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WHO ARE YOU?

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

An address delivered before a group of unaffiliated Theosophists and their guests, at San Diego, Calif., Sunday, March 15, 1953.

I open my address this afternoon with Socrates' prayer:

"Great Zeus and all ye other gods who haunt this place, teach us to esteem Wisdom the only riches; give us beauty in our inmost souls, and may the outward and the inward man be at one."

This prayer, uttered by Socrates 23 centuries ago, I learned more than forty years since while participating in a symposium entitled *The Aroma of Athens*, presented by Katherine Tingley and her students in the open-air Greek Theatre at Point Loma, at the old Isis Theatre in San Diego, at the President Theatre in Washington, D.C., and on the Island of Visingsö, Sweden. That was in the halcyon days when many of us were 'nourished on wholesome poetic dreams from the Golden Age'.—As Kenneth Morris, the Welsh Poet of Lomaland sang:

"High upon a hill beside the western
seas,
That hath more wealth than Hybla
for the bees,

That hath more blueness than the
Aegean skies,
Athens shall again arise, most fair,
most wise,
To shine upon the world."

And though, like the 'Glory that was Greece', the outward picture has faded, to have shared in the vision made life worth living. "Life", says a fine Greek adage, "is the gift of nature; but beautiful living is the gift of wisdom." Socrates was pronounced by the Oracle at Delphi to be the wisest of the Greeks, and Plato called him "the wisest, justest, and best of all men whom I have ever known." Socrates was not satisfied with the examination of the material and measurable world with which his Greek predecessors in philosophy had largely concerned themselves. "This is very good," said he; "but there is an infinitely worthier subject for philosophers than all these trees and stones, and even all these stars: there is the mind of man. What is man, and what can he become?" *Gnothe Seauton*, "Know thyself", said Socrates, echoing the inscription over the portal of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

This brings us directly to the subject:

“Who Are You?”

You will note that our theme consists of three monosyllables: WHO ARE YOU? As many of you doubtless know, the Chinese spoken language consists entirely of monosyllables, and the meaning to be conveyed is determined by the inflection given to these monosyllables by the speaker. So, likewise, the meaning of the three monosyllables in our title WHO ARE YOU? is greatly modified by the intonation or emphasis given to each of these three short words. Let me illustrate: I can say “*Who* are you?”, “*Who are* you?” or “*Who are you?*” and at least three different and distinct reactions will be evoked from the listener.

However, I do not intend to ask “*Who* are you?” or “*Who are you?*” as I take it that the purpose of this meeting is neither to learn one another’s names or occupations on the one hand, nor, on the other hand, to pry into each other’s religious, political, or economic status. So I follow the example of the Buddhists and the Taoists, as well as of the Greek sages and of philosophic minds of all ages and races and stick to the *Middle Way*, by asking: “*Who are* you?”, seeking to plumb, if we can, the mystery which has exercised the greatest thinkers of all times as to what man is *essentially*, not what he merely appears to be—what the German philosophers call *das Ding an sich*, ‘the thing in itself’, the essence behind the outward seeming, the *sat* or reality hidden by *maya* or illusion, as the Hindu sages express it.

In ancient Aryavarta, the sacred home of the Aryan race in prehistoric India, the *guru* or teacher asked his *chela* or disciple: “*Kas twam asi?*” “*Who art thou?*” and the pupil answered, “*Aham asmi Parabrahma*” — “*I am the Boundless,*” thus anticipating by thousands of years the identical great spiritual verity uttered by Jesus:

“*I and my Father are one.*” To enable us better to grasp the meaning of this basic, all-important, universal truth, let me invoke the aid of Dr. G. de Purucker. I quote from his illuminating lectures on *Questions We All Ask*:

“*Who are you? . . . It is the most important question with which human beings can concern themselves. It involves everything that you are and do. If you know truly who you are, you will know your origin; you will also know why you are here, and why you are doing such and such things, and not doing other things. You will also know whither the course of your thoughts is leading you—in other words, you will have some vision of what the destiny is which your present character is already shaping for you . . .*”

“*You are, each one of you, a visible expression of an inner divine intelligence, poorly expressing itself through the human vehicle; but the root of you is divine, a child of the spiritual universe, even as your physical body is an offspring of the physical universe. You are a child of the spiritual-divine Universe in the inmost of the inmost of your being. You are, therefore, inseparable from that spiritual-divine Universe, for you cannot leave that Universe. You are an essential, intrinsic part of it. Think what that fact means. It means, among other things that within you, somewhere, either active or latent, there is everything that is in the Boundless; somewhere locked up within you there is this fiery spirit, a god-spark, of which you, in your intelligence and in the feelings of your heart, are a still feeble expression; but you are destined in the far-distant æons of the future much more completely to manifest forth the divine flame within you . . .*” (Series II, No. 1.)

