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THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, from which the above title is taken, is an immortal story, and its three regenerative Ghosts, The Ghost of Christmas Past, the Ghost of Christmas Present, and the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come will be re-precipitated every Christmas wherever the English language is spoken. It is a perennial tale, and its peculiar magic is not lost, but rather enhanced by its repetition. Whenever one reads or hears the familiar opening words "Marley was dead to begin with, there is no doubt whatever about that," the old, magic carpet begins to unroll, we step upon it, and with eager anticipation of new delight in the already known, we set out on our journey.

The popularity of the tale is due to the fact that Dickens captured the Christmas spirit. Nothing is said about Santa Claus, nothing about the Virgin Mary, the Manger, the Shepherds watching their flocks, or the angels who descended from heaven. The whole point is the inner change which came over Ebenezer Scrooge. Scrooge was a man whose nobler aspirations of youth fell off him one by one until the master passion, gain, engrossed him. His whole life had become dependent upon outer assurances, cash in the bank, debentures,

bonds, ledger balances, and so on. His partner, Jacob Marley, had died earth-bound by these very things. Scrooge, through the ministrations of the three ghosts, underwent an inner transformation and was saved from a similar fate.

Perhaps the appeal of the story is due to the fact that it reminds us of the message of all the saviours, namely, that there must be an inward regeneration, a message whose truth is confirmed by our own sense of fitness. The great Teachers of the past did not come to shoulder the sins of the world, but to tell men and women how they might transform themselves into the likeness of God, and achieve individual realization of the inner divinity.

At the time of the first Christmas, The Christmas Long Past, the people of Palestine were expecting the advent of a Messiah, one who would re-establish David's kingdom and restore the oppressed nation to its former glory. But that ruler did not come, and the Jews did not arise to break the power of Rome and become a powerful and triumphant people. Instead, there came a Teacher, born from the common people, a carpenter's son. He taught not the conquest of an outer kingdom of might, but rather the discovery of an inner kingdom of

power. He taught an inclusive and universal compassion beyond all limits of national and patriotic aspiration, a compassion free-flowing to all, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. He counselled his followers to practise certain virtues, not because these would be pleasing to some cosmic God, but because they were practical necessities for anyone who would find his way back to the inner kingdom, the divine centre of the heart. He said:

Blessed are they that seek the kingdom,
Blessed are they that are modest and gentle,

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst
after righteousness for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful for they shall
obtain mercy,

Blessed are the pure in heart for they
shall see God;

Blessed are those who radiate peace
from within themselves for they
shall be called the Sons of God.

These teachings were practical suggestions in training the individual consciousness toward a realization of that element within man which is capable of infinite expansion. They were not intended to be outer concepts of goodness or morality, but rather were the basis for learning a non-self-centred attitude which would result ultimately in a permanent mutation of consciousness. The enforced denial in daily practice of the validity of the doctrine of self-interest would lead ultimately to a non-self-centred life, and ultimately to a realization of the truth that all individual lives are parts of the One Life. One man saw what the teacher meant, and he said, "This man is the embodiment of the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Others were disappointed; they had expected an earthly king and would not give up the idea.

After the death of the founder, an organized church grew up around his teachings, but in the course of time the essence was cast away and the direction of approach was reversed. Instead of seeking the light which is within, men began to worship a light which was forever outside themselves. The Teacher was virtually deprived of his humanity and was exalted to the position of the only Son of God. The Messianic idea continued, and it was fully expected that very soon He would return to establish an earthly kingdom.

This hope faded after the first thousand years and then the emphasis was transferred to another kind of kingdom, not the inner kingdom of which the Teacher had spoken, but a mythical kingdom in the sky to which men went after death. After death then became the important theme. The concept of creative living to enrich, beautify the lives of human beings was lost. The ills that men suffer, poverty, hardship, want, ignorance, despair, all these were relatively unimportant. This came about not by altering the *words* of the Teacher but by obscuring their original meaning. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" was still preached, but the teaching was stripped of its original sense. The Teacher meant it as a counsel in the practise of universal living; the Church taught it as a bargain with God, give up what you have here and you will have plenty hereafter. However, in the meantime the Church consented to act as custodian of earthly wealth and rapidly became the world's richest corporation.

But through those dark centuries the light was not utterly extinguished. Solitary mystics and little groups of students kept the flame alive, although at times it flickered and went almost out in the storms of persecution. Today the situation has changed and there are

many inside and outside the churches who look through the outer forms to the esoteric doctrine behind them.

At each recurring Christmas season, a growing number of men and women welcome the Ghost of Christmas Long Past, the spirit of the early movement, which reminds us that the Christmas drama is but a symbol of an experience through which all aspirants must pass. The birth of the Christ Child takes place within the heart of each individual, "for

Christ—the true esoteric Saviour—is *no man*, but the Divine Principle in every human being."

