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SELF-DIRECTED EVOLUTION

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Human life, according to the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, is not limited to the short term of one cycle of existence on earth, on this little globe in the boundless cosmos. It is not limited to the embodiment of the evolving monad in one human physical frame for a span of some three score years and ten. Nor is evolution, in our correct etymological use of the term, synonymous with the transformism, the changing of forms all the way from the amoeba to man, popularly known as evolution in the Darwinian sense. No, evolution is the unrolling, the unwrapping, the unfolding, the bringing forth of what is within, of those potentialities, qualities, capacities which are wrapped up in, involved in, the inner man. This inner man, for purposes of ready understanding, we shall call the *soul*, meaning in this case the intangible, innermost center of consciousness in man, the greatest reality of his existence, his link with the Divine.

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 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.

Masters of Wisdom have made available to the West in our day under the name of Theosophy, or 'Divine Wisdom,' the teaching that on the grand cosmic scale, the Monad or unit of consciousness in æons past, at the beginning of a great periodic cycle of manifestation or *manvantara*, was emanated forth from the Cosmic Source as an unself-conscious god-spark, as a ray of light emanates forth from our sun. Then, spiraling downwards during vast periods of time through ever denser spheres of substance, it eventually reached our own present plane on the dense earth and became completely *in-*

volved in matter, incarnating in a body of flesh as a self-conscious human being.

Out of the gross matter in which it is now enmeshed, *involved*, so that it may learn all the lessons necessary to this plane of existence, it is its destiny, in the vast cycles of evolutionary time, to evolve, by self-directed evolution, all the spiritual and intellectual powers latent within itself. It is its destiny to spiral back along the luminous arc of evolution, through countless æons of time, until it again unites itself with the spiritual Source from which it originally emanated. At this high stage of its evolution, it will not be an unself-conscious god-spark, but a fully self-conscious god, one of the spiritual intelligences of the universe, the intelligent spiritual entities which help to establish and maintain what are called 'the Laws of Nature'. These are the laws which keep the stars in their courses and which manifest in *effect*, ineluctably following every *cause* set in motion—the habits of nature, which make of this universe not a chaos but a cosmos of law and order.

There, in brief outline, is the Theosophical doctrine of evolution. It is a magnificent concept that gives dignity and purpose to individual existence and teaches us that, however commonplace, humdrum and mayhap even tragic, our present situation may be, we are the inheritors of an inspiring spiritual legacy from the remote past and have before us boundless opportunities for inner growth and expansion of consciousness along the soul's evolutionary pathway back to Father Sun and on to higher spheres!

Having set our stage in the boundless field of infinitude in which "we live and move and have our being," let us now turn from the universal to the particular and see how this doctrine of self-directed evolution applies to us individually.

However transcendent may be our vision of the ultimate goal of self-directed evolution, we have to remember the lesson of the wise old Philosopher of the 6th Century B.C., in ancient China, Lao-Tzū, who wrote in the *Tao Te Ching**:

"The difficult things of this world must once have been easy; the great things of this world must once have been small. Set about difficult things while they are still easy; do great things while they are still small. The Sage never affects to do anything great, and therefore he is able to achieve his great results . . .

"The tree which needs two arms to span its girth sprang from the tiniest shoot. Yon tower, nine storeys high, rose from a little mound of earth. A journey of a thousand miles began with a single step."

Self-directed evolution, then, from the standpoint of the individual, is the conscious exercise by any human being of his power of choice in determining the course of his life. The Spiritual Titans of the race have trodden the path ahead of us and left their footprints in the sands of time. The Lord Buddha taught:

"Ye are not bound! The Soul of Things is sweet.

The Heart of Being is celestial rest: Stronger than woe is will: that which was good

Doth pass to Better—Best."†

"Stronger than woe is will." There we have the secret of self-directed evolution, of working out our own salvation. No matter what the circumstances surrounding us, no matter what the difficulties confronting us, no matter what the agonies of body and mind may be, so long as the will to grow in wisdom and in capacity to serve is ours, we can go

* Lionel Giles: *The Sayings of Lao Tzū.*

† Edwin Arnold: *The Light of Asia.*

forward on the path, and that which was good shall pass to better, best.

The path of self-directed evolution is the path of progress and achievement on all planes of thought and activity, even here and now in our daily mundane pursuits. The athlete, the student, the artisan, the business man, the professional, the artist, all have to choose willingly to discipline body and mind in order to achieve success in their chosen field.

So, also, the Theosophical student must exercise his will in mastering his own personal weaknesses and dedicate himself to the acquisition of an ever deeper and clearer understanding of the universal truths available in the standard works of the Society's great Founder, H. P. Blavatsky, and of those who have faithfully followed in her footsteps, as well as of the eternal verities in the world's religions, philosophies and sciences which have withstood the test of time, if he would be an effective channel for the transmission of the light which has been given us.

It is this light which we are now attempting to focus on the subject of our present study. Madame Blavatsky tells us in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 17) :

"The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations."

One could hardly find anywhere a clearer exposition of the doctrine of self-directed evolution, of *karman* and reincarnation, summarized in a single sentence. Sooner or later in his progress towards inner enlightenment and peace, the student of Occultism—which has been defined by H.P.B. as 'The Science of Life, the Art of Living'—is forced by his very aspirations towards the light to realize that the only Saviour on whom he can and must eventually

depend is the Divine Principle at the core of him, his own Higher Self, the God within. The doctrine of vicarious atonement, as commonly understood, is, according to our Theosophical teachers, distinctly pernicious, because it weakens a man's sense of personal responsibility and lulls him into spiritual somnolence. As H.P.B. tells us again in *The Secret Doctrine*: (I. 280).

"The ever unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless Cause* of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through the 'still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls, making their Spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*."

To the man who has his inner ear attuned to 'the still small voice' of his 'spiritual consciousness,' there can be little question as to what are 'good actions' and what are 'sinful intentions.' The answer is not a matter of mere custom or convention: it derives from the Universal Spirit as reflected in our own individual spiritual consciousness. This spiritual consciousness far transcends mere logical thinking, however useful this is in its place, and still more does it transcend emotionalism. The spiritual consciousness in any man is only recognized when his thoughts are impersonal, when his soul yearns for that peace which pervades his whole being while in the pursuit of wisdom and in the performance of duty. When the personal man can say in all sincerity and earnestness to his inner God, "Not my will but thine be done", and surrender every selfish desire as a sacrifice to the

Supreme Spirit, then is he firmly on the path of self-directed evolution.

An outstanding feature of the teachings of H. P. B. and other Illuminati, is that they are so universal in their application, so simple, and yet so profound. To be sure, they demand clear thinking, sincere aspiration, and honest effort: but one need not be a doctor of philosophy nor a master of metaphysics in order to understand them. They are definite signposts for every wayfarer pointing to the path of self-directed evolution. They are to be found in the Christian Bible, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in the Buddhist scriptures, in the *Tao Te Ching* or ancient wisdom-religion of China, in the Holy Koran, in the pronouncements of our own Theosophical Teachers.

