

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XXXVIII., No. 4

TORONTO, SEPT.-OCT., 1957

Price 35 Cents

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THE WISDOM OF CONFUCIUS

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

"Never, perhaps, in the history of the human race has one man exerted such an enormous influence for good on after generations." (1)

"With rare modesty and intelligent self-appreciation, Confucius described himself as 'a transmitter, not a maker, one who loved and believed in the ancients'." (2). What, then, can an *amateur*—in the original sense of a *lover* of one's theme—do, other than pass on what information and light he has received from competent sinologues and understanding teachers about the life, the mission and the influence of one of the greatest Sages of recorded history, the Master K'ung, K'ung Futzé, whom we know as Confucius? (551-479 B.C.). Voltaire wrote in his *Dictionary of Philosophy*: "What more beautiful rule of conduct [than that of Confucius] has ever been given to man since the world began? Let us admit that there has been no lawgiver more useful to the human race."

In his inspired and inspiring lectures on *The Crest-Wave of Evolution*, Kenneth Morris, who first awakened in me a perennial devotion to the great Sages of ancient China, wrote of the Master K'ung:

"He becomes a completeness, like

Heaven and Earth: their 'equal', in the Chinese phrase; or, as we say, a Perfect Man or Adept . . . One is not speaking of common statesmen, who effect quick changes that are no changes at all, but of the Men who shepherd the Host of Souls." (3)

K'ung Futzé's greatest expounder, Mang the Philosopher—better known to us under the latinized form of Mencius, who lived and taught some two centuries (372-289 B.C.) after the death of the Master, wrote:

"The world had fallen into decay, and right principles had perished. Perverse discourses and oppressive deeds had grown rife; ministers murdered their rulers and sons their fathers. Confucius was frightened at what he saw, and undertook the work of reformation."

Verily, K'ung Futzé's life and teachings kept the gates of hell shut in China, insofar as they may be kept shut in this world of ours, for centuries. His public career as statesman and teacher has been an example which every good ruler strove to emulate, a rebuke and reproach to every unrighteous sovereign or minor official who departed from his high moral code. Confucianism helped to place and keep China in the very vanguard of civilization for centuries.

The essence of his rational ordering of society is epitomized in one of the Four Canonical Books of the Thirteen Confucian Classics, the *Tahsueh*, which Dr. Legge rendered as 'The Great Learning', but which Ku Hung Ming translates as 'The Higher Education'. For over two millennia Chinese school-children learned these doctrines by heart, long before they were old enough to understand their significance. But, as a great Sung commentator said: "All students should begin their studies with this essay; then it may be hoped that they will not go far wrong . . . The *Tahsueh* . . . constitutes the gateway through which beginners enter into the path of virtue." I borrow the following translation of a portion of the text of the *Tahsueh* from Lin Yutang:

"The principles of the higher education consist in preserving man's clear character, in giving new life to the people, and in dwelling (or resting) in perfection, or the ultimate good. . . .

"The ancients who wished to preserve the fresh or clear character of the people of the world, would first set about ordering their national life. Those who wished to order their national life, would first set about regulating their family life. Those who wished to regulate their family life would set about cultivating their personal life. Those who wished to cultivate their personal lives, would first set about setting their hearts right. Those who wished to set their hearts right would first set about making their wills sincere. Those who wished to make their wills sincere would first set about achieving true knowledge. The achieving of true knowledge depended upon the investigation of things. When things are investigated, then true knowledge is achieved; when true knowledge is achieved, then the will becomes sincere; when

the will is sincere, then the heart is set right (or then the mind sees right); when the heart is set right, then the personal life is cultivated; when the personal life is cultivated, then the family life is regulated; when the family life is regulated, then the national life is orderly; and when the national life is orderly, then there is peace in this world. From the emperor down to the common men, all must regard the cultivation of the personal life as the root or foundation. There is never an orderly upshoot or superstructure when the root or foundation is disorderly. There is never yet a tree whose trunk is slim and slender and whose top branches are thick and heavy. This is called 'to know the root or foundation of things'." (4).

Today, some twenty-five hundred years later, we still reap the benefits of the great Chinese Sage's ordering of life among the Black-Haired People in the sixth century before Christ; for we learn from an article by Carl Click published a few years ago in the *New York Herald-Tribune* that among the Chinese populations in New York, Boston, New Orleans, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, juvenile delinquency is practically unknown. Why? Because Chinatown, following the example of Confucius, blames the father if his child misbehaves; and the Confucian teaching of filial piety instilled into the big-eyed children of Cathay from babyhood, makes them instinctively refrain from doing anything that would cause their parents to 'lose face'. A survey of the children of the different races living in New York revealed that the Chinese were the best-mannered and the best-behaved.

The distinguished British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, who went to China to teach at the Government University in Peking, but stayed, he gener-

ously admits, to learn more than he could teach, writes in *The Problem of China*: (Published in 1922)

"His [Confucius's] system, as developed by his followers, is one of pure ethics, without religious dogma; it has not given rise to a powerful priesthood, and it has not led to persecution. It certainly has succeeded in producing a whole nation possessed of exquisite manners and perfect courtesy. Nor is Chinese courtesy merely conventional: it is quite as reliable in situations for which no precedent has been provided.—And it is not confined to one class; it exists even in the humblest coolie. It is humiliating to watch the brutal insolence of white men received by the Chinese with a quiet dignity which cannot demean itself to answer rudeness with rudeness. Europeans often regard this as weakness, but it is really strength, the strength by which the Chinese have hitherto conquered all their conquerors."—pp. 200-201.

We read much in the teachings of Confucius about the *Chüntse*, variously translated as 'the princely man', 'the superior man', 'the higher type of man', 'the true gentleman', etc. It has been said that it takes seven generations to make a gentleman. It will be somewhat of a clue to Master K'ung's insistence on proper decorum and the right way of doing things, even in matters of external courtesy—which insistence was much overemphasized by his early translators who were unable or unwilling to see beneath the surface of his teaching—when we remember that Confucius was the scion of a family, practically every member of which for some seventy generations before him had achieved a worthy name in Chinese history. Distinguished families in England—to compare one example—sometimes trace their lineage back to the Norman Conquest—a matter of some nine hundred

years. The head of the K'ung family in China, who, at least until fairly recently bore, and perhaps still bears, the title 'Duke by Imperial Appointment and Hereditary Right and Continuator of the Sage'—traced his ancestry back in direct male line to 'sovereigns who reigned beyond the horizon of history—at the latest near the beginning of the Third Millennium B.C. The family has been distinguished for nearly five thousand years.'

"A gentleman," said Confucius, "is calm and spacious." According to the Analects, the Master himself was "friendly, yet dignified; inspired awe, but not fear; was respectful, but easy."

There are only a few well-established historical facts about the birth, childhood and early development of Confucius. His father, K'ung Shuliang Heih, Commander of the District of Tso in the Marquisate of Lu in Shantung, had made a great name for himself as a soldier. In 552 B.C. he was 70 years old and a widower, with no son to carry on the distinguished family name. He determined to marry again. In his own inimitable Welsh story-teller's style, Kenneth Morris recounts the known facts as follows:

"So he approached a gentleman of the Yen family, who had three eligible daughters. To these Yen put the case, leaving to them to decide which should marry K'ung.—'Though old and austere,' said he, 'he is of high descent, and you need have no fear of him.' Chingtsai, the youngest, answered that it was for their father to choose.—'Then you shall marry him,' said Yen. She did: and when her son was to be born, she was warned in a dream to make pilgrimage to a cave on Mount Ne. There the spirits of the mountain attended; there were signs and portents in the heavens at the nativity. The *K'e-lin*, a beast out of the mythologies, appeared to her;

and she tied a white ribbon about its single horn. It is a creature that appears only when things of splendid import are to happen.