The "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men" of the Christmas Long Past, will come to mankind when a preponderance of the egos incarnated on earth become aware of their divine origin and remember that all men are units in one universal brotherhood. To keep that truth alive in the world is one of the tasks of the Theosophical Movement.

"AND THE WORD BECAME—THEOLOGY"

The Canadian Theosophist for January, 1954, published a digest of a national survey and study of the position of world-wide Christianity, which was reprinted in *The New Outlook*. Because of evident interest in the subject, we bring to our readers a further report.

Last August at Evanston, Illinois, representatives of world-wide Christianity gathered. The historic Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches brought together 600 delegates representing a total of about 170 million Christians in 163 member churches (denominations) in 48 countries. The Roman Catholic Church, which is not affiliated with the World Council of Churches, was not represented, and there were no spokesmen for the churches of the U.S.S.R. nor Communist China.

The theme of the assembly was "Christ, the Hope of the World," and attenders had prepared themselves by study and careful scrutiny of a vast amount of preparatory material during six years since the first Assembly was held in Amsterdam in 1948, where the World Council of Churches was born.

Millions of words have been written about this Assembly of super-Protestants from every continent. To make a

theosophical appraisal of it, it is necessary to cut one's way through this verbiage, and in doing this, the penetrating reports of the Quakers who attended have been most useful; particularly those which appeared in the *Friends Intelligencer*, of Philadelphia, whose Editor, William Hubben, was an accredited representative. Friends base their faith on the Inner Light; they have a Gandhian allegiance to peace and, more important in this instance, sacraments for them are of no concern. They were able, therefore, to listen dispassionately to the debates regarding open and closed communion, for instance, which were such painful symptoms of dissent and indicated such serious malady in the church body represented.

Instead of coming together into one body after centuries of separation and declaring their intention to stay together in spite of the many deep differences which remained between them, the Protestant churches at Evanston had to acknowledge that the unity they have found is still a far cry from the unity they need and seek. Instead of obvious success, frustration, disappointment and failure were apparent.

Evanston listened to the prophetic

voice of the so-called Younger Churches in Asia and Africa and found a clear word to say about at least two of the great issues on its agenda—evangelism and race relations—and expressed a more genuine interest than ever before in the role of the laity and the task of a Christian in his daily life and work. On the other hand, the Assembly was not able to reach anything like a common mind upon its difficult and heavily theological, but nonetheless crucial main theme “Christ, the Hope of the World.” Instead of adopting the report presented, the Assembly could only “receive” it for further study by the churches. Evanston failed to find a message upon which all its delegates could spontaneously unite. More seriously, Evanston was frustrated in its efforts to agree upon a next step towards unity. But most serious of all, Evanston was disappointed in its concern to worship together in one spirit and at one table. Instead of one service of intercommunion, there had to be six.

Even the most impressive successes of the Assembly appear to have been bought at a heavy price. For example, its plenary sessions had to resort to the desperate device of voting upon doctrinal issues. Similarly, at least two of its reports on social questions—the reports on international affairs and Christian economic and social policy—had to evade as many problems as they could face. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has been quoted as saying, the Evanston Assembly seems to have succeeded in doing nothing exceedingly well. But there were some achievements:

Evanston's report on race relations is not just good, it is *great*. Surprisingly enough, it is at once the most theological and the most prophetic statement to come out of the entire Assembly. It is the most theological because it affirms that there is no religious justification in

either church history or the Bible itself for discrimination or segregation on the ground of colour alone. It is the most prophetic because it insists that racial intermarriage is therefore not only inevitable but necessary and desirable as well. Reports on race relations do not usually dig down so deeply, nor do they have the courage of their convictions.

Several of the plenary sessions dealt with the rifts in Protestantism and the means of bridging the differences in fragmented Christianity.

The peace testimony received less attention than the Quakers would have wished. Fortunately, an appeal to all the churches of the world to work for the abolition of atomic and other weapons of mass destruction, initiated by Japanese Christians, was accepted, yet no unequivocal condemnation of war as unchristian came forth. The Bishop of Chichester threw a bombshell into the discussion in the Section on International Relations by declaring that there was no longer such a thing as a ‘just war’ and that the pacifists should at least be given a hearing. Evanston, however, did *not* declare that war and military action are no longer permissible or justifiable. What it said was that the churches “must study afresh the Christian approaches to peace, taking into account both Christian pacifism as a mode of witness and the conviction of Christians that in certain circumstances military action is justifiable.” Evanston did *not* declare positively that in the atomic and super-atomic age there was no justification left for war. One lay observer remarked that it “skated around” the issue.