Even to men who are most successful in their worldly pursuits, there come times when the nostalgia of the soul, a sort of divine dissatisfaction with life as it is, forces them to seek some spiritual and intellectual ambrosia to appease the inner hunger for 'light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect.' It is here that Theosophy, as taught by the Masters and their Messengers, adequately supplies the need to those most anhungered for the eternal verities which are their rightful heritage—a heritage which they can accept without surrendering their God-given power of thought, without subscribing to any man-made dogmas which are an affront to their reason, and without relinquishing any of the lofty ideals which have graced the lives of the world's great spiritual seers, sages and teachers. As William Q. Judge says in the opening paragraph of *The Ocean of Theosophy*:

"Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings; unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope,

yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child."

Reference has been made to the teachings of the Illuminati, of Theosophists of all ages, who have left signposts along the road of self-directed evolution for the guidance of later generations. These signposts are as imperative to follow to-day as when first erected. Time has not obliterated them but has made them ever more urgently necessary because of man's involvement in and dedication to materialistic, unspiritual aims, reinforced in our day by uninhibited control over natural forces.

In his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (Ch. X), Dr. de Purucker writes:

"How does a man become a Mahatman or Great Self? Through self-directed evolution, through *becoming that which he is in himself*, in his inmost . . . We make our own bodies, we make our own lives, we make our own destinies, and we are responsible for it all, spiritually, morally, intellectually, psychically, and even physically. It is a manly doctrine; there is no room in it for moral cowardice; no room in it for casting our responsibilities upon the shoulders of another—god, angel, man, or demon. We can become gods, because we are gods in the germ even now, inwardly."

In almost identical language, Jesus is reported by St. John (X. 34) to have declared: 'Is it not written in your law, I said Ye are gods?' And in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the God-Man, the Avatara, the Sage, and Saviour, 'who taught as one having authority and not as the scribes,' showed His followers—and we students of Theosophy should be among the truest of His followers—how each of us may become that which He is in His inmost, a Great Self, a Mahatman, a God-Man, or what the old Chinese philoso-

pher called 'a completeness', 'a Compeer of Heaven,' which he said was the highest goal of the ancients.

This 'highest goal of the ancients' is not achieved as a special gift or privilege; but, as H. P. B. reminded us, it must be won by a man's own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of reincarnations. Thus have the great spiritual Teachers arrived at the high status which has made of them during succeeding ages the forerunners and saviours of millions of their fellowmen. If we aspire to have the privileges and special gifts of the Great Ones, we can have them, provided we are strong-enough to win them through personal effort carried on continuously through a long series of reincarnations. But after we shall have won them, we must be sure that we are also strong enough to shoulder the responsibilities which are the companions attendant upon superior knowledge and power.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky tells us:

"Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance."

This can be done, for it has been done. Jesus did it in fullness; so did Krishna and Gautama the Buddha in India; so also did Laotse and Confucius in China and Zoroaster in Persia; so did Pythagoras, Plato, Apollonius of Tyana, Ammonius Saccas, the 'God-taught' (*Theodidaktos*) and the Neo-Platonic Seers of Alexandria; so did the Elder Brothers who launched the modern Theosophical Movement; so, in varying degrees of completeness, did other great spiritual sages and seers in different epochs. What they did can be done again. Each of us here and now can take the first steps on the long evolutionary journey ahead of us—self-directed evolution towards the goal already reached by the Great Ones.

"Gods we are, bards, saints, heroes, if we will."

By self-directed evolution, by deliberately cleansing one's mind of everything that would becloud his vision and prevent his direct perception of reality, can one know absolute truth, understand himself and thus understand his fellowmen, so that he becomes worthy to help Nature in her creative work and become 'the equal of heaven and earth.' Just as the artist's mind reflects the beauties of sky and mountain, of forest and flower, so does the spiritual aspirant empty his mind of all personal impedimenta until it becomes the clear, unclouded mirror of infinite beauty. Lifted above the conflicts of man against man, of nation against nation, of creed against creed, into the realm of pure universal thought and understanding, wherein we are all one, whether we will or whether we nill, he there comes face to face with reality, with truth, and he knows.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor
sins

Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys
and woes

Invade his safe eternal peace; nor
deaths

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

Om, Mani Padme, Om! The dewdrop
slips

Into the shining sea!†

But even this is not the highest goal; for in one of the sublimest passages in all literature, we read:

"Compassion speaks and saith: 'Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?' . . . 'Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the

† Edwin Arnold: *The Light of Asia*.

sake of *Self*; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow-men' . . . The Bodhisattva who has won the battle, who holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion: 'For others' sakes this

great reward I yield'—accomplishes the greater Renunciation. A SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD is he . . . Peace to all Beings."*

* H. P. Blavatsky: *The Voice of the Silence*.

TOWARDS THEOSOPHICAL UNITY

*The International Fraternity of
Theosophists*

As we move into the last cycle of the first century of the Theosophical Movement, the idea of re-uniting the various theosophical societies, or of creating some channel for closer co-operation between them, is beginning to be expressed. A growing number of members consider it incongruous that a movement devoted to universal brotherhood should be split into separate branches, each of which regards the others with a certain coldness, if not suspicion.

The history of the original breakup of the one society which existed when H. P. Blavatsky was alive has been told and re-told in thousands of words in books and brochures from 1895 onwards, and various writers have given their versions and expressed their opinions. Those who are interested in studying and comparing the various accounts will find enough material to work upon and think about for a long time. Whether persons accept one or another of the versions will depend upon their own capacity for judgment—and on the degree of their awareness of the fact that no history can be an utterly impartial recital of all the facts without colouration or added emphasis arising out of the writer's own background or thought and his or her attitude towards the unprecedented attempt which was made in 1875 to bring the ancient wis-

dom to the attention of the western world.

Such an attempt, while certain to succeed in its main objective, was bound to encounter difficulties. The opposition of orthodox religion and of materialistic science to the essence of the doctrine, was to be expected—but this was a lesser difficulty which could be prepared for. The greater difficulty arose out of the fact that the movement was being launched upon the tumultuous seas of human personalities; that among those who became devotees of its doctrines, ancient memories would be aroused and the depths and heights of human nature would be stirred. Many were unable to handle the psychological quickening which resulted from their encounter with the potent quality of the teaching. While on the one hand there was a new vision of man's estate and a fuller understanding of his high purpose, his inner powers and his essential divinity, another side of human nature was also stirred, the alter ego, and pride, presumption, self-conceit and other vices marred the work. This, of course, was not peculiar to the membership of 1895; it is, to some degree or another, the problem of each generation of theosophical students.

Theosophical history should be read with this in mind and should be thought over with sympathetic understanding of

the inner difficulties which confront all those who accept the theosophical attitude and who take an active part in the affairs of the Movement. "There, but for the grace of God, go I" could have been said by many who were most bitter in their condemnation of others. A full understanding of all the details of the theosophical history of 1895 and succeeding years, would require a knowledge of the inner background of the many individuals involved—perhaps if we knew all the factors we would realize that the wonder is not that the Movement has not had a much more widespread influence in the world but that it has attained even the position it now holds.