"Three years after, the father died, leaving his family on the borders of poverty. At six, Ch'iu, the child, a boy of serious, earnest demeanour, was teaching his companions to play at arranging, according to the rites, toy sacrificial vessels on a toy altar. Beyond this, and that they were poor, and that he doted on his mother—who would have deserved it,—we know little of his boyhood . . . 'at fifteen,' he tells us himself, 'his mind was bent on learning.' Nothing in the way of studies seems to have come amiss to him; of history, and ritual, and poetry, he came to know all that was to be known. He loved music, theory and practice; held it to be sacred . . . Often, in after life, he turned dangerous situations by breaking into song; and his lute was his constant companion. He used to say that a proper study of poetry—he was not himself a poet, though he compiled a great anthology of folk-poems later—would leave the mind without a single depraved thought. Once he said to his son: 'If you do not learn the Odes, you will not be fit to talk to.' 'Poetry rouses us,' said he, 'courtesy upholds us; music is our crown.' . . . At what you might call the other pole of knowledge, he was held to know more about the science of war than any man living. . . .

"At nineteen, according to the custom, he married; and soon afterwards accepted minor official appointments: Keeper of the Granaries, then Superintendent of the Public Parks in his native district. He made a name for himself by the scrupulous discharge of his duties, that came even to the ears of the Marquis; who, when his son was born, sent the young

father a complimentary present of a carp.—It would have been two or three years before the beginning of the last quarter of the century when he felt the time calling to him, and voices out of the Eternal; and threw up his superintendentship to open a school.

"Not an ordinary school by any means. The pupils were not children, but young men of promise and an inquiring mind; and what he had to teach them was not the ordinary curriculum, but right living, the right ordering of social states, and the right government of states. They were to pay; but to pay according to their means and wishes: and he demanded intelligence from them;—no swelling of the fees would serve instead.—'I do not open the truth,' said he, 'to one not eager after knowledge; nor do I teach those unanxious to explain themselves. When I have presented one corner of a subject, and the student cannot learn from it the other three for himself, I do not repeat the lesson.' He lectured to them, we read, mainly on history and poetry, deducing his lessons in life from these.

"His school was a great success. In five years he had acquired some two thousand pupils: seventy or eighty of them, as he said, 'men of extraordinary ability.' It was that the Doors of the Lodge had opened, and its force was flowing through him in Lu, as it was through the Old Philosopher [Laotse] in Honanfu.—By this time he had added archery to his own studies, and (like William Q. Judge) become proficient. Also he had taken a special course in music theory under a very famous teacher. 'At thirty he stood firm' . . .

"And now that he stands before the world as a Teacher, we may drop his personal name, K'ung Ch'iu, and call him by the title to which pæans of

praise have been swelling through all the ages since: K'ung Futze, K'ung the master: latinized, Confucius."

For a masterly sketch of the main events of Confucius's life, a penetrating appraisal of his character and work that will make one love him as a wise and inspiring friend and teacher of today, and for an adequate summary of the very essence of his doctrine, I most heartily recommend to the reader Chapters X and XI of Kenneth Morris's lectures on "The Crest-Wave of Evolution", published in *The Theosophical Path* for January and February, 1920. I have freely drawn on these chapters in the preparation of this paper, without, I fear, always putting in quotation marks, words and phrases and perhaps even sentences, which, through affectionate familiarity, have become part of my own vocabulary.

Said Confucius of himself:

"... At forty, I was free from delusion. At fifty, I understood the laws of Providence. At sixty, my ears were attentive to the truth. At seventy, I could follow the prompting of my heart without overstepping the mean."—*The Sayings of Confucius*, p. 83.

"The Duke of Shê questioned Tzu Lu about Confucius. Tzu Lu made no reply. The Master said to him afterwards: Why did you not say: 'He is a man whose zeal for self-improvement is such that he forgets to eat; whose happiness in this pursuit is so great that he forgets his troubles and does not perceive old age stealing upon him'?"—*Ibid*, pp. 85-86.

"Tzu, do you look upon me as a man who has studied and retained a mass of various knowledge?—I do, he replied. Am I wrong?—You are wrong, said the Master. All my knowledge is strung on one connecting thread."—*Ibid*, p. 91.

One is reminded of H. P. Blavatsky's

statement in the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine*:

"I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: Gentlemen, 'I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them'."

What was that connecting thread on which the Chinese Sage's knowledge was strung? As we shall see by a study of his doctrine, it was simply the moral life, 'which consists in being true to oneself and good to one's neighbour.' Like his older contemporary, Laotse, Confucius made no distinction, as we in the West do today, between virtue and knowledge. As with Socrates and Plato, Wisdom or *Sophia* consisted of knowledge of *To Agathon*, the Good, so with Laotse and Confucius, *Te* or *Jen*, Virtue, consisted in knowledge of *Tao*, the Way.

Let me give you the picture of Chung-tu under the administration of Confucius, so that you may see what it meant to the people to be governed by a Sage and Adept, a Master of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. I repeat the story as told by Dr. Morris in his first chapter on Confucius, entitled 'Such An One', as the Sage was reverently known among his people:

"He takes control; and here at last is one city in great Chu Hia where crime has ceased to be. How does he manage it? The miracle looks but the more miraculous as you watch. He frames rules for everything; insists on the proprieties; morning, noon, and night holds up an example, and, says he, relies on the power of that.—Example? Tush, he must be beheading right and left!—Nothing of the sort; he is all against capital punishment, and will have none of it. But there is the fact: you can leave your full purse in the streets of Chung-tu, and pick it up unrifled when you pass

next; you can pay your just price, and get your just measure for it, fearing no cheateries; High Cost of Living is gone; corners in this and that are no more; graft is a thing you must go elsewhere to look for;—there is none of it in Chung-tu. And graft, let me say, was a thing as proper to the towns of China then, as to the graftiest modern city you might mention. The thing is inexplicable—but perfectly attested. Not quite inexplicable, either: he came from the Gods, and had the Gloves of Gwron on his hands: he had the wisdom you cannot fathom, which meets all events and problems as they come, and finds their solution in its superhuman self, where the human brain-mind finds only dense impenetrability.—Marquis Ting saw and wondered.—‘Could you do this for the whole state?’ he asked.—‘Surely; and for the whole empire,’ said Confucius. The Marquis made him, first Assistant-Superintendent of Works, then Minister of Crime.”

From Confucius’s magistracy of Chung-tu and later from his administration of justice in Lu, he demonstrated that he was no mere impractical theorist, but a master of splendid successes; and that the way of Heaven which he taught and exemplified is also the way that succeeds here on earth, if only it be honestly tried.