In conclusion, we quote William Hubben:

“The World Council is a community of those who disagree. Some groups in it plainly indulge in church fantasies and dogmatic exclusiveness of the ghetto

type. . . The Christian Church has inherited such evil legacies together with its unique mission to reconcile, to unite, and save. Unless the church lives in prayerful expectation, it will miss its calling . . . So much dogmatic theology prevailed at Evanston that liberal Protestants were at times made to feel unsheltered, not to speak of Friends, whose uneasiness about their membership was hardly alleviated. Bishop Berggrav is reported to have remarked "And the Word became—theology." Another delegate wondered whether "the chief occupation in the Kingdom is speaking." Yet one need not go to Evanston to arrive at either one of these conclusions. While there was too much self-assurance that the church was in every regard Christ's Church, the all-too-obvious human factor in it was also apparent. Above all, the knowledge seems to be spreading that it cannot afford to live for and by itself. The gates must be opened wide, and no withdrawal from the wintry gales sweeping over our generation must be permitted. . . . If the Assembly gave at all a true picture of Christianity's predicament in the world, it has made it evident that the Church is engaged in many struggles on many issues."

If H.P.B. had been at Evanston, we can quite believe she would have repeated what she says in *Isis Unveiled* (II, p. 586): "If both Church and priest could but pass out of the sight of the world as easily as their names do now from the eye of our reader, it would be a happy day for humanity."

H. P. BLAVATSKY, COLLECTED WRITINGS

Volume Six of *H. P. Blavatsky, Collected Writings* covering the years 1883 to 1885 will be ready for distribution

sometime about the end of this month. This is the second volume to be published in the Uniform American Edition and follows chronologically upon Volume Five which was published in 1950.

The material contained in the new volume is but little known among students of today and many items were discovered after painstaking search through old files of magazines and other sources. Mr. Boris de Zirkoff, the compiler of the present edition has been engaged since 1925 in gathering material for this and the other volume in the series. Students of Theosophy are under a debt of gratitude to Mr. de Zirkoff for his devoted efforts to preserve and publish all the written teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, the agent of the Masters who were behind the founding of the Theosophical Movement.

In addition to several lengthy articles, the book will contain many brief articles, footnotes and editorial comments, all by H.P.B. and transcribed without alteration from the original sources. In addition it will contain a chronological table of the various travels of H.P.B. and Colonel Henry S. Olcott during the period covered by the text, together with the chief events in the history of the Theosophical Movement during that time.

The new volume, and the earlier volume V, may be ordered direct from *Theosophia*, 615 So. Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles 5, California. The price of Volume VI is \$5.00 and of Volume V, \$6.00. Twenty cents per volume should be added for mailing charges, together with 3% sales tax if the purchaser is in California. Canadian readers may obtain either or both volumes from the Book Sales Department, Toronto Theosophical Society, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont. Remittances should accompany orders; the books will be mailed as soon as they are received from the publisher.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The following is culled from the 1953 Annual Report of the Theosophical Society and will be, I think, of interest to our members. The number of active National Sections is forty, with a total membership of 32,450, an increase over the previous year. The largest sections are, India with 6505 members, the U. S. A. with 4075 and England with 3200. The reports of the various general secretaries make interesting reading, from the voluminous ones of the larger sections to those of the smaller sections such as Venezuela which came into being early this year. All speak in a hopeful manner of the work and progress of their sections with the exception of two who regret loss of members and hint at a downward trend. To this the President remarks in his Presidential Address at the 78th International Convention "It seems to me that it does not really matter whether the numerical strength of the Society, of any Section or Lodge, goes a little up or down. It is not numbers which matter; nor popularity; nor the estimation of people who are considered important from the standpoint of the world's current interests nor the aims determined by those interests. We need surely to understand the problems of our time and the world's needs in every direction. But let us bear in mind the truth that the world is ourselves—we are of the world worldly for the most part, even though we may have other aspirations—and what the world plans, wants, and what we may be inclined to join in as the solution of present problems, may not be what is really needed to bring about order, freedom, peace, happiness, in the world or in ourselves. We need a fundamental change, more truly a renewal of life, such as takes place when the seasons change, or when the individual life sheds

its form and expresses itself in a new one. Such a renovation depends upon depth of understanding, discrimination in one's actual life, an earnestness to discover not just with the instrument of intellect, but with the totality of one's being and awareness, what is beyond the mind, beyond its fleeting shadows. The purpose of the Society may be variously stated; it belongs to many different levels. It is practical, philanthropic, creative, idealistic, spiritual. Let us, in all these ways, prepare ourselves into channels for its pure expression. The quality of each and every one of us will determine the quality of the whole".

