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THE ESOTERIC SAVIOR

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

In a series of articles entitled *The Esoteric Character of the Gospels* written and published by H. P. Blavatsky in her magazine *Lucifer*, beginning in November, 1887, she wrote:

“ ‘The coming of Christ’, means *the presence of CHRISTOS* in a regenerated world, and not at all the actual coming in body of ‘Christ’ Jesus; this Christ is to be sought neither in the wilderness nor ‘in the inner chambers’, nor in the sanctuary of any temple or church built by man; for Christ—the true esoteric SAVIOR—is *no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions, and buried deep in the ‘sepulchre’ of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back the *stone of matter* from the door of his own inner sanctuary, he *has the risen Christ in him*. ”

The more one studies and ponders the meaning of H.P.B.’s challenging words, and checks them with his own inner experiences, the more does their inescapable truth compel recognition. In this same article she wrote:

“ . . . the mystery of Christos—now supposed to have been taught by Jesus of Nazareth—‘was identical’ with that which *from the first* had been communicated ‘to those who were worthy’. . . .

We may learn from the Gospel *according to Luke*, that the ‘worthy’ were those who had been initiated into the mysteries of the Gnosis, and who were ‘accounted worthy’ to attain that ‘resurrection from the dead’ *in this life*. . . . In other words, they were the great adepts of *whatever religion*; and the words apply to all those who, without being Initiates, strive and succeed, through personal efforts to *live the life* and to attain the naturally ensuing spiritual illumination in blending their personality—the ‘Son’ with the ‘Father’, their individual divine Spirit, *the God within* them. This ‘resurrection’ can never be monopolized by the Christians, but is the spiritual birth-right of every human being endowed with soul and spirit, whatever his religion may be. Such individual is a *Christ-man*. . . .

“ . . . He who finds Christos within himself and recognizes the latter as his only ‘way’, becomes a follower and an *Apostle of Christ*, though he may have never been baptised, nor even have met a ‘Christian’, still less call himself one. . . .

“ . . . Christos, or the ‘Christ-condition’, was ever the synonym of the ‘Mahatmic-condition’, *i.e.*, the union of the man with the divine principle in him.”

How was this “Mahatmic-condition” achieved? How may one bring about

this union of the personal man with the divine principle in him? In other words, how may one find the esoteric savior? Only those who have accomplished this union and have "worked out their own salvation with diligence"—in the words of the Lord Buddha, are qualified to show the way—they who have so far transcended the limitations of personality, as to have become cosmic forces for the inspiration and guidance of their younger brothers trailing along behind them on the evolutionary ladder of life. Humanity has never been without its spiritual guides, who have achieved union with the Father in Heaven, the Divine Principle which is the very root and core of their being. There is no cause for doubting that the spiritual forces which brood over erring humanity and ever call to us in "The Voice of the Silence" to come up higher, are still active and compassionately reaching down a helping hand to us—not to save us by assuming our burdens and carrying them for us, but by showing us how we ourselves may face the trials and difficulties of life and meet them courageously and light-heartedly.

Eventually each must find the Esoteric Savior, his own Higher Self. Did not Jesus tell us in the Sermon on the mount: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"?

The human side of us, of the average man, whose consciousness is largely bound up with the physical tenement in which he lives and perhaps still more with the army of thoughts 'that bear him off a captive slave', is fully aware of his personal limitations and weaknesses. Hence the natural tendency of man to look for salvation—or at least for help—to those who have presumably journeyed further along the Path than we have ourselves. Thus arose, no doubt, naturally and properly, a distinct class of men, known in different coun-

tries under different names, whom for the sake of simplicity we may call the priestly class. The fact that such a class exists among practically every people, whether 'civilized' or 'uncivilized', would seem to indicate that it is part of the natural order of things. That the priest's high function has often been abused cannot be denied; but this merely proves that, being human, the spiritual guides have sometimes forgotten that their high mission is to be servants of the servants of the Divine, and helpers and shepherds of their fellowmen.

The true teacher—be he spiritual or secular—can do little more than guide our efforts and correct our mistakes. He cannot tread the path for us. Nor can he, in the truest sense, act as an intermediary for us between our merely human consciousness and the god within, the true esoteric savior. A teacher can inspire us by his words and by his example to tread the path towards self-forgetfulness, towards self-effacement, towards at-onement with 'the Father in Heaven'; but he most certainly cannot save us from carrying the burden of our own karmic responsibilities. Teachers and guides we must have; but intermediaries between our own aspiring minds and the god within each of us—no!

One of the greatest stumbling-blocks in the path of the aspirant towards recognition of the presence of the Christ within his own soul is fear. We are fearful of what is going to happen to us personally, fearful of the loss of our own prestige, fearful of the thousand things that can befall us at any time during our earthly sojourn. The real secret of getting rid of fear is to stop thinking about ourselves. "Perfect love casteth out all fear." The man whose heart is on fire with the love of his fellowmen, with interest in some worthwhile enterprise in which he can play an

honorable, even if inconspicuous, part, is not oppressed with fear. The unhappy man on earth is he whose thoughts are entirely self-centered and in whose heart the holy flame of love for others—at least for some others or even for one other—burns low or has flickered out. The inner god cannot speak to the personal man, cannot illumine his mind with bright visions of the good, the true, and the beautiful, and make him aware of his presence as the esoteric savior, unless the usual impediments of selfishness and personal desires with which we burden ourselves are thrown overboard as the sacrificial victims of the 'Presence.'

Dr. de Purucker wrote:

"Let us remember that while each man has the 'Christ' within himself, and can be 'saved' only by that 'Christ', he can be saved by that inner 'Christ', only when he *chooses to save himself*; the initiative must come from below, from himself."

—*Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 107.

That is the challenge to each and all not to look for salvation outside ourselves, but to work out our own salvation with diligence, in accordance with the last words of the Lord Buddha to his disciples. How shall we do this?

Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character; and you reap a destiny.

Thus we see that the first step in working out our own salvation is by sowing seeds of thought. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Words alone conceal as often as they reveal; actions in themselves may be outwardly fair even though the motive behind them may be questionable; but whatever the apparent effect of our words and

deeds in the external world, the effect of our thoughts on our own characters is inescapable. Inside we are what we are, no matter what we may appear to be or what the world may think us to be. What we are inside will eventually find outward expression in our deeds. So, if we are to find the esoteric savior within, if we are to work out our own salvation with diligence, we have to guard our thoughts—and not merely guard them, but see to it that they are directed towards constructive, generous and impersonal ends.

The faculty of thinking is one of the godlike powers innate in man which transcends the merely instinctual reactions of the beast. What we make ourselves to be—our actions, our character, our destiny, are all dependent in the final analysis on the kind of thought-seeds we sow. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," wrote Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. This expresses a self-evident fact in nature, a universal law of being, which every thinking man knows instinctively, intuitively, to be true.

One does not have to wait for great occasions or crises in his life in order to invoke the 'Esoteric Savior'. In the *Mahatma Letters* we are told:

"The man or woman who is placed by karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving kindnesses, will through these faithfully fulfilled rise to a larger measure of duty."

Any of us can begin to make an effort now with the determination to continue life after life to follow this path of self-directed evolution. The reward of inner peace and power to serve will be commensurate with the strength and continuity of the effort. This is an aspect of the law of Karman, of cause and effect that we are apt to overlook. We sometimes forget that we are our own Karman, and that we become that which we make ourselves to be.