Some of the difficulties in the past have arisen through conflicts between the personalities engaged in the work; others arose through the introduction of teachings at variance with the original theosophical message. The several existing societies result from these causes. These organizations are operating independently at the present time and there is no disposition among them, so far as we are aware, to merge the various societies into one. At least two attempts are being made at present to unite all students of Theosophy. First, Mr. F. Pierce Spinks of San Francisco, is working towards actual organizational unity; second, The International Fraternity of Theosophists has been formed to establish a means to bring together all who are the students of the original message and who desire to promote co-operation among all Theosophists.

The International Fraternity of Theosophists (which is a provisional title pending final acceptance of one of several suggested names) came into being through the activity of Mr. Victor Endersby of Berkeley, California. Mr. Endersby has been a student of Theosophy since 1912 and is well known through his Theosophical writings; he

is the temporary Registrar of the new organization.

We recently received the 'Organization Number' of a Newsletter from the Fraternity which contains certain proposals which will be voted upon by its members. We quote hereunder from the proposed Constitution and a suggested Manifesto; these should give readers a good idea of the aims and direction of the Fraternity. If further information is desired, this may be obtained from Mr. Victor Endersby, Box 624, Walnut Creek, California, U. S. A.

Preamble to Constitution:

The International Fraternity of Theosophists is composed of individuals and groups of students of Theosophy who, inspired by the great philosophy of the Wisdom-Religion, seek through this fellowship an effective means (1) to study and share the teachings of Theosophy as given by H. P. Blavatsky and the founders of the original Theosophical Society, and their Inspirers known as the Masters of Wisdom; and who desire at the same time (2) to promote greater understanding and co-operation among Theosophists, irrespective of organizational affiliation.

The Fraternity likewise emphasizes the need to view most carefully all elucidations of the teachings of Theosophy given since the passing of the Founders; and while bearing in mind that the test of truth is within and not based on mere authority, whatever its source, to regard the original teachings as a touchstone for testing any subsequent exposition.

The Fraternity further states as a *sine qua non* of theosophic conduct that the same fair and thoughtful consideration should be given to the beliefs of others that one expects for his own.

In thus declaring its platform based on the necessity for genuine brotherly feeling among students of the Ancient Wisdom, and a strong adherence to the original teachings, the Fraternity offers

a practical avenue of work and opportunity which should appeal to all earnest searchers for truth—those who yet may not have heard of the teachings, those who have been associated with one or another Theosophical Society and may still remain members, or those who now are not affiliated.

In establishing itself, the Fraternity, because of its principles and purposes, declares itself as an integral part of that spiritual Movement which has been active in all ages and in all countries, whether publicly known or unrecognized, and which has been the inspirer of all the great world religions and philosophies. Faithful adherence to the fundamental spiritual impulses guiding the Movement will mark the degree of success or failure in attainment of its own modest but sincere goals.

Manifesto

Preamble:

Eighty years have passed since the founding of the original Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Movement to-day continues in the form of various bodies and of many individual Theosophists without affiliations. The teachings of Theosophy have worked to the betterment of race thought, but have been hampered by divergences, by public misunderstandings of Theosophy, and of the ways of life implied in it.

It is deemed by the signers of this Manifesto that there should be greater understanding between those Theosophists who adhere to the philosophy of Theosophy as it was originally promulgated, and who subscribe to the practical ethics indicated by it. Our view is shown by the Objects, Principles, and Constitution of this body as set forth hereunder.

Objects:

The Three Objects of the original Society were as follows:

1. To form the nucleus of Universal

Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour;

2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions and sciences;

3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man.

From time to time, these Objects were reframed and varying emphasis put on them as need arose. The Fraternity follows the policy of adaptation to need. The First Object was consistently affirmed as the essential one. The "nucleus" which was to have been formed now exists in the persons of those who sincerely subscribe to it and follow it. Hence we state the First Object of this Fraternity to be:

1. "The maintenance and practice of the principle of Universal Brotherhood, without regard to race, caste, sex, creed, colour, condition or organization."

We recognize the Second and Third Objects of the original Society as legitimate fields of study, but also that such study lacks effectiveness, and is even dangerous, without the keys furnished by the doctrines of Theosophy. Such studies at large are now a part of the current intellectual scene. Hence the Second Object of this Fraternity is:

2. "The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies, science, and current events, and of the unexplained powers in man and nature, in the light of Theosophical teachings."

Our Third Object is subsidiary to and conducive to the practice of the others:

3. "To offer an opportunity to like-minded Theosophists of any and all organizational affiliations or none, to associate for the above purposes, without abandonment of any existing ties that they value; thereby to assist one another in the attempt to lead truly unselfish and Theosophical lives, and to promulgate Theosophy in its true light."

Principles:

1. *Authority in Theosophy:* Theosophy upholds as the first principle of spiritual learning that no man shall accept any teaching, whatever its source, not sanctioned by his own reason and moral nature.

Between 1875 and 1891, there was set forth for public consideration, under that principle, through the agency of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky and co-workers, the teaching known as Theosophy. All discussions of Theosophy are held by the Fraternity to be legitimate studies, but not necessarily to be believed. Various versions in contradiction with one another having been put forward, the Fraternity takes as its reference point the above period; with special note of the work of Mr. Wm. Q. Judge subsequently to it, in supporting the original modulus. It is obligatory upon no one to accept any doctrine not seen by himself as true; but it is also necessary to distinguish between differing doctrines set forth under the same name.

The teachings of Theosophy are held to be a partial statement of knowledge possessed by a body of men of ancient lineage, variously known as "Mahatmas," "Adepts," "Rishis," "Elder Brothers," and "Masters of Wisdom," from which group have come the great spiritual teachers of mankind. They are not to be confused with saints, angels, or gods, though their existence has given rise to such traditions. They are highly evolved *men*. They are far beyond us in knowledge and nobility, but their teachings are not to be considered "infallible" in the sense of religious scriptures. These must be considered on their own rational and ethical values. Claims of individuals to have special knowledge derived from intimate contact with such beings, which others are expected to accept without proof of their own, or against their own reason or ethics, are not recognized by the Fra-

ternity as such. This is also true as to revelations supposedly based upon personal clairvoyant or other abnormal powers.

The blind acceptance of any religious or other belief is a violation of the nature of the human soul. As each of us carries in him the experience of ages, only a small part of which is manifest at any one time, assumptions of the essential superiority of one man over another are out of place. The proper basis for spiritual learning is mutual help and advice.

A like consideration rules in regard to those who may be tempted to assume authority over the personal conduct of the lives of others; whether in Theosophical relationships or others; aside from the normal needs of family life and legal obligations.

2. *Theosophy in Practice:* An impression has gained ground to the effect that Theosophists are peculiar people, whose ways are not for normal men and women. Celibacy, vegetarianism, and other forms of asceticism; as also various psychic practices of "yoga," the pursuit of clairvoyance, astrology, numerology, fortune telling of various kinds, mediumistic seances, and the like, are popularly but erroneously held to be characteristic of Theosophists. Ascetic practices are a necessity in the development of Adeptship, but such an achievement is for only one in thousands. Some practices, such as vegetarianism, are beneficial to those whose constitutions permit it, but are not an essential to Theosophical life or conduct.

