

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XXXVIII., No. 2

TORONTO, MAY-JUNE, 1957

Price 35 Cents

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this Magazine, unless made in an official document

MADAME BLAVATSKY

BY MRS. R. H. GRIFFITH

Winston Churchill once said that Russia was a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma and perhaps we might say the same thing of one of Russia's greatest subjects, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, generally known as H. P. B., who founded the modern Theosophical Society. It is not surprising that the general public do not understand her, for Madame Blavatsky explains Theosophy and Theosophy explains Madame Blavatsky. We who are members of her society do not fully understand her either, because there are mysteries in connection with her which are beyond our present comprehension, but that is no excuse for not trying to understand all that we can about her, and about the work she did for humanity both through her teachings and her writings from the year 1875 when the Theosophical Society was founded, till she left her physical body on May 8th, 1891.

It is impossible, in the scope of a paper such as this, to do more than skim the surface of the life and work of H. P. B., even if I were capable of so doing, but at least I would like to arouse sufficient interest to induce those of you who have not already done so to discover her for yourselves. In doing so you

learn a lot about Theosophy and about the qualities that make for true greatness.

Now, this study could be undertaken under three headings:

1. The personality of H.P.B.
2. The higher self of H.P.B.
3. Her work under the direct influence of the Masters.

What do we mean by personality? By personality we mean our ordinary everyday selves which have been influenced by heredity, by the country into which we were born and by the family into which we came. It is the self of likes and dislikes, of certain habits, of certain manners, of certain charms or the reverse. It is the lower man and comprises our physical impulses and thoughts and tendencies and it is that part of ourselves by which we are mostly known to each other. It does not remain entirely the same from life to life owing to its changed country, circumstances and family, but it will have the same general characteristics (obviously I am taking here the theory of reincarnation as an acknowledged fact).

The individuality, or higher self on the other hand is the spiritual, intellectual and immortal part of us, and remains the same for what we might call

an eternity. Its voice is the voice of genius, of courage, of compassion, of wisdom and true love, and as we grow or evolve this voice is heard more often. It works *through* the personality, when we give it a chance, particularly at times of crisis. As an example, let us take Winston Churchill again, and compare what he says and how he says it when dealing with ordinary matters, with what he says and how he says it when his country, which he loves, is in danger. In the latter case you catch a glimpse of his individuality, the self of dauntless courage and the real and higher man.

Now, such people as Churchill, Joan of Arc, Garibaldi and Sun Yat Sen are great patriots. They are people of destiny, but they are not those we refer to as messengers of the Masters because the work they do is for their *country* or for certain people in their country. The work of the Messengers is *universal* and is done for the sake of mankind as a whole. Such a messenger was H.P.B., but before going any further let us consider just what we mean, when in Theosophy we speak of a "Master".

A Master is simply a perfect man. They are sometimes called Elder Brothers, or sages, or seers, but especially are they called Teachers, because they are chiefly occupied in instructing mankind and instilling impulses of forgetfulness of self into our hearts. Sometimes they are called guardians.

They were men as we are, but have reached their lofty state through their self devised efforts, just as we shall do ourselves some day. The Masters are men, not spirits.

Let us go back to the personality of H.P.B. and see her through the eyes of those who knew her in her childhood, or who worked with her later on, and to do this we must take a brief look at her life before the year 1875 when our Society was founded.

She was born at midnight on July 30, 1831, just 5000 years after the beginning of the Kali Yuga which is stated to have commenced at the moment of the death of Krishna. The Kali Yuga is sometimes called the black age, or iron age. It is the age, or racial period, of the greatest materialism, the age in which spiritual values seem to be clouded in mist, the age in which we live today.

She was born in Southern Russia, her father being descended from the nobility of Germany and her mother from one of the oldest families of the Russian Empire. Her sister tells us that "for Helen all nature seemed animated with a mysterious life of its own. She heard the voice of every object and claimed consciousness for such things as pebbles, mounds and pieces of decaying phosphorescent timber." She used to take her sister and other children to a museum and recall the past of the animals there. She would at other times draw on the sand with her finger the fantastic forms of the long dead sea monsters, and almost make them see the very colours of the fauna and flora of those dead regions. "Where," her sister said, "had she heard of reincarnation. . . or the mysteries of metempsychosis, in a Christian family?" A wise old man, in whom she was very interested said of her, "There are great events lying in wait for her in the future. The little lady is quite different from all of you. I feel sorry in thinking that I will not live to see my predictions of her verified, but *they will all come to pass.*"

At the age of eight or nine, Helena told her sisters that there had always existed wise men who knew everything, and had the most wonderful command of the forces of nature. She assured them that they existed today, but made themselves known only to those who were worthy of knowing and seeing

them and who believed in, instead of laughing at them.

Everything mysterious and occult had a great attraction for this child. She was extremely self-willed and rebelled against all restraint, but this indomitable self will was afterward brought under control and made to serve in the accomplishment of her mission, owing to her inflexible devotion and obedience to the Masters.

We shall pass briefly over the years 1842 to 1875, the time when her life became dedicated to Theosophy, except to mention a few highlights.

She travelled extensively to all parts of the world, sometimes as a woman and sometimes disguised as a man. She went to the most out of the way places and her adventures would fill volumes. She was married at the age of seventeen to General Blavatsky, but very soon left him.

In 1851, according to Countess Wachtmeister, she met her Master for the first time in the flesh, in London, although she had known him psychically from childhood, as her guardian. He showed her somewhat of the future which lay before her, and told her that he needed her co-operation in forming a society, of which he wished her to be the Founder; but warned her of the many troubles and trials which this work would entail. Further he said she would have to spend some years in Tibet, in order to be prepared for this important task. This she did, and writing in 1883 H.P.B. says, "I have lived at different periods in Little Tibet as well as in great Tibet, and these combined periods form more than seven years." In 1873 she went to Paris, from where she was told to go to New York. She arrived there with no money, and supported herself by making artificial flowers for a kind hearted Jewish shopkeeper, until money arrived from Russia.

She then went to Chittenden where she met Colonel Olcott, the co-founder of the Theosophical Society. In *Old Diary Leaves* he tells us of his first meeting with H.P.B. He says, "It was a very prosaic incident. I said, 'Permettez moi, Madame', and gave her a light for her cigarette; our acquaintance began in smoke, but it stirred up a great and permanent fire".

It was at Chittenden that she approached the Spiritualists, because she felt that they had broken with orthodoxy, and would be more likely to listen to her message, but her explanation of their phenomena did not please them and they became her bitterest enemies.

Before coming to the important year of the formation of the Theosophical Society let us examine some of the criticisms and libels levelled at H.P.B. She has been called a charlatan, a trickster, a forger, a Russian spy, an atheist, a Jesuit, a blackmailer and many other things. Her enemies have even tried to attach scandal to her name.

No one needs more than a little ordinary common sense, and a very ordinary brain, to see how completely false these charges are, if they will take the trouble to examine the evidence with an open mind. Indeed I think that if they would look at the photos of H.P.B. and read just the poem of *The Secret Doctrine*, they would need to go no further.

We do not need even to consider these charges here, although we should have the knowledge to show their falsity whenever they appear, for Madame Blavatsky is the heart of the Society, and if we, knowing the Truth, do not defend her, who will, unless indeed it be posterity, or some of those rare souls such as Zola or Voltaire who sacrifice everything to fight injustice.

There are, however many minor criticisms levelled at H.P.B., and not always by people outside the Society.

They say that she smoked, that she was temperamental and impulsive, that she lost her temper, that she was inconsistent, that she certainly did not turn the other cheek, and so on. Indeed it may be truthfully said that she uttered many a cuss word; but what are all these compared with her dauntless courage and devotion, her love of Truth, and her great humility towards her own accomplishments? She sacrificed her health, her happiness, her money, her reputation and was more than willing to sacrifice her life in the service of Those who live to serve humanity, who live to bring us the Truth. Who could do more than that?