Tse Kung, one of the faithful disciples who accompanied Confucius during his subsequent twenty years of wandering from state to state to find a ruler who would embrace and follow his teachings, once heard that some potentate had remarked that he, Tse Kung, was a greater man than his Master, Confucius. Said Tse Kung: “The wall of my house rises only to the height of a man’s shoulders; anyone can look in and see whatever excellence is within. But the Master’s wall is many fathoms in height; so that who fails to find the

gateway cannot see the beauties of the temple within nor the rich apparel of the officiating priests. It may be that only a few will find the gate.”

Said Confucius: “I will not be grieved that other men do not know me: I will be grieved that I do not know other men.”

Yen Hui (or Yen Yüan), the favourite disciple, who was to Confucius what St. John was to Jesus and Ananda to Gautama, said:

“The more I look at our Master’s teaching, the higher it seems. The more I test it, the more reliable it appears. I am gazing at it in front of me, when lo! it is suddenly behind me. Our Master knows how to draw men after him by regular steps. He broadens our outlook by means of polite learning, and restrains our impulses by means of inward self-control.”—*The Sayings of Confucius*, p. 119.

Of this same disciple the master said:

“I may talk all day to Hui without his putting in a word of criticism or dissent—just as though he were deficient in understanding. But after he had left me, I find, on examining his private conduct, that he knows for all that how to exemplify my teaching. No! Hui is not deficient in understanding.”—*Ibid.*, p. 71.

Said Confucius:

“The highest class of men are they whose knowledge is innate; next to these are they whose knowledge is acquired by study; after them come those who are dullwitted, yet strive to learn; while those who are dullwitted and will make no effort to learn are the lowest of the people.”—*Ibid.*, p. 106.

Confucius himself never claimed to belong to the highest class and thought that he fell short of the second; but in this we may safely ignore his judgment! The Master always said that he was

merely a transmitter of the wisdom of the ancients and held up before his people the lofty example of the lives of the three great traditional initiate-kings of old China—Yao, Shun and Yu, who were looked upon by him and other Chinese mandarins as the patron saints of their country, the very embodiment of 'the higher Chinesity', and were regarded by the people as the modern American might regard a synthesis of Washington, Lincoln, and the Twelve Apostles.

In one of the four great Confucian books, the *Chung Yung*, translated by Dr. Legge as 'The Doctrine of the Mean', but rendered by Ku Hung Ming, from whom I quote, as 'Universal Order' or 'The Conduct of Life', the Master's conception of the survival of the fittest is recorded by his grandson. If one is looking in the *Chung Yung* for the lofty impersonal ideals found in The Sermon on the Mount, in the Buddha's Sutras, or the path of chelaship set forth in *The Voice of the Silence* or *The Mahatma Letters*, one will not find them. But it should be borne in mind that Master K'ung was not training his pupils for religious discipleship, but to be worthy civil administrators; so he contented himself with holding up before them and their worldly ambitions ideals which would qualify them, by following the moral law as exemplified by the traditional careers of Yao, Shun and Yu, for the highest posts of authority in the Middle Kingdom. His teaching was not transcendental; it was distinctly pragmatic; but even this ideal, as will be shown later, was regarded by his contemporaries as impossible of attainment. Below is Ku Hung Ming's translation, which has been highly praised for its literal accuracy and its beauty by Lin Yutang, who found nothing to amend but the last line of the verses, which last line is Dr. Lin's rendering:

Confucius remarked: "The Em-

peror Shun might perhaps be considered in the highest sense of the word a pious man. In moral qualities he was a saint. In dignity of office he was the ruler of the empire. In wealth all that the wide world contained belonged to him. After his death his spirit was sacrificed to in the ancestral temple, and his children and grandchildren preserved the sacrifice for long generations.

"Thus it is that he who possesses great moral qualities will certainly attain to corresponding high position; to corresponding great prosperity; to corresponding great name; to corresponding great age.

"For God in giving life to all created things is surely bountiful to them according to their qualities. Hence the tree that is full of life He fosters and sustains, while that which is ready to fall He cuts off and destroys."

The Book of Songs says:

"That great and noble Prince displayed

The sense of right in all he wrought;
Adjusting justly, grade by grade,

The spirit of his wisdom swayed
Peasant and peer; the crowd, the court.

So Heav'n, that crowned his sires,
restored

The countless honours they had
known;

For Heav'n aye keepeth watch and
ward,

The mandate gave to mount the
throne."

"It is therefore true that he who possesses exceedingly great moral qualities will certainly receive the divine call to the Imperial throne."⁽⁵⁾

If all rulers, whether in China or elsewhere, had considered that kind of divine right to be the only kind that was fit to survive, there had never been any quarrels either about the divine right of kings or the survival of the fittest;

for the ruler would have ruled by the divine right of natural fitness.

(To Be Continued)

(1) Lionel Giles, M. A. (Oxon.), *The Sayings of Confucius*. John Murray, London.

(2) Lionel Giles, M. A. (Oxon.), *The Sayings of Lao Tzu*. John Murray, London.

(3) *The Theosophical Path*, Vol. xviii, No. 1, January, 1920.

(4) *The Wisdom of Confucius*, Random House Inc., New York.

WHAT IS OCCULTISM?

T. SUBBA ROW, F.T.S., B.A., B.L.

The following article by the renowned author, a brilliant member of the early Society, was written some years before his death.

There is no difference between ancient and modern occultism. So far as I know all real 'occultism' is founded on the same principles though the terms in which they have been expressed have varied in different ages.

By occultism I understand that science, or rather wisdom, that gives a true and accurate explanation of the workings of the laws of nature, together with their application, throughout the universe.

Since all truth is one, its teachings must necessarily accord with all the proved facts of science whether ancient or modern. It must further explain all the facts of history, or the laws that govern the relation of men to each other; all mythologies, and the relation in which man stands to the rest of the universe.

It is, in fact, the science of the origin, destiny and powers of the universe, and all things therein.

The salient point of difference between occult and modern science is that the former works by using the forces and materials of Nature in their natural condition, while the latter makes use of them in a limited and separated condition, on the lowest plane of their manifestation.

For instance, the occultist uses the invisible forces of Nature themselves when he wishes to produce currents of heat, electricity, and the like, as *elements* in their higher and more spiritual forms, while the scientist is obliged to have recourse to materials as light, water, etc., and must first split these up, as they exist on the lowest material plane, into what are called primary substances before carrying out his experiments.

The occultist looks upon all Nature as a unity, and attributes all diversity to the fact that this unity is composed of manifestations on different planes, the perception of which planes depends on the development of the perceiver.

He believes that the one law pervading all things is development by evolution, to an almost infinite degree, up to the original source of all Evolution—The Divine Logos: hence that man, as we know him, is capable of almost infinite development.

He also believes in the absolute original unity of all forms and modes of existence, and that all forms of matter are interchangeable just as ice may be converted into water and *vice versa*.

While scouting the idea of miracle, he believes that the developed man may attain additional faculties of perception and action, and thus be able to control the elements—in fact become possessed of almost all the powers attributed to a personal God.