The "occult" in general comes under the head of the original Third Object; but that Object contemplated impartial scientific study from the basis of facts, and in the light thrown by the teachings of Theosophy; not, as some imagine, spiritualistic or mediumistic practices, or uncritical acceptance of one or another "occult" creed or practice, "sit-

ting for development," "Yoga exercises," etc. In the teachings are to be found many warnings against indiscretion in these practices, and the dangers involved.

The ethics of Theosophical life as to personal conduct are those of Christianity and the other great religions, but reinforced by the teachings of the moral order of nature, as found in Theosophy. They support, above all, strict performance of all duties in the world, as to family and other relationships, and hold that no high spiritual state can be reached over a path of neglected duties. Theosophy does not lay down fixed rules of conduct; but its principles show the evils of sensual and self-indulgent living as well as of selfishness on any plane.

3. *Freedom of Speech:* For mutual help in attaining knowledge, it is necessary that opinion be freely spoken and impartially considered. Even leaving aside teachings variant from the original, the doctrines of Theosophy, going as they do, far beyond the usual lines of thought, contain a wide field for differences of individual opinion. In addition to this, there exist many works purporting to clarify or interpret these teachings, and many claims as to the excellence or otherwise of various teachers and writers.

In a group assembled as is the Fraternity, from members of various backgrounds and traditions, impartiality and freedom of discussion are necessary. While the Fraternity points to the location of the original teachings of Theosophy, it does not as a body seek to interpret or explain them. It shows where Theosophy is rather than what it is. Its understanding is for the individual, as is the particular mode of study used.

4. *Esoteric Studies:* In the time of Mme. Blavatsky, there was formed an "esoteric section" in which certain studies were pursued under pledge of

secrecy and under pledge of a certain ethical way of life. These pledges were necessary because the studies contained clues to powers which might be socially dangerous in improper hands. These studies are still extant. The pursuit of them and the manner thereof are the responsibilities of those engaging therein; they are not taught by the Fraternity as such. Neither does the Fraternity recognize claims of special authority, due to esoteric studies, on the part of any member. On the other hand, it exercises no censorship over such matters. However, warning is given that abuse of "esoteric authority" in some groups, both in and out of the Theosophical Movement, has been the cause of damage to members, and of disrepute to the "occult" in general.

5. *Relationship with Other Organizational Memberships:* In order to join the Fraternity, it is not necessary to sever relationships with any other organizations, nor does membership prevent joining any other organization. Organizations as such, which may find themselves in sympathy, are invited to consider the Fraternity a means of broadening their own acquaintance.

6. *Members and Non-Members:* Except for the right to vote and hold office, it is the desire of the Fraternity that non-members interested in its work shall be treated in no way differently from members. The chief purpose is to promote brotherly relationships in all possible ways, and without distinction of organizational affiliations, the bond between members, and between members and non-members, being similarity of aims and ideas. Above all, there should be no friction between members of groups who choose to join, and those who do not choose to do so. Each is entitled to his own reasons, without criticism.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

In the last issue I mentioned that one of our new members was a Mrs. Agnes O'Brien—this was incorrect in that it should have been Miss Agnes O'Brien. I herewith tender my apologies.

* * * *

The Bridey Murphy case caused quite a stir in Toronto as elsewhere, and the interest aroused in the theory of re-incarnation was such that the audiences in the Toronto Lodge were exceptional and full of expectation of learning more about this subject. Curiously enough outstanding speakers such as Mr. Geoffrey Hodson, Mr. Iverson Harris and Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pearson happened to be visiting here at the time, and referred constantly to the matter to the enlightenment and pleasure of their audiences. Indirectly this case has done much to put Theosophy on the map.

* * * *

By special request I went to Detroit by plane last month to deliver a lecture on "The Great Pyramid". There I met a very interested and appreciative audience, and incidently many good friends. This lodge has very fine quarters, is very modern and up to date and most efficient in carrying out the work of the Society.

* * * *

Again this year we have had an election for officers of the General Executive, which is all to the good. The result is published elsewhere in this issue. Regarding myself, I fully appreciate being returned again by acclamation for another year as General Secretary, and thank the Lodges for their confidence in my ability to fill that position. As heretofore I will do my best, which is all anyone can do. I regret that Mr. Hale was not elected, for he is a most useful person to have on any executive. In his stead we have Mrs. Mavis Harley,

past president of the Montreal Lodge whom I welcome to our council, and from whom I have already received several useful suggestions for our future work. It is a privilege to work for others, and I trust this coming year of endeavour will be a fruitful one for the Society.

* * * *

In my references to the Victoria Lodge I have perhaps extolled one person to the neglect of others, if so, I am sorry. The correspondence relating to the reorganization of the lodge emanated from one person and inadvertently I spoke of this person as being the leading light. I now know that others were concerned and all worked together in perfect harmony, thus the credit should go to the group as a whole. I am delighted to express myself thus in these Notes.

* * * *

I have received several letters from the West expressing pleasure in seeing Mr. and Mrs. Barr who in holidaying out there and ever mindful of the Cause, have combined business with pleasure, for Mr. Barr at my request was good enough to open two lodges on my behalf, the Canyon Lodge and the Victoria Lodge. At both these he presented the Charter, Diplomas for new members and delivered my address. He also spoke in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver. From all I have happy reports and I take this opportunity of thanking him for taking time off to help me out in the duties I was unable to carry out.

* * * *

I have just received word of the death of Miss Annie S. Chapman of Edmonton Lodge. Miss Chapman, who was over eighty years of age, died on June 20; she had joined the lodge in 1945. Our sincere sympathy is extended to the members and friends of the family.

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

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OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

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EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

All Letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publication should be sent to The Editor,
Dudley W. Barr, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.
Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

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ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The Annual Meeting of the General Executive of the Theosophical Society in Canada was held at 52 Isabella St, Toronto, on Sunday July 8. Members present were, Miss Hindsley, Messrs. Barr, Bunting, Kinman and the General Secretary. In welcoming the members for another year of office, Colonel Thomson regretted that Mr. Hale was not among them and spoke of his zeal and general usefulness on the Council. A vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Hale for his good work during his term of office, and for his faithfulness in attending all meetings even when he resided in New Liskeard.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved, as was also the Financial Statement which showed a balance of \$2088.56, a gain of \$141.00 over last year. The Standing of the Lodges showed a gain of twelve members and there were twenty new subscribers to the magazine. The General Secretary stated that he had hoped that the membership would have passed the 400 mark this year, but we were short of the goal because certain members had not paid their dues—a mere two and a half dollars a year for the privilege of belonging to a society which had so much to give. In accordance with regulations, their magazines will be discontinued until the arrears are paid.

The Editor reported progress and then read a report of his trip to the West. This is published elsewhere in this issue of the magazine. The General Secretary thanked Mr. Barr for the time and trouble he had taken during his holidays on behalf of the Society. The meeting accorded Mr. Barr a vote of thanks for his excellent work on that occasion.

