

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XXXVIII., No. 6

TORONTO, JAN.-FEB., 1958

Price 35 Cents

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

## THEOSOPHY, A DOCTRINE OF RELATIONSHIPS

BY MRS. R. H. GRIFFITH

Theosophy, as we all know, is a tremendous study. You can study it for years and years and the longer you study it the more you realize that as you wend your way slowly towards its intellectual horizon, the horizon recedes. This is good, for what man or woman would like to think that his or her limited brain could here and now grasp the whole of "Truth",

But although we cannot yet grasp the whole of Truth, and perhaps never shall do so, we can attempt to follow the path of Truth, if we have the urge and sincere determination to obey the rules of the Road. These rules have been laid down by all the seers and sages of the Past, and in our present day, the leaders of the Theosophical Society have proclaimed them once more. They have not only done this, but they have, in clear and simple language, told us why those rules are necessary to those who want to know why they are here, what they are doing, and whither they are going; those people who are tired of being tossed about on the sea of life, like a rudderless boat.

Now it has always been the case, that those who genuinely seek shall receive

an answer, and I believe that the teachings of Theosophy, for some people at least, provide that answer. Perhaps it is not so much an answer that it gives, as a key, which the inquirer must use himself, to unlock the doors which lead to knowledge.

Now there is one great beauty about the study of Theosophy, which should prevent it from becoming dogmatic and lifeless, and that is, that although the fundamental ideas underlying this great teaching must of necessity be changeless, the methods by which the laws of life work out are subject to much argument and even disagreement among its students.

For instance, we all agree that there is only one life, which manifests in innumerable forms. We all agree on the theory of the re-embodiment for man as for any other entity.

We believe in the law of karma, in the law of cycles and so on, but we do not always agree on the details as to the working out of these laws. Even some of the best interpreters of these teachings do not always agree. This I think is good, because we are constantly thrown back on ourselves, and must, if

we are to get anywhere with this study, learn to think for ourselves. For, although we are pupils in the same school we are not all in the same grade. Therefore, on being presented with certain ideas our reactions to them will be different. Our understanding of the law of reincarnation, for instance, will be greater after perhaps twenty years of thought and study, than it was when we first heard about it, and our conception of it twenty years hence, or for that matter twenty lives hence, will be greater still. The laws do not change but our understanding develops, and we change.

This must be one of the difficulties faced by our teachers when giving out ideas for they must do so in such a way that we can get some faint idea of what they are trying to convey to us, whatever our place in evolution. We see things through our own limitations and judge them in the light of our own experiences, so no wonder we do not all see eye to eye. We are told that we must never accept anything that does not appeal to us as true. If we do, we simply blunt our faculty for perceiving Truth. If we are told a fact of life by someone whom we feel to be an advanced pupil in the school of life and that fact does not appeal to us as logical, in the light of our own experiences, we need not accept it. But we do not need to deny it either. We can simply put it aside until such time as we feel ourselves more capable of judging.

There is one thing about these ancient teachings, now known as Theosophy, that we must always remember. No one can prove them for us. Each and every one of us eventually will have to prove them for himself. What we can do, at our stage of development is to study the great religions and philosophies; try to interpret the myths that have come down to us from antiquity; try to open our minds to the really great

ideas expressed so beautifully by some of our intuitive poets; we must also study nature and science. But above all, and this is far more important, we must look deeply within ourselves, for that is where Truth is really to be found.

It has been said that those who ask shall receive, but when we ask to be shown Truth, we are asking to be shown the pearl of great price, and we will not be shown that in its true glory, unless we prove ourselves worthy to behold it. In fact it seems to me that to know Truth, we shall have to become the very Truth itself.

Now the subject of this paper is "Theosophy, a Doctrine of Relationships"—a few ideas, and necessarily limited ideas, on man's relationship to the world around him, and to those beings both above him and below him in the field of evolution. What is man's relationship to the God within him, and the God without him, to the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, his fellow man, his own bodies, his family, his country, and so on? What is his relationship to the sun and the stars?

It goes without saying that all these questions cannot be answered in a short paper, even in the elementary fashion in which we can understand them, but let us consider some of them, and those that we cannot answer, let us think and ponder over in those quiet moments when the affairs of the personality do not absorb our attention.

Why, to begin with, are we related to all these different kingdoms? Because, and this answer may sound a little obscure to those who are not used to thinking in these terms, everyone of us is a miniature world in himself. The words macrocosm and microcosm are often used in Theosophy in this sense, the former meaning the great world and the latter the small world. The relationship is the same as a drop of water

to the ocean or a spark to a flame. The sun, the stars, the vegetables, animal, elemental and mineral kingdoms, our country, our family, have all played their part, or are playing their part in our evolution, for man is a complex and wonderful being, whose growth has occupied an enormous length of time. We are built of the very fabric of the universe, and are at home in any part of it, on any of its planes, for there is that within us which corresponds to that part or those planes, and this should be a comforting thought to those who seem to think of any other plane except the physical, as alien to us.

Now when we speak of man, we do not here mean the sum total of each one of our separate worlds, for that would include that spark of Divinity which overshadows the human soul called the Inner God, the guardian angel, the Buddha within or the Christos. We mean by man, for the purpose of this paper, more than the personality, whom we refer to usually as ourselves. We mean the individuality or reincarnating ego, that part of ourselves which persists from life to life, gathering up the fruit of its experience, and which should be or is learning to be in control of the personality, that is in control of its actions, desires and concrete thoughts. To these, we, as men, should stand as Master.

To the God within, on the other hand, we stand as pupils, seeking for guidance and for strength. All thoughts of compassion, self sacrifice, and impersonal love come from this source. We have to learn to listen for the "Voice of the Silence", for, for each of us, this is the supreme inspiration. Now it is very important, when thinking of relationships to think of ourselves in our highest capacity. We know that we can say to our physical body, "You may eat this, but you shall not eat that". We can say to our desire nature "Stop wanting so

and so and fix your desires on something better", or we can with a great effort control its irritability. The same with the thoughts that flit in and out of our minds. We can, if we have the strength of mind, refuse lodgement to those of them which are miserable, useless, destructive, or untrue. In all these ways we show that we are not our physical bodies, our desires, or our thoughts, for we stand above them, and our growth now consists in developing the inner powers with which to control them.

Let us look at it in a little different way. We are each one of us rulers of a small world or universe. Within that world play all the forces of life, their goodness or the reverse depending on how we use them. We have been growing up in this world throughout the ages, without quite realizing what our position in it is, or what it finally would be.