Believing that Nature and its laws are one, the occultist knows that all action contrary to those laws will be met by opposing forces and destroyed, hence the developed man must, if he would attain divinity, become a co-worker with Nature. This, he must do by training himself into conformity with Nature. This conformity with Nature will lead him to act invariably with benevolence to pursue unswervingly the highest good, for what is called good is but action in conformity with the one law. Hence 'Occultism' gives a rational sanction for right conduct such as is offered by no other system, for it erects morality into a cosmic law, instead of basing it on superstition. Moreover, the realization of the unity of Nature leads the occultist to recognize that the same one life that pervades all, is working within himself also and he is thus led to find in 'conscience' not merely a criterion of right and wrong, but the germ of a higher faculty of perception, a light to guide him on his way, while in the Will he recognizes a force capable of indefinite increase and extension.

All mythologies are pictorial representatives of the laws and forces of Nature, as creeds are but partial expressions of the universal truth, and, by intuitive study of the oldest of these, occult knowledge can be attained. This knowledge in its purity has been handed down from time immemorial from teacher to pupil and carefully guarded from abuse by a refusal to impart it until the candidate has actually proved himself incapable of misusing and misunderstanding it, for it is obvious that in the hands of an evilly-disposed or ignorant person, infinite harm might result from its use.

The current account of experiments in thought-reading, psychometry, clairvoyance, mesmerism, spiritualism, etc., will show that there are reasons for

believing that unsuspected powers and faculties are latent in man.

The 'marvels' of the occultist are the result of scientific cultivation, and the attainment of perfect control over such powers.

If it be asked what is the practical good to be obtained from the development of these powers in man, it should first be settled whether freedom from the ordinary cares of life, and immunity from anxiety are good. If the reply be in the affirmative it must then be conceded that there is good in occultism, because it tends to raise the mind above the plane on which material things affect one's equanimity; in fact, without the attainment of such equanimity the pursuit of occultism is impossible.

This secret wisdom is the foundation of all ancient philosophies and religions, whether Indian, Egyptian, Chaldean, Zoroastrian, Grecian, etc. Its traces are to be found in every age and country; there can be no greater mistake than to suppose that its reality is dependent on any single authority. Its initiates and adepts form an unbroken succession from the earliest appearance of man on this planet; their organization is to-day practically what it was thousands of years ago, and what it will be thousands of years hence. At the present time it is creating more stir in the public mind than it has done for some centuries, and many are fancying that it is some new thing. This is not so. As at some portions of the year the daylight lasts longer than at others, so the divine light of wisdom is more broadly diffused in some cycles than in others.

To those who have eyes to see, a brighter light has arisen; but the light will not cease to shine because few heed and many even scorn it, while others again misrepresent and try to persuade themselves and others that it is but darkness upon all.

'The Word', January, 1905.

“THE GOD THAT WALKS LIKE A MAN”

“ . . . The first necessary qualification is an unshakable belief in one's own powers and the deity within oneself . . . throughout the whole mystical literature of the ancient world we detect the same idea of spiritual esotericism, that the personal God exists within, nowhere outside, the worshipper. That personal deity is no vain breath, or a fiction, but an immortal entity, the Initiator of the Initiates.”—(S.D. III., 62). *ACW IV 571*

To those who have accepted orthodox religious thought, the above teaching may seem blasphemous. Their minds have been accustomed to think of God as a Being who exists outside man; that He is the Creator and that men and women are His creatures who do not partake of His essence. In some orthodoxies this belief has led to the ultimate dogmas that all men are born in sin; that their actions are necessarily sinful, and that all, apart from the few who accept the church teachings, are doomed to eternal punishment.

Such systems of thought are born of the lower mind ‘the great slayer of the real’. They are the opposers of true religion and throughout the ages there has been a continuing conflict between the priests and the seers — the first ever striving to superimpose upon man the freedom-destroying doctrine of original sin, and of consequent dependence upon some outside power; the seers always stressing the innate divinity of man and the necessity of man's growing into independence, self-determination and self-realization of the inner god. Theosophy is the message of the seers.

The Theosophical Society does not say: ‘Here is something you must believe’. It says ‘Here are ancient teachings relating to the inner being of man; if something within you responds to them, then follow the thread of your

own intuition. Become a theosophist, not by joining one or another of the various theosophical societies, but by adopting the theosophical attitude of seeking truth wherever it may be found.’ When this is done we no longer seek to propitiate an outside Creator God, but in all humility and reverence we seek to recover a way to the god within.

According to the ancient traditions, the god in man is linked to the body of an animal, our human-animal form — and what is more important, the divine intelligence of that inner being has been submerged in the lower passional nature of the animal. Mankind suffers primarily from forgetfulness of its true nature. The amnesia is so profound that men have come to believe that our present state, the selfishness, ambition, competition and desire for personal advancement, which so influence our age, are ‘natural’ and normal. But our suffering, squalor, debasement, degeneration, and perversions are the perfectly ‘normal’ karma of this abnormal attitude.

Theosophy is a message for the gods hidden in humanity, a call to them to remember their high estate, to awake from their slumbers and to re-assert their true power, dignity and glory. When men do remember and begin to walk the earth like the gods they truly are, the Universal Brotherhood of Man will be re-established.

The Theosophical Society does not preach a new doctrine; it recalls to memory that which has been forgotten. Someday, somehow, by some casual phrase or by a more profound book or lecture, the inner god is stirred to remembrance. Then the ancient quest begins and will not end until life ends.

D. W. B.

NOTES AND COMMENTS
BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Elsewhere in this issue is an article by Mr. Dudley W. Barr on the subject of Rule 10. Supplementing this I think the members will be interested to know that the preliminary voting among the General Secretaries was as follows:—

For Proposition 1	29 votes in favour
Proposition 2	4
Proposition 3	nil
Proposition 4	3 (1 invalid)

The Canadian Section voted for the first and this Proposition will be brought forward as a Resolution at the next meeting of the General Council to be held in Benares this coming December.

* * * *

I welcome the following new members into the Society, Mrs. Vera Ljachenko, Montreal Lodge and Mrs. Dorothy Howe on a demit from the English Section. Mrs. I. M. Jackson, Toronto Lodge has, at her request, been demitted to the Canadian Federation.

* * * *

Recently I received from the Ontario S.P.C.A. a startling pamphlet entitled "Humane Slaughter for Our Food Animals". It emanates from Vancouver and vividly illustrates the inhumane practices employed in most of our packing plants. These are of such a nature that anyone with the least humane instincts will be appalled that such things can go on in civilized communities. I feel so strongly on the matter that through our Animal Welfare Committee I shall circularize our lodges with copies of the pamphlet so that they may judge for themselves, and I will further urge that each and all pass resolutions requesting Federal legislation without delay. A great humanitarian, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, writing on the subject says: "When so much brutality prevails

in our slaughter houses . . . we all bear the guilt of it". This, my advance notice, will be followed up in due course with full information and suggestions for a course of action. I feel that this is a matter that all real theosophists should take up and throw their weight into the scales.

* * * *

Having been under the weather for some time I am glad to say that after a vacation I have returned feeling hale and hearty. My daughter and I again spent a happy time with our old friends the Garsides at their delightful home near Nobel on the Georgian Bay. Mr. Garside is president of the St. Thomas Lodge and being an ardent theosophist is a delight to converse with. Beyond that we did little but feed the gulls and hoodwink the chipmunks with hidden peanuts. To have a rest from the turmoil of modern living is indeed a treat—no TV, no telephone—the only concession was the radio and that little used—hence peace, rest and contentment, recuperation and well-being.