Mr. Kinman, reporting for the Pamphlet Committee, asked authority to

TOWARDS THEOSOPHICAL UNITY

(Continued from Page 58)

7. *The Status of the Fraternity in the Movement:* In accordance with the generally accepted cycle, a new major Theosophical effort in the last quarter of the century is expected. It is recognized that at that time, there may be the necessity for many realignments and changes of policy. Meantime, the Fraternity is not to be considered as sacred, imperishable, or infallible. It is a tool for the time being, for the use of Theosophists who find it of value. Caution is given against "adventism"—the idea that after 1975, individual efforts may be slackened in the presence of a new "messiah"; and against possible unfounded claims regarding such a personage.

purchase a die and five thousand seals at a cost of some sixty dollars. This was approved. Mr. Barr was authorized to order one hundred copies of a pamphlet prepared by Mr. Boris de Zirkoff, a copy of which is to be given to each lodge free, and the remainder to be sold at half price.

The General Secretary brought up the question of the approval of the bylaws submitted by Phoenix Lodge. As this entailed careful scrutiny of each item, Mr. Barr agreed to go over them and report at the next meeting.

A report from Adyar regarding the resolutions respecting Rule 10, submitted by the Canadian Section in January 1953, was discussed. Rule 10 relates to the election of the President of the Theosophical Society. Colonel Thomson stated that he would withhold a reply until comments from certain of the Executive members were available.

The General Secretary said that he was very interested and concerned re-

garding the subject of Animal Welfare, and suggested that a committee be formed to do what it could on this very necessary work. Miss Hindsley agreed to act as Chairman. The committee was approved.

A letter from Mr. Iverson I. Harris was read in which he informed the General Secretary of what he had done regarding the case of a theosophist living in California who is desirous of leaving part of his property in his will to the Canadian Section. This letter clarifies the situation considerably. Correspondence is still proceeding

Mr. Kinman reported that he had been interviewed by a writer on behalf of *Liberty* magazine who is writing an article on Theosophy. Mr. Kinman is taking care of the situation. Other matters of a minor nature were then dealt with. The next meeting was arranged for Oct. 8. The meeting thereupon was adjourned.

General Secretary.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA

Statement of Accounts as at June 30th, 1956

RECEIPTS	EXPENDITURES
Balance from last year	Adyar, per capita
(Including W/E Lodge	Magazine Cost:
and Vulcan Lodge	Printing
Lodge Dues and Fees:	Postage
1956	1008.51
1957	General Fund:
1958	Postage
1144.60	Stationery
Magazine Subscriptions	Stencils
Magazine Donations	Extras
Editor's Tour	110.94
Sales	Editor's Tour, Oct., 1955
Magazine Advt.	Election Expenses
Bank Interest	Pamphlets
46.98	Bank Exchange, etc.
Total	Cash in Bank
\$3708.17	2088.56
	Total
	\$3708.17

Membership	394
New Members	26
New Subscribers	20

E. L. THOMSON,
General Secretary,
Theosophical Society in Canada.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist,
Sir:—

May we, the least significant of the Canadian Lodges, be one of the first to congratulate those responsible for aborning the latest jewel in the Theosophical Crown—the Phoenix Lodge in Hamilton. We wish them Bon Voyage and pleasant sailing.

While we regret to see a division in a long established Lodge like the Hamilton Lodge with all its cultural associations, its record for tolerance, and the happy memories of its guidance by our beloved and departed Brother Albert E. S. Smythe from his exalted exedra, we must perhaps realize that the Ambitious City is growing up and that the recent dichotomy is due to the fact that the newcomers desire a new type of theosophy—such is the *Zeitgeist!*—and hence a new Lodge. This rare bird, however, must not be in any way understood as arising from the ashes, or even embers, of the Hamilton Lodge, because we know that body to be a brilliant and ever-burning lamp to lighten the gentiles in that city!

We read with interest the 'notes and comments' of our General Secretary in the May-June issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*, especially where he says that some members of the old Hamilton Lodge have found "the great Divide between those who live on the Mountains and those who live on the Plains" is too strenuous in a physical way. He omitted to mention the Valleys, perhaps as it is there the pilgrims view the radiant Body of Isis as through a mist! Those on the Mountains, however, with eagle sight, should not find it necessary to even consider the formation of a second Lodge in any one city. And this brings us to what we consider a very important matter.

It is of course understood and goes without saying, that those 'in high places' who dispense Charters to newly formed Lodges, do so after applying every acid test to those making the application, especially as to the 'brand' of theosophy they have in mind propagating. The older Lodges and the inactive ones, affiliated with the Canadian Section, are all voluntarily pledged to uphold Blavatskyan Theosophy, and in these times, it should be a matter of responsibility to those issuing new Charters, to see that the present day characterizations of theosophy do not creep into our august society.

We understand there has always been an esoteric section in the Theosophical Society and always will be but we deplore the 'casting of pearls' and the open exposition of pseudo occultism to all and sundry newcomers, who find themselves attracted to the flame of psychism.

These remarks are occasioned by reading the report of the inaugural meeting of the Phoenix Lodge in which its Secretary, Stella Ballard, states: "Regular meetings have been held on Wednesday evenings consisting of a series of helpful and aspiring meditations . . .", and "Mrs. Gladys Miller has been conducting breathing exercises for daily use, together with a method of utilizing the cosmic rays . . ."

We hope we are not doing an injustice to this new group and do not wish to say or suggest anything that might retard their full flowering, or perhaps we should say—full feathering, and it may be that the report referred to a private and closed meeting of the Lodge—we do not know. We sincerely hope, however, that publicly and in open meeting, subjects of this nature are not put forth as 'theosophy', as we who hold our theosophy dear, would then find it necessary to dissociate ourselves from the new thought.

The first object of the Society is a full meal for most of us in this incarnation. The second is a refection for epicureans, while the third is oft-times nothing more than a nauseous mess for gluttons.

Let all good theosophists in Canada sit down together at what will be our Last Supper for awhile, and arise refreshed and sustained by a well-balanced meal that will not cause the least delicate to complain of indigestion.

Yours very sincerely,

Kitchener Lodge,
Alexander Watt Pres.

WESTERN TRIP

Dear Colonel Thomson:

On our trip to the west coast in June, Mrs. Barr and I had the pleasure of meeting members of six lodges, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Orpheus, Vancouver Canyon and Victoria. I spoke in Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria on aspects of the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita.

On our arrival at Winnipeg on Sunday June 17, we were met by Mr. Percy H. Stokes and Mr. Henry Gadd, President and Secretary, respectively, of the Winnipeg Lodge. Mrs. Stokes joined us for lunch and then Mr. and Mrs. Stokes showed us the sights of the city and drove us out to Stoney Mountain where we spent an interesting hour prospecting for fossils in the limestone formation there. We dined with Mr. and Mrs. Stokes and then went to the home of Mrs. A. Bell in St. Boniface where the meeting was held. About twenty persons were present and a general discussion took place on various theosophical topics.