The problem of self-directed evolution is not merely a philosophical and a scientific one, but also, and perhaps primarily, a religious one. A man's religion is his basic understanding of his relationship with his fellowmen and with the universe surrounding him—visible and invisible. It is this which is the greatest reality to him and closest to his heart. Probing into the human psyche, we find that the deepest element in every man is the feeling—a vague adumbration with some, with others a flaming verity—that the inmost of the inmost of him is his link with the Divine. I believe it was Mohammed who told his Moslems: "Allah is nearer to each of you than your own jugular vein." Religion, *per se*, etymologically as well as philosophically, is that which binds a man back to the Divine Source from which the real man emanated as a ray of light shines forth from the central sun.

How long will man, the thinker, take the hard way of growth—made hard by his inflicting upon himself needless pain and suffering, instead of choosing the luminous, joyous path of self-directed evolution upwards? Must we go on forever allowing our god-given power of thought to be enslaved by hatred, anger, jealousy, ambition, self-seeking, and all the rest of the ugly brood spawned by the lower mind? When will mankind as a whole choose to be ruled by compassion instead of by passion, and thus walk in the light of its innate godhood? One naturally cannot answer for the human race as a whole, but each of us can take the first steps on the path of self-directed evolution—not tomorrow or next week or next year, but right now. In the words of Dr. de Purucker:

"The battle must be fought some day; why not do it NOW? How grand is the man who has overcome himself; who has gained perfect self-control; whose heart and mind, in consequence, are at

one with all that is, and was, and will be! Nature cannot produce a nobler work."

If we are not satisfied with ourselves in this life—and who is?—even though we would not, because we cannot, be anyone but ourselves—we are assured by the teaching of reincarnation, that we can be more evolved, more progressed, and more worthy individuals in our next incarnation, provided we sow the seeds now whose harvest we hope to reap then. We are not the slaves of some imaginary fatalism. We all have a certain relative amount of freewill; and this freewill can be decreased or increased in direct ratio to the contraction or the expansion of our thoughts and interests. The man who is wrapped up in himself has a very small package. Nature herself, as well as other men, conspire to see that his exercise of freewill is more and more restricted, lest he injure others. The man who exercises his freewill contrary to the rules of a decent social order, is finally confined within prisonwalls, so that he cannot even move his person from place to place. But there are few restrictions placed upon a man of goodwill beyond those which are self-imposed. The philosopher and the spiritual seer have the universe for their home. Where between these extremes do you and I fit into the picture? This depends entirely upon each one of us. We can choose to exercise our freewill in pursuing our own selfish ends until we gradually lose the love and respect of our family and of our neighbors, because there is nothing more unlovable than selfishness; or we can progressively expand our circle of affinity until we take in the whole world; and then, behold, a Christ or a Buddha walks the earth! In which direction is each of us moving today? We cannot stand still.

(Continued on Page 115)

THE PURPOSE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

W. E. WILKS

Our thanks are due to Mr. Spinks for putting forward (in the July-Aug. C.T.) clearly and unmistakably his view of the real purpose of the Theosophical Society. Briefly it is this,—to create a "Brotherhood of all religions". He says,—"The founders. . . invited men of widely differing views to join the T.S. and form a union of diverse religious beliefs". Toleration here becomes the supreme test of brotherhood; and he writes "The monotheist's tolerance of the polytheist's beliefs, is the very essence of the brotherhood and love which should cement all members together".

In contradistinction to this I would like to put forward the extreme opposite view, viz;—that the real purpose underlying the formation of the T.S. was the decision of the Brothers to put before the world some of their knowledge, in the form of a self-contained philosophy, for its examination, study, and perhaps acceptance. This philosophy, it was agreed to call Theosophy. In support of this contention the following quotations are offered. "The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must,—supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give—become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually, enforcing its theories—unimpeachable facts for those who know—with direct inferences deduced from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science", (Chohan's letter). Also the following,—"On the 17th Nov. next, the septenary term of trial given the society at its formation in which to discreetly 'preach us' will expire. One or two of us hoped that the world had so far advanced intellectually,

if not intuitionally, that the Occult doctrine might gain an intellectual acceptance, and the impulse given for a new cycle of occult research." These quotations are sufficient to show that the plan of the 19th century Theosophical Movement was to supply mankind with knowledge which could give a true sense of direction to the goodwill efforts of man, lost between superstition, blind scepticism, and still more blind materialism.

Neither this view, nor that presented by Mr. Spinks, finds any mention in the Society's three objects. Why not? Why is Theosophy not mentioned if the main idea of the Theosophical Movement was to promulgate this philosophy?

From the beginning the Society has had no creeds or beliefs or dogmas. "Having no accepted creed, our Society is very ready to give and take, to learn and teach, by practical experimentation, as opposed to mere passive acceptance of enforced dogma", and later,—"for the very fact of a man's joining it (the T. S.) proves that he is in search of the final truth as to the ultimate essence of things", and again,—"The very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation". (from "What are the Theosophists" by H. P. B., *Complete Works*, Vol. I, page 304.)

The Society was formed as a *neutral* body having no beliefs because complete freedom of thought was more important than the inculcation of any doctrine however true or valuable. Consequently the Society was created as a body of truth seekers for the enlightenment of Mankind, whilst the 2nd and 3rd objects indicated the main directions it was proposed to search for this knowledge. Furthermore, any belief except in Uni-

versal Brotherhood, would be certain to exclude some groups of individuals in a society whose members are drawn from all races and creeds and differing backgrounds. As H.P.B. puts it in the conclusion to the *Key*, "Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because sooner or later it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard and fast dogmas of its own and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart", also on page 366 *Mahatma Letters* there is this, "I tell you with a few exceptions we have failed in Europe. Henceforth the policy of absolute neutrality of the T.S. in Occult teachings and phenomena will be rigidly enforced." This explains why the Society was formed to be a body dedicated to Truth and the welfare of Mankind, without any beliefs or teaching of its own.

The first object of the Theosophical Society was, and is, to form a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. In other words, it was to aggregate a group of lovers of Mankind, i.e., men and women willing to sacrifice time and energy, reputation and comfort, and even life itself, if need be, to bring Light to humanity, so greatly in need of it. Brotherhood as an ideal is accepted by all men of good-will; also as an intellectual metaphysical conception, based upon the doctrine of the One Life, it is accepted doubtless by all students of Theosophy; as a Spiritual perception and practical realization, it is very, very rare in human life. It was of such rare men who had attained to this realization, surely, that it was said (I quote from memory) "So long as three members of the T.S. remained worthy of our Lord's blessing, the Society could not be destroyed". Then the *Mahatma Letters*, page 17, has this,— "The term Universal Brotherhood is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim

upon us, It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream it is at least a noble one for Mankind; and it is the aspiration of the *true Adept*". And something of the high nature of Brotherhood is indicated further on page 8, *Mahatma Letters*,—"Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity becomes tainted with selfishness, if in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself". Again (page 252 M.L.) "It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood, who is entitled to the possession of our secrets".

Brotherhood, then, is not something we possess, it is man's highest ideal, something that the student aspires to grow into as he awakens his spiritual powers. No amount of willing, or determining to act in a brotherly way can awaken the realization of Brotherhood in an individual, because all ordinary people, whether student of theosophy or not, are the slaves of egoism, of an obsessing self-love which effectively prevents, as yet, the existence of love of humanity as more than a germinal possibility, an ideal hope. We are all living almost wholly in the purely personal part of our nature, which of itself, can never know anything of brotherhood, but by engaging in the regenerative process and transmuting crude energies into spiritual perception, we can awaken that consciousness where brotherhood becomes the very nature and native air of the individual, and the love of Mankind the one and only passion. Furthermore, dedication of our free energy to such a supra-personal cause as Theosophy, is the scientific way of doing this,

of engaging in the regenerative process.