Now we are told that we have come to that point where we have to take our duties seriously, assert our authority, and bring to our kingdom the gifts of the spirit. These gifts of the spirit are not far off for they radiate from the inmost core of our Being, the Inner God, but they cannot penetrate a world of selfishness, limitation and ugliness, any more than the sun can shine on us when the sky is covered with thick dark clouds. Therefore, what each one of us is faced with is the cleansing of our own individual world and freeing it from the bonds of personality, a very hard task indeed, especially in our Western world of the present day, when most of us are so intensely personal, and where everything contributes to its importance. We do not have to repress the forces of the personality for they all have their uses and place in our world, but we have to guide them into the right channels and give to each a chance of expression along the right lines. We must take our

place in the seat of judgment and try to bring to our kingdom justice, truth, harmony and beauty. To do this, needless to say, we shall need will power, wisdom, a sense of humour and courage; more important still we must start building a path between us and our Inner God so that we can travel that path to gain inspiration to carry on our work. We are the stewards of our kingdoms; the Inner God is the King, but since he is a being of light, his full presence will not be felt until we have cleared away the rubbish and ugliness that bestrew the paths of his kingdom.

Dwelling in and passing through our worlds are many entities. There is the animal soul, the lower human soul; there are all the little atoms that fly in and out and make up our various bodies or principles. There are all the thoughts and desires from the most beautiful, to the most contemptible. All these receive an imprint from us, and since the tiniest atom is growing and evolving just as we are, they can be helped or hindered on their way.

Above us are the many, who have passed beyond our stage, on the ladder of life and can help us, and below us are the many who have not reached our stage and whom or which we can help.

I do not want to dwell any more on this particular relationship of man to the different entities that comprise his world, and to his own highest nature, except to leave the impression that it is an extremely important and responsible one. We must watch ourselves so that we do not any longer identify ourselves with our lower animal nature, even lending it, as we do, our minds to enhance the attractiveness of its desires. We may be only a little further up the hill, but let us remain there, for it is only from that elevation that we can wield any authority.

The great thing to realize, and it is not easy to do, is this—the joys and the

peace of the upper air, the things of the spirit are far greater than those of the material world, but we have to discard the lower to make way for the higher, and that requires courage and an act of faith. It requires the capacity to go through a period when we may feel empty and rather alone, a period perhaps when having tried to sacrifice our pet weaknesses and feeling a little lost without them, we have not yet felt the breath of the spirit. That is when we find out if we are sincere or not.

Now, let us take a different sort of relationship that of ourselves to the earth, the sky and the sea, and all the vegetation that grows on the earth. We might even include the mineral kingdom here. In a physical sense of course, the earth is our mother. She feeds and sustains us during our sojourn here and even provides us with remedies to cure our physical ills, but we have a closer kinship with her even than that, for we in a certain way, during the kindergarten days of our evolution, passed through the experiences to be met with in the mineral and vegetable kingdom; we passed through that kingdom just as we are passing through the human kingdom today, but the *we* that I am speaking of here is the animal soul, not self conscious man. This is a complicated subject and cannot be dealt with here. Therefore it is no wonder that we feel such a close kinship with Nature. We go down to the shore when the wind is blowing, and the sea is covered with white caps, and we listen to the roar of the surf on the rocks. We feel excited. Something within us feels released. We admire the colouring of distant hills or the sun reflected on snow capped mountains, and the dullest of us experiences a quickening of life in the beautiful season of Spring.

There are endless joys to be found in nature, and to those who love her, she will reveal her secrets. The more evol-

ed we are the more we can learn from this source and the more real happiness we can get from it, because we sense not only the work of creation, but also the creator. Ask a gardener about his garden, or a mountain climber about his moments of joy in climbing mountains. Take your dog for a walk and he will bound along filled with physical well-being, but he will not notice the patches of golden crocuses that seem to have sprung up over night, or the graceful flight of a seagull. He will not enjoy the sound of rippling water. Now to the Theosophist all this is very important for he believes that there is only one Life manifesting in all these myriad forms, from a star to a daisy, and the more he can merge his individual life with the greater life of which physical nature is an expression, the more his understanding will grow.

In all individuals, deeply buried or near the surface lie the possibilities of creation, for the creative force is inherent in life itself, and once again let us remember, that whatever exists in the whole, exists in the part, and nature arouses this creative instinct if we can make ourselves receptive to her. Nature is also a healer and one that we should turn to during those unhappy periods of which all of us have our share.

An interesting thing was told to us the other day, by a member of our society. He said that in occidental art we frequently portray portraits and statues of individual men and women, while in Oriental art the subject is usually some scene in nature, and if a man is included in the picture it is just a faint impression showing him almost as part of the landscape, as a tree or flower is. The explanation was that *we* accentuate the individual, whereas the Eastern people see themselves as part of the greater life of nature. In their eyes we are the "man plants" of the universe,

if you can put it that way, and the universe is more important than its separate parts.

We read these days, so many panaceas for our various ills; one that is sometimes mentioned and which fits in with our Theosophical ideas is that we should go back to a simpler life, living and working in more countrified surroundings, and that is probably true. Until we start co-operating with nature, instead of boasting of conquering her, and feeling superior to her, we shall no doubt suffer the unhappy consequences.

We cannot all live and work in ideal conditions, but there are always the sky, the sun, the stars and the open air, and outside any town there is the country.

I seem to have dwelt a long time on our relationship with Nature, but so many of our most enlightening symbols come from this source, such as the acorn and the oak tree, the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly, or that of a spider weaving his web out of his own substance, and greatest symbol of all, the coming of Spring. I feel that if we study with understanding, knowing well that its life and our life are one, that we shall find our own symbols, and so be that much wiser than we are at present.

Just one word more before we leave this particular relationship. This same personality which if uncontrolled causes us so much trouble every day of our lives does the same thing here, because if our minds are filled with unnecessary worries and irritable thoughts, we cannot see the beauties or be receptive to the healing power of nature, so here again control is necessary.

From our relationship to the vegetable kingdom to our relationship to the animal kingdom is not a far step. I am not going to deal here with such difficult questions as vegetarianism, the wearing of furs, vivisection, so called

*(Continued on page 137)*

# KARMA AND ACCIDENTS

*Verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or in another life.*

Theosophically minded persons accept the concept of a universally operating law of cause and effect, Karma, "the undeviating and unerring tendency in the universe to restore equilibrium." They are therefore not prone to ascribe to "accident" or "chance" those events which seemingly happen without any one's direct intention or come about without any known cause, and instead look upon these events as the results of the working out of a law whose more subtle and intricate operations are not readily discernible.