Sages of freed spiritual vision and clear intellectual insight in many lands have recognized the fact that man him-

self is a *stream of consciousness*, ranging all the way from the beast kingdom in his merely physical form, appetites and desires—his lowest aspects—to the cosmic consciousness and at-one-ment with the Universal Soul or *Anima Mundi* achieved by the Christs and the Buddhas. Each one of us *is*, at any time, whatever his self-conscious ego identifies itself with at that particular moment. Each of us is not one, but many, as we can readily see for ourselves by studying our own states of consciousness.

Speaking for myself, when partaking of a good meal, I do not believe I am quite the same person as I am when seeking, with Socrates, to invoke the wisdom of the gods on Olympus! Again, one's ego is certainly not centered in the same knot of consciousness when he is witnessing over television or listening over the radio to some of the ghastly, sub-human, barbaric caterwauling that goes by the name of singing, as he is when exalted by a well-trained choir singing Schubert's *Ave Maria*, or when inspired by Maestro Toscanini conducting the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. Again, are you the same person when you allow your mind to be beclouded as well as your bloodstream poisoned with ill-will, resentment and sometimes with hatred — are you the same person under these circumstances, I repeat, as you are, if and when you can not only say with Jesus but actually feel in your heart as He did when He told His followers on the Mount of Olives?:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; . . .” (Matthew: V, 43-44.)

No, we are not merely dual, not merely Jekylls and Hydes, we are chameleons who change from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from day to day, from year to year, and even from life-time to life-time, according to whether, by the exercise of will, of the failure so to exercise it, we raise our minds towards the light of the spirit, to the bright realms of thought where the good, the true and the beautiful are native, on the one hand, or on the other hand, permit ourselves to drift rudderless on a sea of personal emotions, when we might turn in aspiration upwards towards the Buddhas and the Christs, who are ever beckoning and calling to us to come up higher. The great Spiritual Masters are not figments of the imagination—they have actually lived and taught, and the existence and availability of the wisdom which they bequeathed to us, are, by far, the most valuable and incontestable witness to what man is, potentially, and what he can actually become. Their incarnation as men is the most inspiring event in the history of the human race on this planet *terra*.

Plato said:

“He who knows not the common things of life is a beast among men. He who knows only the common things of life is a man among beasts. He who knows all that can be learned by diligent inquiry is a god among men.”

Sir Francis Bacon, who has been called the most powerful mind of modern times, wrote: “The mind is the man, and knowledge mind; a man is but what he knoweth. Men are not animals erect, but immortal gods.”

And Shakespeare has the Prince of Denmark soliloquize:

“What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like

a god!"

(Hamlet: II: 2.)

The old Greek Philosopher Heraclitus, said: "Man is a portion of Cosmic fire, imprisoned in a body of earth and water." Please note how close this comes to the first line of the sub-title of my talk this afternoon: *Who Are You?* "Offspring of the Cosmos, yet child of the Earth." Heraclitus's definition of man will be better understood if we recollect that among many ancient philosophers, fire symbolized spirit, water symbolized feeling or emotion, and earth symbolized matter. So, if we say that man is a tripartite creature consisting of fire (spirit), water (emotion) and earth (body), we come very close to the Pythagorean-Platonic three-fold division of man into a spiritual soul (*nous*), an animal soul (*psuche*) and the physical body. This division was adopted by Paul, who was also an Initiate into the Mysteries, and even by James (III-15).

In Chapter VI of *The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky discusses and reconciles this three-fold division of man's constitution with the Theosophical division of man into seven principles. Before going into this septenary division, let me here utter the very warning which H. P. B. herself gives at the close of the chapter referred to:

"But you must beware of the general error into which too many even of our Theosophists fall. Do not imagine that because man is called septenary, then quintuple and a triad, that he is a compound of seven, five or three *entities*; or, as well expressed by a Theosophical writer, of skins to be peeled off like the skins of an onion. The "principles," as already said—save the body, the life and the astral *eidolon*, all of which disperse at death—are simply *aspects* and *states of consciousness*."

The ranges of our consciousness or the aspects or states of our consciousness may be briefly defined as follows:

The highest state is that of Pure Spirit, sometimes called the 'Divine Soul', in Sanskrit *Atman*, in which there is no sense of separateness at all—a radiation of Universal Consciousness: the same in you and me and in all of us just as sunlight shines on all alike. It is the 'I am' consciousness, as distinguished from the egoic or 'I am I' consciousness. It is in this Atmic state of consciousness—when in highest meditation or ecstasy the spiritual Sage reaches it—that Universal Brotherhood becomes, as it was to the Buddha and the Christ when they received their enlightenment—not a matter of sentiment at all, because personality at that time did not exist for them; it was an actual recognition and direct perception of the fundamental oneness of all that is.

In *The Light of Asia* Sir Edwin Arnold describes in exquisite language the life of the Prince of India, his enlightenment as the Lord Buddha and his message to suffering mankind. The poem closes with these verses picturing one who has reached at-one-ment with *Atma*, the Divine Soul, with Cosmic Consciousness, with God:

No need hath such to live as ye name
life;

That which began in him when he
began

Is finished: he hath wrought the pur-
pose through

Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor
sins

Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys
and woes

Invade his safe eternal peace; nor
deaths

And lives recur. He goes

Unto Nirvana. He is one with Life,
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to
be.