The idea of 'Unity' and that of Brotherhood, are often used by students as synonymous terms, and a split or division of organization is regarded as a lack of brotherhood, or a letting down of the brotherly ideal. Yet, it is possible to be united (or disunited) on other things than the service of mankind. Brotherhood finds its metaphysical basis in the doctrine that all lives are expressions of the One Life; that we human beings are one in our inner essence, and therefore human life can be poisoned or enriched at any point, and no man lives to himself alone. Practically it means that humanity is one big family where what benefits one, benefits all to some degree and what injures one, injures everyone. This is the way life is. And it is an actual impossibility for one to benefit at the expense of another in spite of appearances to the contrary, anymore than it is possible for one finger to benefit at the expense of another. Life in reality is one, and its centres are interrelated at all levels. At the spiritual level, we are told, this intellectual understanding becomes a matter of direct perception, which arises first in consciousness as a deepening sense of kinship with the race and an aspiration to live to benefit mankind, both in the mass and individually. Here is where Brotherhood and Unity are closely related ideas, brotherhood implying unity. From this has arisen the idea that the converse is true; that Unity, the banding together in a group or society, means necessarily brotherhood, and a lack of this unity as by a split into two parts of an organization, separating to follow different paths implies a letting down of the ideal of Brotherhood.

Unity only exists upon the spiritual level; down here, actually we cannot but look upon ourselves as separate entities

with a private good and a private evil of our own. This is the hypnotic delusion of separate individuality imposed upon us by nature; complete awakening from this would make of us a Buddha. The degree of our awakening from this obsession, is a measure of spiritual growth. When, therefore, we unite to form a Universal Brotherhood we need to be united first in aspiration, viz. to benefit Mankind, second in the means to such benefit. These are essential and must be agreed upon for united effort. Lesser things such as methods, loyalties, may cause dissension but can be ironed out, or disregarded. Without an ideal and a dominant idea to support it, any attempt at Unity is a material thing only, and is only a pretense, or an appearance only of Unity. M.L. page 20 . . . "Why in Europe more than anywhere else, a Universal Brotherhood i.e. an association of affinities of strong magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities, centred around one dominant idea, is necessary for successful achievement in Occult sciences". This is exactly what the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, the primary objective of the T.S., really is, or should be. The 'affinities' are men interested in Theosophy; the strong magnetic and yet dissimilar forces and polarities, are provided by the men and women of all temperaments and types, backgrounds, from all parts of the world; centred around the one dominant idea,—the enlightenment of humanity, through Theosophy. Without such solidarity strongly integrated in a common cause, and a common plan, dissension arises within, enemy destructive energies make a breach from without, and the focus of energy is lost in disunity. Remember H.P.B. and her unbreakable *bundle* of sticks. Where a division of aim, or even of means, becomes evident, a split is not only inevitable, but beneficial. It is better to have two societies, each

working unitedly for its high aim on its own path, than one disunited society. Take an extreme case, that of Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, both imbued with the love of humanity in no small measure. When the latter, turned Theosophist, Bradlaugh remained atheist and materialist—what Unity was possible, except what existed upon the spiritual plane of pure ideal? It was no longer possible for them to march forward shoulder to shoulder; although still one in the desire to benefit man, they took separate roads.

In the Theosophical Movement, all societies or groups are working for the enlightenment of humanity. This is the fundamental ideal and aim which unites all such associations in the Theosophical Movement, but some believe that this ideal is best served by teaching Theosophy to all those interested, whilst one large body at Adyar, believes that a modern, more advanced, teaching which they have produced themselves, is the best means of helping humanity.

Whilst the ideal of human enlightenment holds all in the Theosophical Movement together, it is yet impossible for these two groups to work together, for the former holds that Theosophy is what the Mahatmas and H.P.B. put forth, and laugh at the idea that the 'advanced' teaching will stand up to critical examination for a minute. Unity between these two bodies is impossible and undesirable so long as agreement on essentials is absent. Attempts to unite them are misguided and futile, unless they go to the root and use the criteria of the search for truth as the common basis of united action. Under this common banner, with freedom of expression and criticism, and of belief, a large step toward real unity would be possible. But fraternization and all attempts to dissolve differences from *below* are futile, where not hypocritical.

The Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, or rather the Nucleolus, that centre within a centre, has existed in some fashion since it was first established in the early days of the Movement. It is composed of those few deeply dedicated students in any society of the Theosophical Movement or in none, who work alone, or in touch with others for the enlightenment of mankind through inculcating an understanding of theosophy. Some of these are well-known figures of the past, others are unheard of, silent, but none the less effective workers. And around them are aggregated the less deeply dedicated students of all kinds in all societies, an asset or a liability according as they help carry the weight, or make part of the weight to be carried. Splits and divisions are inevitable misfortunes, humanity being as it still is, in its adolescence. They represent strategic failure, not a change or lack of Brotherhood, for both sides are still as strongly dedicated to the ideal of Universal Brotherhood.

The only foreseeable avenue to Unity in the Theosophical Movement as a whole, is the determination to examine our own most cherished beliefs in the light of the most searching, impartial criticism we each are capable of bringing to bear upon them. Out of the fire of this self-criticism, the dross will be burnt away, leaving the gold.

"The assertion that 'Theosophy is not a Religion', by no means excludes the fact that 'Theosophy is Religion' itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* Men, but also *all* Beings and *all things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole."—H.P.B. *Lucifer* Nov. 1888.

THE WESTERN TRIP

Lt.-Colonel E. L. Thomson, D.S.O.,
General Secretary,
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Colonel Thomson,

In accordance with arrangements made at the July meeting of the Executive Committee, I visited the western lodges during the first week in October.

The first stop was at Calgary, where Mrs. Lillian Glover and Mr. S. S. Elliott kindly met me at the airport. After dinner we talked about lodge affairs and it was apparent that our Calgary members have a difficult problem to face. The death of Mr. Knechtel, the former president, not only deprived the members of the one around whom the Lodge work centred; it also left them without quarters in which to work. No other member can provide a room for the lodge library and for meetings. The only course open at present is to carry on quietly with their studies in the hope that other theosophically-minded persons will be attracted and will aid in reviving the work there.

On Sunday morning I arrived at Edmonton and was delighted to see Mr. Emory Wood at the airport. Mr. and Mrs. Wood had kindly invited me to be their guest while in the city. There was an attendance of about thirty-five at both the Sunday and Monday talks, which were held in the Labour Temple. Numerous questions were asked at the close of each meeting. Following the Monday evening lecture, I had an opportunity to meet the Edmonton Lodge members at the home of Mrs. Tiplin.

Mr. Wood had arranged to take a few days holiday at the coast, and on Tuesday morning we left for Vancouver. Unfortunately, the morning plane could not land at Edmonton on account of fog, so we travelled by bus to Calgary and caught a 6 p.m. plane which arrived in

Vancouver about 8 p.m., the hour at which the first public lecture was to start. Mr. and Mrs. Kartar Singh met us at the airport and with Kartar at the wheel, we arrived at the meeting about 8:30 p.m., to find that Dr. Wilks had stepped into the breach, speaking impromptu to the audience in the interval. Mr. Singh was chairman and I was reminded of the old days in Toronto when Kartar and I were often on the platform together. In view of the delay, the lecture was shortened somewhat but several questions were asked afterwards. Later, Mr. Wood and I met some of the Vancouver members at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kartar Singh.