One factor which makes difficult the tracing of the hidden causes of an outer event is that under the law of Karma the relationship between a cause and its effect is not altered by the lapse of time. The effect may come immediately, but in other instances the effect may not become manifest until years or ages have passed. An effect does not *follow* a cause; a cause produces an effect which exists from the moment of the cause. The two cannot be separated, each is the other half of the duality of cause-effect, or as is said in *Aphorisms on Karma*, compiled by Mr. W. Q. Judge, the effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause". This duality is present in all actions even minor ones for as *The Voice of the Silence* says, "A harsh word uttered in past lives is not destroyed, but ever comes again."

That accidents have causes and are not fortuitous happenings is recognized by insurance companies, compensation boards, the employers of labour and other groups which are concerned in the

financial responsibilities arising from injuries to persons or damages to property. There are 'accident prone' individuals and some accidents are described as 'psychosomatic' in recognition of the fact that the tendency of an individual to experience accidents arises from inner problems. In fact, in considering cases of recurring accidents caused to or by one individual, the practice is to endeavour to ascertain the nature of the inner problem, what is the disturbance in the psyche. Often it is found to be worry over financial problems, an unhappy married life, sickness, a sense of insecurity, a feeling of inadequacy to face minor daily problems or some other inner worries relating solely to the personality concerned. The outer circumstances of his work or of the actions in which he was engaged at the times of his accidents, are not contributing factors and do not present hazards which the average individual could not prevail over. In some cases, it has been revealed that continuous worry induces a subconscious death wish or sometimes a desire for an accident which will not kill but will injure and thus provide a means of escape for the time being at least from what is becoming the intolerable task of living under the daily load of worry.

The point of there being a causal relationship between inner attitudes and outer events is commented upon by Laurens van der Post in his interesting book, *Venture to the Interior*, an account of a visit to Africa. During an inspection tour of the Mlanje mountain reserve, in the company of a young man who was the superintendent of the range, tragedy suddenly overtook them. A heavy rainstorm arose while they were on the mountain and the young man was drowned while trying to cross a swollen stream with a rope which

would be a guide for the remainder of the party.

"From the moment Vance was killed I had blamed myself bitterly, though not for the actual accident. I think it is clear that there is a point at which all outside responsibility for an individual ends and the final result concerns him and his fate alone. . . .

"It was rather in our being there at all, that I felt my share of the responsibility lay. Firstly, if I had not come out to Africa, Vance at that moment would in all probability not have been on the mountain. Secondly, if I had refused to let our party take the short cut from the lumber camp, we should not have been in the gorge either. Then again I had had all the time an uneasy feeling about this trip. I had left England in a mood of resentment and had always been in a divided state about Africa. Supposing my own conflict about it had been resolved, could I have ever got entangled in a set of circumstances so disastrous as those in Mlanje?

"My instinct was to say No; that a split in ourselves produces a split in the pattern of our lives, creates this terrible split down the middle, this deep dark Mlanje gorge, through which disaster runs and the devil drives. Accident and disaster without feed on accident and disaster within. The design of our outward life, from its minutest detail up to the atom which we put in our latest bomb, reflects and confirms our deepest and most private purpose."

The author's words, "Accident and disaster without feed on accident and disaster within" calls to mind Whitman's lines in his *Carol of Words*,

"I swear the earth shall surely be complete to him or her who shall be complete!

I swear the earth remains jagged and broken only to him or her who remains jagged and broken!"

That an inner compulsion may oper-

ate to keep an individual away from a catastrophe if he himself has no direct karmic connection therewith is the thought of one of the *Aphorisms on Karma*. We can recall stories of persons who would have been involved in a disastrous wreck if, except for some seemingly trivial cause or some vague intuition of danger, they had been passengers on the train or ship. Apparently the opposite is also true, and an individual may be drawn into an impending catastrophe through some departure from what should have been his normal course of action. The word "impending" suggests a predestined event and sometimes it would appear, judging from the process of selection which goes on beforehand, that a disaster is in the making, the victims are present, the innocent are absent, and that an inner compulsion to be present or absent was at work long before there was any hint of danger. To quote again from Mr. van der Post's book, "Wrong begets wrong, starts a chain of accident and disharmony in circumstances which quickly develop a will of their own. These circumstances exact their own logical toll and must run their time to the bitter end, before an individual is able to break free of them again."

One major railway wreck in which a process of selection seemed to be present for some of the victims occurred several years ago. A northbound and a southbound train operating in northern Ontario on a single track line had a meet at a flag station early one morning. There was a long passing siding at this point and the northbound train was to enter the siding from the south, wait for the passing of the southbound train and then proceed on its way. The crews of both trains were competent men of many years' service and both crews understood the train orders they had received. The meet was in accordance with standard railway practice in

daily use. However, as the two trains moved toward each other through the rocky lonely countryside an unforeseen element entered. The northbound train lost time—not very much, there was still ample time to reach and enter the passing track before the southbound train was due. Then another factor entered—water trouble developed in the northbound engine and in his concern over this, the engineer overran the south switch at the meeting point. This was a serious error, but if it had been noted in time it could have been nullified by backing down through the north switch. However, the southbound train had gained time and its engineer was approaching the meeting point expecting either to find the northbound train on the passing track or to stop on the mainline clear of the switch. He was not expecting to find the northbound train a half mile beyond the north switch. The chain of circumstance had developed a will of its own and the inevitable happened. The two trains met in a head on collision in a narrow rock cut which obscured any view which either engine crew might have had of the headlight of the other train.

Fifteen persons were killed in the first passenger coach of the northbound train, a colonist car. Of these, one was an immigrant woman who had boarded the train by mistake; she should have been on another railway, and the conductor decided to carry her on to the nearest junction point. Another passenger holding first-class transportation had just left the rear of the train and walked through to the colonist car to purchase a soft drink from the news vendor. If he had stayed in the rear of the train he would have been safe. The news vendor, who was killed, was on that train because he was taking the place of the regular vendor who had become ill between the initial terminal and the first divisional point. The con-

ductor of the northbound train, who was also killed, had rushed into the colonist car a few seconds before the crash occurred. He had evidently realized that the meet had been missed, but instead of signalling the engineer by means of the air system, he tried to reach the engine. Three other passengers in the colonist car, newly arrived from Europe, had missed an earlier train which they should have taken. All three were killed. In other deaths there were indications of some patterning at work which brought the victims into the car at the time of the impact. This was not so of all deaths, for others died who were holding colonist tickets and who had been in their regularly assigned places since the start of the journey. Not all passengers in the car were killed; some escaped with minor or no injuries.