E. L. T.

o o o

" . . . the first duty of one [a chela] is to hear without anger or malice anything the guru may say . . . We have one word for all aspirants, TRY . . . It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to our secrets. He alone, such a man—will never misuse his powers, as there will be no fear that he should turn them to selfish ends. A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is not worthy of becoming our chela—he is not worthy of becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour."

The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, pp. 235, 247, 252.

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

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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.

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.

THE AMERICAN CONVENTION

I have just returned from my second visit to the Theosophical Society in America assembled in Convention at Wheaton, Ill., and while everything is very vivid in my mind, I would like to share with those unable to go, some of my memories.

First and foremost was the friendliness shown to the six Canadian visitors. It seemed as though our American F.T.S. could not do sufficient in their efforts to show their pleasure at our visit.

Secondly, there is a very strong realization that as members we must get back to the basic fundamentals of Theosophy if we wish to attract newcomers. The emphasis was on the necessity of studying the original teachings as given to us by Madame Blavatsky and The Masters. This theme was also most noticeable in last year's Convention as well, and gladdened our hearts.

To try and pick out the best talk would be to belittle the other speakers. The public lecture on Sunday afternoon by Dr. H. Douglas Wild entitled "Laws of Dramatic Perspective in Man and the Universe" was outstanding, and many will be glad to know it will be available in printed form shortly. The Olcott Foundation lecture by Gladys Lawler on "Man's Inner Centre of Calm" was most beautifully given and was alone worth the 600 odd miles we drove to hear it. "Basic Concepts of Theosophy" by Mr. James Perkins and Mrs. Eunice Layton—the Symposium on "Freedom of Thought" by Joy Mills, Gladys Goudey and Felix Layton—were given excellently, very concisely and very much to the point. The sessions on Lodge work and Lodge problems were most illuminating and helpful. The session entitled "Theosophy at work in Specialized Fields" gave thumb nail sketches of the amount of work done by individual

members in addition to Lodge activities.

How many members in Canada know that it is possible for blind members to get Theosophical books in Braille? How many realize that T.S. books are gracefully accepted by public libraries if approached in the right way? Here is something that could be duplicated in Canada by a few members scattered across the Dominion having a car, energy and enthusiasm.

Speaking for myself, I feel as though I had received a "shot in the arm" and have returned full of Theosophical vitality to tackle the problems which will no doubt arise during the next twelve months. I realize, that my vision has been widened by the discussions to which I listened—the friendships I have made and the counsel I received.

Next year, the International President, Mr. Sri Ram is expected to be present to lecture and I would like to suggest that a large contingent of Canadians, including a representative of the Canadian Executive and at least one from each Lodge attend; I guarantee that everyone will get a warm welcome.

Kathleen Marks,
Phoenix Lodge, Hamilton.

* * * *

The Editor.

Dear Sir:

I have just returned from the Convention of the Theosophical Society in America which was held at its headquarters at Wheaton, Illinois.

My purpose in going to this Convention was first, to broaden association with members of the Theosophical Society and second, to become acquainted with the national policy and program of the American Section. Most of the sessions were of great interest to me and there appeared to be great enthusiasm for the promulgation of Theosophi-

cal concepts of life by various ways and means. Efficiency, enthusiasm, vitality and energy appear to be characteristic of the American Section.

Three talks delivered at the Convention on the basic concepts of Theosophy gave evidence of considerable spiritual insight, but the lecture by Gladys Lawler on July 16 was of an exceptionally intuitive nature; based on the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*, it was presented with ample and appropriate analogies. To this lecture Mr. J. Perkins, the National President of the American Section, referred again in his closing speech to the Convention.

Another outstanding feature of the Convention, and one that aroused my attention most, was Mr. F. Pierce Spinks' talk on "Theosophists Re-Unite" and for your information I enclose a copy of this address.

Perhaps we should do more work and seek more enlightenment in this direction and in some measure support Mr. Spinks in his endeavour. May I take this opportunity to give publicity to the fact that the Theosophical Society in Canada always did take the stand of fraternization among all the Theosophical Societies and that fraternization conventions were arranged for this purpose. During a question period especially arranged for the purpose, many questions were asked of Mr. Spinks.

Time did not permit me to stay for the Summer School sessions, but they were described to me at length and I thought such a School could be of some value in our own Society here in Canada.

During the Forum Discussion of National Policy and Program, there were displayed well designed and appropriate posters to be used in propaganda work. The promotion of more extensive radio work was discussed.

Other highlights of the Convention were meditation meetings, community singing, specialized discussion groups, an evening of music and a guided tour of the American Headquarters.

Several of the American members told me that this, in their opinion, was one of the best Conventions for some time and that there were more members present than the previous year. Throughout the entire period of the Convention there prevailed a fraternal spirit and everyone appeared to have a most enjoyable time.

Fraternally yours,

J. H. Oberlerchener,
Secretary, Kitchener Lodge.

* * * *

CORRESPONDENCE

100 Third St.,
Newark, N.J.,
August 11, 1957.

The Editor.

Dear Sir:

May I congratulate you on the July-August issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*. I have long thought that Theosophy would have a broader appeal if the ordinary speech of people were used in its presentation. Terms and expressions reasonably clear to students are not so to the interested but casual reader, no matter how openminded or unprejudiced he may be. The two articles in the above noted issue of your magazine by Mrs. Dalzell and Mrs. Griffith respectively are the nearest approach to simplification of the subject re the Masters and Reincarnation that I have yet come across. More of the same would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

Clara T. Wilson.

UPHILL

"Does the road wind up hill all the way?"

"Yes, to the very end."

"Will the day's journey take the whole long day?"

"From morn till night, my friend."

"But is there for the night a resting place?"

"A roof for when the slow dark hours begin."

"May not the darkness hide it from my face?"

"You cannot miss that Inn."

"Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?"

"Yes, those who have gone before."

"Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?"

"They will not keep you waiting at that door."

"Shall I find comfort, travelsore and weak?"

"Of labour you shall find the sum."

"Will there be beds for me and all who seek?"

"Yes, beds for all who come."

Christina Rossetti.

"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."

attributed to H.P.B.

REVIEW

An Historian's Approach to Religion, Arnold Toynbee, (Oxford University Press, \$5.00).

This is a rare treasure of religious-historical writing and places its readers in permanent debt to the scholarly author. It is an invaluable guide to an understanding of mankind's spiritual yearnings as expressed in what are referred to throughout as the world's 'higher religions'.

"... Religion is an essential element in Human Life which cannot ever be ignored or repressed for very long at a time." (p. 205).

The author analyzes with unerring penetration and logical deductions from the lessons of universal history the basic factors that have led to the failures of the world's great religions to realize in full the high civilizing potentialities inherent in the essence of each. He also discusses the beneficent results, in the light of history, of the religious aspirations of the adherents and devotees of all the higher religions. To Professor Toynbee, 'Original Sin' is selfishness, or, as he prefers to call it, 'self-centredness'. He dwells at length on man's eternal conflict between his self-centredness and his striving towards union with Absolute Reality (or God), culminating in and transcended by the sublime self-sacrifices for the benefit of suffering humanity of Gautama the Buddha and Jesus the Christ.