It has been argued that these faults which are sometimes laid at her door, are the very ones that we are told to overcome in ourselves, and that is true, but none of us are called upon to perform or are capable of performing, the great work that H.P.B. was called upon to do. We are called upon to do something and that is to purify our lower natures so that we shall be more fitted for responsible work later on.

It would have been far easier for H. P. B. had she been born with a well-balanced controlled personality, far easier for her, and for the Masters and for her co-workers, but the miracle was that, having a difficult personality to contend with, the real H.P.B., that being of indomitable courage and devotion, was able to control it sufficiently to accomplish what she did.

Somehow, too, I feel that those who understand her, love her as much for her faults as for her true greatness. It seems impossible even in our minds to replace the H.P.B. we feel we know, the tempestuous, courageous, kind-hearted and self-effacing woman, with the kind of person considered by many people to be the ideal type for a messenger of the Masters.

In this connection, one of her close pupils upon being asked by an inquirer whether she thought H.P.B. really was the messenger for the last century, answered that the question obviously presupposes an ideal already existing in the questioner's mind, of what such a messenger ought to be; and we shall find that this is as a rule drawn from their ideal of Jesus Christ, an ideal which for many centuries has dominated the thought and captivated the imagination of all Christendom. Notwithstanding the beauty of that ideal, she advises us to divest our minds of preconceived ideas and speaks of the Door which symbolically was opened by the Masters in the last quarter of the 19th Century to permit a beam of the Sacred Light to stream forth into the blackness of the Kali Yuga, or dark age. She goes on to say that H.P.B. was a part of that light, but that purity and the practice of brotherhood alone give this power of inner vision, the capacity to see beneath the surface, to pierce the mask of personality. But, she adds, purity and charity (which is brotherly love) are not virtues which flourish easily in the Kali Yuga.

Now, as opposed to all the gross libels and petty criticisms levelled at her, I could quote endlessly from those who knew and understood the real H.P.B., but there is space for only a few.

Beatrice Hastings, who was acknowledged to be one of the, if not the, cleverest writer of her day, and who took up the defence of H.P.B. as her life work, said of her, "It is not every day that a writer discovers a writer of genius, a martyr and an occultist all in one".

Mr. Charles Johnston, a learned orientalist retired from the Indian Civil Service, says, "An immortal spirit—she perpetually took her stand on the realities of spiritual nature . . . and this dominant power and this clear interior light were united to a nature of wonder-

ful kindness and absolute self-forgetfulness and forgiveness of wrong . . . Nothing in her was more remarkable, nothing more truly stamped her as one of the elect, than the great humility of her character . . .”

And again, “She cast herself with torrential force against the dark noxious clouds of evil and ignorance that envelop and poison human life; the rift in their leaden masses, through which, high above, we catch a glimpse of the blue, bears testimony of the power that rent them asunder.” Mr. Johnston ends by saying, “One who stood beside her, so calm and quiescent in death, could never believe . . . that a great soul like hers could ever cease to be.”

And let us quote from the Masters themselves:

The Master Morya says, “Martyrdom is pleasant to look at and criticize, but harder to suffer. There never was a woman more unjustly abused than H. P. B.” And again he says, “She is *too truthful, too outspoken, too incapable of dissimulation*; and now she is being daily crucified for it”.

Another Master says: “In the superficial details, homely, hard-working, commonplace daily life and affairs you discern but unpracticality, womanly impulses, often absurdity and folly; we, on the contrary, light daily upon traits of her inner nature the most delicate and refined, and which would cost an uninitiated psychologist years of constant and keen observation and many an hour of close analysis and efforts to draw out of the depth of that most subtle of mysteries—human mind—one of her most complicated machines—H.P.B.’s mind—and thus learn to know her true *inner Self*.” M.L. 314.

Note again the distinction between the inner and the outer or the higher and the lower self. We shall never understand Theosophy or H.P.B. until we

grasp to some extent the two-fold or really threefold or sevenfold nature of that being we call man. She, herself, said “I, the real inner I, am in prison, and cannot show myself as I am, with all the desire I may have to”.

To return to H.P.B., where we left her in America trying unsuccessfully to enlighten the spiritualists, we find that the next important date is the foundation of the Theosophical Society in 1875, although at that time H.P.B. merely consented to the proposals of others. It was at Benares in India in 1879 that “Universal Brotherhood” was added to the title, and the Society reconstituted on the basis of Brotherhood.

Meanwhile in America H.P.B. wrote *Isis Unveiled* in the short space of a little over a year and in 1878 she and Colonel Olcott left America and arrived in India in February of the following year, where their first important work was the publication of *The Theosophist*.

A great deal happened in the development of the Society in the following years, but as this is a paper dealing more with H.P.B. than the Society (although in reality they cannot be separated) we will turn to that much discussed subject, the phenomena produced by H.P.B.

H.P.B. was an occultist, which means that she understood and could work with the hidden forces in nature. Furthermore, she had gone through a strenuous training in Tibet. To put it shortly, and certainly not quite accurately, she could by an act of imagination and will produce material objects out of etheric matter.

Many reliable and well known people had seen her do this, as well as other phenomena and she herself explained that there was nothing mysterious about it. The fact is that some of the powers that are latent in all men were active and not latent in the case of H.P.B.

Before going further I should like to quote two passages in this connection written by the Masters, as they have a bearing on what happened later both to H.P.B. and the Theosophical Society. The first is written by the Master K.H. He says: 'She can and did produce phenomena, owing to her natural powers combined with several long years of regular training and her phenomena are sometimes better, more wonderful and far more perfect than those of some high, initiated chelas, whom she surpasses in artistic taste and purely western appreciation of art—as for instance in the instantaneous production of pictures . . .’ M.L. 312.

The second is from another Master who says when writing to Mr. Sinnett, editor of *The Pioneer*:

“Also try to break thro’ that great maya against which occult students, the world over, have been warned by their teachers—the hankering after phenomena. Like the thirst for drink and opium, it grows with gratification . . . If you cannot be happy without phenomena you will never learn our philosophy. If you want healthy, philosophic thought and can be satisfied with such—let us correspond. I tell you a profound truth in saying that, if you . . . but choose wisdom, all other things will be added unto it—in time. It adds no force to our metaphysical truths that our letters are dropped from space onto your lap or come under your pillow. If our philosophy is wrong, a *wonder* will not set it right. Put that conviction into your consciousness and let us talk like sensible men . . . Are not our beards grown”? M.L. 262.

These two quotations are very important, the first showing that the production of phenomena is taught to accepted pupils in the course of their training, and the second showing how truly insignificant and even dangerous to the un-

initiated is this art in comparison with an understanding of the sublime teaching of the Ancient Wisdom.

We must always remember too that an accepted pupil is a person of such high standing that very few reach this level except after many years of effort. H.P.B. has often been called a medium, but she was not a medium in the sense ordinarily understood by that term, because while *they* are unconscious when another entity uses their body, H.P.B. never was.

It is fascinating to read how *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* were written, but it would take a whole paper to do any sort of justice to the subject. It can only be said here that H.P.B. was the compiler and not the author of these particular works. How could *she*, surrounded by hardly any books, have been able to produce, in a language that was foreign to her, the wealth of knowledge that is contained in them, when it is said that it would take anyone years of steady work, to look up all the references in *The Secret Doctrine* alone.

H.P.B. herself said that were she the author of *The Secret Doctrine* it would be a greater miracle than if she was the compiler. This, of course, applies only to certain works as H.P.B. was a brilliant author in her own right. She wrote several books and innumerable articles for papers and magazines. Not long before she died, a prominent Russian newspaper offered to take her articles on such terms as had only been offered to one other writer. Despite the fact that the assignment was not a difficult one, and that she badly needed the money, she refused, because she required every bit of strength she had to write *The Secret Doctrine*.

