconsciousness. Very good, pure-minded people may remain but a few unconscious hours.

**Devachan:** From kama-loka the freed ego, carrying with it the aroma, as has been said, of the last terrestrial life, goes on into the next plane of consciousness, which is called by Eastern occultists, *devachan*, a Sanscrit word meaning divine place. It has been adopted by Theosophy because there is no English word by which it can be conveniently designated. Devachan is not the heaven of Christian theology, nor is it the summerland of Spiritualism. It is a subjective state akin to, but *very different*

from the dream-state. The objection has been made that such a life must consist largely of illusion. And so it does, but the same objection may be made with equal force regarding our earth-life, during the whole of which we are deceived without pause or let, both by mind and senses, and yet we are perfectly satisfied by a false sense of reality. It is the same in devachan where, it is said, life appears to be far more vivid, real, and satisfying than any single moment of earth-life. Moreover, it is difficult to see how any life founded upon the complicated interplay of relationships, rivalries and rapid changes of this life, could be made even moderately happy except through some form of forgetfulness or delusion.\* The Mahatma known as K. H. writes on this subject:

“Of course, it is a *state*, one, so to say, of *intense selfishness*, during which an Ego reaps the reward of his *unselfishness* on earth. He is completely engrossed in the bliss of all his personal earthly affections, preferences and thoughts, and gathers in the fruit of his meritorious actions. No pain, no grief nor even the shadow of a sorrow comes to darken the bright horizon of his unalloyed happiness: for, *it is a state of perpetual ‘Maya.’*”†

\* It must be recognized that in seeking for truth, one should not allow himself to be influenced by what he thinks *ought* to be, or what he thinks would be preferable. No objections to dreams could stop dreaming.

† A very fine description of the devachan state is given by the Mahatma K.H. with answers and explanations to Mr. Sinnett's astute questions and objections in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, from which the above quotation has been taken, page 101. Also see *The Key to Theosophy*.

(To Be Continued.)

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