* * *

The letter from the General Secretary, T. S. Viet-Nam which was published last July, and on behalf of which I appealed for donations has had its effect. This month I closed the account and forwarded to the designated bank in Paris, France, the sum of \$45, equivalent to French francs 16,017. No doubt a letter of acknowledgment will be received in due course, but in the meantime I thank those who out of the goodness of their hearts came forward with their contributions to such a worthy cause.

* * *

It is with deep regret that I announce the deaths of two members of Toronto Lodge. Mr. Arthur T. Hession passed away on Sunday October 31. In his earlier days he was a noted swimmer and delighted in all kinds of sport. Later until ill health overtook him, he was active in the work of the lodge where he was a member of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Program Committee. His presence will be sadly missed. Our sympathy is extended to his family in their bereavement.

Mr. Martin S. Stewart, who was a member before the Society in Canada was formed, passed away on Wednesday, November 24, in his seventy-second year after a long period of ill health. Mr. Stewart was well-known through his lectures and classwork, and also through his interest in numerology by means of which he was able to give astonishingly accurate character delineations. His quiet and kindly influence will be remembered by his many friends. Our sincere sympathy is sent to the members of his family.

* * *

The many friends of Captain and Mrs. Russell Lloyd Jones of Higganum, Connecticut, will learn with deep regret of the death of Mrs. Jones on December 1. Their joint work in the cause of Theosophy brought them in touch with students in many lands, particularly in the United States, and Australia, where Captain Jones lived formerly. We extend our sincere sympathy to Captain Jones, knowing that the Wisdom which he and his wife served so faithfully together will sustain him in his sorrow.

* * *

The magazine *Theosophy in Australia* has an interesting account of the Convention of the Australian Section held in Brisbane recently. They propose to make this year a year of propaganda by literature, including a new series of pamphlets, free leaflets, etc. I noted with the greatest interest that a proposal for a certain series of lectures was turned down because "it was agreed that some advantage might accrue from these lectures on psychism and psychology, but greater stress was laid on the need for Straight Theosophy". To which we might add "Hear, Hear." I also note that this Section is in the same boat as ourselves in regard to funds, for they have to continue their appeal for funds to cover shortcomings on their

annual budget. It is a voluntary appeal to all members to enhance the funds in order to carry out the great work in Australia.

* * *

It may be of interest to the members to know that their General Secretary has an exhibition of his oil paintings now on view at the Guild of All Arts on the Kingston Road, Toronto and is one of the many attractions at this popular resort. Incidentally all of them have been sold, which I believe is rather unique in its way.

* * *

We are happy to welcome to Canada Mrs. Viola P. Law, her husband and two young sons. Mrs. Law is a member of the T.S. in Northern Ireland, and Mr. Law is a son of the well-known Mrs. Alice Law, formerly and for many years General Secretary of the T.S. in Ireland. Mr. Hugh Shearman, Organizing Secretary of the T.S. in Northern Ireland gives me this information and I have hopes that Mrs. Law may wish to be demitted to the Montreal Lodge when she has settled down in that city. Any member from that virile spot in the Emerald Isle will be gladly welcomed, and we hope she and her family will have a happy sojourn in Canada.

* * *

Miss I. M. Hartman, a member of the Montreal Lodge has been formally demitted to the Toronto Lodge where we hope her abundant energy will be utilized to the fullest.

* * *

We send a hearty Christmas Greeting to every member and every subscriber to *The Canadian Theosophist*. May the new year in its everlasting cycles bring blessed peace and happiness to a humanity that has been through the crucible; and by this refining process let us hope that the beneficence of true Brotherhood will pervade all peoples throughout the world.

E. L. T.

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THE THREE TRUTHS

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

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

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist.

Dear Mr. Barr:

The comments you have published on the draft Alternative Policy come from two non-members of our Society, Mr. Iverson L. Harris and Mr. Alex Wayman, and three Canadian T. S. sources, the Orpheus Lodge, a Toronto student and Mr. F. E. Tyler of Toronto.

The salient points may be summarized like this:

MR. TYLER

1. Apart from the Judge reference, it isn't an alternative policy, but only what already exists.
2. Leadbeater's work should be fairly assessed, not denigrated.
3. It is tolerance we need and the proposed policy is tolerant.

MR. WAYMAN

1. Pseudo-tolerance, trying to harmonize good and evil, is dangerous.
2. Leadbeater's work is trash, and trubish should be swept up and destroyed; not tolerated, or criticized, but got rid of.
3. The 1975 impetus will not be channelled in a body that is going to "average it in" with a lot of lower psychic stuff.

MR. HARRIS

1. There is danger in open-mindedness that refrains from rejecting all that is not disproven.
2. There is not much time left to get the Theosophical house in order before 1975.
3. The 1975 impetus will by-pass the Theosophical Movement if it doesn't *practise* brotherhood and put truth first, 'esteeming Theosophical principles above positions and personalities'.