I would like to quote a few sentences written by H.P.B. to her sister when she was writing *Isis Unveiled*. She said:

(Continued on page 40)

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

THE TRUTH SEEKER

In the task of applying the principles of Theosophy to one's own life, the love of truth must come first amongst one's values. In the inward quest for self-knowledge and equally also in the outward endeavour to discriminate between the true and the false in the realm of ideas, between spiritual things and their imitations, and also between real and spurious teachers offering knowledge and wisdom, a high and exacting demand for the truth is a paramount necessity. Every spiritual value has its imitation on the personal level, every true philosophy or doctrine has many distorted and beglamoured imitations to attract the unwary, and again and again in this and in each new life, we shall have to depend upon our own discrimination and awakened love of truth to distinguish the truth from its spurious imitations amongst philosophies, doctrines, and teachers, proffered to us.

The theosophical student who sincerely attempts to apply theosophy to his own life has to know where he stands every step of the way, for nothing that he does can be of any real value if he allows himself to be deluded and sidetracked. This theosophical teaching in which we are all so deeply interested, is loaded. No one can come into close touch with it and remain the same; it stimulates all that is in an individual, the good and the bad as well, and puts these two fighting for supremacy within him. Everyone is somewhat better and stronger, or somewhat weaker and worse, as a result of bringing theosophy into his life. If he uses it wisely, if he uses it always with an eye to the true welfare of humanity, it will carry him toward the height of human achievement. If he misuses it, if he uses it to

enhance the power and glory of his own separative Ego, it will slowly but surely disintegrate him morally, so that he will be unable to tell black from white, or right from wrong.

It is true that in this Universe 'Nothing that is really worth doing in human life is safe'. We cannot afford to be lax where the truth is concerned, the stakes are too high. Therefore the first duty of a student of theosophy is to inure himself to the love of truth. This he can do by undertaking the discipline of the Truth Seeker, and striving to become an individual who at all times values truth above comfort. We have to be able to echo Teufeldrosch's cry in *Sartor Resartus*,—"Truth though the heavens fall" and always make the truth supreme. How is this to be done; how does one go about making oneself a lover of truth? There is a logical, scientific process which anyone can apply with confident certainty, who has the will to put it into practice. Note all through what follows, that there are two parts to a man in this relation. There is the individual of intelligent will (*Buddhi-Manas*), the representative down here of the Spiritual Self. This part, largely germinal as yet in us, always when left to itself and when it is in the saddle, wants the truth, will face it and follow it. The power to see clearly, and the love of truth are innate in man because he is a spiritual being; these faculties do not have to be created, but they do have to be called upon and kept free from contamination. The other part of man is the personal emotional-mind,—*Kama-Manas*, the personal Ego, which wants comfort and security, and recognition of its own importance at all costs. It has no interest in truth in the abstract, but only in facts which can be

of use to gain these comforts for itself. The discipline of the love of truth consists in training oneself to come on guard and identify oneself with this power which loves truth in oneself, whenever a matter of concern arises.

The most important result of carrying out (with sincerity and determination) the discipline to be described, is the discovery of this truth-seeking, clear-seeing power in oneself,—this power which has no bets for or against, this power which simply shows *what is*, no more, no less, impersonal, calm, just; this power which takes no account of our hurt feelings, our personal predilections, our hopes and fears, this power which goes straight to the core of any matter and leaves it bare, exactly as it is, before the intelligence. When the student has reached this point, when he knows as a matter of personal experience that this truth-seeking power exists in himself, when he knows something of its real nature and the effect it will have upon his life,—its ability to show up everything within him before the intelligence for its estimation and judgment, he is then in a position where it becomes possible for him to make a very important evolutionary decision. He can then, if he will, deliberately and self-consciously decide to make this clear-seeing power within him, the controlling force in his life,—at least in that part of his life wherein his major decisions are concerned.

How does the student enter upon this discipline? A very direct way is to discover for ourselves and clearly define, our deepest, most valued beliefs, and then determine how they stand up in the light of keen, critical examination. We take our stand as an impartial outsider, desiring only to know whether they are true or not. To do this we shall call to our assistance the best that can be said on either side, consulting the most reliable authorities for and against, which

are available. As normal students we all start this process with the full conviction that we want the truth. We all normally think we want the truth and we do so long as it bolsters up, confirms, and enlarges our existing beliefs. But how much do we want the truth which undermines our beliefs, which points out that we stand upon a very shaky foundation? Are we so eager to arrive at the truth at any cost that we will go to considerable trouble to meet with something (a book, a person, a lecture,) which reliably claims to explode some idea, or belief of ours?

Whether our beliefs stand up to this examination or are found to have small basis in reality, we shall most certainly discover how little, even our most cherished beliefs, are our own. We shall find that we have taken them over, fully formed, from one source or another, without any deep individual thought or investigation of their verity. We shall be forced to realize that we have been living largely at second-hand, basing our life and standards upon other people's ideas and values, without finding out whether they are true, or whether they are really *our* values. This will come as quite a shock to one's idea of oneself, as one who wants the truth.

Another thing may happen. The student may find that his deepest beliefs, those ideas and values that he most relied upon, have dissolved into thin air in the light of critical, intelligent examination. The security he has lived with has gone, one belief after another has failed him, and he feels as if suspended in mid-air with no foundation upon which to stand. Desolated by this experience, with no certainty anywhere to be seen, he may give up seeking for such an uncomfortable thing as the truth, and perhaps end up joining and submitting to a religion which relieves its votaries of all such worries. But if he stands up to this ordeal he will find

himself in an excellent position, at rock bottom, to seek and find and build a fane of truth for himself. Destruction of illusion is nearly always the necessary first step to knowledge.

In the same impartial spirit of critical inquiry, coolly and calmly, without hurry, but inexorably the student examines all those beliefs, and opinions, and ideas, which are of real concern to himself. Eventually every belief he holds is his own; he knows how he came by it and upon what it is based. He knows to what extent he can lean upon it. The most important result of this discipline, undertaken over months and years, is that he has come to value always getting down to the truth. He is thoroughly familiar with the ways in which attractive ideas are accepted as true, and he has learned to thoroughly distrust the emotions as a criterion of truth. He knows to some extent the way to the truth concerning any matter and has learnt to use and to value it.

The next step in this discipline will be for the student to deal with his prejudice and bias. We are all well aware that we have strong bias in favour of some things, our friends, relations, religion, politics, our country, etc., and against other things. We are often urged to see only the good in people,—why? The refusal to see the faults and weaknesses of others is the surest path to refusing to see them in ourselves. We want to see the truth, no more, no less. Being students of life, we have to learn to estimate people accurately and to understand them. We, ourselves, are the only ones we can condemn and hold accountable, for only there, within our own life, can we know the whole story. Bias plays a big part in our thinking; we can offset its blinding influence, once we know it exists, by making a deliberate effort to see things as they are, or failing this, by discounting our probable error in judgment as a result of its influence.

Prejudices are blind judgments which we have made as a result of feeling, rather than fact, and with which we have identified ourselves so strongly that they seem to be a part of us; they prevent us from seeing anything concerning this matter in its true light. A prejudice may often be so strong that we are completely blind to any evidence which goes contrary to it. Such prejudices are the most powerful enemies of truth, and they must be brought before the bar of the intelligence and fully exposed and faced, and their error destroyed. There are two kinds of prejudices, conscious and unconscious prejudice. The latter, unconscious prejudices, are those which we are completely unaware that we possess. They are the more dangerous to truth, for they will silently bias our thinking and judgments without our ever suspecting it. The way to discover and deal with them is to deal straightly with the prejudices we know we have, our conscious prejudices,—an exercise which will sharpen our perceptions and enable us to detect those prejudices which are still below the surface of our consciousness. These we become aware of chiefly by watching our reactions; it may be a fleeting thought caught crossing the mind which shows that we have a wish to favour something, or an antipathy which we did not know we possessed; it may be a persistent objection to reading some book, or hearing some speaker, and so avoiding certain matters; or it may be by noticing that we become unreasonably upset when some particular subject is under discussion. In these and similar ways, if we follow them up, seeking to know the reason for unusual mental and emotional reactions in ourselves, we shall bring to the surface many of our unconscious prejudices, where they can be faced and dealt with.