Why did certain individuals die and not others? This question is asked after every major catastrophe. It is the problem which Brother Juniper set himself to solve in Thornton Wilder's famous story, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. Five persons were on the ancient bridge when it fell into the river gorge near Lima. Why those five of all the thousands who had used it? Brother Juniper had a theory that the answer lay in the personal lives of the victims, but despite his painstaking research into all available details of their lives, he could not find the logical moral cause which he *knew* existed. Nor are we who accept the theory of the law of Karma in any more favourable position than Brother Juniper was to unveil the mystery of the exact details of the working of the law or to prove that an accidental death in this incarnation was due to a certain action performed in the past. We are convinced of the justice of the law and have confidence in its equitable operation. But while we may not know the precise details of operation, this is not



to say that the answers to such problems are unknowable.

We have knowledge of so small a segment of the whole life of any individual, even of one with whom we have been intimately associated for many years. How much less do we know of their lives—and of our own lives—in past incarnations where chains of cause-effects were forged by bygone deeds, words and thoughts? For thousands of generations members of the human race have lived together and have passed through periods of history when human life was not considered inviolate and when thousands of lives were terminated suddenly and ruthlessly by the intentional acts of others. The slaying of another person produces held-over Karma, creates a debt which cannot be finally discharged until a future life, no matter to what degree its effects may be mitigated by subsequent acts of the slayer.

Possibly major catastrophes are clearing houses for much held-over Karma and those who die therein are those who were karmically involved in former lives, but who can assert with final authority that all such deaths are the direct results of deaths caused by the victims in previous incarnations. Karma, according to our understanding of it, does not require that if one slays he must be slain in turn. Karma is not mechanical. It is, as Mr. Judge said, "both merciful and just" and "mercy and justice are only opposite poles of a single whole". In some way the equilibrium must be restored; a counterbalancing death might do this, but would it not appear that a life lived in service to the victim, or the bestowing upon him of the greatest gift one can offer, an introduction to and guidance in the occult philosophy, might counterbalance the gross acts of ancient times?

A perfect example of an accident

which could have caused a number of deaths but did not because the potential victims were absent, occurred in the town of Beatrice, Nebraska, about seven years ago. This incident was given wide publicity at the time through an article in *Life* magazine and later through *The Reader's Digest*. In the late afternoon of the day of the event, the minister of West Side Baptist Church went over to the church and lit the furnace in preparation for the choir practice which was to be held that evening at seven-thirty. All choir members were as a rule very punctual in their attendance, most of them arriving ten or fifteen minutes early. But on that evening something occurred which had never happened before, there was no one in the church at seven twenty-five P.M. At that hour the church was totally destroyed by a heavy explosion. The outer supporting walls were blown out and the heavy timber roof crashed down on the pews and the choir area.

Enquiries afterwards revealed that the unvarying habit of arriving early had been broken for various reasons. The minister, his wife and little daughter were delayed because it was found that the child's dress was soiled and had to be changed just as they were ready to leave. One choir girl was in the middle of a difficult geometry problem which was part of her homework and she stayed a few moments to complete it. Another girl's car would not start so she had called the girl with the geometry problem to be picked up in her car. Another member would have arrived at seven-twenty P.M. but for the fact that she had to call in on her mother on her way. The pianist had planned to arrive about half an hour early, but she was tired and had a catnap after dinner and her mother allowed her to sleep on. The coldness of the weather tempted another girl to

(Continued on page 142)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Election time is in the offing and I wish to remind the electorate that this is a democratic organization whose privileges should be enjoyed to the full. All officers are automatically out of office at the expiration of the financial year on June 30. It is your prerogative then to state who is to take over. Presidents and other officials of lodges are requested to study the notice about the General Election elsewhere in this issue, and to call special meetings, if necessary, of their lodges to prepare nominations for the office of General Secretary, and seven members of the Executive. There should be no delay about this. All members are requested to interest themselves in this matter, and are reminded if an election does take place dues must be paid to entitle members to vote.

\* \* \* \*

After eight years residency at the Guild of All Arts where I was in charge of the Arts and Crafts I finally decided to retire from active participation in the struggle for pelf and become a person of more or less leisure. I am now back in the city and am living with my daughter Viola at 14 Bishop St., where I will be within walking distance of Isabella Street and most of the organizations I am interested in. More especially will I be able to give almost undivided attention to Theosophical work which I have so much at heart. At the Guild I was hampered to a degree not only with my work there, but by the distance I was away from the centre of things; now this is obviated I can give free rein to my aspirations in other fields of endeavour.

\* \* \* \*

Again I must bring to the notice of subscribers to The Canadian Theoso-

phist who are domiciled outside Canada that in sending their subscriptions they should ADD the current rate of discount on the dollar and (if by cheque) bank charges on such cheques. If this is not done it means that by the time such amounts are deducted we get very little for the magazine and work involved.

\* \* \* \*

It is with deep regret I note the passing of Mrs. Anne Kember of the Victoria Lodge on November 25. Mrs. Kember was one of our most recent members having joined the Society only last February, but during that time and before, she made a most valuable contribution in work and effort in the building and re-opening of the Lodge. Her loss will be deeply felt, not only by her fellow members but by all of us, for we can ill afford to lose any of our members, especially when they are ardent workers like Mrs. Kember. My heartfelt sympathy is extended to her son and daughter whom she leaves behind.

\* \* \* \*

I would like to say a word in recognition of the work carried out by the ladies of the Toronto Lodge on behalf of their Annual Bazaar. This function is usually a success, but this year well over two thousand dollars was netted which says much for the Lodge's efforts. This money goes to pay the many charges the lodge accumulates during the year and helps finance outside lecturers and many other things conducive to propaganda of the Cause. Willing workers in any organization are wonderful to have, and it is only by them that its work can be successfully carried out. So I say "Well done, Toronto Lodge Workers".

\* \* \* \*

By the time this is in print Christmas and New Year will have come and gone. Therefore as usual I want to thank the many kind friends and adherents who

have sent me cards and good wishes, many from the other side of the world, and some from persons not known to me. To you all I send New Year Greetings in the hope that this tired world will recuperate, bloom and blossom like the proverbial fruit tree.

\* \* \* \*

Just as the magazine was going to press I received a telegram from Montreal notifying me of the sudden death on Friday, December 27, of Miss Mary Henderson, sister-in-law of the late Mr. A. E. S. Smythe. Miss Henderson was a resident of Toronto and was visiting in Montreal over the Christmas holidays. She joined the Toronto Lodge in 1926, shortly after she came to Canada from Ireland following the marriage of her sister to Mr. Smythe. Miss Henderson was active in the lodge affairs for several years while Mr. and Mrs. Smythe were in Toronto and until her death her deep interest in Theosophical teachings was sustained. At the time of her death she was Directress of the Kindergarten at John Ross Robertson school. A Theosophical funeral service was conducted by me on December 30 and cremation took place at St. James Crematorium.