TORONTO STUDENT

1. Critical appraisal of the differences between the original and the Neo-Theosophical teachings is only possible when members know what those differences are.
2. At present new members don't learn this; they often get imbued with Leadbeater or Bailey ideas, without ever getting the direct impact of Blavatsky or the Mahatma Letters.
3. If Alice Bailey, why not Max Heindel and Rudolf Steiner?
4. Why not praise for Prof. Ernest Wood and Dr. A. B. Kuhn?
5. Neo-theosophical books, etc., should be kept out of the standard catalogue, and treated as reference material only.

ORPHEUS LODGE

1. Truth and error must be brought face to face, and when truth is staunchly presented, it will always conquer.
2. This process rightly leads to splits, such as the one which exists between the Canadian National Society and the Canadian Federation.
3. The Alternative Policy proposes peaceful penetration and infiltration.
4. Conditions in the T.S. have changed, the glamour of neo-theosophy is dispersing; possibly the time is ripe.

In the light of these appraisals, may I clarify in your columns the purposes for which the Alternative Policy is proposed?

To those who accept Mme. Blavatsky's assurance that the Lodge of Adepts makes a cyclic effort in the last quarter of every century, certain responsibilities of decision arise. Is there anything that should be done about getting ready for 1975? If so, have we any duty about it? If we don't do what is necessary, who will?

Mme. Blavatsky said that The Theosophical Society could make the job of

the 1975 agent of the Adepts much easier if it were true to its mission and formed a *united* body. The value of *unity* is well brought out in the document from The Orpheus Lodge.

The Theosophical Society has split. The Movement H. P. Blavatsky started is rent. Reunion, as Mr. Harris rightly says, is out of the question at present. It is a secondary matter anyhow. Right accord among those who aspire to be Theosophists is essential. Can it be brought about before 1975 to help the Brotherhood and their agent at that time, and make their work more powerfully effective? Is the possibility promising enough to try? Mr. Harris thinks it is "not yet too late". There are 20 years in which to make great changes in strongly established institutional thought-patterns — always difficult, slow work, requiring much patience and unwearied persistence. Is it worth trying? If we do nothing, what chance is there of it happening? Come failure or success, shall we try?

If so, how? Can it be brought about in any other way than by getting back "on the beam" of the original program? If that is what is needed, then students who are working together for this end, in all branches of the Movement, must needs work upon their own Society or Lodge, to tune in again to that program. The Movement is rent not only because the Adyar Society is "off the beam", but because Adyar, the United Lodge and Pasadena are all "off the beam" in different directions. The work of those of us belonging to the Adyar Society, who are moved to work to this end, is to attend to the state of our own Society. Never mind about "fraternization"; let us put our own house in order whether the others do or not. If we all get "on the beam", we shall spontaneously find ourselves in brotherly accord.

Without pausing to attempt any

assessment of the degree to which the challenge to Neo-Theosophy in our Adyar Society is valid, perhaps we shall all agree, including Mr. Tyler, that it has a measure of justification. We shall differ in our measures, but the Adyar T.S. has been swung away from the original program.

The Orpheus Lodge assertion that 35 years ago a request to read *The Secret Doctrine* led to being ostracized, whilst doubtless true in their experience, was not the case everywhere in the Society. When I joined the Manchester City Lodge in 1920 it had a regular Secret Doctrine class. Peace Lodge was formed in 1923 and commenced to study *The Secret Doctrine* in 1925, finishing it in 1950 after wartime interruption. It was followed immediately by *Isis Unveiled*, and we are now approaching the end of the first volume of that work. *The Key To Theosophy* (in the un mutilated United Lodge edition) was taken concurrently with *The Secret Doctrine* during 1946-48. No one has ostracized us for that. We have been tabooed for being forthrightly critical of things we disapproved of in the Society. There is truth in this Orpheus paragraph, but in our experience it is exaggerated.

The original program is the crux of the Society's life and proper usefulness. There must be adaptations of presentation to meet changes in public thinking and advances in scientific knowledge and hypotheses; new data must be questioningly examined and assimilated after test: but the roots and sap of life are in what the Society started from, and all that is in accord with it, expressed freshly and lively in our present selves: hence paragraphs 2 to 5 of the Alternative Policy.

Mr. Tyler says this policy is no different from what exists, except in one particular. The difference is in emphasis and slant, wherein often lies the

difference between truth and error. The original program and basic literature are made central. A body of people who in principle, priority and propaganda do in fact make it central, can have a powerful and beneficial influence in the Adyar Society.

The question put by the issue of the Alternative Policy is: shall those of us who see the need, come into working touch with one another on an agreed basis to form a united body in the Adyar Society throughout the world, having certain declared ends and purposes as a common bond? If so, the draft Alternative Policy is offered as a starting point, open to amending revision.