"Gautama, like Jesus, dedicated Himself to His mission in the World by victoriously resisting a temptation to take a short cut. At the crisis of His life, Gautama was tempted to use His newly attained spiritual power for the purpose of making his own immediate exit into Nirvāna instead of showing others the way; Jesus was tempted to use it for the purpose of imposing the Kingdom of

Heaven on Earth instead of preaching it. Both victories over the temptation were deliberate acts of self-sacrifice. Both required a revulsion from a self-regarding personal asceticism to a life of familiar intercourse with ordinary people in order to bring them spiritual aid. And in both cases the victor-missionary's commerce with the World caused scandal among the professional practitioners of a conventional religion. The Buddha's life after the temptation shocked the Yogis, as Christ's life after the temptation shocked the Scribes and Pharisees." (p. 75).

"... in any religion, a concentration of attention and effort on formalities is spiritually sterilizing." (p. 85).

A significant, but by no means complete, exposition of the author's approach to religion is given in his own words:

"The historian's point of view is not incompatible with the belief that God has revealed Himself to Man for the purpose of helping Man to gain spiritual salvation that would be unattainable by Man's unaided efforts; but the historian will be suspicious, *a priori*, of any presentation of this thesis that goes on to assert that a *unique* and *final* revelation has been given by God to *my* people in *my* time on *my* satellite of *my* sun in *my* galaxy. In this self-centred application of the thesis that God reveals Himself to His creatures, the historian will espy the Devil's cloven hoof. For there is no logically necessary connexion between the belief that God reveals Himself to His creatures and the belief that God has chosen out, to be the recipient of His revelation, one creature that happens to be precisely *I myself*, and that this revelation, given exclusively to *me*, is a *unique* and a *final* one." (p. 135).

The foregoing is the spirit which pervades the whole book. It finds one of its noblest expressions in the following passage, which closes the chapter on 'The Religious Outlook in a Twentieth-century World':

"... the fact that I and my neighbour are following different roads is something that divides us much less than we are drawn together by the other fact that, in following our different roads, we are both trying to approach the same mystery. All human beings who are seeking to approach the mystery in order to direct their lives in accordance with the nature and spirit of Absolute Reality or, in theistic terms, with the will of God—all these fellow-seekers are engaged in an identical quest. They should recognize that they are spiritually brethren and should feel towards one another, and treat one another, as such. Toleration does not become perfect until it has been transfigured into love." (p. 253).

In her Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine*, written in 1888, sixty-eight years before Professor Toynbee's work appeared, H. P. Blavatsky said:

"... I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: *Gentlemen, 'I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them.'*

"Pull the 'string' to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay of *facts*—you will never be able to make away with these. You can only ignore them, and no more."

Professor Toynbee has also presented a nosegay of perennially blooming thought-flowers culled from the known history of the world and tied together with the thread of his own scholarly syntheses and analyses made with in-

tellectual understanding, kindness and generosity.

Although Professor Toynbee's book does not cover the vast field treated in *The Secret Doctrine*, nevertheless, it does forward (not consciously one may assume) the Theosophical Movement. It is one more evidence, among many that could be cited, of the truth of the declaration made in 1882 in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, that "There is more of this movement than you have yet had an inkling of, and the work of the T. S. is linked with similar work that is secretly going on in all parts of the world." (*M.L.* p. 271).

Professor Toynbee does not deal only with the higher religions; he also discusses at length the strength and weakness of various forms of worship or 'idolization' which have played, and still play, important rôles in determining the conduct of men and the destinies of nations. Among these may be mentioned: 'The Worship of Nature', 'Man-Worship', one aspect of which led captive the minds and emotions of millions under Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and Mao; 'The Idolization of Parochial Communities' like Athens and Sparta; 'The Idolization of Oecumenical Communities' like the Roman Empire; 'The Idolization of Religious Institutions', which led to the catastrophic wars of religion between Catholics and Protestants, in a revulsion from which came the modern age of the physical sciences and technology, and 'The Idolization of the Invincible Technician.'

Following are some of the author's key-thoughts on 'Man-worship: The Idolization of Parochial Communities':

"... The worship of parochial communities tends to set their respective members at variance because this religion is an expression of self-centredness; because self-centredness is the source of all strife; and because

the collective ego is a more dangerous object of worship than the individual ego is.

“The collective ego is more dangerous because it is more powerful, more demonic, and less patently unworthy of devotion. The collective ego combines the puny individual power of each of its devotees into the collective power of Leviathan. This collective power is at the mercy of subconscious passions because it escapes the control of the Intellect and Will that put some restraint on the individual ego. And bad behaviour that would be condemned unhesitatingly by the conscience in an individual culprit is apt to be condoned when it is perpetrated by Leviathan, under the illusion that the first person is absolved from self-centredness by being transposed from the singular number into the plural. This is, however, just the opposite of the truth; for, when an individual projects his self-centredness on to a community, he is able, with less sense of sin, to carry his egotism to greater lengths of enormity. ‘Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel’(*) ; and the callousness of committees testifies still more eloquently than the fury of mobs that, in collective action, the ego is capable of descending to depths to which it does not fall when it is acting on its individual responsibility.” (p. 34).

In his concluding chapter, entitled *Selves, Suffering, ‘Self-centredness, and Love’*, our author says:

“Human Nature is, in truth, a union of opposites that are not only incongruous but are contrary and conflicting; the spiritual and the physical; the divine and the animal;

consciousness and subconsciousness; intellectual power and moral and physical weakness; unselfishness and self-centredness; saintliness and sinfulness; unlimited capacities and limited strength and time; in short, greatness and wretchedness; *grandeur et misere*. But the paradox does not end here. The conflicting elements in Human Nature are not only united there; they are inseparable from one another.” (p. 289).

“... The pain to which we expose ourselves through Love is still greater than the pain to which we expose ourselves through Cupidity. In the judgment of Christianity and the Mahāyāna, even the extremity of Suffering is not too-high a price to pay for following Love’s lead; for, in their judgment, Selfishness, not Suffering, is the greatest of all evils, and Love, not release from Suffering, is the greatest of all goods.” (p. 293).

Having been reared from childhood in an atmosphere of Theosophic idealism, having been introduced through the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, G. de Purucker and Kenneth Morris to the basic universal truths of all religions, and having learned from them to love and revere the great Spiritual Sages of the past, it is with genuine gratitude of heart that I am here endeavouring to introduce to fellow-students of Theosophy everywhere, this latest work of the outstanding historian of today, Arnold Toynbee. With his own high talents and enormous prestige, Professor Toynbee has (probably unwittingly) given immense support to the great spiritual and intellectual movement inaugurated in the last quarter of the 19th century by H. P. Blavatsky and ‘Those who sent her’.

Iverson L. Harris.

(*) Dr. Johnson on the 7th April, 1775 (*Boswell’s Life*).

MORE ON RULE 10

The following article was written by Mr. T. H. Redfern of Peace Lodge, Hyde, Cheshire, England and was evoked by the short report on the proposed amendment to Rule 10 which appeared in the May-June issue of the Magazine:

“Since the last Presidential election this bad rule has been under reconsideration, and a committee of the General Council has been dealing with the subject.

Nothing has been made known to the total membership of what has been proposed. *The Theosophist* has been silent upon it; and this is bad practice. All members are entitled to vote for a President, and all members are entitled to know how it is proposed that their rights shall be limited, and who proposes to limit them, whilst the rule is under consideration and it is possible to exercise a formative influence.