The sudden departure from Winnipeg of Mr. and Mrs. Bowers who reorganized the lodge in 1954, coupled with the departure also of several members who had joined at that time, has resulted in

reduced lodge activity. However, under the guidance of Mr. Stokes and Mr. Gadd the lodge is entering a new phase of its life. A small room may be rented this fall, and if this is done the library will be installed there and regular meetings held.

On June 19 we arrived in Edmonton and I spoke in the Masonic Hall that evening. About thirty-five persons attended. After the meeting we met the members and friends in a private dining room at "The Seven Seas" and enjoyed a social hour. One visiting member was from Honolulu and another from Switzerland. Edmonton Lodge is firmly established and is doing excellent work.

On Wednesday, through the much appreciated kindness of Mr. Emory P. Wood, President of Edmonton Lodge, we started off on a memorable trip with him through the mountains to the coast. This took us through over one thousand miles of what is perhaps the most spectacular scenery in the world. I must not in this report, attempt to describe the grandeur of the mountains. Many scenes are etched upon our memories and will remain until this incarnation is over. Often we would find ourselves in a valley entirely surrounded by snow-topped mountains with seemingly no way through them. At our first encounter with the mountain ramparts outside Jasper National Park Mr. Wood had mentioned the Zen kohan 'Walk on'. This kohan came to mind several times in the valleys and then we would talk for a time about the Zen school of Buddhism. Throughout the entire journey, Whitman's words "Do you move in these broad lands as broad as they?" came frequently to my mind. One impression which came to us often as we journeyed westward among the towering mountain ranges, so solid, broadbased and immovable, was that they were not inert. They are colossal symbols of the power and majesty of the life force of

the universe and are alive and pulsating with vitality, merely resting for a few brief moments, which we little humans count as millions of years.

We reached Vancouver on Saturday and on Monday evening, Mrs. Barr and I were the guests of Dr. W. E. Wilks at dinner and later spent an enjoyable evening with Dr. Wilks, Mrs. A. Kelly, Mr. Ernest Wilks and Mr. Emory Wood. Mr. Wood left the next morning for Edmonton. We were sorry to say farewell; he had been a most considerate and pleasant companion throughout the whole week.

The lecture in Vancouver was held in the Art Gallery on Tuesday June 26 and about one hundred and twenty-five attended. Mr. Kartar Singh was chairman. Several old friends from the east were present and we had the pleasure of meeting for the first time, Miss Joan Morris of the Canadian Federation of Lodges. Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan of Vancouver Lodge were in England, but we met the members of Orpheus, Vancouver and Canyon Lodges, together with several members from Hermes Lodge.

On Tuesday before the lecture we were the dinner guests of Mrs. A. R. Creeth, Secretary of the newly-formed Canyon Lodge. On Wednesday we were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Carter in their home in North Vancouver. A meeting of Canyon Lodge was held later in their lovely living room with its great picture window overlooking Burrard Inlet and the city of Vancouver. The President, Mr. Carter, read passages from *The Mahatma Letters* and Talbot Mundy's *I Say Sunrise*. Afterwards I read your address to the lodge and presented the charter and the diplomas. Mr. Carter on behalf of the lodge, asked me to convey to you their thanks for your message.

Many Toronto members will remember Mr. Kartar Singh who was so very

active in Toronto Lodge affairs between 1916 and 1929 and who started and edited *The Toronto Theosophical News*. He and Helen, his wife, were most hospitable to us during our stay in Vancouver, both before we left for Victoria and on our return from Vancouver Island.

We both regretted that we had so short a time with Mrs. Edith Fielding of the H.P.B. Library in North Vancouver. There was but an hour on Wednesday afternoon, just time for a brief glance at the Library and a short chat.

On Thursday June 28 we arrived in Victoria where we were met at the dock by Mrs. W. Gilmour and Mrs. J. Housez. Mrs. Housez took us for a delightful drive along the seashore. After dinner with Mrs. Gilmour, I spoke to the lodge in the studio of Mr. Housez which is loaned to the lodge as a meeting place. Afterwards I read your address to the members and presented the original 1911 charter of the Victoria Lodge which had been returned to headquarters when the membership had dropped to one. Mrs. Gilmour, who acted as chairman of the meeting, expressed thanks to you for your message and the lodge's appreciation of the restoration of the charter. There is considerable theosophical interest in Victoria and Mrs. Barr and I both felt that Victoria Lodge will steadily increase in membership and influence.

On Wednesday July 4 we had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Gilmour and Mrs. Housez again when Mrs. Housez kindly drove us out along the south shore of Vancouver Island to Sooke Harbour House where we gazed over the broad Pacific.

In closing may I express the deep appreciation of Mrs. Barr and myself of the many kindnesses extended to us by the members of all the lodges we visited.

Sincerely yours,

D. W. Barr.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA

ANNUAL ELECTION 1956

TOTAL VOTES—236.

NUMBER TO BE ELECTED—7

QUOTA—30

NAME OF CANDIDATE	1st Count	2nd Count		3rd Count		4th Count	
		Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total
		BARR		KINMAN		HINDSLEY	
DUDLEY W. BARR	118	-88	30	—	30	—	30
CHARLES E. BUNTING	19	9	28	1	29	1	30
CHARLES M. HALE	3	5	8	8	16	5	21
MRS. W. S. HARLEY	18	8	26	1	27	3	30
MISS M. HINDSLEY	18	27	45	—	45	-15	30
GEORGE I. KINMAN	22	30	52	-22	30	—	30
W. H. WILKS	26	7	33	—	33	—	33
EMORY P. WOOD	12	2	14	12	26	6	32
TOTALS	236		236		236		236

(Signed) E. L. THOMSON.

The ballots in the election of the General Executive were counted on Saturday evening, June 16 under the supervision of Colonel E. L. Thomson. The scrutineers were Mr. John W. Gaunt, Miss O. Olive, and Mr. S. Sniderman. The vote was light as usual, nearly two hundred failed to send in their ballots. There were 236 votes counted and the quota under the proportional representation system was 30. The No. 1 votes were Barr 118, Wilks 26, Kinman 22, Bunting 19, Harley 18, Hindsley 18, Wood 12, Hale 3. The new Executive was declared elected as follows:

Dudley W. Barr
 Charles E. Bunting
 Mrs. W. S. Harley
 Miss M. Hindsley
 George I. Kinman
 Washington E. Wilks
 Emory P. Wood

Barr's surplus of 88 votes was distributed on the second count, electing Hindsley, Kinman and Wilks. The third and fourth counts distributed the other surpluses with the result announced. The General Secretary, Col. E. L. Thomson was elected by acclamation.

THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE

The ultimate purpose of life is manifestation. Life manifests itself in a great many aspects—the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms and in its highest form, the human kingdom.

The purpose of life is to manifest and to express that which we eternally are. There can be no fulfilment of the ultimate purpose of life unless we have knowledge and understanding of its laws of order, sequence, rhythm, intelligence, patience, love and wisdom beyond all human estimation. These are involved in the great purpose of life. Most of us live more truly in our purposes than we do in the world of achievements and circumstances. The purpose of existence is more important than the progress. The builder is greater than that which he builds. The thinker is greater than his greatest thought.