To her brother, Mr. Tom Henderson of Ireland, to her niece, Mrs. Moira Davis of Victoria, B.C., to Mr. Conn Smythe and to other members of her family I extend my sincere sympathy.

## THE ANNUAL ELECTION

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made by the lodges during the month of March (or before) so that Returns may be in by April 1. Experience has shown that it is impossible otherwise to issue voting papers, carry on the elections, get returns made, and scrutinize the

ballots in time for a declaration in the May-June magazine. Presidents should see that the matter is brought before their respective lodges, and when nominations are made, have them sent AT ONCE to the General Secretary. All nominations must be made through a lodge and consent of persons nominated must have been previously obtained. Nominations must reach the General Secretary by April 1 when nominations close. They should be mailed at least a week before. This will enable ballots to be sent out, should an election be necessary, on or before May 1, and voting to close June 1. Nominations must be sent in a separate letter addressed to the General Secretary, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

E. L. T.

## CORRIGENDA

In the article *The Wisdom of Confucius* which appeared in the Sept.-Oct. and the Nov.-Dec. issues, the following corrections should be made:

Sept.-Oct., page 76, 2nd column, 2nd paragraph, 7th line, change the word *states* to *life*.

page 78, 2nd column, 5th paragraph, 5th line, change the word *had* to *has*.

Nov.-Dec., page 103, 1st column, 2nd paragraph, 12th line, after the word *idea* add the words, "is so remote from modern practice and theory that it"

Strike out the word *so* before the word *Utopian*.

These errors are deeply regretted.

In the first line of the first paragraph of the review of *Candles in the Sun* (page 117) the word *grandfather* should have been *granddaughter* — "without distinction of sex" is all very well in its place but the printed word carried it too far!

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

Charles E. Bunting, 75 Rosedale Ave., Hamilton, Ont.

Charles M. Hale, 26 Albion Ave., Toronto, 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.

---

---

## CORRESPONDENCE

19th December 1957.

The Editor,

Dear Sir:

The editorial comments on my contribution published in your September/October issue under the heading *More on Rule 10* appear to misconceive the basic ground of the criticism of that rule.

The danger is not "world-wide skulduggery" and a conspiracy "to nominate three candidates only". That would indeed indicate a desperate position for the Society, but such a situation is almost inconceivable and not a prospect calling for protective action. May I restate the case to clarify?

1. What the last election demonstrated is that when every General Councillor is invited to make 3 nominations, the natural trend—not involving any suggestion of conspiracy—will be that most councillors will nominate up to 3 alternatives of the prevailing majority view.
2. Any candidate of a minority view is likely to get only *minority* nominations.
3. In consequence the 3 nominees with the most nominations are always likely to be alternatives of the majority view.
4. The possibility of getting a minority view candidate nominated will therefore be remote—Ernest Wood was nominated 5 times but was excluded from the voting paper at the last election, and still would have been under the new version of Rule 10 if the first 3 had all accepted.
5. The puzzle is whether the designing of this rule was politically astute, to produce this sort of natural outcome, or just bumbling.
6. Either way it is not democracy. It is the essence of democracy that a minority challenge shall be facilitated, not suppressed; and that any such challengers, representing any significant backing, shall have the opportunity to make known to the entire electorate why they advocate a different policy.
7. The President's comments which you quote on p. 93 are, of course, equally valid. A minority spokesman should not be elected to the supreme leadership of the Society owing to a divided vote amongst those holding, in the main, a common majority view. This is, I take it, the main cause of alarm about the rule as it stood, and served us well, until after Mr. Jinarajadasa's

unopposed election in 1945/6.

8. Agreeing with the President in his desire to obviate the hazard of a candidate being elected who only represents a minority, I yet hold that he and the members of the General Council have a duty to see that the door is wide open for any supported candidate with a legitimate alternative policy to expound it and have it tested at the poll of a Presidential election. For such a candidate to be rejected by the votes of the members if his policy is deemed unsound, or the less attractive, is healthy. The hampering of nomination, and consequent prevention of submission of an alternative policy to the electorate, is unhealthy.

9. The new rule does not eliminate the risk against which it appears to be directed. If two strong majority-view candidates only accepted nomination, a strong minority representative could still slip in between them.

10. Therefore the proper course, I suggest, is a revision that eliminates *both* dangers. Your Canadian practice of the transferable vote is quite an effective way to achieve this. Consider how this would apply to the circumstances the President is apparently anxious to take care of. Suppose there were 4 candidates, one (X) representing a minority, and the other 3 (A, B and C) alternative choices of the prevailing majority. The voters would indicate their order of preference on the voting paper by inserting 1, 2, 3, 4 against the chosen names. The first ballot might turn out:

X	—	8,000	votes
A	—	7,000	“
B	—	6,500	“
C	—	6,000	“

It would be bad for X to become President with more than 2 votes to 1 against him. So the second choices of those who voted for C would be distributed over the first 3, with perhaps this second stage:

A	—	10,000	votes
B	—	9,000	“
X	—	8,500	“

'A' would now have over 1½ to 1 against him, so the second choices of X (and the third where C was the second) would be distributed between 'A' and 'B', with this possible outcome:

B	—	14,500	votes
A	—	13,000	“

This over-simplifies a little, I know, and the mechanics of election procedure would be more complicated when the transferable vote came into play; but this presents no insuperable difficulties and can be discussed if the method is seriously considered to be desirable if practicable: and all our electoral history suggests that an overall majority at the first ballot would be the usual result.

Yours sincerely,  
T. H. REDFERN,

### 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.

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Theory of Eternal Life*, by Rodney Collin, 1956. Vincent Stuart Publishers Ltd., 55 Welbeck St., London, W.1, England. 126 pp., 8 illustrations. Price 22 shillings.

This is a re-statement in plain English of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, by Evans-Wentz, (see review *Canadian Theosophist*, July 15, 1952) and other books on the art of dying. The author, who was a companion of the Russian philosopher, P. D. Ouspensky, has used both ancient wisdom and modern science to explain and illustrate questions about life and death. According to Dr. Edward Conze, the well-known Buddhist scholar, Mr. Collin has done an extraordinarily competent job.

He makes clear in an almost startling way the importance of the moment of death, the importance of remaining conscious at that time and remembering one's past incarnation. The Egyptian and Tibetan Books of the Dead and other instruction on the process of dying say that the preservation of memory through the awful shock which is death is the pre-requisite for escape from rebirth. The Tibetan book emphasizes that most people at death—unprepared to look at the record of the life just closed as look they must—are thrown into a swoon which lasts 3½ days.