The reason why prejudices form such
(Continued on page 45)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members into the Society:—Mrs. Ann Bellanger, Toronto Lodge; Miss Aline Denault, Montreal Lodge; Mrs. B. Tremain Garstang, Mrs. Margaret Ross and Mr. Herbert Ross all of the Toronto Lodge. In our last issue Miss Frances Kennedy was inadvertently shown as Mrs. Kennedy; I apologize for this error and make amends accordingly.

* * * *

Those of our lodges who have made use of the Toronto recordings of lectures express much satisfaction and pleasure from the use of these for their meetings. The President of the Toronto Lodge states that he has some sixty such lectures in stock; thus lodges desirous of taking advantage of these tape recordings have a large list to choose from.

* * * *

I would bring to the notice of those members who have not paid their dues for the current year that time is running out, there being but two months left in order to put themselves in good standing. As General Secretary I hate to have to record at the end of our financial year that so many members are in arrears; not only does it detract from my Annual Report to Adyar, but it is disheartening to have our record of new members counterbalanced by a group of members who are seemingly careless about submitting that small amount of two and a half dollars per annum for the privilege of belonging to a society that is an honour to belong to and more especially one that meets their requirements in the way of spiritual needs. Will those concerned please remit at the earliest opportunity?

Lodges are reminded that our attractive new pamphlets are now fully available, and it is suggested that the utmost advantage be taken of these for the purposes of propaganda.

* * * *

We welcome the return of Mr. Charles M. Hale as a member of the General Executive. It will be remembered he lost out in the last election, giving place to Mrs. W. S. Harley of the Montreal Lodge, but now he is taking the place of Mr. Dudley W. Barr who decided not to stand for election in view of his possible retirement later on this year. In the meantime Mr. Barr will attend the Executive Meetings ex officio as Editor of the magazine.

* * * *

The following message is self explanatory:—Greetings to Convention of the Canadian Federation held this Easter of happy augury in Vancouver. May you have a fruitful, enlightening and enjoyable get-together, and may this fraternization lead to closer bonds of brotherhood so fundamental in our work. I trust it is the forerunner of many more to come. Fraternally, Col. Thomson, General Secretary, Theosophical Society in Canada.

* * * *

Mrs. Harley writes that the French speaking group in the Montreal Lodge is meeting regularly and that there is a gratifying enthusiasm prevalent with the hope of expanding activities and membership. This is heartening.

* * * *

The Animal Welfare Committee has had a most successful general meeting and quite an appreciable amount was collected to meet current expenses. Several plans were discussed for the furtherance of its efforts and a hopeful attitude was displayed in the general outlook. Any organization is helped tremendously by people intimating that

they are in sympathy with the work in hand and I therefore ask on behalf of the Committee that members of the Section who are interested, no matter where they are write of their approbation of the work being done and address their letters to: Mrs. Gaile Campbell, 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.

* * * *

That the General Secretary has other interests in the cultural activities of the community is evinced by the photograph herewith reproduced.

professional status. It has been quite successful in its purposes. I also originated the Ontario Amateur Art Club some years before the Arts Club and it also has been most successful. To continue my somewhat egotistical remarks, The Guild of All Arts is gradually accumulating a collection of my paintings of local scenes which have attracted much attention as they record old houses and scenes that are rapidly disappearing to make way for progress as it is termed these days.

* * * *



It portrays the opening of the 18th Season of the Arts Club in Toronto.

On the left is seen His Worship Mayor Nathan Phillips, who formally opened the event. Next is Miss Wilson, President of the Club, then Mrs. Nathan Phillips and Colonel Thomson, Hon. President.

Behind the group hangs a painting by myself of the Bluffs at Scarboro where I am domiciled. It may be of interest to know that I founded the club in 1940 in collaboration with the late Sir Charles G. D. Roberts and others for the purpose of fostering the Fine Arts among people bordering between amateur and

For some years now I have had a problem that has frequently come sharply to my attention, and that is the case of isolated members away from any lodge and with but little contact with the theosophical world. I understand that Australia and New Zealand had the same problem and that it was overcome to a great extent by organizing what they term Drawing Room Groups. For example members who live some distance from lodges could draw together other members living nearby and friends who are interested in our philosophy, and thus in an informal way arrange meetings weekly or monthly in

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

Published Bi-monthly.

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.



Subscription: TWO DOLLARS A YEAR

OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

GENERAL SECRETARY

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.
To whom all payments should be made, and all official communications addressed.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

Dudley W. Barr, 18 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont.
Charles E. Bunting, 75 Rosedale Ave., Hamilton, Ont.
Mrs. W. S. Harley, 254 Pine Beach Blvd., Dorval, P.Q.
Miss M. Hindsley, 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.
George I. Kinman, 262 Sheldrake Blvd., Toronto 12, Ont.
Washington E. Wilks, 925 Georgia St. W., Vancouver, B.C.
Emory P. Wood, 9360 — 86th St., Edmonton, Alta.

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.

Printed by The Griffin & Richmond Co., Ltd.,
29 Rebecca Street, Hamilton, Ontario.

their own homes. The nearest lodges could offer the services of their lecturers and send tape recordings to assist such groups. Energetic and devoted theosophical members who are isolated, as several of ours are between Toronto and Montreal, could thus formulate groups which would be of inestimable worth to those looking for help such as only our Society can give. I hope this suggestion will meet with approbation by members situated in such circumstances. Anything I can do to further such endeavours will be gladly undertaken.

* * * *

A pleasing attribute of the Eastern Lodges is the frequent interchange of speakers who are capable and willing to devote their services in this respect. The result is an atmosphere of unusual

friendliness between lodges and makes for that elasticity of views that is highly commendable. The lodges concerned are those of Toronto, Phoenix, Hamilton, and Montreal.

* * * *

Again I am making a plea for an issue of the magazine which we are short of, viz., No. 1, April/March, 1956. More copies of this are required because we intend having some twelve volumes bound, and cannot do so unless there is a response to this appeal. If any of our readers have this issue and no particular use for it, we would be extremely grateful if they would put it in the next magazine envelope received and mail it to us. We are now getting more copies printed of each issue and trust this dilemma will not arise again. Many thanks in anticipation.

E.L.T.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held in Toronto on Sunday, April 7, 1957, the following members being present: Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. D. W. Barr, C. E. Bunting, G. I. Kinman and the General Secretary.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved and the financial statement was adopted.

Reports from the various Lodges respecting nominations were read. Mr. Kinman's motion that the nominations be closed was seconded by Miss Hindsley and carried. The nominations for General Secretary were in all cases for the present incumbent and therefore there would be no election for that office. With respect to the members of the Executive, the Lodges were in favour of the present regime, with the exception of the Toronto Lodge which omitted the name of Mr. Dudley Barr (at his own request) and substituted that of Mr. C. M. Hale. As there were seven nominees

for the seven vacancies, an election will not be necessary this year.

Mr. Barr reported progress for the Magazine. In a discussion which followed concerning Mr. Barr's possible retirement as editor at the end of the year it was stated that two persons had signified their willingness to help with the magazine work.

Letters from Mr. F. E. Tyler of Toronto were read and discussed in which he advocated unity with the Canadian Federation of Lodges and suggested that the magazine be open for the use of Federation members in order that differences of opinion between the Section and the Federation might be elucidated. Mr. Barr pointed out that the editor was always glad to receive well written articles whether by members of the Federation or otherwise.

General Council: The General Secretary read from the Minutes of the meeting of the General Council held at Adyar in January 1957, an extract relating to the Report of the Committee appointed to consider amendments to Rule 10. This is the Rule relating to the election of the President of the Society. The Committee's recommendation was as follows:

"In order to satisfy every member of the General Council who has made proposals in regard to the number of nominees who should be on the ballot paper when voting takes place for a President, the following four amendments are put forward to be voted upon:

1. That paragraph 2 of Rule 10 remain as at present in regard to the number to be on the ballot paper, but be changed in such a way as to ensure that if any one or more of the three having the highest number of nominations does not wish to go on the ballot, the next highest on the list shall be substituted.