Om, Mani Padme, Om! The Dewdrop
slips

Into the shining sea!

—in other words, the personal self merges with Universal Self, “The Dewdrop slips into the shining sea”—losing its identity as a *separate* dew-drop, which ever was and ever will be identical in essence with the mighty ocean, the source from which it sprang, a microcosm of the macrocosm—individual man a replica in the small of the Boundless All, man an image of God: *Aham asmi Parabrahma*: “I am the Boundless.” What a rebuke to all that is small, self-centered and earthbound in us, and what a challenge to all that is godlike and aspiring in every human being! It cannot lead to arrogance in the sincere man; for while it inspires him with a vision of what he is in his inmost, it humbles him with the recognition of how far short he falls of being what he can become!

The second principle in the Theosophical septenary division of man's states of consciousness is known by the Sanskrit term *Buddhi*, the ‘Spiritual Soul’, the vehicle of pure, Universal Spirit, the principle by which Universal Spirit is ‘stepped down’ into egoic or individual consciousness, just as diffused sunlight is brought into focus by a lens; it is the principle or state of consciousness which is reached on rare occasions by men of genius and high spirituality, including men of less exalted talents but of lofty ideals when they have direct perception of truth. It is a state of consciousness attained by the few truly devoted worshippers in the Temple of Pure Science, when, with the flashing light of intuition they perceive an actual fact in Nature, which they then proceed to prove by empirical tests or mathematical calculations for the enlightenment of smaller men of less intuition. It is the principle by

which the greatest philosophers and religious teachers, the noblest figures in literature, art, music, and social service, catch their visions of the good, the true, and the beautiful, which thereafter perennially inspire grand thoughts, fine feelings, and noble actions. These reflect the light of *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Soul. The perceptions of the man whose consciousness is touched with the light of *Buddhi* may transcend reason, but they will never be *unreasonable* nor an affront to one's highest and most generous instincts.

The third principle in our septenary division of man—the most important of all in aiding us to answer our question: WHO ARE YOU?—is the thinking principle, the mind, in Sanskrit *Manas*, that which makes a man a man and not a beast. It is the principle which gives a man the power of self-consciousness—that is, of consciousness reflected upon itself. Man in his physical form has many characteristics and biological features similar to those of the higher apes and other mammals, with whom he has evolutionary ties. But besides the enormous gap between physical man and the anthropoids, there is the still greater gap between man's power of reason, of self-analysis, of self-directed evolution, of deliberate self-sacrifice and of creative imagination, on the one hand, and on the other hand the responses to mere instinct, habit, or even training, of the most highly evolved beasts. In fact, the word *man* itself is actually cognate with the Sanskrit root of *manas*, meaning ‘to think.’ Hence, man is essentially a *thinker*.

The thinking principle is decidedly dual in its aspects—the battleground in which every human being wages continuous warfare with himself, until he either wins, and thus unites himself with the Spiritual Soul, or loses, and identifies himself entirely with the lower principles of his constitution, and

thus drifts backwards in the stream of evolution towards the beasts. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that he gets stranded on a sandbank, while the stream of evolution flows past him, instead of marching forwards and upwards and onwards towards the gods, of whom he is one in his inmost essence. Most of us oscillate in our consciousness between the two extremes. A very few lose in time the last link with the Higher Self and become what are known as 'Lost Souls.' On the other hand, relatively few unite themselves completely with the Spiritual Soul and become the great Spiritual Teachers who have been the strength and refuge of millions of struggling human beings who followed after them.

So much for man's highest principles, called in our septenary division of man's constitution, the *Higher Triad*. We come now to the four lower principles termed the *Lower Quarternary*:

Kama, or desire, which is the driving force in nature—generally, though not necessarily, of a purely personal, passionate, and selfish character. In its higher aspect it becomes aspiration and upward striving. "Back of Will stands Desire," is an Eastern maxim. It was Will in this sense that was the basis of Schopenhauer's doctrine in *The World as Will*. In view of the excessive weight given to the desire principle in man's constitution by many modern psychologists and psychiatrists, I should like to add to the other end of the scales the following conclusion reached after more than half a century of practice by one of California's oldest and most respected psychiatrists, Dr. James Tucker Fisher, in his recent book, *A Few Buttons Missing*:

"If you were to take the sum total of all the authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists . . . if you were to take the whole of the meat and

none of the parsley, and if you were to have these unadulterated bits of pure scientific knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount."

Next to the *Kama* or desire-principle, we may consider the *Linga-Sarira*, or model, or astral, or form body—scarcely less gross than the physical body itself. It is the form-body on which the physical body is moulded and which enables the physical body in Nature's marvelous processes of adaptability to preserve its form in repairing and replacing tissues which have been diseased, injured, or worn out, to anticipate functions soon to be required, and to maintain the body's physical identity throughout its life-cycle amidst the constant flux and changing of its billions of cells.