The author says that instead of waiting for the overwhelming revelation at death, we should write the log of our life by years; we should try to remember *now*, bringing back sequentially and by will the entire incarnation. We must assemble, extend and assess all memories of people, of places, of one's own movements including their work, their physical sensations such as illnesses, sex experience, visual impressions, critical and trivial incidents. Once begun, these memories unravel in amazing detail

now. All memory must be marshalled, particularly those memories which one is most reluctant to recall. Remembering our failures and our weaknesses, we must determine that another time the same mistakes will not be repeated.

The second stage of the log is to contemplate what might have happened if better decisions, a different course had been taken at one time or another. Thus one begins in retrospect to reconstruct the life.

"The whole aim must be to develop and fix memory gradually and intentionally *while still alive* . . . the purpose of acquiring consciousness in life is to remain conscious through death . . . The moment of death is the greatest test and opportunity which comes to man for in this moment everything is possible."

Of great interest are the chapters on the logarithmic scale of time. On this scale gestation, childhood and maturity are the three main parts of the incarnation, gestation being one-third of man's career. As the embryo recapitulates the entire physical evolution of the race, this time scale makes sense. Counted in years, gestation is but a hundredth part of the incarnation but measurement in years is a planetary scale created by the motion of the earth and does not refer to the inner time of man. To measure his organic development we must find quite a different scale. This is exactly what the book does with the help of diagrams, and the result is extremely interesting.

F.E.G.

---

*"Till We Meet . . ." and Twelve Other Stories* by Mikhail Naimy (The Indian Institute of World Culture, 6, North Public Square Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore 4, India: 1957—\$1.50).

This volume—with its coarse cloth cover, its pulpy pages and its photo-

graph of the distinguished Lebanese author, Mikhail Naimy—is a collection of thirteen tales that are reminiscent of both Burton's *Arabian Nights* and Burke's *Limehouse Nights*. While the author of this book is hailed on the dust-wraper as being "one of the most eminent, independent and daring thinkers of the Arabic-speaking world," he is little known outside of the east, except in such harbours for the mystical writer as The Theosophical Society.

Twelve of the thirteen tales included in "*Till We Meet . . .*" are comparatively short and average about ten pages each, with the thirteenth, the title novelette, almost one hundred pages in length. The shortest and best tale in the entire collection is undoubtedly "A Nail-Paring", a minor classic that has been reprinted from *The Aryan Path*. Generally, all the stories are entertaining, simply told and bear the mark of a precise craftsman with a powerful personality that either animates the stories directly as a protagonist or indirectly as a narrator.

The author, Mikhail Naimy, is one of the few outstanding figures in contemporary Arabic letters. Between the two world wars he was part of the group of Lebanese-Syrian writers in New York that sparked Near Eastern literature. One of his closest friends was Kahlil Gibran, the author of *The Prophet*, and Naimy has been his chief biographer.

Born at Biskinta, Lebanon, in 1889, Naimy was educated in Lebanon, Russia, France and the United States. He fought in the first world war and after it began an active literary career in three languages by writing critical essays, poems, novels, philosophical contemplations, lectures, aphorisms and most important of all, tales of his people. To the western world he is known mostly for his books *Memoirs of a Vagrant Soul*, *The Book of Mirdad*,

*Kahlil Gibran: A Biography* and—now—"Till We Meet . . ."

This book is Naimy's most recent and is a collection of tales rather than a collection of stories. Half allegorical, half grotesque, these tales should best be heard spoken from the lips of the author himself. They appear to be deceptively simple in form since they are stylized after the mystery-detective story of thirty years ago, the kind that was once popularized by Burke and Sax Rohmer, the creator of Dr. Fu Manchu. But these tales deal with some aspect of the mysterious, the irrational, the occult and even the divine—yet all are suffused throughout with a deeply pious tone of religious fervour. Like the tales of Aladdin and his magical lamp, Naimy's deal with the forces of both devas and devils.

At first glance the title story of "*Till We Meet . . .*" is a romance with supernatural overtones. It relates how the violinist Leonardo, with his rendition of the tune "Till We Meet", succeeds in enchanting his beloved Baha and sending her into a trance. It becomes evident, though, that there is more to the mystery than this, for the eternal evil and eternal good in the soul of man begin to come forth. Past and present seem to be interfused and legend and reality become one as Naimy describes the lovers as they are finally transported into a world more eternal than this one. For as he writes, "There is nothing *impossible* in Nature. Would that her boundaries stopped at the usual and the reasonable; how tractable she should then be to the slightest whim of man!"

Other tales in "*Till We Meet . . .*" present a panorama of attitudes to life ranging from complete nihilism—as in "Suicide"—to complete acceptance—as in "Earthquake". In the latter story the eternal dialectic of ends and means, permanence and progress is worked out,

just as in "Repentance" the law of *karma* is described as the law "which makes us answerable for all our acts, paying us pain for pain and pleasure for pleasure in proportion to the pain and pleasure we cause to other creatures." But undoubtedly the most vivid and instructive tale is "A Nail-Paring", in which a tailor is depicted as continually cutting his fingernails, an act which for him has the significance of culling his sins from his soul.

In these tales and in others like "Bread and Wine" Naimy has presented truth disguised as the bizarre. The result is that the sensitive reader soon learns when to discount the fantasy of the plot and when to consider seriously its timeless moral. Speaking generally, all of these stories suggest a dissatisfaction with life as it is and a desire for a life more permanent and significant that only a spiritual reconditioning of the personality can give.

Ultimately "*Till We Meet . . .*" may be regarded as a collection of poetic tales in prose that are fragments of Mikhail Naimy's mystical philosophy. While Naimy writes of the same philosophy of love as Kahlil Gibran, he has none of Gibran's isolated utterances but, instead, has a plot that resembles a folk tale. And all of this is implicit in Naimy's unique literary credo: ". . . art, no matter how highly regarded by its own creator and his fellow-man, is of little value save when translated by its creator and by men into a power capable of leading them from the bounds of a limited existence to the boundlessness of Life—from the man in God to the God in man. And literature, no matter how absorbing, has little meaning except that it is to reveal to us the meaning of Life which is more enduring than the earth, and more lasting than the sky."

John Robert Colombo.

*The Wisdom of Confucius*, Iverson L. Harris (Toronto: The Blavatsky Institute, 1957), forty-five pages, twenty-five cents.

A frequent contributor to *The Canadian Theosophist*, Mr. Iverson Harris has published one of his longer studies in booklet form. Printed on good paper with a soft coloured cover, *The Wisdom of Confucius* is actually an off-print of his popular article of the same name which appeared in the two previous issues of *The Canadian Theosophist*.