On Wednesday, Mr. Wood and I were guests at a luncheon party of Vancouver Lodge members at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan. Later, Mrs. Edith Fielding of the H.P.B. Library, called for us and we had an opportunity to examine the collection of books in the Library.

The public meeting on Wednesday was held in the Art Gallery and there was a large attendance. Several former Toronto Lodge members were present and it was a delight to renew old ties. The subject "The Memory of Past Lives" brought forth a number of questions at the close of the talk.

On Thursday we went to Victoria, where we were met at the airport by Mrs. Wm. Gilmour and Mrs. J. Housez. Mrs. Housez drove us along lovely winding roads by the sea and past wonderful gardens. The evening meeting was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths, about 20 being present. It was an informal gathering and after the talk on "Reason and Intuition" a general discussion took place and refreshments were served.

On Friday evening the last public lecture at the coast was held in Vancouver, the subject again being, "Reason and Intuition". The two previous talks

had been prepared for newcomers, and I was doubtful whether the subject chosen for the closing talk would be of interest to those not familiar with the Theosophical approach. However, interest seemed to be sustained throughout.

Mr. Wood was staying on in Vancouver until Sunday, and so on Saturday morning I left alone for Winnipeg, arriving there about 4 p.m., where I was met by Mr. T. L. Bowers, Secretary of the Winnipeg Lodge and Mr. Gadd and Mr. Stokes. The Lodge quarters are in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bowers, and Mr. Bowers drove me on there to meet Mrs. Bowers who had but recently left the hospital after a serious illness. The meeting scheduled for that evening was for members only, and unfortunately, owing to illness and absence from the city, the attendance was rather small—the newly-formed Winnipeg Lodge has a membership of twenty-three. The public lecture on Sunday was on the subject of reincarnation and the memory of past lives and an audience of about one hundred turned out. Again there were many questions—it was quite evident that some of the audience—non-members of the Society—had accepted the theory of Reincarnation and one lady, speaking to a question, quoted verses from the Bible in support of the teaching.

Mr. Percy Stokes kindly drove me to the airport on Monday morning where I caught an 8 a.m. plane for Toronto, arriving there about 1 p.m.

With the exception of Calgary Lodge which at present is not active, the western lodges are vital. The members are serious students of Theosophy and the lodge work is study. Weekly public meetings are not held as is the custom in the eastern lodges. It was interesting to note that in Vancouver, cards had been distributed in the seats inviting

interested persons to attend a special series of weekly lecture-study groups to be held by Orpheus Lodge and drawing attention to the regular meetings of the Vancouver Lodge, to which the public was invited.

In Vancouver, the lectures were given under the joint auspices of Orpheus and Vancouver Lodges, and in that city and in Edmonton and Winnipeg, the public lectures were well advertised. The attendances indicated that there are a number of persons in each city who are interested in Theosophical ideas and who had not contacted the local lodges. It will be interesting to learn how many new enquirers attend at subsequent meetings of the lodges. Many other persons in each city might be attracted through a continuing series of public lectures given by the lodge members. Short, infrequent visits of an out-of-town speaker may stimulate interest temporarily, but cannot take the place of steady, persistent work in presenting Theosophical ideas to the public throughout the whole year.

May I, in closing, say that in each city I visited, the kindly thoughtfulness of our members touched me deeply. A few names have been mentioned in my report, but there are abiding memories of things said and done by many members in each city. For these I am grateful. Theosophy is an opener of doors, and one thing which impressed me greatly, was the ease with which Theosophical students, who have never met before in the flesh, flow into each other so readily at the first meeting. We speak the same language, we have the same ideals, we share a common aim, and when we meet, it is the renewing of old ties rather than the commencement of new friendships.

Fraternally yours,

D. W. Barr.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Recently I received a long letter from the General Secretary of the Indian Section Mr. Rohit Mehta appealing for help in restoring Annie Besant's old home in Banaras, India. I make the following excerpts:—"Dr. Annie Besant came to India in 1893, settled down at Banaras in 1896, and from then on Banaras was her home. Her house was named Shanti-Kunj and it was from there that she organized her Theosophical and Educational work. It is thus an historic house, a witness to many events and happenings of world-wide theosophical importance. Since her death it has been used only by the President of the Society when attending Conventions, etc., at Banaras. Another portion of the house is the residence of the General Secretary of the Indian Section and is also used by important visitors. Our engineers report that the building cannot stand intact for long unless major repairs are immediately undertaken. They estimate that it would cost not less than \$10,000 to renovate the building. Now, it is beyond the financial capacity of the Indian Section to meet this expenditure. We are raising a special Fund for this purpose to be called "The Shanti-Kunj Renovating Fund." 1st October 1955 is the 108th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Besant. We would like the work of renovation to be started as soon after 1st October 1955 as possible. We appeal to you and through your members to help us to save the home of Dr. Besant. We feel sure that generous help will be forthcoming from the members of your Section." Signed Rohit Mehta. To all those who will help in this undertaking please send remittances to me and I will be happy to forward same to Mr. Mehta.

Our President, Mr. Sri Ram as we all know is actively interested in Animal Welfare and has written me partially as follows:—"I thank you very much for your letter dated 10th August addressed to the Editor, *The Theosophist*, and the report on the activities of the Winnipeg Lodge. We made use of the information sent, in the Supplement to *The Theosophist*. I have been writing from time to time in the Watch Tower columns on the subject of the treatment of animals. . . Please give my greetings to the members of the Canadian Section when you have the opportunity. With the warmest regards, Fraternally, N. Sri Ram". The Animal World is happy in having "A friend at court" of such standing, and through his interest and the activities of the Theosophical Society in general, lovers of animals have high hopes that something of real value will accrue from their endeavours.

* * * *

There is much activity among our lodges just now. Among the accounts I have just received a letter from Mrs. Mavis Harley, President of the Montreal Lodge, who has recently returned from a visit to England where she spent a vacation with her family. A high light was when she met several Theosophical notabilities at the English Convention held at Camberley. Now, full of zeal and ambition, Mrs. Harley is actively engaged in rounding out a programme for the lodge's seasonal activities.

* * * *

I have excellent reports also from the Hamilton Lodge, which, under the guidance of Mr. Bunting, the president, is entering upon an ambitious programme. A report from Hamilton Lodge appears in this issue. It is always a pleasure to bring these happenings to the forefront.

E. L. T.

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QUARTERLY MEETING

The Quarterly Meeting of the Theosophical Society in Canada was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, on Sunday October 16, 1955. The following members were present: Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. Barr, Bunting, Hale, Kinman and the General Secretary.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

The Financial Statement, which showed a balance on hand of \$1889.80 was read by the General Secretary, who moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Kinman and carried.

Mr. Barr then gave an oral report of his visit to the western lodges, and spoke of the vitality and keen interest which

were everywhere apparent. A public meeting was not held in Calgary as two only of our members were in the city, but in Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria and Winnipeg the meetings were well attended. A detailed report will appear in the magazine.

Mr. Kinman, as Chairman of the Pamphlet Committee, reported that progress has been made in selecting the radio talks which were to be re-printed in pamphlet form. The General Secretary urged that this be completed soon, and it was arranged that a complete report should be ready for the Executive at a special meeting in November.