The following has now come out of the obscurity, by way of the report of the quarterly executive meeting of the Canadian National Society, as reported in *The Canadian Theosophist* for May-June, 1957. The members of our Society ought to thank God for Canada in the interest of the fundamental welfare of the whole Society. It seems to be the only section where officialdom retains any proper respect for the intelligence and the common rights of the members.

From this report we learn that members of the General Council have put forward four alternative recommendations, as follows:

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 num-

ber 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.

These four alternatives are now submitted for voting by the members of the General Council, and Canada has voted unanimously for No. 1. We are astonished that the *Canadian* executive should be so blind, for No. 1 retains all the fundamental features of the bad rule.

Until Dr. Besant died no contested election was ever necessary. Then we had two candidates with markedly different policies—Dr. Arundale and Prof. Wood—in 1933/4. It was a deplorable affair, not on the part of either candidate, but on the part of the supporters of Dr. Arundale, who used reprehensible tactics to hamper Prof. Wood, and to a lesser degree of a few partisans of Prof. Wood; but all the trouble arose from repressiveness and lack of a clear and fair procedure. The Society hadn’t had a presidential election before and hadn’t developed fairminded skills.

In 1945/6 there was no contest, Mr. Jinarajadasa being the only accepting nominee, but there followed some Machivellianism in revising Rule 10.

After the discreditable happenings of 1933/4 there ought to have been an endeavour to see that no future candidate should ever be vulnerable to the sort of treatment Prof. Wood had to suffer. No candidate should be eligible for the office of Acting Vice-President whilst the election is in progress. Every can-

didate should be entitled, as of right, to access to every member to state the policy for which he stands. Every member for whom there is more than local support should be entitled to effective nomination, and his supporters to have the policy for which he stands voted upon. These are first principles of a validly just democracy.

There are currents of "double-speak" strongly present in the world, and by way of Rule 10 they have invaded The Theosophical Society. You can have a choice from an approved panel to vote for, and you call this democracy. To do so is a lie, and the business of The Theosophical Society is "to tell the truth in the very face of lie".

Politically this pseudo-democracy is usually a choice from nominees of a single party, or a group of *approved* parties. *Approved by whom?* By those in authority of course. That is bad.

In The Theosophical Society there is no *party*, but there is a group in authority and a body of followers of authority who form a majority equivalent to a dominating party, *unless there is full freedom for minority challenge.*

Rule 10 (paragraph 2) is doubly bad because of its subtlety. In the guise of protecting the Society against a supposed evil that is no evil at all but a good thing, and against possible circumstances which in fact never existed in the Society until this rule provoked them, the Society was deprived of a most valuable safeguard to its health, and the individual member of a right that he ought to cherish and defend, for the Society's good.

Rule 10 (paragraph 2) protects the Society from a plethora of presidential candidates. Why? There had never been more than two in the whole 70 years of the Society's existence before it was framed. How then can this be the genuine reason?

We have long wondered whether something we pointed out in *Eirenicon* No. 62 (April/May 1946) was the instigating cause of this thoroughly misconceived method of preventing a circumstance that *would* be deplorable and can quite properly be guarded against by *proper* means.

We are uncompromisingly opposed to any inhibition of the right of minorities to challenge, and to have such a challenge voted on, because that is of the essence of true democracy. For the very same reason we are opposed with equal emphaticness to any minority faction slipping in a President on a split vote who would be unwelcome to the majority. That too is not true democracy, and it is against this possibility that Rule 10 has its only valid merit, but it is bad because it kills the patient to cure the defect.

The effect of Rule 10 in practice was quite clear in the election of 1952/3. Having introduced a limit of three candidates, nominations came in threes; and naturally *in the main* they came in three *alternatives of the prominent and leading school* of thought in the Society. So the outcome was three alternatives of the prevailing "party" to vote for—a panel of three of broadly the same policy. Doubly bad pseudo-democracy because the pretence is double—it pretends to be democratic, and it pretends that there is no "party" or group of approved parties.

The result was that the only nominee of a genuine alternative policy—Prof. Ernest Wood—was excluded from the voting paper, and those who wanted to record that they considered his policy the correct one for the Society were disenfranchised, despite the fact that he was five times nominated from five countries—six if we include one that arrived too late to be valid.

Prof. Ernest Wood stood no chance of being elected. His supporters did not

mind that. They only wanted the opportunity to record their honest votes. They were deprived of that democratic right by an undemocratic and pseudo-democratic rule. Prof. Wood had no particular desire to stand, but did so under the pressure of his friends to test the working of this revised Rule 10. It is a good thing for the Society that he did, for otherwise the badness of it would not have been brought to light.

In consequence of what his service revealed, the General Council's committee has been reconsidering Rule 10—but still undemocratically, because keeping the full membership in the dark; and now four alternatives are submitted, and—shade of A. E. S. Smythe!—the Canadian executive falls for the ruse of No. 1!

Consider what happened in 1952/3. Sri Ram, Sidney Cook and Rukmini Arundale received the most nominations, three alternatives of the official view; Ernest Wood was excluded as No. 4 (jointly with Mrs. Ransom). So the minority who favoured a radical change of policy were disenfranchised because, although Sidney Cook withdrew, that did not admit Ernest Wood.

The No. 1 alternative proposed that in future if someone does what Sidney Cook did—get in the first three, so blocking the fourth, and then withdraw, the fourth shall become No. 3, but this is just tinkering with an evil thing. It does not face and eliminate the fundamental badness.

Had this variant been operative, all that would have been necessary to debar Ernest Wood would have been for Sidney Cook to refrain from withdrawing. Sri Ram would still have been elected. Ernest Wood would still have been debarred.

There is either some Machivellian subtlety in high quarters in our Society, or else some plain fuzziness and incompetence on first fundamentals of free-

dom in a society of free members. Either way it is time the entire membership were alerted.

The honest, just, and really democratic alternative is No. 4, coupled with some safeguard such as the transferable vote. Canada may well be able to advise on this device—they have used it for years in executive elections, apparently quite successfully and fairly.

T. H. Redfern.

The proposed amendment relates to the second paragraph only of Rule 10. The first paragraph provides that each member of the General Council may nominate three persons. The General Council consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, the General Secretaries of all National Societies and certain additional members (not less than five and not more than ten) who are nominated by the President. Each General Secretary is required to consult with the Executive Committee of his National Society and to make his nominations on their behalf; at present there are forty-three active National Societies. There are, therefore, over fifty-two members of the General Council who may make three nominations each or a total of between 156 and 171 possible nominations.

The two questions before the General Council at present are, 1st, shall all nominees be on the ballot paper, or only those who receive the highest number of nominations? 2nd, if a panel, then how many shall be on it, three, five or seven? Mr. Redfern has set out his arguments for the acceptance of all nominations and claims that this is the only democratic method. Admittedly, if there were world-wide skulduggery afoot, the Executives of all National Societies might conspire to nominate three candidates only who could be relied upon to

support 'the party in power' and then a 'reform' candidate would have no chance. However, if the international Theosophical Society ever degenerated to that point, it would not matter very much who was President of the empty shell. But assuming that the members of the General Council act in good faith, with the best interests of the Society at heart, and in making their choice have before them full information concerning the possible candidates who would and could assume the very important position of President of the Society, could it be termed undemocratic to select from the various nominations those names which have received the approval of the majority of the elected representatives of the members and of the non-elected members of the Council?