The existence of this astral or model or phantom body has recently been definitely put to use by orthopedists in rehabilitating men who have lost their limbs. To the 2000 doctors attending the Internatoinal College of Surgeons in Madrid in May, 1952, Dr. Henry H. Kessler of Newark, N.J., exhibited a one-legged man equipped with an artificial leg, darting around a stone pavement cutting intricate figures on roller skates. With the collaboration of Consultant John Seeley of International Business Machines Corporation, marvelous electrical mechanisms had been successfully employed in restoring the use of amputated legs and arms. An account of this fine work, published in the magazine *TIME*, issue of June 2, 1952, ends with this significant paragraph — particularly significant to students of Theosophy:

"As an aid in rehabilitation, Kessler pointed out, orthopedists can now take advantage of the amputee's familiar 'phantom limb' sensation; i.e., after an

(Continued on Page 59)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I was indeed grieved to learn of the death of Mr. L. W. Rogers who passed away at Santa Barbara, California on April 18 at the ripe age of ninety-four. For fifty years Mr. Rogers was an ardent theosophist and an outstanding personality in the American Section. He was a lecturer of world-wide renown, a writer of many well known books and a publisher of note. He inaugurated *Ancient Wisdom* one of the best magazines of its kind, and wrote among other books *Elementary Theosophy* and *Hints to Young Students of Occultism*; this latter was to me a vade mecum and I never tire of recommending it to all theosophists of any age, not only as a guide to things occult but as a mode of life. A genial, loving soul, my memory of him is the richer for the many pleasant meetings I had with him.

* * * *

The members of the General Executive seldom if ever get together in an entirety and so when one from our far extended domain does come our way we are very glad to welcome him. Mr. Emory Wood of Edmonton paid a fleeting visit to our headquarters on his way to P.E.I., to visit his ailing mother whom we hope he found well; we were delighted to have the opportunity of meeting him and discussing things in general.

* * * *

Felicitations to Mrs. Elizabeth Belcher who celebrated her ninety-fourth birthday on April 28. Having joined the Society in 1897 she is thus one of our oldest members and her late husband, Mr. Felix Belcher, is well remembered by most of us as the "Smiling Philosopher". Good health and continued happiness is our fervent wish for her on this unique occasion.

A member of the Toronto Lodge, Mr. Arnold Wild has a farm at Sprucedale, Ont., about 170 miles north, in the beautiful lake country where he is ready to receive guests, preferably of a theosophical turn of mind at his Retreat. He and his wife are both ardent theosophists and would be glad to receive visitors desirous of spending their summer vacation with a theosophical background. For further information write him at 15 George St., Mimico, Ont.

* * * *

I have received a letter from Dr. Alvin B. Kuhn who informs me of the result of his tour to the West Coast ending at Vancouver on April 30. Altogether he gave 52 lectures and a considerable amount of interest and enthusiasm seem to have been aroused, this was especially apparent in Vancouver. He hopes to be able to visit the Mid-West cities next spring.

* * * *

A very warm welcome was extended to Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pearson of Wheaton, Ill., on their recent visit to Toronto where both gave most interesting lectures to the Lodge. It is two years since they left America for an extended tour of the far East, including India and Australia, in fact lecturing their way round the world. Both of them illustrated their talks with lantern slides, some in colour, and Mr. Pearson's travelogues, especially that of Adyar were most enjoyable.

* * * *

I am happy to welcome the following new members into the Society:—Mr. John D. Griffiths as a Member at Large; Mrs. Dora Salverson of the Toronto Lodge; Mrs. Helene L. Parker and Miss Mollie Goodman both of the Montreal Lodge; and Mrs. Dorothy W. Glen of the Toronto Lodge.

E. L. T.

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OFFICE NOTES

The summer program of the North-east Federation of Theosophical Lodges at its Pumpkin Hollow Farm, Craryville, N.Y., indicates that considerable time will be given over this year to the study of *The Secret Doctrine*. The period from July 3 to July 12 will be devoted to "The Secret Doctrine and Modern Science"; Mr. Fritz Kunz will lead the discussion. The weekends throughout the summer will also be set aside for Secret Doctrine study. This is an encouraging sign; a grounding in the Secret Doctrine approach will carry a student safely pass the many attractive bypaths which open up before him. The camp is open to all members of the

Society and to friends; the diet is strictly vegetarian.

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Eight free public talks will be given by J. Krishnamurti at The Oak Grove, Ojai, California, at 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays, June 20, 27, and July 4, 11, and on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. on June 21, 28 and July 5, 12. These will be the only talks given by Mr. Krishnamurti in the United States this year.