The General Secretary read a letter from Mr. Rohit Mehta, General Secretary of the Indian Section, asking for funds for the restoration of Mrs. Annie Besant's home in Banaras which was falling into disrepair. As it was felt that the Canadian Society was not in a position to help in this matter, Colonel Thomson suggested that the subject be mentioned by him in the magazine. This was agreed to.

A memo from Adyar respecting voting on an amendment to Rule 20 and for additional members of the General Council, was read by the General Secretary, who stated that as these were both routine matters, he had voted in favour of both proposals. His action was approved.

A report of the Hamilton Lodge was read, which indicated much activity there. One of the suggestions was the holding of a Convention of the Society in Canada and of the Canadian Federation. Mr. Bunting was requested to bring this matter up for further discussion at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

The date of the next meeting was provisionally arranged for November 13. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

General Secretary.

AMONG THE LODGES

The following is a brief account of the events that have transpired in the Hamilton Lodge since the members were addressed by Colonel Thomson on April 17 as reported in the May-June issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*.

The General Secretary described the above meeting as enthusiastic, but much greater enthusiasm was displayed when the members met at a later date to present proposals for the more active propagation of Theosophy. Many ideas were put forward and discussed, and a statement of those approved was put in the form of a motion and adopted unanimously. The chief proposals were:

1. That the weekly meetings should be changed so as to give members a more active part in them.
2. That when a visiting speaker was available, a greater drive to attract public attention should be made.
3. That new centres should be formed in adjacent communities.
4. That a convention of local 'occult' societies should be organized.
5. That the General Executive should be asked to arrange a national or regional convention of both the Society and the Federation.

At the subsequent annual meeting, the following were re-elected: Mr. Charles Bunting, President; Mrs. Sarah Lakin, Secretary; Mrs. Gladys Miller, Treasurer; Mrs. Gertrude Hilton, Librarian; Mr. Reg. Stevens, Social Con-venor; and Mr. Cecil Williams was elected Vice-President. A sub-committee was appointed to study and report on a set of by-laws, which was drawn up many years ago but never adopted, while plans to carry out some of the objects cited above were discussed and forwarded. The ideas relating to weekly meetings and to new Theosophical centres were put into an even more practical form at the first meeting of the new Executive. It was decided to attempt

first the formation of a centre in Burlington.

An enjoyable picnic was held in Dundurn Park on July 16 which was attended by approximately 35, including welcome visitors from Toronto and Kitchener. A garden party was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Williams on August 30, 21 persons being present. Through the efforts of the hostess, Mrs. Alice Williams, and Mrs. Kathleen Marks, Mr. R. Stevens and Miss Gertrude Lilli, the party was very successful. The total proceeds were \$52.00. Most of the guests stayed till a late hour, enjoying the cool mountain breezes. A corn roast was held on September 17 at Coot's Paradise in the Botanical Gardens, under the stars and by the water's edge. It was a lovely outing.

A project, initiated and carried out by Mr. Bunting, President, is now under way. This is a convention of 'New Truth' groups in Hamilton. The Bud-dhists and Radiant Living have responded favourably and other organizations are to be approached.

The Lodge has taken the first steps toward the formation of a Theosophical centre in Burlington, and Mrs. Alice Stewart has kindly offered her home as a meeting place.

It has been decided to hold public meetings once a month only in the Royal Connaught Hotel, and to increase the advertising. As a trial, other meetings are held in members' homes, the money thus saved being regarded as devoted to a contemplated fund for the establishment of a Lodge room of our own.

A new way of conducting the home meetings has been inaugurated on a plan introduced by Mr. Cecil Williams. This combines meditation and study. In the study period, *The Secret Doctrine* and other writings of the Mahatmas are to be discussed by topics. The meditations, or will-prayers, are strictly pantheistic or occult, as contrasted with

theistic prayers, and are applications of the postulates of *The Secret Doctrine*. The inaugural meetings were characterized by a spiritual tone, and a most harmonious, friendly and cheerful spirit prevailed.

The appearance of the number seven, which Madame Blavatsky pointed out as occurring in the early events of the Society, has been noted, either in the date or the number present or both, at all recent meetings of the Lodge.

While it is recognized that at the outset, progress must necessarily be slow, and indeed, preferably so, enthusiasm is growing, also a resolve to make the beneficent influences of Theosophy felt more widely in preparation for the outer work of the Masters in the new age that is opening before us.

Sarah Lakin,
Secretary, Hamilton Lodge.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist.

Dear Sir:

An article in a recent issue reminded me of a reflection I have had in the past concerning some of the out-of-date topics of Theosophists (not the article *per se*). For example, take that essay, "Was Writing Known before Panini?" Nowadays, this is not the question. Writing is not established with reference to the date of Panini by Indianists. In the first place, there are different views in regard to this date; but I think that V. S. Agrawala puts up a good case in his book, *India as Known to Panini* (University of Lucknow, 1953), for placing Panini in the fifth century B.C. As to the writing, there are of course the inscriptions of Ashoka in the third century B.C. There are statements of foreign writers that prove the currency

of writing on cloth and on birch-bark in India during B.C. 327-25. What entirely changed the situation was the excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in the 20's of our century. The script found there is still undeciphered (despite the claims of certain people), but it proves that writing was of great antiquity in India. The explanation that now is given for the lack of examples of writing for a long period is that it was usual to write on materials which naturally have perished in the course of ages. How long would our books last, especially in a hot, damp climate? Besides that, writing was frowned upon as a vehicle for religious texts. These were memorized and handed down from teacher to disciple. The emphasis was on training of the ear and an iron grip of memory.

Take the Cretan syllabary, of which the decipherment was a recent sensation. It proved that the Greek language went back to at least B.C. 1400, but there were no philosophical works at all. The script, called "Linear B" was entirely given over to inventory accounts, indicating that there also, what might be called the "esoteric doctrine" was an exclusive possession of people who passed it down by word of mouth. The still older Cretan writing, which is ideographic, has not yet been deciphered.

The writing down of philosophical texts in India must have required extraordinary pressure of events. The change of heart took place about the beginning of our so-called Christian era, at a time when Northern India was subjected to continuous invasions by foreign peoples. With this phase of writing down the texts, there naturally occurred a change in the texts; in particular, the Brahmins wrote works which would have everything but some essential statement that would still be passed on by word of mouth. The

Buddhists never felt themselves bound to such withholding, and this is one of the chief psychological reasons for the inveterate hostility of the Brahmins toward Buddhism. It is nevertheless true that there was still a class of work which was not written down for almost the whole first millenium, A.D. in India. In Tibet, for the first time in our modern historical annals, the written and oral esoterical traditions were combined and written down.

Sincerely ours,

Alex Wayman.

Editor, *The Canadian Theosophist*.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Wilks has a surprisingly strong recommendation of *Theosophical Notes* in the Sept.-Oct C. T. This is surprising to me, because, although I have not read it for some years, the early issues were not, as I recall, of a character that would at all deserve recommendation as a Theosophical contribution. But I respect Mr. Wilks' standard, and hence must assume that subsequently the journal experienced a pronounced improvement.