There is no easy formula for living. It is sometimes through weakness we find our greatest strength to meet the challenge of disaster and master it.

A calm equanimity is a desirable attitude, difficult to attain, yet how necessary in all phases of life, success or failure.

“Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat the same to thee, then prepare for battle, for thus and thus alone shalt thou in action be free from wrong doing . . .”

Bhagavad Gita.

There is always a great need of patience with and understanding of those with whom we come in contact every day. We must not be so prone to criticize others and forget the beam in our own eye. If some offend then let us ask what is to be done but only if the offense is against the whole. It is wise to accumulate a fund of good for others. ‘In patience ye shall win your soul’—and

what is this patience but an equanimity which enables us to rise superior to the trials of life and thus find its ultimate purpose.

“Those who have spiritual knowledge and discernment standeth upon a pinnacle.” . . . Krishna.

Charlotte Bronte once wrote these lines—

“Revenge never worries my heart, degradation never too deeply disgusts me, injustice never crushes me too low. I live in calm looking to the end.”

“He saw life steadily and saw it whole,” says a Greek poet.

The unity of purpose in thought and action must be steadfast. If the fervor of combat ends with the combat, then the enemy’s selfishness re-asserts itself with redoubled vigour.

To find the Real in the ultimate purpose is through Manas—mind. The mind is the patterning principle, but the verging realities of day-by-day action obscure this secret of all creation. Mind is a god which, as the Upanishads say, makes manifold forms out of the great mind of Nature that forms the houses of life. The things with which we live are like rocks and cliffs which determine with finality the boundaries of the present. Therefore, ‘Stiffness to principles—Tolerance to individuals’ should be our axiom. What is life but a series of experiences and it is how we use those experiences that forms our character. By means of experiences during our lives in all incarnations we can develop the potentialities that are latent within all men. We come to each incarnation in a different environment where our experiences must be different from those we lived before. Qualities and faculties will be brought into action and

BOOK REVIEW

our characters will gradually become more complete with a spiritual understanding of the ultimate purpose of life. The goal of humanity is perfection and there are those who are consciously and deliberately treading the path that leads to the goal.

What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and purpose—hence his destiny. Behind man, and all things living, is the immortal part known as Spirit. This immortal part is the moving power. It has the power to perceive, to act, to grow and is latent in all. Whatever may be the nature of this form and however small our perception, we should know that it could have no existence except from the One Source, the One Power, the One Life within it. The Spirit is the real part of man. It is the Spirit which is the Knower—Spirit is the Seer, not that which is now seen.

The ultimate purpose of life is to find the Real. Into the lives of all men come ultimate moments when Self asks Self, "What is Real?"

"Look for the Real beneath the unreal, look for the substance behind the shadow."
W. Q. Judge.

"Each man is his own authority. Man stands between ultimates of time, space, and matter that vanish into nothingness toward the infinitely small, into eternity and infinitude toward the Vast and no whit of it is real other than himself and his thoughts . . ."

The Real belongs to all and we shall not know it truly until we have made it the common property of all mankind.

Winifred Tiplin.

A Buddhist Students' Manual, edited by Christmas Humphreys, published by The Buddhist Society, London, England; 280 pp., 1956, 10/6.

This work was compiled and published as a souvenir of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Buddhist Society in England. It consists for the most part of revised and enlarged editions of three works originally published by the Society and now out of print, namely, (a) *The Development of Buddhism in England*; (b) *A Brief Glossary of Buddhist Terms* and (c) *An Analysis of the Pali Canon*, together with *An Analysis of the Mahayana Scriptures*; *a Note on Sanskrit/Pali Variations*; *An Analyzed Bibliography of Books on Buddhism in English*; a version of *Pansil*, and *Twelve Principles of Buddhism*.

The story of the founding and growth of the Buddhist movement in England is a fascinating one, and students will be impressed by the account of the years of work, study, self-sacrifice, tribulation and disappointments through which the movement passed before emerging as The Buddhist Society with many members, its own headquarters and a world-wide reputation.

The Glossary (70 pages) is a valuable aid to the understanding of Buddhist terms from many sources, Sanskrit, Pali, Japanese, Chinese, Siamese, and others. This might have been of greater interest if roots and root-meanings had been given. However, it is comprehensive and fully meets the needs of the average student for whom it was intended. We quote from the definition of 'Karma': "*Karma* does not, in itself, bind to the wheel of re-birth; the binding element is personal desire for the fruit of action. Liberation is therefore achieved by the elimination of desire for self."

The *Twelve Principles of Buddhism* were drafted for Western Buddhists, but have been translated into sixteen languages and are used in eighteen countries. "They may become the common platform for a world Buddhism." The twelve underlying principles of Buddhist thought are set out succinctly and give a clear concept of the breadth and depth of this ancient Way.

A WELL IN INDIA

Our readers undoubtedly know of the Bhoodan (Land Gift) Movement of Vinoba Bhave in India. Possibly in no other land could a movement of such a nature have come into being. The appeal of the saintly character and simple practicability of Vinoba Bhave has already resulted in over four million acres of land being given free by former owners for re-distribution among landless tenants.

Now the problem has arisen of providing water for these lands. An appeal has been made for funds to provide the tools and equipment needed. The work of digging the wells and the irrigation channels is being done by voluntary labour in those centres where re-distribution of the donated lands is under way.

The Bhoodan Well Fund Appeal is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Chester Bowles. Mr. Bowles was the United States Ambassador to India from 1951 to 1953; he is familiar with the conditions and is deeply interested in the Land Gift Movement. All money donated goes to those villages which have qualified for help under the Fund; the staff which handles the funds works voluntarily. A well costs from \$150.00 to \$350.00, depending upon local conditions.

Those who would like to share in and help this remarkable movement of voluntary social change, may send dona-

tions to *The Bhoodan Fund*, Room 1501, Commonwealth Building, 1201 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.

THEOSOPHY AND BUDDHISM

In the special Buddha Jayanti number of *The Middle Way* (May, 1956), Mr. Christmas Humphreys pays tribute to the work of H. P. Blavatsky, Colonel H. S. Olcott and the Theosophical Society in bringing to the western world the doctrines of karma, reincarnation and the oneness of life. Mr. Humphreys, who is President of the Buddhist Society, London, writes:

"As a matter of history, Karma and Rebirth, and the Oneness of Life, were widely taught in the West before the arrival of Buddhism. They are thundered forth in the mighty works of H. P. Blavatsky, and the Theosophical Society has untiringly proclaimed them throughout the length and breadth of Europe for over sixty years. H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, who themselves took Pansil publicly in Ceylon in 1880, were the true pioneers of Western Buddhism, and the fact that the Theosophical Society of to-day has strangely deserted principles which "H.P.B." and her followers strove to make known is no cause for forgetting the part which Theosophy, a modern presentation of the Wisdom that is older than all religions, has played in preparing the Western mind for Buddhism."

Life is a bridge—build no house upon it;
a river—cling not to its banks nor to
either of them;

a gymnasium—use it to develop the
mind

on the apparatus of circumstance;
a journey—take it, and walk on!