We, then, face at once all that comes under the head of Neo-Theosophy. The Canadian Society, under Mr. Smythe's leadership, may or may not have been right to drive the issue to a split, but as The Orpheus Lodge notes, the climate is different today. Let truth and error be brought face to face, by all means, but discrimination is needed. Both parties think they have truth. Let opposing views be brought face to face, and error consequently demolished on either side. The side with the greater truth will assimilate what is true from the other.

Here we come to a basic question: What was the original program in relation to such clashes? Every member has freedom of thought and judgment. He may be in error and think you are; but he is entitled to membership, despite his error; for he can only discard that when he has penetrated it and seen a new truth. Meanwhile he is entitled to respect for his own measure of present understanding. Separativeness is not theosophical; honest challenge without breach of brotherly consideration is essentially theosophical.

The facts of the present situation have to be met. Neo-Theosophy exists. Mr. Wayman may say Mr. Leadbeater's

works should be swept up as rubbish, but they will continue to be read, with negligible diminution because of his disgust with them. They have become part of the Society's heritage-stream. Their influence is diminishing. The time is ripe for dispassionate assessment; hence paragraph 11, calling for "close and honest examination" of them, "with supporting and critical considerations freely circulated", to see how far they "withstand fair test". This will tend to bring the differences home to members as "a Student" wishes.

It is not by emotionally assailing them, nor by abusing Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, that betterment of the Society will be achieved. They both made mistakes, but they were both devoted to what they believed was the good of the Society, in whatever measure they were misguided or illusion-bound. Reasonableness that admits what is good creates karmically an opportunity to win recognition of demonstrated error, not always immediately, but in the passage of time: hence paragraph 12.

Will it not be in true accord with the original program if the basis of agreement is made as broad as possible by a policy of respect for differences that avoids giving unnecessary offence, provided that all who join accept the original program as central, and agree that critical assessment of all teachings, basic and later, is proper and to be encouraged?

If such a world-wide group of alternative-policy-members comes into existence, the provision of fresh literature for newcomers, in close accord with the original program, could be part of its early work, and this might well take account of, and give a different setting to, some of the books that "a Student" thinks likely to "confuse the mind of new students", but which will doubtless

continue to circulate willy-nilly.

Why bring Alice Bailey into it? If Alice Bailey, why not Max Heindel, Rudolf Steiner, etc.? The Alice Bailey literature claims to follow in the Blavatsky tradition. It has a large circulation. It is rather disdainful of Leadbeater, yet adopts his formulations on the Hierarchy, including ideas in flat contradiction to Blavatsky, whilst ignoring much of his work: and it constantly refers back to *The Secret Doctrine*. It therefore comes within the purview of those concerned with what happens in the Blavatsky heritage-stream. Hence the proposal in paragraph 13 that Alice Bailey's work should be embraced "for guarded appraisal" on a basis similar to that of Leadbeater. Heindel and Steiner did not claim to follow H.P.B. They patronized her as having done good work in her day, but they regarded her as outmoded and superseded.

Why omit reference to the scholarly work of Prof. Ernest Wood and Dr. A. B. Kuhn? One has to draw a line somewhere. Our wholehearted support of Prof. Wood for the presidency, on both occasions when his name has been put forward, is well known. Dr. Kuhn's good work is also known to us. The inclusion or not of other names is a detail of revision.

On Mr. Harris's point that minds can be so open that they become lumbered, I need say no more than that, whilst agreeing with him that I cannot disprove the assumption of the Virgin Mary, before I need spend any time on whether I should reject the idea or not, I await some proof that (1) the Jesus of the Gospels ever existed, (2) if He did, that his mother was named Mary, and (3) if she was, that she was a virgin when she bore him!

Yours sincerely,

T. H. Redfern.

BOOK REVIEW

New World of the Mind by Joseph Banks Rhine, published by William Sloane Associates, New York, 1953, 321 pp., price \$4.50.

To students of Theosophy, the importance of Dr. Rhine's latest book lies in the scientific evidence which it presents of the existence of subtle powers latent within man. *New World of the Mind* contains the accumulated results of many experiments in parapsychology together with numerous accounts of non-experimental occurrences. The author is deeply interested in this subject and his work is known to students the world over through those experiments which have associated the name of Duke University with the new science; they are often referred to as the "Duke experiments" and the phrase "extra-sensory perception" has become familiar by reason of the public interest in Dr. Rhine's former books on this subject. These include, *Extra-Sensory Perception*, *New Frontiers of the Mind* and *The Reach of the Mind*.