2. That the Rule be changed to read 'five' instead of 'three'.

3. That the Rule be changed to read 'seven' instead of 'three'.

4. That paragraph two of the Rule be deleted and the names of all the nominees appear on the ballot."

After discussion the Meeting voted unanimously for paragraph 1. The amendment receiving the highest number of votes will be later put forward pro forma as a Resolution to be voted upon by the members of the Council.

Mr. Kinman stated that the Toronto Lodge now has sixty lectures available on tape recordings for use by the lodges. The response so far has been small perhaps partly because of the difficulty in hiring reproducing machines in small towns.

The next meeting was arranged for July 7 or at the call of the General Secretary.

The meeting then adjourned.

THE GENERAL ELECTION

The Lodges submitting nominations for the General Secretaryship were unanimous in naming Colonel Thomson as continuing in that office. This was also the case of members for the General Executive. As will be seen in the report of the last Executive Meeting (in this issue) Toronto Lodge did not include the name of Mr. Dudley Barr at his own request and substituted that of Mr. Charles M. Hale. This does not change the number of members nominated and thus does not obligate an election. I therefore declare that the following list of officers constitutes the General Executive for the forthcoming year.

General Secretary, Col. E. L. Thomson.

Members

Mr. Charles E. Bunting, Mr. Charles M. Hale, Mrs. Mavis W. Harley, Miss Madeline Hindsley, Mr. George I. Kinman, Dr. Washington E. Wilks, Mr. Emory P. Wood.

Signed: E. L. Thomson,
General Secretary

PHOENIX LODGE

The first anniversary of the meeting at which it was decided to form Phoenix Lodge was celebrated on March 9th in the home of Mrs. Agnes Hambly and was attended by an enthusiastic group of members and well-wishers. Games were played, after which the president, Cecil Williams, spoke of the work of the Lodge during the first year and outlined its hopes and plans for the future. The gift of a silver incense burner was presented to Mr. Williams by the members in recognition of his unstinted time and labour which he had given during the past year in the interests of the Lodge.

In accordance with a decision to make the Lodge as self-reliant as possible and to develop its own speakers, members are being encouraged to lead public meetings on Sundays. In line with this policy the three main monthly lectures since the last report were given by members and associate members. These were Mrs. Kathleen Marks who spoke on "Reincarnation, a Christian Doctrine", Dr. Arnold A. Moxom whose subject was "The Science of Breath", an exposition of Prana Yoga, and Mr. Gerald N. LeGault spoke on enzymes under the title of "The Key to Vibrant Health". An encouraging sign is the interest shown by younger people.

The Lodge has been quietly pursuing its purpose of placing theosophical books in prison libraries. Additional books have been supplied to Barton Street Gaol in Hamilton, and the Industrial Farm at Burwash, where the volumes are reported to be in active circulation, and a first set of books was placed recently in the library of Guelph Reformatory. Theosophists outside the Lodge have shown an interest in this work, and we are grateful to them for substantial donations towards the purchase of more volumes.

THE ROAD

In the March-April issue a short quotation appeared bearing the above title and ascribed to H.P.B. It is not our custom to publish quotations from H. P. B. without checking the original source, but in this case we could not trace it and as the quotation had been taken from *The Real H. P. Blavatsky*, written by that staunch admirer of H. P. B., W. A. Kingsland, we departed from our usual course. Enquiries later through Mrs. Fielding of the H.P.B. Library, North Vancouver, resulted in the quotation being found in an editorial in *Lucifer* for September 1891, written some months after H.P.B.'s death and when Mrs. Besant was editor. It is possible that Mrs. Besant was quoting from a teaching given orally by H.P.B.

Incidentally, the quotation as given in this Magazine does not agree exactly with the original wording in *Lucifer*. Here is the original wording of 1891:

"There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe: I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that opens inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling—the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come."

THE MAHATMA LETTERS

TRUST LIBRARY

An Appeal for Material

The Mahatma Letters Trust was founded by the late Miss Maud Hoffman, executrix of A. P. Sinnett, to control the future of the book, *The Mahat-*

ma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, edited at her request by A. Trevor Barker and published in 1923, with a second edition in 1926.

While working on a third and definitive edition with the late Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, the Trustees began to collect all books concerning the Letters and their authorship, and this collection was soon expanded into a small library of early works on Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement. When older Theosophists were asked to contribute material they gave to the Trust not only books and pamphlets, but manuscript material, photographs, souvenirs and the like. The collection thus grew rapidly, and the Trustees are now in a position to appeal not merely generally but for specific material. The most urgent of our needs is for Volumes 8 to 12 of the magazine *The Theosophist*.

Generous donors to the Library have included the late Miss Hoffman, Miss A. Morton, Miss Debenham, and Colonel J. M. Prentice of Australia. We appeal to all others who may possess material of value to the Trust either to send contributions at once or to leave such gifts in a codicil to their will. In this way the material will not fall into the hands of people who in ignorance may destroy it, and will remain available to all serious students of Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement.

In connection with the third edition the Trustees will publish a collation of the three known attempts to produce a Chronology of the Mahatma Letters to Sinnett and those of H. P. Blavatsky to Sinnett, as contained in the companion volume. The Trustees will therefore welcome suggestions from any other students who have attempted such chronology.

This Notice is being sent to all Theosophical and kindred periodicals, but the Trustees would also like to reach indivi-

dual students, especially those with long association with the Movement who may not see the published Notice. Further copies of this Notice are available from the Trustees, who would like the names and addresses of persons to whom it might be sent with advantage.

For The Mahatma Letters Trust,
Christmas Humphreys
Elsie Benjamin
Trustees.

58 Marlborough Place
London N.W. 8.

* * *

THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY, LONDON

The Council of the Buddhist Society held a Reception on December 12th, 1956, at their new Headquarters at 58, Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1.

The purpose of this Reception was twofold—to celebrate the opening of the new Headquarters, and to welcome their President, Mr. Christmas Humphreys, on his return from his recent trip to India and Nepal.

The new house is excellently appointed and beautifully decorated. There is a fine Library on the ground floor, and on the upper floor a lecture hall and a Shrine Room which will be kept strictly for meditation. The Shrine Room contains a fine Buddha Rupa in gold, with crimson decorations, and candles and incense burn before it. The lecture hall is spacious and will accommodate a large number of members and visitors, and is dominated by a representation of the Buddha. It also contains a glass-cased museum of Buddhist antiques and miscellaneous items.

The Ambassadors of Nepal and Thailand, and a representative of the External Department of India House were present, and the Theosophical Society sent a representative. Members of the Society and guests came from many countries. Several Bhikkhus were in attendance.

MADAME BLAVATSKY

(Continued from page 30)

"You cannot imagine in what a charmed world of pictures and visions I live. I am writing *Isis*; not writing, rather copying out and drawing that which She personally shows to me. Upon my word, sometimes it seems to me that the ancient Goddess of Beauty in person leads me through all the countries of past centuries which I have to describe. I sit with my eyes open and to all appearances see and hear everything real and actual around me, and yet at the same time I see and hear that which I write . . . Slowly century after century, image after image float out of the distance and pass before me, as if in a magic panorama; and meanwhile I put them together in my mind, fitting in epochs and dates and know *for sure* that there can be *no mistake*. Races and nations, countries and cities which have long disappeared in the darkness of the pre-historic past, emerge and then vanish, giving place to others; and then I am told the consecutive dates".

She goes on to tell of the help she received from her guru and others and ends by saying: "They remember everything. They know everything. Without them from whence could I gather my knowledge?"

Now, it might be asked here whether the production of phenomena helped the work, that the Theosophical Society was founded to perform and I think the answer is "No". I am not, of course, referring here to the means employed in producing *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, which are a precious legacy left to the whole of humanity, and most certainly not to the methods used by the Masters; but rather to the phenomena produced by H.P.B. to satisfy certain individuals. It drew their attention to Theosophy, which it was intended to do,

but unfortunately, human nature being what it is, some were dazzled by its alluring gleam, instead of looking for the purer light of Truth beyond.