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The story of the discovery of 'the most sumptuous mortuary chamber in the western hemisphere' at Palenque, Mexico, was of much interest; the more recent discovery that the great 'sacrificial stone' contained therein is actually a coffin, has revived that interest, particularly as the right hand of the crumbling skeleton held a large jade cube, and the left, a large jade sphere. Dr. Alberto Ruz, who made the discovery does not consider that the similarity between these tombs and those of the Pharaohs indicated any Egyptian influence on the Mayan civilization. A land of common origin, Atlantis, might account for the similarity. Recent articles in this magazine have dealt with the Platonic Solids, and the presence of the jade cube and sphere should be noted—Platonic solids before Plato, timeless symbols in the occult story of man.

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In the issue of March 1949, attention was drawn to the establishment at Harvard University of a centre for the study of altruism. *Pageant* for June carries a short article on this subject under the eye-catching title 'Harvard Invests \$100,000 in Love.' The Harvard Research Center in Creative Altruism was made possible by the gift of \$100,000 from Mr. Eli Lilly and the Lilly Foundation. It is under the direction of Professor Pitirim A. Sorokin and is engaged in the scientific investi-

gation of a inner power "that can prove more potent for good than atomic fission for evil . . . All the useful techniques man has ever discovered are under perusal from Yogi and the mystery religions of the past through psychology, psychiatry, religion, education, and the social sciences." Science is engaged in the task of proving by its own coldly analytical methods the ancient truth of the Golden Rule.

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WILLIAM B. PEASE

Another old comrade of the way, William Benton Pease, passed from earthly activity on April 30, 1953 at the advanced age of 92. The late Mr. Pease was born on December 27, 1861 at Henbury Hill near Bristol, England, and came of an old Quaker family. His birthdate was the same as the late Mr. A. E. S. Smythe's. A funeral service was conducted by Mrs. Edith Fielding of the H. P. B. Library in Vancouver on May 2nd.

Mr. Pease was a whole-heartedly devoted worker whose life was indissolubly linked with the Theosophical cause. We do not know the date he joined the Society, but he was President of the Victoria Lodge when the Theosophical Society in Canada was formed in 1919. He was a frequent contributor of articles and letters to the magazine; a long article of his "An Outline of Theosophy" was recently re-printed in the magazine, beginning in September 1952, and this was afterwards printed in pamphlet form for the H.P.B. Library. He was one of the first in Canada to recognize that the direction of Leadbeaterianism was away from the Theosophy of *The Secret Doctrine* and the teachings of the Masters; that it was not merely, as has been claimed, a new approach to Theosophy, but was in fact a complete reversal of some of the basic ideas. Mr. Pease, a deep student of

Theosophical sources and of Theosophical history, was always outspoken in his endeavours to restore the original basis of the Society.

In a tribute to his friend and co-worker, the late Mr. William H. Griffiths of Victoria, Mr. Pease mentioned the belief that, 'those who desire to return quickly to the fighting line on this earth will not be held long by the selfish bliss of devachan.' Such is our belief concerning him; the valiant warrior-soul who has now gone from among us will return in its due cycle to take again its place in the war 'a longer and greater one than any', the timeless war for man's freedom through self realization, from ignorance, fear and egotism.

To his two daughters, Miss E. Mary Pease and Mrs. T. P. Crowther and to other members of the family we extend our sincere sympathy.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Dear Sir:—

In answer to a number of questions in a letter to my address in your April number, signed G. H. Hall, I offer the following:—

1. "Is there any such thing within the T.S. as an authority?"
Answer, yes, lots of them,—there are authorities on the Secret Doctrine, others on the Theosophical history, still others on the Vedanta, —the best example which comes to mind is Dr. Kuhn, now lecturing here, who is a great authority on Comparative Religion and Mythology, having spent the last thirty years of his life in research in this field. If the questioner means, is there any one supreme authority, the answer is again yes. It is the bar of Intelligence of every student

before whose judgment every important question should come for final decision. I know of no other.

2. Are the Mahatma Letters any more of a Theosophical Bible than *The Secret Doctrine* or *Man Whence, How, etc.*?

Answer, Yes much more. The Mahatma Letters are the authoritative work on what the Mahatmas personally have to say about their philosophy, parts of which they were at that time proposing to put before the world. *The Secret Doctrine* is regarded by all or nearly all students as the most authoritative work we possess on the esoteric doctrine as it is to be found, often hidden under symbol or allegory, in almost all ages and in all races. It not only restates the philosophy as a clear and definite teaching, but brings an amazing abundance of proofs to show the existence of this meta-physical doctrine fully formed, in the ancient world. It is a scientific work of the first order and shows profound erudition and research. The book, *Man, Whence, How, etc.*, purports to be a product of psychism and as such, like all psychic books, has validity with regard to the objectivity of its contents, only so far as they can be checked. Unfortunately, this is not at all the case here, as this work deals with the very remote past and future and is consequently beyond the possibility of cross checking by historical research. The chief value of psychic books is psychological. The more one studies the literary product of psychism the more one is forced to recognize the unreliability of the psychic faculties as a means of examining and reporting events.