Since I am not a reader of *Theosophical Notes*, the following need not be construed as applying to that publication. Mr. Wilks found especially praiseworthy that "it leaves no-one in doubt where it stands on any matter of importance." Presumably, one or more other Theosophical periodicals compare unfavourably in this regard. Is this valid? Is it really the business of a periodical to take a stand on all the important matters? This would be the concern of the errorless divine guides of mankind who reappear in cycles. It would be the concern of such a one as H.P.B. who was establishing a movement and thus was vested with the responsibility and knowledge to make cer-

tain issues clear. It does not seem to be the policy of such periodicals as *The Canadian Theosophist* and *Theosophy* which have a responsibility to the members, subscribers, etc., and therefore could hardly represent a *single viewpoint*. Indeed, one of the most commendable features of the C.T. has been to provide space for *differing* views, expressed in the words of their respective proponents, so that readers would have a *fair* opportunity to judge the respective merits.

Mr. Wilks himself gave far superior advice in his letter, "The Pearl of Great Price," of Oct. 29th, 1943 to Mr. Hodson. He said, "For until the student, as the result of having been fooled, deceived over and over again, learns to use his intelligence and distinguish the true from the false, the real from the unreal,—the Pearl of great price from its imitations—he can be nothing more than part of the great mass of dead weight liability which has to be *carried* in any spiritual movement with an open membership." Here we find that the place free from doubt is *within the student*. The Theosophical periodical itself does not provide the light. Even further, there never was a Theosophical periodical that failed to show where its contributors stood on important issues to the one who had the insight that sees things as they really are. People, as well as publications, are more appealing to the general run of humanity when they present that mixture of good and bad which is usual, "down to earth," like ourselves and therefore comfortable and "understandable." But such people, and such publications, are not the best.

May I be permitted to make a few suggestions for evaluating Theosophical publications? Are they friendly and compassionate? Or are they mean and self-righteous? If they criticize, do they do so in an impersonal way? Or do they descend to unsigned personality

attacks? When they discuss ethical points, do they make use of the Theosophical ethical treatises (such as *The Voice of the Silence*)? Or are they carried away by private ethical theories? Do they offer guidance for leading the student onward in the spiritual life? Or do they presume to give final conclusions on profound matters? Are they produced for the purpose of strengthening the Theosophical Movement? Or are they motivated toward gaining support for division and schism?

Respectfully yours,

Alex Wayman.

WHAT OF SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION?

Attempting to think beyond the ordinary toward the permanent values of all life is the privilege of man. By reason of the mental plane consciousness which evolves in man, speculation can be undertaken and recorded for others to read. A conception of the whole mental sphere is bound to be sketchy. There is likely to be one impression observed now, another again. What is being searched after has to be established. All may appear empty with little to be discerned upon which comment can be recorded.

One has at least a sense of attempting an analysis of a new arena—quiet, full in potential, still, yet vibrant. It seems to be an inner world of one's own where peace and security exist, all else excluded or not noticed as being existent there. Reflecting on all the array of facts studied over years in theosophical literature one wonders where all this is at the moment when reflecting upon the soundless, though vibrant. It is to be

conceded that there would be no such mysterious concept were it not for this prior study, yet there is only a dim remembrance of these studies as one attempts scanning, highly attracted.

Our attention is continually drawn toward this sphere or plane in mysterious imagination. It is a concept which attracts. It is inviting as to an explorer. It suggests that long-sought-after quietude, rest, soul ease and more perfect understanding, after the physical realm has been so strenuous—particularly as the physical body ages.

The concept calls for continual searching, for there is a feeling that somehow there will be a gratifying disclosure in ratio to the spiritual eagerness of the observer. Who communicates in such a sphere, is bound to be a recurring thought as the attention remains fixed upon this plane. There will, perhaps, be no startling awareness of any communicating entity, but rather a slow exhilaration of the activities of this plane—consistent and unfolding the consciousness there-toward. To make the commencement! How many have to be the years of booksearch ere this vision opens and the new sphere becomes a budding reality? How assiduous has to be the application of effort to allow for and evolve an ever broader unfolding in this new area dimly discerned? What now is the procedure to be, varying from all prior approach to theosophical truth?

One senses that as years of application so far have brought their unfoldings, so more steady effort, persistent, enduring with high purpose and diligent practice, will open a new concept, (sphere, plane or area) it proving to be along the line of amplifying a spiritual consciousness in man while in physical incarnation.

B. J. W.

REPORTS FROM THE WESTERN LODGES

I have received reports from three of the lodges visited by Mr. Barr on his recent trip to the west. Knowing that Mr. Barr would be reluctant to embody them in his own report, I am having them published in my capacity as General Secretary, as I feel that they will be of much interest to all our members.

E. L. Thomson,
General Secretary.

EDMONTON LODGE

Edmonton Lodge was singularly honoured recently when Mr. Dudley Barr, Editor of *The Canadian Theosophist*, and author of *Theosophy, an Attitude Toward Life*, visited Edmonton for two days, and lectured on two evenings, besides calling on members unable to attend.

His subjects were: "What Theosophy Offers" and "The Memory of Past Lives". Mr. Barr developed his subject matter with such nicety and skill that the latter lecture seemed to derive naturally from the first; while the audience of some thirty-five persons each evening, were intently interested in everything that was said. This was evidenced by the type and number of questions asked, by the size of the collection—(this will please the Scotch), by the number of pamphlets accepted, and by the purchase of literature on the general subject of Theosophy.

Heretofore we have not been favoured much with persons seeking more information after a series of lectures, or returning to our regular weekly meetings. On the three meetings since Mr. Barr's visit, however, several have returned, indicating interest might gather greater momentum, if more lectures had been given. From remarks gathered at random, his evident sincerity, his calm and collected manner, his logical approach

and clear reasoning upon the teaching, made a very deep and favourable impression. A few others expressed pleasure because no reference was made to historical wounds.

That the National Executive was able, and saw fit to send out Mr. Barr at this time, elicits our gratitude; and we trust a return visit can be arranged conveniently next year, with a longer stay in anticipation. Travel by air being general, the East is now near to the West, and periodic visits should be maintained. Though small in membership, our Lodges are nevertheless vital, and such contacts with the Eastern personnel of the National Executive brings into clearer focus the difficulties under which the Western Lodges operate.

On the other hand, our contribution to the national effort could be developed, if more of the serious students across the Dominion wrote articles for the Editor, thus making *The Canadian Theosophist* an outstanding organ among Theosophical periodicals, and essentially by Canadians.

ORPHEUS LODGE

When the usually anaemic exchequer of the Canadian Theosophical Society received a munificent donation from anonymous sources recently, we were asked what aspect of the 'Work' we would like it applied to, so far as we in the West of Canada, were concerned. We unanimously decided upon a series of lectures, and our first choice of possible lecturers was, by a wide margin, for Mr. Dudley Barr, Editor of our Magazine, *The Canadian Theosophist*.

Very few of us had met Mr. Barr, though all of us knew him well through the Magazine and by correspondence. We were overjoyed, therefore, when we heard that Mr. Barr had consented to give up his holiday and to take on this work of lecturing to the lodges from Winnipeg west to the coast. His visit

to Vancouver was an unqualified success. He gave three public lectures in which he presented an outline of what Theosophy has to offer to the enquiring student. Each lecture was better attended than the last, and Mr. Barr finished up with a most courageous and ambitious attempt to explain in simple language the place which reason and intuition have in Theosophy and in the life of the student. Instead of people being bored, there was obvious intense interest and keen concentration, and a very fine atmosphere was produced. Perhaps we have under-estimated our audiences; at least this lecture was, all agreed, an exceedingly successful one, the most successful, we all thought.