"This new world is new only to the sciences", is the opening sentence in the latest book. Almost everyone has had some familiarity with "psychic" experiences (which are now more professionally called *psi* occurrences) such as premonitions, precognition of events, telepathy, clairvoyance, psychometry, and to a lesser degree, with psychokinesis, the action of mind on matter. Such an experience is "a kind of miracle—that is to say, an inexplicable phenomenon"; the word "inexplicable" is used by the author in the sense of "not explainable in terms of the orthodox science of today".

While occult literature abounds in these "inexplicable" phenomena, and in some instances indicates the method of operation, the whole subject has re-

mained outside the realm of scientific research. Through the experiments of Dr. Rhine and other research workers—experiments which were performed with every possible safeguard against error, conscious or unconscious—enough has been proved to demonstrate scientifically the reality of such phenomena.

"Parapsychology is therefore science's first world beyond physics." However, despite his painstaking labours and careful analysis of results, Dr. Rhine has had to face the unbelief of some of his scientific fellows. This unbelief is apparently founded solely on the fact that the phenomena do not submit to physical explanations and are outside the time-space limitations of physics. Chapter two sets out some of the criticisms and Dr. Rhine's replies.

The book is divided into four parts, Explorations in the New World, Relation to Other Worlds of Natural Science, Significance of Psi for Human Life and The Prospect for Further Exploration.

Part II deals particularly with the relation of parapsychology to the three sciences with which it has close connection, physics, biology and psychology. Dr. Rhine states that ". . . physicists have approached the facts of the psi research with comparative open-mindedness" although as he points out, "physical laws do not hold. . . most of those who have followed it (the evidence for precognition) have given up all expectation of an hypothesis that could explain it adequately on a physical basis". In the field of biology, Dr. Rhine considers that psi is significant in that its findings, which relate to activities of living beings, are incongruous with the prevailing body of biological knowledge. Curiously enough, it was from psychologists that there came most criticism of parapsychology. In the author's opinion this is because modern psychology is not the science of the soul or the mind or of

human behaviour; it has become merely a science of the relation between the organism and its environment. If psychology became concerned in the animating spirit in man, then the findings of parapsychology could be of service.

The chapter on Importance to the World of Religion, will be of much interest to theosophical students. "The religions were all founded upon some concept of truth, upon what their founders believed to be the truth. . . The founders of the religious systems were themselves explorers, pioneers, revolutionists. . . There is no use wasting time speculating on the possible initiation of any progressive step in any religion under its established leadership . . . Dogmatic religion comes to assume the shape and proportion of a gigantic group delusion, cutting itself off deliberately from the tests of reality by which its position could be verified. . . an almost complete abandonment of realism, a surrender to a system of unverified fantasy that, in a single isolated individual would be diagnosed as psychotic." Some of the author's comments on the enslavement of mind by religious systems remind one of similar comments in *The Mahatma Letters*. Dr. Rhine considers that in the world of religion, the new science of parapsychology will disclose to man verifiable knowledge of his more subtle, non-physical nature and of his interrelation with the universe; this knowledge will supplant the materialistic philosophy of today and the ossified beliefs of old religious systems.

The significance of this book lies in the fact that Dr. Rhine, his associates and a goodly number of his fellow scientists are convinced by the work that has been done, that man is a being who has his roots in the non-physical and that he

possesses powers of awareness which are not explicable in terms of the physical senses. This for science is truly an exploration into a new world. It is to be noted that while the many recorded examples of spontaneous (non-experimental) psi occurrences are dramatic incidents from human lives and obviously involve many as yet unknown factors, the actual experiments are minor in character and relate only to the more obvious fringes of extra-sensory perception. The fact remains that parapsychology is correlating all authenticated material on the subject and with understandable caution is testing the shore waters of the great non-physical ocean of being in which man lives and moves, and in doing so is following in the traditional course of working by induction,—from effect to cause. "In occultism it is always best to proceed from universals to particulars," says H. P. B., which is the deductive method.

Scientific knowledge is cumulative and this early experimental work may be the foundation of a future science which will bring to mankind an organized body of knowledge relating to man's subtle nature. This in its turn may give rise to a new philosophy born from its implications, new concepts of religion, a sense of integration with all life, a social awareness based upon that integration, a new standard of ethics and an intelligent, verifiable basis for universal brotherhood. This new world in scientific endeavour may very well be the antipodal shore of the old, old continent of occultism.

It is the ideation of ego, of self, which prevents the realization of Nirvana (which is the 'blowing out of the flame of selfish longing'); and so the Wheel of Life continues to turn.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead, p. 97.

EXTRACT FROM REPORT
OF THE THEOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY FOR 1953

16. Questions raised by Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, General Secretary for the Theosophical Society in Canada regarding the autonomy of Sections and Lodges: the power of a General Secretary, or any Lodge, to refuse an applicant for membership in the Society; or any Lodge to refuse a demit from one Lodge to another.