The Masters said later that it should have been kept for an inner group only. These years, however, were years of great encouragement for the Founders of the Theosophical Society. The knowledge was growing and spreading and some of the finest minds in India and Europe were attracted to its teachings. It was said in Simla that no gathering was complete unless it included Madame Blavatsky. She went to Paris and London, while Colonel Olcott travelled through India and Ceylon, encouraging the people to live up to the ideals of their own religion in its purest form, for this is the work of Theosophy.

It seemed that the highest hopes of the Founders were to be realized, when a cloud appeared on the horizon and the drama, and one might almost say, the tragedy of the foundation of the Theosophical Society unfolded.

It had all the elements of real drama for forces of Light worked through H. P. B., while the forces of Darkness worked through an insignificant couple called Coulomb and in a slightly lesser degree through some Christian missionaries and the London Society for Psychological Research. Like most dramas, which so frequently follow the same pattern, some who should have stood solidly behind H.P.B. did not do so. She herself never failed, but rose from Death's door, through which she was tempted to pass, to write *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and *The Key to Theosophy*. So the forces of light prevailed, but the infant Theosophical Society, now growing up a little, has still to recover fully from the blows it received at its inception, and this it will never do until we can make the world realize the injustice which has been done to H.P.B.

Let us go over this story and see how false are the ideas which have resulted from it. Before the foundation of the Society, when H.P.B. was in Egypt, a certain Miss Cutting did her a favour. Subsequently she was married to a man named Coulomb and later the pair arrived in India with no money. They appealed to H.P.B. for help and she took them in to Headquarters at Bombay and later Adyar. Madam Coulomb was established as housekeeper and her husband was a sort of odd job man, although he held a nominal post as librarian. All went well for a while, and since they made things run smoothly, they went their way undisturbed. Later Madam Coulomb, who was very ambitious, became exceedingly jealous of H.P.B. and took to slandering her behind her back, although when tackled with it she would deny it. The climax came just when H.P.B. was sailing for England. Madam Coulomb wanted to borrow money and approached one of the members, but H.P.B. told the member not to give it to her and Madam Coulomb thereupon swore vengeance. She and her husband made themselves very unpleasant while H.P.B. was away, and the committee that was running things dismissed them. Four months later there appeared in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* letters said to have been written by H.P.B. to Madam Coulomb, which, had they been really so, would have proved H.P.B. to have been a fraud. These letters were rented to the Missionaries by Madam Coulomb and her husband, by whom they had been forged. This was not all they did, for when H.P.B. was away in Europe and they had the run of her rooms at Headquarters, Madam Coulomb's husband, who was a professional carpenter, had made various sliding panels and hidden doors in H.P.B.'s rooms to try and prove that her phenomena had been faked and done by the

help of confederates.

Later the Coulombs sought to substantiate the famous letters by pointing to those sliding doors and hidden panels, but even the missionaries' own investigators admitted that the apparatus was made "without the slightest concealment, evidently of recent construction" (in fact long after the phenomena was produced).

The next arrival on the scene was a young and inexperienced man called Hodgson who was sent out from London to investigate the phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society, by the Society for Psychical Research. His report, based almost entirely on the information of the Coulombs, was unfavourable and the Society for Psychical Research finally stigmatized H.P.B. as a fraud and a charlatan.

I am touching very lightly on this story, which in reality is a very long one, and would not touch on it at all, except that no one can fully appreciate H.P.B. unless one realizes the terrible suffering she endured in order to bring us the light which we call Theosophy. Some of the facts of this story are understandable, and some are not. It was understandable that the missionaries opposed H.P.B., because while they were trying to convert the Indian people to Christianity, she was urging them to return to the purity of their own religion, just as she would have advised the Christian world to return to the purity of its faith. Furthermore, she refused to compromise with orthodoxy, or in other words she fought the tendency to materialize the original purity of any true religion.

It was understandable, too, that the spiritualists should oppose her, because she did not agree with their deductions, but what is not understandable is that the Society for Psychical Research, which counted among its numbers some sincere and fine people, should not have allowed the defendant, in this case H. P.

B., to defend herself.

In regard to the letters handed over to the missionaries by Madam Coulomb their owners refused to allow any Theosophist to see them, refused to submit the letters to an open public examination, refused to allow them to be photographed, refused them to be traced, refused their reproduction in any facsimile, and apart from an expert hired by the missionaries themselves, no one ever saw them except Hodgson and his expert Netherdift.

In 1907 Mr. Johnston, reporting to a convention of the Theosophical Society said in his report, "The public accepted Mr. Hodgson's view, without question or examination . . . and has rested on it for more than 20 (now 70) years. It was popularly supposed that the S.P.R. had investigated the phenomena. But:

1. The Society, in fact, never investigated them.
2. It delegated the work to a committee of five.
3. That committee never investigated them.
4. The committee entrusted its task to Mr. Hodgson.
5. Mr. Hodgson never investigated them.

He could not, because most of them occurred at Simla in 1880. He did not reach India till nearly five years after and then based his report entirely on the evidence of dismissed employees, despite the fact that they were absent when the most important phenomena took place."

The really grave charge against the report of the S.P.R. is, that not one of those reporting was actually a witness of the phenomena as they occurred; very credulous hearsay and not very intelligent conjecture. Not one in ten thousand of those who to this day believe that the S.P.R. exposed H.P.B. ever read the report. As the verdict fell in with their prejudices they—

- (a) Accepted the view of the Society, which
- (b) accepted the view of its committee, who
- (c) accepted the view of its agent, who
- (d) never saw the phenomena he professed to investigate. . .

Mr. Hodgson submitted to an expert parts of letters attributed to a Master and some writing said to be by H.P.B. The expert gave as his positive conclusion that H.P.B. was not the writer of the letters attributed to the Master. I would like to explain here for those not familiar with the subject that Mr. Hodgson tried to make out that H.P.B. herself forged the letters that she received from the Masters.

Mr. Hodgson cut out this part of the expert's letter. In other words, the evidence that was in the defendant's favour was cut out.

Actually the phenomena produced by H.P.B. and the Masters, were not exhibitions of magic. They were experiments intended to show that certain kinds of Force existed.

What was H.P.B. doing all this time? Notwithstanding the loyalty of members of the Theosophical Society and the Indian people, who gave her a great ovation and garlanded her with flowers when they met her on her return to Madras, she suffered intensely from this attack on her character. She wanted, as one can imagine, to rush into action immediately and bring an action for slander against the missionaries but the committee, for many reasons, decided otherwise. H.P.B. deeply resented this at the time, became very ill and nearly died, and it is still an open question as to whether the decision of the committee was a wise one or not. Eventually disharmony arose and in 1885 she resigned her official connection with the Society as Corresponding Secretary, gave up the editorship of *The*

Theosophist and left India, the land of her beloved Masters, the land where she had worked so unselfishly and with such high hopes, never to return.

Having finally recovered her health to some extent in Italy, she went to Germany where she was joined by Countess Wachtmeister, the widow of the Swedish Ambassador to London and it was here that she worked so hard on *The Secret Doctrine*.

Countess Wachtmeister tells us of the distress of H.P.B. when the final damaging report of the S.P.R. came out. She said, "How can I carry on the Masters work. Oh cursed phenomena which I did only to please private friends and instruct those around me. What an awful karma to bear. If I die the Masters work will be wasted and the Society will be ruined". As ever her thoughts were of the Masters. The Countess tells us of another night when H.P.B. seemed to be dying. She was determined to watch her all night, but against her will, she slept. When she awoke H.P.B. told her that her Master had given her the choice of living to complete *The Secret Doctrine*, or leaving her physical body, which was the cause to her of such terrible pain and distress. She chose to live and that was the greatest of all the sacrifices made by H.P.B. in a life which contained little else. In spite of pain and disease, which the doctors say should have killed her, she sometimes worked for sixteen hours at a stretch at her desk.