Had the Theosophical Society remained a fraternity of free minds

intent upon discovering and making available to the world esoteric truths, and determined to accept nothing but the truth so far as lay in their powers of criticism and discrimination, then Mr. Leadbeater's psychic books would have been regarded as perhaps interesting, and some of them of value to enquirers, but hardly to be taken seriously in the search for truth. It would have been recognized that many of Leadbeater's books contain within themselves the proof of their, at least partly fanciful, nature.

3. Question,—If there is a member of the T.S. who claims to be an authority, is he not a prisoner of his own beliefs or fixed ideas, creations of his intellect within the field of the opposites?

Answer,—Of course he is, as we all are, to the extent that his, or our, beliefs are prejudices. The whole aim of the discipline of the truth seeker is to perfect the instrument of knowledge—the mind, by first recognizing and then controlling and destroying those Kamic elements of attachment which distort the clear-seeing mind. So long as we are slaves of the personal Ego, it is impossible to be free of attachment and so of bias and prejudice. All truth apprehensible by the mind of man is relative, but there is a vast difference between relative truth and falsity. Our great need for truth is orientation. We need to know our way; land marks; a compass; and a map; relative truth can show us the next steps to take. Only as the mind, *Kama-Manas*, becomes clarified and free from distortion (domination of mind by *Kama*) can it reflect *Buddhi*:—and spiritual perception or intuition sends a gleam of something which transcends the unaided mind.

I hope this answers in some measure the last paragraph which is too long to quote.

Yours, etc.,

W. E. Wilks.

WHO ARE YOU?

(Continued from Page 54)

amputation, patients often 'feel' pain in the lost member. Instead of trying to get rid of this sensation, doctors in Vaduz, capital of the postage-stamp principality of Liechtenstein, have been urging patients to cultivate it, e.g., by flexing the muscles in the arm stump, as if opening and closing the hand. Thus the muscle is kept alive, and rehabilitation (with an electric hand) can be speeded up."

It remains to mention briefly the two other principles:

Prana:—the life or vitality which runs through all Nature and which keeps in physical functioning every composite organism until dissolution at death.

The physical body or *Sthula-Sarira*—which we are all too painfully familiar with, and which, alas, the materialistic science of the last century, and indeed, of the present century in some quarters, would have us believe is all there is to man! As if the piano on which Rubinstein plays were the artist himself! Of course he cannot make music without an instrument, and if the piano is defective the resulting performance is imperfect. But to the materialist who believes that a man's physical body is all there is to him, we ask: What is it in him that questions this assumption? Does anyone seriously maintain that the molecules of his brain, purely by chance, suddenly begin to vibrate and question their own monopoly of man's thinking? No, we need a higher, God-given Sherman Anti-Trust Law to

break up that assumed monopoly!

An eminent British neurologist, Sir Russell Brain, in a lecture last year on *The Contribution of Medicine to our Idea of Mind*, published by Cambridge University Press, has this to say:

"I speak of mind quite openly and unashamedly, not being one of those philosophers who make their living by expounding the non-existence of their own minds . . . I shall assume that you know what I mean when I say that thinking, remembering, imagining, willing, feeling emotions and experiencing sensations are the kind of activities we describe as mental . . . Though it is linked through the brain to the world of matter, it (the mind) moves in its own sphere as though it could soar above the physical."

As I opened this lecture with Socrates' prayer of yearning for wisdom I will close it with another, probably the oldest extant, expressing, I believe, the highest wisdom known to man, the *Gayatri*, regarded for ages in Hindustan with almost divine reverence. I use Dr. de Purucker's paraphrase of the original Sanskrit:

"O thou golden Sun of most excellent splendour, illumine our hearts and fill our minds, so that we, recognizing our oneness with the Divinity which is the Heart of the Universe, may see the pathway before our feet, and tread it to those distant goals of perfection, stimulated by thine own radiant light."

"True Freedom is won and lost in the heart. Would you have war? Wage it within your heart upon your heart. Disarm your heart of every hope and fear and vain desire that make your world a stifling pen, and you shall find it broader than the Universe; and you shall roam that Universe at will; and nothing shall be unto you a hindrance."

The Book of Mirdad, Mikail Naimy.

THE SLEEPING SPHERES

(Continued from Page 48)

In the introductory note to the first portion of *The Sleeping Spheres* (see issue of March 15, 1953) it was stated that the commentary by Mr. Willem B. Roos would be published together with a biographical note on the author, Jasper Niemand. This note and the complete text of the article have been printed in the March, April and May issues, and we now turn to the commentary which formed part of the pamphlet published by Mr. Roos.

The abbreviations used to indicate the source books quoted in the commentary are as follows:

M.L.—*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett.*

Luc.—*Lucifer*, edited by H.P.B.

The Theos.—*The Theosophist*, edited by H.P.B.

S.D.—*The Secret Doctrine*, by H.P.B.

Tib. Yog.—*Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrine*, by W. Y. Evans-Wentz.

The first figure following each sectional heading is the page number in the current volume of *The Canadian Theosophist*; the second figure is the paragraph on that page.