The President read out his reply to Colonel Thomson containing the following relevant extracts:

“Rule 28 of the Rules and Regulations of the International Society says that every person of ten full years, etc., shall be eligible for membership. The word ‘eligible’ has a permissive significance and implies the existence of a certain discretion or choice on the part of the admitting authority.

“Rule 30 speaks of Fellows, whether unattached or attached to a Lodge, which seems to indicate that an individual who is admitted as a member of the Society need not necessarily be attached to a Lodge. Both the Lodge and a National Society have a certain right to take into consideration the question whether or not an applicant should be taken in as a member. There is also the possibility of direct attachment to the International Headquarters of the Society. This states the legal and technical position.

“We next come to the question of *how* this discretion which exists should be exercised in the light of the nature of our Society and its objectives. From the early days, the Society has been described in official Charters and Diplomas as ‘The Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood.’ . . . That being so, it does not seem right that we should reject any applicant for his race, caste, sex, colour

or creed, whether the creed is religious, political, or any other.

“It seems to me to be in the very nature of our Constitution that we should hold the door wide open, but at the same time we cannot force a group of members, a Lodge, to admit an applicant when they do not want to do so for some strong reasons.

“There is the question: If a Lodge or Section has the right to expel a member in certain circumstances, does it have a right to refuse to admit an individual when he applies? I personally feel that there should be absolute freedom in our Society for individual members, the natural groups which are the Lodges, and the National Societies. . . . There is no rule, and there can be no rule, describing how this freedom is to be used, as I have said, obvious that whatever course of action we decide upon should be in full consonance with the ideal and spirit of Brotherhood.

“As regards a demit, that is merely a formal procedure of transfer, and I do not see why a demit should ever be refused.

“I do not think a Lodge should be chartered for the carrying out of any aims which would tend to narrow down our outlook, which should be as wide as Truth itself. But if a Lodge, because of its particular composition at any particular time, decides upon a certain line of study or discussion, it should be free to follow that line. . . . I see a certain danger in a Lodge becoming, for example, exclusively astrological, or anything else in particular, because I feel that the Society should at every point stand for the widest possible approach and endeavour, along every fruitful line of activity which may afford an outlet for the inner spiritual impulse.”

No action was thought necessary by the General Council, and it approved the President’s statement.

THE FIRST AND LAST FREEDOM —AN APPRECIATION

The First and Last Freedom, J. Krishnamurti's latest book, covers the whole field of his teachings and is a valuable contribution to psychological science. Few, if any, psychologists have so clearly explained the limitations of the human mind, which is confined to the "corridor of opposites" as compared with the intuition in its field of direct perception. Krishnamurti says it is only when the thinking process ceases completely that the mind, like a polished mirror, can reflect THAT which lies beyond the mind. "No amount of meditation, discipline, can make the mind still, in the real sense of the word. Only when the breezes stop does the lake become quiet," page 257.

Again, the mind can translate the unknown into factual knowledge, but it can never *know* the Unknowable, since the knower and the known are a pair of opposites and thus confined to the phenomenal world of time and space, while "What is" or "Truth" is Timeless. "The mind must understand itself as the known, because that is all it knows. You cannot think about something that you do not know," page 256. Philosophical speculation about the Unknowable is not knowledge; it is belief only. It is always very important to distinguish between a fact and a mere belief.

Jesus is reported to have said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is *within* you." Most of us are largely concerned with the material world *without*. Those who seek the Kingdom within will find abundant inspiration for a greater understanding of it in this valuable book. It is unnecessary to consult interpreters and explainers of Krishnamurti's teachings when his own words are so easily available to all who can read or who have the great privilege of listening to

him speak. No reviewer of this remarkable book can do more than hope to stimulate interest to read it. Once it has been read, it will be treasured always and studied often as one of the greatest aids obtainable to that universal admonition of all great Teachers, philosophers, poets and mystics: "Man know thyself."

G. H. Hall,
Ojai, California.

The First and Last Freedom, published by Harper & Bros., New York, 1954; 288 pp., Price \$3.50, obtainable from the Toronto Theosophical Society, 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.

THE FREE

They knew that which the rising of the sun conceals.—Popol Vuh.

They bathed in the fire-flooded fountains;

Life girdled them round and about;
They slept in the clefts of the mountains;

The stars called them forth with a shout.

They prayed, but their worship was only
The wonder at nights and at days,
As still as the lips of the lonely,
Though burning with dumbness of praise.

No sadness of earth ever captured
Their spirits who bowed at the shrine;
They fled to the Lonely enraptured,
And hid in the Darkness Divine.

At twilight as children may gather
They met at the doorway of death,
The smile of the dark hidden Father
The Mother with magical breath.

Untold of in song or in story,
In days long forgotten of men,
Their eyes were yet blind with a glory
Time will not remember again.

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