In 1891 she died, having produced her greatest phenomena, *The Secret Doctrine* and this phenomena, no one can deny. "How," one would like to ask her detractors, "could H.P.B., whom they called a charlatan, be the same person as the H.P.B. who wrote *The Secret Doctrine*?"

Just here I should like to quote two passages from Mr. Kingsland's book, *The Real H.P.B.* from which I have

taken much of the material for this paper. He says:

"H.P.B. was no saint in the ordinary acceptance of the term, but she *did* have this preliminary qualification. Her whole life was a renunciation. She never asked for or sought anything that this world would give for herself. Led in the first instance by an inner urge to wander the Earth in search of the hidden occult knowledge, in due course she found it; and when it became her mission to direct the footsteps of others to 'the road that leads to the heart of the universe', she concentrated her whole energies on that work, sacrificing position, health, wealth and reputation to give the message to the world. But the learned savants of that time wrote her down a fraud and a charlatan; and half the world today, without any real knowledge of the facts of the case, or any capacity for appreciating the profound spiritual teachings contained in her works, ignorantly echoes this condemnation."

And again—

"But perhaps also, while Mme. Blavatsky, the outer personality, chafed and raged under the stigma placed upon her, the *real* H.P.B. regarded the whole matter with those calm, deep, far-seeing eyes which look out on us from her portraits as from a soul untouched by the passing shows and storms of this life; knowing that all that happens is in accordance with immutable Law; and knowing also that her . . . mission involved the crucifixion of the personality."

Before closing, let us touch briefly on two points, one, why should we defend H.P.B. and two, what should the sacrifices made by her mean to us?

In answer to the first question, some people say that all that matters is the teachings that she has left us. Why worry about all the slander and abuse that has been levelled at H.P.B.? While

admitting that Truth is far more important than those who brought it to us, yet the fact remains that many people will not examine what they consider to be new ideas, if given out by someone whose good faith has been questioned. The other day, for instance, I read in a book called, *Heresies Exposed*, a book I may say that has gone into 24 editions since 1917, the following sentence; after the usual line of abuse quoted from some writer against H.P.B., the writer remarked "Strange vessel indeed, out of which we are invited to drink the clear waters of Truth".

Not long ago, to quote another instance, I heard a sermon by a clergyman who undertook to expose Theosophy, which of course included H.P.B. What he really did was to expose his ignorance of Theosophy, but who among his congregation would know that and who among that same congregation would take the trouble to check the statements made?

As far back as 1882 one of the Masters said "We claim to know more of the secret Cause of events than you men of the world do. I say then that it is the *villification and abuse of the Founders*, the general misconception of the aims and objects of the Society that paralyses its progress—nothing else". M.L. 251.

And again, answering a letter in which the writer had asked what he could do to help the Society a Master answered, "No: neither yourself nor the Lord Śang-yias Himself—so long as the equivocal position of the Founders is not perfectly and undeniably proved due to fiendish malice and a systematic intrigue." M.L. 254.

I think these statements stand good today and justify us in our defence of Madam Blavatsky apart from the ordinary feeling of disgust aroused by the unwarranted and continual attacks made

upon a great soul. It is, however, satisfactory to note that the demand for *The Secret Doctrine* is steadily increasing year by year, that it is studied by scientists and frequently quoted by scholars. The teachings have spread all over the world despite the efforts of the destructive forces to prevent it. Many people today have a working knowledge of Theosophy but there is one danger that we cannot afford to overlook which is that, in trying to water down Theosophy in order to make it palatable to the public we may lose the purity of the original teachings. It is true that we must crawl before we can walk, and we should be more than grateful to the interpreters of the teachings brought us by H.P.B., but our object should ever be to acquire sufficient knowledge to study the original teachings ourselves. One of our chief aims also is to prepare the ground for the next spiritual impulse which occurs in the last quarter of every century. This is very important.

The world will one day claim Madam Blavatsky, but until that time, and while to some extent she is still an outlaw, thanks to the Society for Psychical Research, we to whom she has brought the light should persist in her defence.

To the second question, what do the sacrifices of H.P.B. mean to us? I should answer that they should act as a light and a never failing inspiration. We sometimes think ourselves rather good because we go to a meeting when we would rather stay at home, perhaps write a paper or read a little Theosophy. The love of Truth and the willingness to pursue it at all costs does not burn as brightly in our hearts as it did in hers. We are only at the beginning of the journey while she is nearly at the end, but she has drawn our attention to this Path once more, as all our great Teachers do, and not only this, but she has shown us how with courage and

devotion the steepest and rockiest places can be climbed, yes, even in the face of scorn and slander of the ignorant. We may not at our stage be able to do great things but we can, I think, do much more than we do.

In the Inner World we all know best what we have to do. No one can judge for us but in the outer world, remembering the plea of H.P.B. that her last incarnation should not be a failure, which really depends on every one of us, I think we should give of our best to all Theosophical efforts, treating it as a privilege, not as a weary duty, and as regards H.P.B. we can see that our libraries contain a few at least of the best works written about her, of which none, to my mind, is better than *The Real H.P.B.* by Kingsland. There have been many good books actually devoted to her and her work, written by people who knew her, and if each of us possessed only one, to lend to anyone interested, and if we saw that our public libraries contained some too, then the day may come sooner, when H.P.B. will be known for what she really is.

Just one last quotation from Mr. Kingsland. Writing in his book he says: "I will hope also that this work may serve to remind the great body of Theosophists the world over of the immense debt which they owe to the one and only real *Founder* of the Movement in its outer aspects. That it will serve to draw them together once more on the basis of the fundamental principles, which Those who were—and are—behind the Movement had in view originally; which they indicated so plainly through their outer Agent; and which should be the incentive of both the individual and the body-corporate to follow her example of one pointed devotion—setting aside all *personal* considerations and claims.

"The Path by which to Deity we climb
Is arduous, rough, ineffable, sublime."

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY THE TRUTH SEEKER

(Continued from page 33)

a large part of our mentality, and the reason why these enemies of truth are so difficult to deal with and eradicate, is because they have become a part of us—of our Ego. Having identified ourselves with an idea which we have been attracted to from a conversation, or even from a newspaper, and have accepted and taken over for ourselves, it becomes us,—part of our Ego, and anyone who attacks it, attacks us, and we resent it and close our mind to reason, and fight back. Such is the insane blindness of egoism. Behind all our prejudices stands the personal ego,—the idea of I, My, Mine,—myself, to which we are all so tremendously and tenderly attached, and which we feel we must protect every moment of the day. Here we have only space to note the reason why complete detachment is so very rare. It can only be achieved in an individual who has broken the obsessing power of the Ego, and who therefore at need, at will, can put it completely on one side,—a tremendous achievement.

When the student has examined some matter with the most impartial mind he can summon, divested of prejudice and bias, having obtained and having considered and honestly estimated the best that can be said from every angle on the matter, then he has carried out one phase, the negative phase, of the dual work of the truth seeker. In order to complete the effort, he must come to a definite conclusion and know exactly where he stands regarding this matter which he has been investigating. This is the positive phase of this work, and it is just as important as the former, the negative phase, but it is often neglected, or not understood, its importance not being realized. Every-

one is familiar with the broad-minded individual who is conversant with every aspect of any subject which interests him, but who holds his ideas so lightly that one day he will be found taking one position in a discussion, and another day arguing from the opposite position and against what he was saying on the former occasion. Many people who enjoy playing with ideas take this attitude; it is purely negative and avoids all responsibility. Failing to come to a definite conclusion, we never know what we think. It is far better to come to a mistaken conclusion, than none at all. We can learn discrimination from our mistakes, as well as true up our ideas. In spiritual matters, where human growth is concerned, it is true to say that unless we take a stand by the ideas we value, nothing can happen, nothing at all, to ourselves nor can we be of use to our fellowmen; we are ineffectual. Here, in spiritual matters, clear-cut definiteness in coming to a self-conscious conclusion, is all-important. A man can go on dealing with fine ideas, high philosophical concepts, and great ideals, all his life and if he takes no stand by any of them, he will end up precisely where he started, in so far as growth is concerned. This attitude, if indulged in, can lead to astral intoxication, an abuse of psychological stimulants,—psychological dram drinking in fact.