COMMENTARY

I. The Objective Vision

1. *The Messenger* (3.—2nd of Part I)

Although J.N. does not indicate who this Messenger was, from the fact that R.S. was taught at nights by H.P.B. it is more than probable that H.P.B. was that Messenger. We do not know the date of the vision. The date of its publication (July 1893) was two years after H.P.B.'s death and nearly two years after J.N.'s marriage to Dr. Keightley. But although the comrade spoken of in *The Sleeping Spheres* is certainly Dr. Keightley, there are no indications that the comrade was already

her husband. But even if she were married when she experienced the life of a sleeping Sphere, it does not preclude the possibility of H.P.B. being the Messenger. R.S. in the above mentioned letter to Countess Wachtmeister describes how H.P.B., after her departure continued to visit R.S. several times, although in masculine guise.

2. *Devachan* (3—2nd of Part I)

This word has often been misrepresented as derived from the Sanskrit and still more often is mispronounced. It is a purely Tibetan word and although it has the same meaning as the Sanskrit deva-loka its etymology is quite different. It comes from the root bde-ba, meaning, to be happy, to be well; happy, easy; happiness. This root is, therefore, at the same time a verb, an adjective and a noun, and its Sanskrit equivalents are, among others: subha, sukha, and kusala. To this root, bde-ba, is added the Tibetan affix 'can', signifying: having, being provided with, etc. Jaschke gives as meaning of bde-ba-can: the land of bliss (Sanskrit: sukhavati) a sort of heaven or paradise, in the far west, the abode of Dhyani Buddha Amitabha (270). Sarat Chandra Das gives in his Tibetan-English dictionary: "*Bde-wa-can, Dewachan, the paradise of the Northern Buddhists*" (670). Madame Alexandra David-Neel, the famous explorer of Mystic Tibet, writes in *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* . . . "the Paradise of the Great Bliss (Nub Dewachen)." . . , giving a correct phonetic transcription of the word (op. cit. 52). Again, on page 121 she writes: "The Dhyani Buddha ODPAGMED, of whom the Tashi Lama is the *tulku*, resides in the Western Paradise, Nub dewachen."

As to the correct pronunciation of bdeba-can: the first b is mute; the second b is pronounced in Lhasa as our w; the d, e, and first a are pronounced like the corresponding sounds in Spanish; the c is pronounced as the ch in "church"; while the second a is pronounced in Lhasa as the e in "when"; finally the n is equivalent to the English n. (See also ML-373 and Tib. Yoga pp. 220, 246)

3. *Spheres, having condition but no place* (3.—3rd of Part I)

An analogy is a wave on the ocean, of which it is impossible, or rather, meaningless, to fix the place and of which the constituent particles are constantly changing place with others. "Condition" refers to the rate and intensity of the vibration. "The centre of Devachanic activity cannot be localized" (The Theos. IV—268).

4. *Cohering by means of their own vibration* (4.—1)

Here a general statement is made about the rationale of attraction, a subject as yet unexplained by modern science. Those acquainted with the laws of electricity and magnetism know that between two electric currents going in parallel paths in the same direction, there exists an attractive force, called electrodynamic, which is made use of in many electrical instruments and motors.

5. *Into the Air* (4.—2)

The *element* air, in Sanskrit *vayu*, is here meant, and not the air we breathe.

6. *The airy body* (4.—2)

The *mayavirupa* of Theosophy.

7. *Changing their Consciousness; fusing them anew* (4.—3)

The Spheres are transitory, changing from stage to stage, not only in form, but even in their constituent active elements. The energy, stored up within the Spheres during the lifetime of the indwelling Ego, dissipates objectively in the form of vibrations. Subjectively

these vibrations correspond to thoughts and ideas of a spiritual nature.

8. *I soon observed a marked change* (4.—5)

It must not be inferred that Devachan is of a very short duration—on the contrary, it lasts very much longer than the corresponding life on earth, as it is one of spiritual digestion and assimilation, so to say. J.N. was made to see the various stages in Devachan in rapid succession, just as psychometers see a series of pictures passing with extraordinary rapidity before their inner eye, pictures pertaining not only to different parts of space, but also to different periods of time.

9. *The Spheres grandly awoke* (5.—1)

A change of consciousness is meant here, analogous, but not similar, to that of waking up from a night's sleep. It is the passage from a world of effects to one of causes.

10. *The end of all desire* (5.—1)

Of all *spiritual* desire; as in Devachan the unfulfilled spiritual desires of the personality are satisfied until the complete exhaustion of their original impulse, when the forces of *Tanha* carry the *Monad* back to rebirth.

11. *Efforts towards crystallization* (5.—2)

The collecting of the *Skandhas*, the formation of a new astral body, is here described.

12. *Still I wept* (5.—2)

This corroborates her statement that her consciousness "was that of the airy body only."