Mr. Harris' analysis of the half-legendary figure of Confucius—the Chinese sage who lived five hundred years before Christ and who "kept silent as to the Silence"—presents the reader with an outline of this religious philosopher's life and a discussion of some of his main ethical principles, all reinforced with a large number of references. The result is that *The Wisdom of Confucius* often reads like an extended commentary on quotations, although Mr. Harris' "verbal bridges" evaluate much significant information.

One aspect of Confucian thought that is usually overlooked but which is dealt with by Mr. Harris in a most perceptive manner concerns the nature of this Chinese religious leader's status. Confucius is regarded as a national hero, "a transmitter, not a maker, one who loved and believed in the ancients." Admitting his debt to modern scholars, Harris traces this essentially Chinese concept to the present day, compares and contrasts it with related systems and then places it beside quotations from such writers as H. P. Blavatsky.

While the author of *The Wisdom of Confucius* admits that Confucius will always appear to be an enigmatic figure and his teachings somewhat obscure, Mr. Harris insists that Confucianism is a philosophy of life which has much to offer to the western mind. It is further



implied by Mr. Harris' study that when Confucius stressed a return to tradition, a following of the middle way, he was actually suggesting a return to the "universal order" about which he, like the Buddha, refused to speculate.

J.R.C.

## THEOSOPHY A DOCTRINE OF RELATIONSHIPS

(Continued from page 125)

sport, and so on, which do worry a certain percentage of mankind, both within and without our society. The exponents of Theosophy try to present a picture, try to show us how life works out, and we as self responsible beings have to make up our own minds what to do about it. Just as we in our lower aspect, passed through the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, so later on we passed through the animal kingdom, having evolved in that kingdom to some extent, the principle of Kama or desire. The animals feel far more than the units of the vegetable kingdom do, and their impressions are stronger. They are working towards the human kingdom and we often speak of our domestic animals as nearly human. Now most of us know that the door into the human kingdom, with one exception, is shut, which simply means that no animal now living can enter the human kingdom for ages to come. They will, however, do so in the far future, and the impressions they have received in their journey through the animal kingdom will help or handicap them, when that time comes. If we, by our actions, fill them with fear and distrust we are making their future path through the human kingdom more difficult, and I imagine we shall have to pay for that. I often wonder if some of our own unexplained fears and feelings of nervousness might not hark back to our experiences in this kingdom.

Many years ago we stayed at a camp at Minaki, which had been uninhabited for some years and we had great pleasure in watching the wild animals for they were less timid there than usual. I remember, for instance, a mother grouse with her young even walking in at the cottage door and solemnly parading round the verandah. Then one year hunters came, and we had that pleasure no more.

There is a short passage in Joan Grant's *Winged Pharoah* which seems to fit in here. It reads:—(and it is referring to life in earlier root races) "In those early days all living things knew of their kinship, and on a cold night a little hare would lie down for warmth against a mighty lion, and men were grateful to the plants and trees that sheltered them, and gave them of their fruits. For in those vanished days, when Earth was young, none had forgotten their Creator." Personally I think it will be a happy time in evolution when understanding and trust are established once more between all the kingdoms of nature. Meanwhile let us be thankful for those people who do give their lives to the amelioration of the lot of animals and for a man like Walt Disney who in such pictures as *Bambi* arouses our sympathy for them. I always feel that these people will reap a rich and happy karma.

Now if it is important to re-establish understanding and trust between human and animal kingdoms it is certainly important to establish these things between members of the human race. We are all travelling the same journey towards the same high mountain top, and although some are approaching it and some are still far away, and although we may approach the mountain top by different paths, our fates are linked together. Let one stumble and all are hindered. Let one climb over a steep piece of rock with

steadfast feet, and all are helped. We might imagine a single false note spoiling the harmony of a beautiful symphony.

Now many people are in a sense making this journey unconsciously, but we who are beginning to see a pattern in life, have, I think, added responsibility. In our Western world the glamorous and the materially successful are among those who attract a great deal of attention, and I am sure that to become, say a movie star, or to be a success at anything, must require certain qualities, but any success on this journey we are speaking of, requires qualities of a different kind. We seek to reduce our personalities to second place, to make them channels for a higher life. We are trying, however feebly and faintly, to shift our viewpoint from the personal to the impersonal, and I think there is one way that we can help each other and so the world in general, to start making this change, and that is to observe, appreciate, and look with understanding on those qualities which we see in the truly great, and which we do find less perfectly in our fellow man, such qualities as humility, the ability to judge of a thing without any personal bias, a steadfastness which can stand unmoved in both success and failure, a generous attitude towards our fellow beings, one pointedness and so on. Let us remember always, and repeat to ourselves often, that life is one.

Books could be written on man's relationship to man, and most of us know what this should be, however much we fail to put into practice what we know, so let us take another relationship, the relationship of Theosophy to the various religions.

Now, the Theosophical story is something like this, that as soon as man on this planet was endowed with mind, great Beings from various cycles of evolution, more evolved than ours, came

to this earth, came to instruct and strike the key note for the coming race of men. They then handed on their knowledge to those destined to guide the children of Earth. This was the Wisdom religion, known by the few throughout the ages and taught in secret. It is now known as Theosophy and some of its tenets, for the first time, are taught publicly. These messengers or great ones have incarnated from time to time, and have founded the various religions, giving to the people as much of the teachings as were fitted to their state of evolution, while still keeping their esoteric teachings for the few. These messengers, unlike their followers, could not be antagonistic to each other, for they belonged to the same great Lodge and their aims were identical.

It has sometimes been said that Theosophists are opposed to the religions, but a more truthful statement would be that many clergy and priests, with some notable exceptions, are opposed to Theosophy. We could not be opposed to the teachings of the Religious founders, for Madame Blavatsky herself a messenger and the founder of Modern Theosophy, drew her inspiration and knowledge from the same source as they did. I think also that the opposition of the clergy comes in most cases from a misunderstanding of our teachings, for I heard a sermon once, the object of which was to "expose" theosophy, and the representation was so completely false that had it not been labelled Theosophy I would hardly have known what this clergyman was talking about except that some time was given to running down Madame Blavatsky and, to a lesser extent, Mrs. Besant. However, there were only two or three of us in the audience who knew anything at all about the subject, so the sermon went down very well.