In all his lectures, Mr. Barr succeeded in doing something more than produce a clear statement of the subject matter, he also made evident that intangible thing, the true Theosophical attitude. Not himself, but the theosophical ideas offered for examination, was what he put forward.

We all regret not to have had more time with Mr. Barr, but this regret was mitigated by learning that there is a lively prospect of his visiting the Coast again before long.

WINNIPEG LODGE

Winnipeg Lodge was delighted to have as its guest and distinguished visitor and lecturer, Mr. Dudley W. Barr, who was guest of honour at a Members' Meeting on October 8th, and at a Public Lecture on October 9th.

At the Members' Meeting, Mr. Barr was introduced to the Lodge and enthusiastically welcomed. His talk to the members was entitled *Mind, the Slayer of the Real*, and he included excellent examples and illustrations as well as quoting from the writings of Bergson and Whitman. The members loved it, and took Mr. Barr to their hearts, and were loath to part with him. A question

and answer period followed the talk, and he received an enthusiastic ovation, with members coming to clasp his hand and converse afterward.

The Public Lecture on October 9th was an event which had been extensively advertised; and although this was during the Thanksgiving holidays, it was indeed very well attended by a most agreeable and appreciative audience. The lecture was given at the Marlborough Hotel in Winnipeg, in the very beautiful Palm Room on the mezzanine floor. Mr. Barr was introduced by our President, Martha Bowers, and was immediately applauded. He then launched into a most interesting and fascinating lecture on *Our Memory of Past Lives*. The public drank in his words hungrily, asked questions afterwards, came forward to talk, and showed enthusiastic interest in Theosophy. We feel that we should do this more often, and wish we had a fund for this purpose!

We received a letter from Toronto Lodge, wishing us well, and we were indeed delighted to hear from their Corresponding Secretary and would like to take this opportunity to thank our sister Lodge and to send our greetings and fraternal good wishes to all the Section and to our sister lodges everywhere. We are an enthusiastic and happy group engaged in the work, and with plans for the future that augur well for all.

Martha M. Bowers.
President.

I do appreciate and wish to thank the lodges for these kindly comments on my efforts—but I must confess that upon reading these, I was somehow reminded of the story of the Irish widow who had lived an arduous life with her departed spouse, and who, after listening in amazement to the eloquent eulogy of his virtues delivered at his funeral

service, whispered to her young son, "Mike, slip over will ye, and see if it 'tis your father that's in the coffin!"

D. W. Barr.

THE ESOTERIC SAVIOR (Continued from Page 100)

The loftiest spiritual Teachers of recorded history have spoken with authority because they had become at one with their own Higher Selves, the God within, 'The Father in Heaven', and therefore they *knew*. Men of less exalted spiritual and intellectual stature, insofar as they actually did know, have revealed in less fullness the laws of being to which the human consciousness of them had become attuned.

To illustrate: when Schubert wrote the *Unfinished Symphony*, he attuned himself in some measure to 'The Music of the Spheres'. The proof lies in the masterpiece which he transmitted to men through his human genius. Those of us who have not yet evolved to the state where we, unaided, can hear those divine harmonies, can at least recognize that they exist, rejoice in them, and strive to interpret them. Similarly, as we raise our consciousness out of the personal and the ephemeral into the impersonal and the eternal, we can realize that truth is to be had by each of us—truth convincing and certain and universal insofar as we have the capacity to understand and rightly to interpret it. In the meantime we can accept the teachings of those who we know are further advanced along the path than we are ourselves, just as we can enjoy and interpret the music of the great Masters even now, long before we have evolved to the point where we ourselves are capable of capturing the divine harmonies from the storehouse of the cosmic ethers in which we live, and move, and have our being.

We are convinced that the most lasting solution of the major problems that

confront mankind today and have confronted humanity for ages past, lies in changing men's hearts and minds through self-directed evolution—through keeping alive in them their spiritual intuitions. These intuitions spring from the light of man's innate godhood—"the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world". This innate godhood has, through self-directed evolution, found its noblest human expression in god-men like Jesus of Nazareth, Krishna and Gautama, the Buddha of India, Zoroaster of Persia, Laotse and Confucius of China, Pythagoras and Plato of Greece, Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus of Alexandria, Quetzalcóatl of ancient America, and others less known and too numerous to name.

It is these members of the Brotherhood of Compassion, who from time to time in different ages and according to the needs and receptivity of different peoples, send forth their Messengers into the world to proclaim once again the everlasting truths of religion, philosophy and science on which man's spiritual and intellectual thirst is perennially assuaged—too often, alas, only when suffering and pain have made him aware of a nostalgia of the soul for the realities of life. Once aware of this, a man begins to take his own evolution in hand. He is no longer satisfied with the discredited materialism and mechanistic theories, which have been tried and found wanting; for even now they are threatening to destroy civilization before our very eyes, because they are divorced from the high spiritual and ethical principles which man knows instinctively, intuitively, and absolutely, are intrinsic parts of his innate godhood. Thanks largely to the work of the Theosophical Movement during the past eighty years, materialistic theories of life have lost some of their power to bind man's thoughts to matter and self-

interest as the be-all and end-all of existence. Theosophy has given man freedom to grow and evolve; and on the wings of this new-found freedom, man is soaring in thought ever nearer to the sunlit mountain-peaks of the spirit, from which the Gods look down with sorrow and compassion upon erring mankind, while ever calling to those who have ears to hear: "Come up higher."

As H.P.B. tells us in *The Key to Theosophy*:

"From strength to strength, from the beauty and perfection of one plane to the greater beauty and perfection of another, with accessions of new glory, of fresh knowledge and power in each cycle, such is the destiny of every Ego, which thus becomes its own saviour in each world and incarnation."

THE GOLDEN STAIRS

"Behold the Truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science (Gupta Vidya) depicts—these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom."

(from the letter of a Master, quoted by H.P.B. in her first preliminary memorandum to E.S. members in 1888).

THE UNAFRAID

The heavens are silent and the Gods are sleeping,
No plea is heard from one who stands alone;
What need of prayer to him who is my being—
Dweller in That, the mystic three in one?

No coward suppliant cries for help or pardon,
Nor sues for mercy with a failing breath!
Thou art the law, eternal and unchanging,
Who gavest life, and nothing heeds of death.

Here stands thy self, beleaguered not defeated,
Prisoned in clay, within yet burning bright;
Think not I fail or faint or am extinguished—
I do but greet thee, calling from the night.

The heavens are silent but the darkness trembles,
Pierced with a ray that strikes into my heart;
Softly as dew from out the veils of morning
Descends the word—"I AM, and now thou art".

Mona Barry.

"If Sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet. . . . Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, and—let him hear the Law."