In his comments on the report of the Rules Committee, the President stated, "The important thing to ensure, whatever may be the method of election, is that it should result in the election of a President who would command the confidence of the *entire* Society, as indicated by a good proportion of the votes of the members, or at least a very good proportion of the votes cast by the members. If we are to have a President elected by, say, one-fourth or one-fifth of the votes cast, on account of the total number of votes becoming split amongst a number of nominees, the person who is elected would be either a party-man or just an administrative head, as pointed out by the Rule 10 Committee. Such a procedure may seem democratic, but the result would be undemocratic; there would not be that relationship between the President and the members everywhere which should exist in such a Society as ours. It is not improbable, when the votes are scattered, that a nominee who is supported by a large number of votes in a big Section may get elected with very little support from other Sections. He would then be more

of a National representative than a truly International head. The condition that there should be a number of nominations by members of the General Council, representing different Sections, was intended to obviate this."

Mr. Redfern states that each candidate should be entitled as of right to access to every member of the Society to state the policy for which he stands. With this we agree, but would point out that there is no machinery for this at the present time. It is not the point at issue and other changes in the Rules would be required to provide for this.

Nor is it possible under the present Rules for there to be an interchange of information and ideas among the members of the General Council before nominations are made. As Rule 10 now stands, nominations must be in Adyar within two months after notices of an impending election are sent out by the Recording Secretary. This is far too short a time to permit the Executive of a National Society to become acquainted with the names, policies and qualifications of the prospective nominees of other Sections.

The office of President of the world-wide Society is a very important one, and it is likely that there will not be for some time more than a very few persons whose inner qualifications and outer circumstances of life would enable them to assume the responsibilities and multitudinous duties of the office. A President is elected for a seven year term; surely a year instead of two months would not be too long a period in which to consider and decide upon nominations. Such a period would afford time to enable the whole Society to be notified of the names of possible nominees and to become acquainted with their policies and programme through the mediumship of articles in the various national magazines.

BROTHERHOOD AND THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

From the time of the establishment of the Theosophical Movement in the world in 1875 its foundation was defined as the formation of the beginning of a *universal* brotherhood of humanity. This foundation rests on the principal teachings of the ancient wisdom-religion: the fundamental unity of all human beings and their noble destiny, described in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. During her life H.P.B. repeatedly pointed to this necessity of brotherhood with great emphasis; we refer to her "Messages to American Theosophists" (1888-1891) and other writings, from which it appears that she expected the realization of such a fraternity *at least* in the circles of those who tried to make Theosophy a living power in their lives, as an example to the world. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* contain a good many appeals in this respect (letters II, IX, V and VI). "The chiefs want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity', a real universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds". (VI).

Those who take the study of Theosophy seriously and work for its promulgation review now and then the history of the modern movement. They have to accept certain facts; they know that some of the theosophical groups in the world have a friendly attitude towards each other, attend each others' meetings and exchange magazines, but that several smaller and larger groups of theosophists—all owing their origin to H. P. B.'s work—show an absence of the ideal mentioned above, so that among the various theosophical circles there has not been a question of starting "a real universal Fraternity" as yet. What H.P.B., according to her words, expect-

ed and G. de Purucker afterwards forcefully repeated: namely the possibility of one *theosophical* front at least, as an example of true brotherhood and tolerance to the world, has not as yet been realized. Reviewing the causes of this evident absence of a universal fraternity, we have to admit that, in a way, history has repeated itself in the Theosophical Movement of the last few decades. Causes comparable to those which divided the Christian church into so many separate sects, all connected with human qualities as ambition, envy and the "better-than-thou-attitude", can clearly be pointed out—qualities which should have no place in students of the grand old philosophy of life. Another cause that must be put on record is what is called "neo-theosophy" which crept into several theosophical groups, i.e., vague and phantastical representations of (mostly) psychic aspects, which have nothing to do with real Theosophy as explained in *The Secret Doctrine* and which have consequently never arrested "the attention of the highest minds". It is therefore most necessary that earnest enquirers are continually referred to the contents of *The Secret Doctrine* and to the confirmations of it in the scientific and philosophic field in the world. It will then be seen how "up-to-date" *The Secret Doctrine* is!

Another cause is to be found in the fact that the old principle—theosophical students should be independent thinkers and no followers, independent investigators—seems to have been abandoned. Theosophists have always been free to differ in opinion as much as they liked, but co-operation is always easy on the basis of the uniting, *fundamental* teachings of Theosophy, so nobly expressed in the three fundamental propositions

of *The Secret Doctrine*. Another cause can be found in the mistaken idea of "leadership". Lao-Tse's conception of the true leader, standing behind and having deep wisdom, has evidently been lost sight of. Consequently we see a followership in certain groups, who are convinced that their group is the "one and only" and the followers feel privileged and fortunate in the way of the members of the only saving church: the chosen people and consequently the tragic walls with which they enclose themselves. An organization initially meant as a means to an end has become an end in itself. And the understanding of the real theosophical philosophy, universal as it is, has suffered. An attitude of standing separate, and forgetting the "universal fraternity" may be excused by specious arguments, just as in religious sects; a wrong use may be made of esoteric truths and great names, the bell, book and candle method may even be followed in certain groups, but H.P.B. reminded people in her days that it is *not* Theosophy. There may be some comfort in the thought, expressed by an American Theosophist, that with a pure motive good may be derived from bad teachers, and that with a bad motive evil may be derived from good teachers.

Meanwhile we take into account that in this world there are large groups of people who without any dogma or compulsion have succeeded in making the spiritual brotherhood of men a living power in their daily lives and in the life of their association, finding their basis in the same universal truths as those which Theosophy teaches. In truth, the inspiration flows continually there where the channels are open, for those who have the eyes to see it. As G. de Purucker said: there are very many theosophists outside the theosophical groups. Those who are aware of the

dangers in this world, both on the psychical and on the worldly plane, remember H.P.B.'s work and expectations, and as the least token of gratitude to the Foundress act in accordance with them. As Judge said in *The Path*, X, Oct. 1895: "Remember that we are not fighting for any form of organization, nor for badges, nor for petty personal ends but for Theosophy; for the benefit, the advantage and the good of our fellowmen. As was said not long ago, those of us who follow after and worship a mere organization are making fetishes and worshipping a shell. Unselfishness is the real keynote". And in *The Path*, X, Febr. 1896 he said: "The untheosophical view is based on separation, the Theosophical upon unity absolute and actual. Of course, if theosophists talk about unity but as a dream or a mere metaphysical thing, then they will cease to be theosophists and be mere professors, as the Christian world is to-day. of a code not followed." In another place Judge speaks about the universal freemasonry, resting on a foundation on which each man is an independent thinker and worker and at the same time a brother, thus becoming a helper and teacher in his own sphere of his fellowmen. Let those who understand all this continue on their way, either individually or in groups, and remember the symbology of the words: Keep the link unbroken.

J. H. V.

From *Contact*, Holland,
March, 1957.

"All of Life and every atom of even mineral dust is a life though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism."

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