II. The Subjective Experience

1. *Devachan is the subjective existence of the personal and higher Ego* (28.—3)

The personal Ego is that aspect of *manas* which manifests as a specific personality and is generally called the "lower *manas*." It consists of two parts, one of which, the animal part, is subject to *Kama*, the desire principle,

while the other part follows the light of Buddhi, the immortal Monad. After death this spiritual part of the lower manas is assimilated by the higher manas, the incarnating Ego, and goes as "Manas-taijasi" to Devachan. The dissipation of the stored-up energies of Manas-taijasi produces the subjective devachanic life. "It is a law of occult dynamics that 'a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence.'" (S.D. I-644). And with regard to the long time passed in the devachanic state, note the explanation of T. Subba Row Garu: "Energy exerted on the astral plane produces effects which last for a longer period of time than those produced by an equal amount of energy on the material plane, for the reason that less friction or opposition is encountered on the astral plane." (The Theos. VI-110). To this may be added the fact, demonstrated by modern science, that on the subtler planes greater amounts of energy are found associated with matter. It is sufficient to consider the quantities of mass associated with equal amounts of mechanical, chemical and nuclear energies, to realize the likelihood of encountering on still subtler planes larger and larger amounts of energy.

2. *This Higher Self is a state of the Sphere* (28.3)

This state is known as Nirvana by the Buddhists and is the highest spiritual state attainable by man while incarnated on earth.

3. *To compare the two events* (28.—4)

Apparently J. N. never wrote the promised comparison.

4. *I fell into Thought* (29-2)

"At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event

after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity . . . No man dies insane or unconscious . . . The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body—the *brain thinks* and the *Ego* lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye, who assist at a death-bed . . . Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future." (M.L.-170/1). "The experience of dying men—by drowning and other accidents—brought back to life, has corroborated our doctrine in almost every case" (M.L.-170). "The events of a long life, to their minutest details, are marshalled in the greatest order in a few seconds in our vision" (M.L.-128). Dr. Carl Du Prel enumerates many instances of such "Memory in the Dying" (*Philosophy of Mysticism*, I-92/3, II-42/50) and so does H.P.B. in her article "Memory in the Dying" (Luc. V-125/9).

5. *In each I seemed to have a choice* (37.—2)

In this "death-bed vision" the Ego views the pictures from its own exalted position. The memory of the kamic organs of the body cannot interfere, because these organs are already dead. "The brain is the last organ that dies" (M.L.-128Fn). Hence the Ego will be its own judge during this vision. Admiral Beaufort had the same experience upon having fallen into the water and having lost normal consciousness: ". . . in short, the whole period of my exist-

ence seemed to be placed before me in a *kind of panoramic review*, and every act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right and wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or its consequences . . . ” (Du Prel, op. cit. I-93).

6. *The choice appeared to be for either Matter or Spirit* (37.—2)

Quite right, because in the final instance these are the only alternatives. All our deeds can be classified in either one or the other of these two categories. But their full significance implies much more than is commonly realized. Let the student keep this constantly in mind!

7. *So soon as this thought came before my mind* (38.—1)

Here we have the first deviation from a normal post-mortem process. Had J. N. really died she would have lost consciousness at this point. “Every just disembodied *four-fold* entity—whether it died a natural or violent death, from suicide or accident, mentally sane or insane, young or old, good, bad, or indifferent—loses at the instant of death all recollection, it is mentally—*annihilated*; it sleeps its akasic sleep in the Kama-loka.” (M.L.—186/7).

8. *A flame seemed to sweep over me* (38.—2)

Now comes a description, a medley of images, a motley crowd typical of a confused state such as one may imagine Kamaloka to be *at its best*. For those who die a natural death, the interval of Kama-loka is described as follows by a Tibetan Ge-long of the Inner Temple—a disciple of Bas-pa Dharma, the Secret Doctrine (the Bumapa?): “According to the karma of the previous birth the interval of latency (i.e. Kamaloka, W.B.R.)—generally passed in a state of stupor—will last from a few minutes to an average of a few weeks, perhaps months . . . ” (Tibetan Teachings, Luc. XV-100). Again Mah. K.H. writes: “From Kama Loka then in the great

Chiliocosm,—once awakened from their post-mortem torpor, the newly translated “Souls” go all (*but the shells*) according to their attractions, either to Devachan or Avitchi . . . Reviving consciousness begins after the struggle in Kama-Loka at the door of devachan, and only after the ‘gestation period.’” (M.L.-199/200).

9. *I was in torment in the Kamaloka* (38.—3)

As J.N. had not really died, no separation between her “shell” (the Kama-rupa, or form of Desire) and her Ego had taken place. So it was possible for her to pass consciously through a quasi Kamaloka, and bring its remembrance back upon returning to her body. In Kamaloka dwell the shells, which are soulless entities; the victims of accident and violence; the suicides; the Mararupas, doomed to annihilation in the Eighth Sphere; and the Rakshasas, astral forms of sorcerers (cf. M.L.-107, 198). But not even these are necessarily subject to suffering—only the very wicked and impure suffer there all the tortures of a horrible nightmare, lasting years (cf. M.L.-123, 136).

(To Be Continued)

THE THREE TRUTHS

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

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

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

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

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