The Voice of the Silence.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Movement differs from these two groups [Ethical Culture, and Humanist Movements] in that it offers a theory of knowledge involving transcendental assumptions about the nature of things. Theosophy, according to its chief nineteenth century exponent, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, is characterized by belief in the eternal existence of the *Gnosis*—actual knowledge or wisdom concerning the nature of things. While Theosophy declared uncompromising opposition to the supernaturalism of a personal God, it proposed that all men were possessed of latent deific powers, and could ultimately become "Masters of Wisdom." This philosophical position, however, when sloganized by immature members, created extreme hazards for the Theosophical Society, since those who were to all appearance ordinary human beings eventually were found implying that they had attained to spiritual heights not yet reached by the common herd, and entitled, therefore, to special recognition as Theosophical authorities. In consequence of this development, splits occurred in the Society, until there were three schismatic groups, organized more or less like churches, each claiming to be the true channel of inspiration. It was inevitable that the educated public should show little respect for a movement displaying such self-discrediting behaviour. What happened in this instance should hardly be regarded as surprising, since whenever transcendental ideas of great subtlety are promoted by *group* enthusiasm, the ideas tend to be vitiated into a creed by the very language of the "joiners." From this grows the authority of "group" beliefs. This record should be instructive, for there is little or no basis for any sort of religious authoritarianism in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, which are a

searching inquiry into ancient religions. Thus the history of the Theosophical Movement should be a useful "case-history" to refer to when contemplating the proposal of an organization devoted to the quest for philosophical truth. It is one thing to set up a principle of "no authority," but quite another to make it stand, especially when the goal is human development. At any rate, the continuing vigour of the Theosophical Movement seems to reside mostly in the efforts of relatively unorganized individuals who are pursuing their studies and work without interest in organizational authorities, or in spite of them.

—*Manas*, Dec. 1, 1954

BOOKS RECEIVED

We acknowledge receipt of the following books for review:

The Diamond Sutra, or The Jewel of Transcendental Wisdom, translated from the Chinese by A. F. Price, with foreword by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz; published by The Buddhist Society, London, 5 shillings.

Selected Sayings from the Perfecting of Wisdom, chosen, arranged and translated by Edward Conge; published by The Buddhist Society, London, 8/6.

The Buddha and His Path to Self-Enlightenment, by Ronald Fussell; published by the Buddhist Society, London, 7/6.

India's True Voice, a Critique of Oriental Philosophy, by Alvin Boyd Kuhn, Ph.D.; published by the Academy Press, Elizabeth 2, N.J. 3.50.

The Expansion of Awareness, One Man's Search for Meaning in Living, by Arthur W. Osborn; published by The Omega Press, Reigate, Surrey, 15s.

An Introduction to Organic Philosophy, an Essay on the Reconciliation of the Masculine and the Feminine Principles, by Lawrence Hyde; published by The Omega Press, Reigate, Surrey, 15s.

GLEANNINGS

Coleridge said: "The artist must imitate that which is within the thing, that which is active through form and figure, and discourses to us by symbols." He viewed beauty as "the subjection of matter to spirit so as to be transformed into a symbol, in and through which the spirit reveals itself." Thus it may be held that objects of art are effective and more or less adequate symbols of reality, and that the principal meaning of art is that it does communicate reality to us.

New movements in art always disclose the self-renewing demands of human beings to conquer for themselves a positive satisfaction for contemplation which shall be wholly theirs, a mystical conviction of insight into the truth, as what ought to be. Modern literature and modern painting in every age repeat the rebellion of each new generation against the static, formalized conventions which were once, for the fathers of the new generation, living forms but have now lost that precious mystical value.

The Meaning of Art, A. P. McMahon.

Myrtale, when I am gone,
(Who was once Anacreon)
Lay these annals of my heart
In some sacred shrine apart;
Into it put all my sighs,
All my lover's litanies,
All my vows and protestations,
All my jealous accusations,
All my hopes and all my fears,
All the tribute of my tears—
Let it all be there inurned,
All my passion as it burned;
Label it, when I am gone,
'Ashes of Anacreon.'

To Myrtale, Austin Dobson.

Ananda asked, "How can it be that when Thou preaches the Law, these men pay no heed thereto?"

"Ananda, such things as The Buddha, or The Law, or The Order of Brethren, through countless cycles of time have never been heard of by these beings. Therefore they cannot listen to this Law. In this round of births and deaths, whose beginning is incalculable, these beings have come to birth hearing only the talk of divers animals. They spend their time in song and dance, in places where men drink and gamble and the like. Thus they cannot listen to the Law.

"But what, Lord, is the actual reason, the immediate cause why they cannot?"

The Master replied: "Ananda, owing to hatred, owing to delusion, owing to lust, they cannot do so. There is no such fire as the fire of lust. It burns up creatures, nor even leaves an ash behind."

Dhammapada Commentary,
translated by F. L. Woodward.

You may be sure of this, my son; that no decision you may take, nor any course, will meet with universal favour. Though you turn to the right or to the left, or go ahead, or turn back, or attempt to stand still, there will come to you some critic to advise the contrary. For ten fail where the one succeeds; and some who failed are jealous, others, vain, some full of malice. There are also honest men, who having failed, would warn you of the reef on which they wrecked their too unmanageable bark. I tell you, in the end you must decide all issues for yourself, and there is only one true guide, which is experience.

*The Book of the Sayings
of Tsiang Samdup.*

And forget not this; that outward semblance of authority is not a necessary symptom of its essence. There are men in high place who have no authority at all beyond what indolence confers because the indolence of the many is the opportunity of one. Such men lead multitudes astray.

*The Book of the Sayings
of Tsiang Samdup.*

Success and failure, Glaucon—how you worry yourself over these words! . . . A little honest self-seeking should demonstrate to anyone that he is *both* a success and a failure many times over. The more sensitive one becomes to the strengths and weaknesses within his own nature, the more readily he admits that, at any given time, to strike a balance is so difficult that he gladly relinquishes the attempt—unless, that is, he happens to be frightened, and needs to construct a sort of private trance in which he is able to crown himself with laurels . . . In any case, I find it very easy to regard myself as *both* monumental failure and inspiring success at one and the same time, which is just another way of asserting that neither word has any genuine significance. To press the case further, one may point out that the things we think to be our greatest weaknesses sometime turn out to be our strongest and best points, and the apparent great strengths occasionally reveal themselves to be of rather different origin. Successes and failures, Glaucon? Always are we both and neither.

—From *Manas Children and Ourselves*.

This indifference to ethics, politics and other social sciences is the vulnerable point in Indian philosophy. A philosophy, if it is to satisfy fully the demands of human life, should not only provide us with a principle on which we can base our conception of the world, but also attempt to develop from it the

sciences that are incident to social life. True, a synoptic view of the universe, an intellectual construction of it, should not be the sole aim of philosophy. It is the ability to rise above such an attitude that most of the Western systems are lacking. Their dominant attitude is one of intellectual curiosity rather than of a serious search after the solution of life's problems. On the other hand, we should not fail to notice that life's problems include the ethical and social. They should be related to the same principle which is to explain the nature of the world. It is very often said that the outlook of Indian philosophy is practical, that philosophy, for the Indian, is not a way of thought, but a process of life. But philosophy, if it is to be a process of life, must be a process, not of blind, but of conscious life, of a life that thinks. Studies like ethics, etc., form part of our conscious life.

Our life cannot avoid thinking about them. Nor can it sunder itself into discrete and unrelated parts, and treat social sciences as having nothing to do with its theory of the world. Life is a whole, a unity, and its various phases cannot be left in isolation.

Thought and Reality, P. T. Raju.

Probably the only total error in the world is the belief in total truth, and categorical attacks upon even this error are often self-defeating. Every pea of truth, including scientific truth, seems to be enclosed in a pod of superstition. Removing the pod without losing the pea has always been the Western mind's most difficult problem, but it hardly seems a problem to the East. The attitude of the Eastern sages toward it. . . . seems to be expressible by saying that just as hatred is never ceased by hatred, so superstition is never ceased by unbelief, it ceases by right understanding.

From: *Richer by Asia*,
by Edmond Taylor.

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