For the student who is trying to apply theosophy in his life, 'doubt' is one of the great dangers. This is emphasized strongly in the Mahatma Letters, in many places. To come to doubt what one *knows*, and has fully decided is true, because of some happening; or information strongly impregnated with emotion, is fatal. The work of years may go to pieces in a moment, or a few hours. This brings home to us again, the importance of knowing what we know; of coming to full self-conscious

conclusions about matters of vital consequence, which we have decided as the result of reasons well understood by us. Then no emotional storm can throw us off balance, and make us doubt what we know.

We are in a position now, to try to formulate what should be the attitude of the Truth Seeker. What is the theosophical attitude toward life? In those two memorable articles in the first numbers of *The Theosophist*, headed 'What is Theosophy' and 'What are the Theosophists' H.P.B. laid down for the Modern Theosophical Movement, the programme, the lines, upon which it was meant to go. In the latter article she says, "The root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation", and the motto chosen for the T.S., was "There is no religion higher than truth". What will be the attitude of the individual who takes this for his standard? He will be a student who knows *what* he believes and *why*, for his beliefs will be entirely his own.

There will be some things, one or two, perhaps, which he *knows*, that he is certain of, matters of direct experience. He cannot imagine anything which could shake his knowledge of these one or two. There will be a number of self-evident truths which he would cheerfully stake his life upon. There will be many ideas and doctrines which he is fully convinced are true because he has thoroughly examined and tested them, and finds there is nothing in human experience which can explode them; because they are rational, and furthermore because they throw a flood of light upon many dark places in the mystery of human existence.

And then there will be a host of beliefs which he holds lightly, things which he lacks the power to explore fully and which he believes, first because they are reasonable and fit in with and round

out a rational philosophy of life, and still further because they are the teaching of individuals who, he has fully convinced himself, have knowledge, and who are completely reliable.

The attitude of the Truth Seeker, will be that of a man who is ready to put his ideas forward as a challenge to criticism, at all times. He welcomes sincere criticism, knowing that criticism can never harm the truth, it can but make it stand out more clearly. He will go far out of his way to meet a view which reliably claims to oppose his own ideas. If there is something to be said against his belief, he wants to know it and examine it. If his belief is false, he will discard it, and if inadequate, he will true it up. At all costs he wants the truth, and he will not be content with anything less than he can reach. And so, the Truth Seeker, taking a firm stand behind those beliefs and ideas which he has made his own, is ready at any time to cast them into the melting pot, where the fire of intelligent criticism will burn out the dross and leave pure gold.

He knows that in order for truth to be brought into human life, it has to be brought into direct conflict with ignorance, error and fraud, and he knows also that the mind and soul of man is the place where this struggle between truth and darkness has to take place. Without the self-conscious action of enlightened human intelligence vitalizing ideas, there can be no truth in human life; without the self-conscious effort of individual men applying these ideas in their own lives, truth must remain a spiritual metaphysical abstraction.

This is the reason why it is absolutely essential that we students of Theosophy carry out our part of the latest effort to bring these great universal spiritual truths to humanity. If we fail in this through cowardice, weakness, selfishness, or simply through stupidity; if we

fail to take up this, our unique task, of translating these Theosophical truths into terms of practical human consciousness, then this teaching of the Mahatmas and H. P. B., will of necessity, remain largely nothing more than a number of metaphysical ideas, and its impact upon the spiritual life of humanity will have been transient and superficial. But, if on the other hand, we pull ourselves together and take up this challenge; if we, in full awareness of its vital significance for the Race, take hold of these truths and evoke our utmost courage, fortitude, and intelligence, and engage in the inner individual struggle, by means of which alone they can be translated into terms of human conscious experience, then there is no way of telling how far-reaching the result of our combined effort may be for us all, and how conducive to true human welfare in the present and the future, it may prove.

Orpheus Lodge, C.T.S.

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.

ORIGINAL AND UP-TO-DATE THEOSOPHY

We lend freely by mail all the comprehensive literature of the Movement. Catalogue on request. Also to lend, or for sale at 20c each post free, our eight H.P.B. Pamphlets, including early articles from LUCIFER and Letters from the Initiates.

THE H. P. B. LIBRARY

1385 TATLOW AVE., NORSGATE PARK
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.

BLAVATSKY INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS
by H. P. Blavatsky.

THE EVIDENCE OF IMMORTALITY
by Dr. Jerome A. Anderson.

MODERN THEOSOPHY
by Claude Falls Wright.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA
A Conflation by Albert E. S. Smythe.

These four books are cloth bound, price \$1. each.

THE EXILE OF THE SOUL
by Roy Mitchell, a key to the understanding of occult psychology.

THROUGH TEMPLE DOORS
Studies in Occult Masonry
by Roy Mitchell, an occult interpretation of Masonic symbolism.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION
by Roy Mitchell, a re-examination of Theosophical ideas, and their practical application in the work.

THEOSOPHIC STUDY
by Roy Mitchell, a book of practical guidance in methods of study.

The above four books are attractively bound; paper bound \$1.00, cloth, \$1.50.

COURSE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING
by Roy Mitchell. Especially written for Theosophical students. \$3.00.

THEOSOPHY, AN ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE
by Dudley W. Barr. 50c.

CANADIAN LODGES

CALGARY LODGE:

Address enquiries to Mr. Stanley S. Elliott,
No. 3, 1735 College Lane, Calgary, Alta.

EDMONTON LODGE:

President, Mr. Emory P. Wood; Secretary,
Mrs. Madeline Williams, 10943, 77th Ave.,
Edmonton, Alta.

HAMILTON LODGE:

President, Mr. C. E. Bunting; Secretary, Mrs.
Clare Lakin, Ancaster, Ont.

PHOENIX LODGE, HAMILTON:

President, Mr. Cecil Williams, 49 E. 7th St.;
Secretary, Miss Stella Ballard.

KITCHENER LODGE:

President, Alexander Watt; Secretary, John
Oberlerchener, Kingsdale P.O., Kitchener.

MONTREAL LODGE:

President, Mr. W. S. Harley; Secretary, Miss
Ebba Tolson. Lodge Rooms, 1426 Bishop St.,
Room 2, Montreal, P.Q., Mail P.O. Box 212.

OTTAWA:

Enquiries respecting Theosophical activities in
Ottawa should be addressed to: Mrs. D. H.
Chambers, 531 Bay St., Ottawa.

ST. THOMAS LODGE:

President, Benj. T. Garside; Secretary, Mrs.
Hazel B. Garside, 71 Hincks St., St. Thomas,
Ont.

TORONTO LODGE:

President, Mr. G. I. Kinman, 262 Sheldrake
Blvd., Toronto 12 (phone Mohawk 5346). Re-
cording Secretary, Miss Laura Gaunt. Lodge
Rooms, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.

VANCOUVER LODGE:

President, Mrs. Buchanan; Secretary, M. D.
Buchanan, 4690 W. 8th Avenue. The Lodge
rooms are at 151½ Hastings St. West.

ORPHEUS LODGE, VANCOUVER:

President, R. H. Hedley; Secretary, L. C.
Hanson; Copp Bldg., Vancouver, B. C.

CANYON LODGE, NORTH VANCOUVER:

President, Mr. Charles R. Carter; Secretary,
Mrs. A. B. Creeth, 344 East 26th St., North
Vancouver, B.C.

VICTORIA LODGE:

Apply to Mrs. W. Gilmour, 2540 Cotswold Road,
Victoria, B.C.

WINNIPEG LODGE:

President, Mr. Percy H. Stokes. Secretary, Mr.
Henry Gadd, Suite 9 B Maple Leaf Apts., 915
Corydon Ave., Winnipeg 9, Man.