The 'passing show' is to be used, and
neither enjoyed nor ignored, for behind
the show is only mind, Mind-Only.

—*Buddhism*, by Christmas Humphreys.

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

The question as to whether the teachings of Theosophy can be practically applied in everyday life is one that is frequently asked, not only by the casual inquirer into the philosophy, but also by students themselves. All too often Theosophy is regarded as a mere abstract system of thought, giving an intellectual explanation of life and its various processes and manifestations, but of little use in the practical affairs of life.

This is an erroneous view. It springs from a basic misconception which would be fatal for anyone to harbour who would make of Theosophy a living power in his life. For, if we would ever hope to achieve realization—direct, first-hand perception of the truth of the philosophy—we needs must exemplify it in daily life. To accept it intellectually but not to practise it is to deny it in the heart, and this constitutes a self-erected and insurmountable barrier on the path of true knowledge.

The word "practical," as its derivation suggests, signifies action. A practical man is a man who is inclined to action. A practical system is a system which can be put into effect. To make a practical application of anything we have to use that thing. Can Theosophy be used in the affairs of daily life? A Master of Wisdom once wrote:

"Theosophy should not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical ethics, epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy *must be made practical* . . .

"The problem of true Theosophy and its great mission are, first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for

their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness. ("Some Words on Daily Life": *U.L.T. Pamphlet* No. 22, pp. 10 and 13)"

These words of the Master make it amply clear that Theosophy *can* be applied. A true Theosophist is not one who professes that he believes in the philosophy, but one who *does* Theosophy.

It may well be asked: "Why, then, does the U.L.T. lay so much stress on the study of philosophical, abstract and metaphysical concepts?" In adopting his profession in life a young man readily and as a matter of course undertakes the course of study necessary to his future vocation. Yet it is strange that people who are desirous of leading a higher life often do not realize how necessary it is to gain right knowledge for such a serious venture. A little thought would convince us that, far from being impractical, those who study philosophy and metaphysics are the really practical people, for they have recognized the practical importance of such study for day-to-day living in the world. On the other hand, those who divorce knowledge and understanding from the performance of deeds or the application of that knowledge to life and life's problems, should be looked upon as impractical, for they have failed to see that such a divorce is not possible.

In this topsyturvy age, we have been seeing things upside down, physically as well as metaphysically. The question whether Theosophy can be applied practically springs from such an upside-down picture. Reverse it and the question will be: Is there anything in the

teachings of Theosophy that cannot be applied practically? The answer is: No, because Theosophy is essentially practical, inasmuch as none of its teachings are based on speculation or theory; they are all the result of actual experience or direct perception, and therefore they constitute the only true Knowledge there is.

Theosophy is in fact the root-base of every noteworthy ethical system the world has seen. It covers the whole ethical ground. There is hardly a problem on which Theosophy does not offer practical advice and instruction. He who would make Theosophy practical must let it enter into every detail of his life, in his dealings with others and his discipline of himself. These words of practical advice have been given to us:

"How shall we apply Theosophy in daily life? First, to think what we are in reality, on arising, to endeavour to realize what this small segment of our great existence may mean in the long series of such existences; to resolve to live throughout the day from the highest of our realizations; to see in each event and circumstance a reproduction in small or in great of that which has been; and to deal with each and every one of these from that same high point. Resolve to deal with them as though each had a deep occult meaning and presented an opportunity to further the successes of the past, or undo the errors. Thus living from moment to moment, hour to hour, life will be seen as a portion of a great web of action and reaction, intermeshed at every point, and connected with the Soul which provided the energy that sustained it. If each event is so considered throughout the day, be it small or great, the power to guide and control your energies will in no long time be yours." — Robert Crosbie.

It depends in every case upon the man himself to what extent the teach-

ings of Theosophy will be transformed for him from abstractions into realities. To the extent that anyone has *used* the teachings, to that extent he has experienced them, made them part of his own nature, assimilated them, and therefore to that extent he knows them to be practical. He who applies Theosophy will soon find out how practical it is, and for him the teachings change from the Eye Doctrine into the Heart Doctrine. This effort to realize Theosophy by the living of the life constitutes the first step on the path of the would-be disciple. "Even a little of this practice delivereth a man from great risk."

The whole of the *Gita* expounds the right philosophy of action; it is a book of practical guidance and instruction for every Arjuna or student-aspirant. The position in reference to action is summed up in this verse :

" . . . perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme." (III. 19).

The injunction of Krishna, "Perform thou that which thou hast to do," is the injunction that Theosophy gives to its students. In the words of the same Master whom we have quoted earlier in the article:

"Let every Theosophist only do his duty, that which he can and ought to do, and very soon the sum of human misery [in the vicinity] . . . will be found visibly diminished." ("Some Words on Daily Life"; *U.L.T. Pamphlet* No. 22, p. 10).

What could be more practical than this? In becoming practical Theosophists we take up our duty where we find it. Theosophy has been called the quintessence of duty. The very first subject H.P.B. deals with in the Section on "What is Practical Theosophy?" in

The Key to Theosophy, is that of duty. We must perform our duty by every duty, because we owe it to that great Self which we are learning to realize, the Self of all of us; and therefore we owe it to the manifested rays of that one self—we owe it to humanity. This debt to humanity, if left unpaid, will leave us morally and spiritually insolvent. To do our duty, therefore, is to pay our debts; it is to walk the path of practical Theosophy.

We can all become practical Theosophists and we should do so. What is badly needed in the world is practical Theosophy. "Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man"; it teaches people "to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think." This alone will lead to consistently right action; this alone will change radically for the better the world in which we live and make it a more habitable world, peopled with thinkers who think along right lines and choosers who are aware of their moral responsibility. Then the task of moral and spiritual planning, in co-operation with Nature and Nature's changeless laws, in co-operation with universal ideals, will be much easier.

W.Q.J. once wrote:

"The path of Practical Theosophy is wide; it is narrow; it is straight; it is crooked; but it is never without good. Expect nothing; work without thought or desire for reward; share your happiness with others; be upright in your dealings with your fellow labourer on life's highway; work for the good of humanity; speak ill of no one; judge the act and not the actor; and last, but not least, strive for consistency as a Theosophist. Then will be realized the basic idea of Practical Theosophy and Universal Brotherhood."

—From *The Theosophical Movement*, Oct. 17, 1954.

THE THOUGHTS AND NO-THOUGHTS OF MU-SHIN

Only in two-ness may one-ness be known.

Learn to suffer, and you will have learnt not to suffer.

Truth is not concerned with comfort, of body, emotion or mind.

Never seek help until you know you need it. Then it will come, from within, and be made visible in circumstance.

The God that I know is no Saviour. Rather he cries out to be saved, for he is my fellow men in their totality and the life that is not yet man. This is the God I serve, who of my service will be given power to save.

A condemned man as he leaves the dock has been given much, of abuse and vilification, of warnings, threats and punishment. Has anyone given him, or sought to give him, understanding, or as much love as any man will give that evening to his dog?

—*The Middle Way*, May, 1956.

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.

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