We have spoken of Theosophy as a key and there are many people in our

society who have a strong leaning towards one or other of the great religions. One sometimes hears them called Christian Theosophists, or Theosophists who if they had to choose between religions would say they had a leaning towards Buddhism or Hinduism and so on. In such cases they use the Theosophical key and so have a deeper understanding of the Faith that appeals to them most. There are others who seek God or Truth in other ways, and no antagonism between these various people is felt, because they know that God is to be found everywhere. Like the sphinx, as we grow in knowledge our eyes will be turned more and more constantly inwards, for there above all, Truth can be found.

What Theosophy, or rather Theosophists, do oppose in religion is orthodoxy, certain ideas that have grown up among various sects long after the original teachings have been given and which we feel to be untrue. Let us take an example. Somewhere in the Church of England prayer book is a passage in which the congregation declares that they are "miserable sinners with no health in us". Now no member of the Theosophical Society would subscribe to that. Apart from the fact that the constant reiteration of such a thought would have a bad effect on the person repeating it, the Theosophist believes that we are growing, however slowly, towards the Godlike state, and that it is far better to try and live up to that than to proclaim oneself a miserable sinner. He points to the fact that Jesus is reported to have said, "Ye are gods".

Our Teachers, and we ourselves, do oppose certain interpretations of religion but never the founders of religions or true religion itself. We feel too that as time goes on crystallization may creep into our own teachings unless we are constantly on guard.

Here is something we have to remember regarding all relationships and that is that what we get out of any relationship depends entirely on ourselves. People all over the world are meeting similar circumstances and they respond in their own individual but different ways. To some, trouble brings understanding, to others bitterness. To some disappointment is overwhelming — to others it is a challenge. To some a garden means utility, to others beauty, while others perhaps combining these two may see in it the mysterious workings of nature where many lessons may be learned. Two people see a play. To one it is just a story, to the other a symbol. Two people come across the teachings of Theosophy. To one it is an interesting hypothesis, to another something familiar he has known before, and something which gives the key to understanding.

We stand at different points in evolution, so naturally our reactions to life will be different, but if the teachings of Theosophy mean anything to us at all, they should inspire in us a profound wonder and interest in the mysteries of life. We take so much for granted, our scope of interest is so very limited that those things from which we could learn so much simply pass us by, for most of us are lacking in the quality of awareness. We can well understand, if we think this way why one of our Teachers said that we should cultivate the mind of a child, for a child wants to know the reasons for things and asks questions. Take man himself, or even just the physical body of man. It has taken untold ages to reach its present state, and to produce it and its field of evolution countless beings of all types and grades have worked and planned. The scientific explanation of this wonder goes back only a short length of time compared to the Theosophical one, yet we rarely wonder about these things.

To the Theosophist, or would be Theosophist for that is what we really are, nothing is unimportant. It is not the importance of the thing itself, but that of which that thing or event is an expression. So many people are interested in what are supposed to be extraordinary miracles, that they do not notice the ordinary ones that surround them. The growth of a giant tree from a small seed is really a miracle, and so is man, though perhaps mystery is a better word.

You hear people say, "That tree is strong because it has had to withstand wind and storm and so has had to thrust its roots deep down in the soil", but the remark you hear most often is, "No plant or tree, except the very few, can grow without plenty of light". Is not this true of us? We must have room and time to grow, even to make mistakes. We must have hardships to strengthen our characters, and times of happiness to make us feel the journey worth while, to make us seek for that essential harmony which we feel to be the ultimate goal. We must have human affection to warm us and beauty to arouse our will to create, but above all we the man plants of this universe, must be drawn upwards by the light of the spirit.

### THE MAHATMA

A Mahatma is a personage, who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge, which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of reincarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go, in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature and thus bring on their own annihilation. This

process of the self-evolution of the Mahatma extends over a number of 'incarnations', although comparatively speaking they are very few. Now, what is it that incarnates? The occult doctrine, so far as it is given out, shows that the first three principles (counting from the lowest) die more or less with what is called the physical death. The fourth principle, together with the lower portions of the fifth (i.e. Manas), in which reside the animal propensities, has *Kama-Loka* for its abode, where it suffers the throes of disintegration in proportion to the intensity of those lower desires; while it is the higher Manas, *the pure man*, which is associated with the sixth and the seventh principles, that goes into *Devachan* to enjoy there the effects of its good *Karma*, and then to be reincarnated as a higher individuality.

Now, an entity that is passing through the occult training in its successive births, gradually has less and less (in each incarnation) of that lower *Manas*, until there arrives a time when its *whole Manas*, being of an entirely elevated character, is centred in the higher individuality, when such a person may be said to have become a Mahatma. At the time of his physical death, all the lower four principles perish without any suffering, for these are, in fact, to him like a piece of wearing apparel which he puts on and off at will. The real Mahatma is then not his physical body but that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the *Atma* and its vehicle (the sixth principle, *Buddhi*)—a union effected by him in a comparatively very short period by passing through the process of self-evolution laid down by the Occult Philosophy . . .

H. P. B.,

*The Theosophist*, July, 1884.

# REAL KNOWLEDGE

BY DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR

The important question: What is Real Knowledge? should be answered. Many people confound physical seeing with knowledge. They do not think deeply enough to discover that one may see a thing and not know it, while he may know a thing and yet not see it.

True perception is true knowledge. Perception is the capacity of the soul; it is the sight of the higher intelligence whose vision never errs. And that can be best exercised in true serenity of mind, as Mahatma K. H. observes: 'It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that visions gathered from the invisible, find a representation in the visible world'. In short—as the Hindu allegory has it—'It is in the dead of night that *Krishna* is born'.

In Occultism, *Krishna* represents the Christ Principle; the *Atma* of the Vedantins, or the seventh principle; the Logos of the Christians—the Divine Spirit, who is the manifested Son of the unmanifested Father. In the dead of night, that is, when there is complete physical and mental rest, when there is perfect quiet and peace of mind, it is only then that the individuality of man—his higher nature—becomes a fit vehicle for the manifestation of *The Word*. This is what is meant in the Bible where it says that we must try to obtain 'redemption through Christ'. The Divine Principle in man is indivisible: the human soul is universal. He who would live and enjoy eternal life must live in and unite the human soul with the Divine Principle. Therefore, a sense of personal isolation brings on *death* and annihilation, while genuine unselfish philanthropy places the individual in touch with the Divine Spirit, and thus gives him eternal life. The

Divine Spirit is all-pervading, and those who put themselves *en rapport* with the Divine Spirit are necessarily *en rapport* with all other entities who are also *en rapport* with it. Hence, the Mahatmas, who are conscious of the Logos, are in constant magnetic relation to those who succeed in extricating themselves from the lower animal nature; and, by evolving the higher manas (the mind, the fifth principle of the occultist), to unite it permanently with buddhi and atma, the sixth and the seventh principles mentioned in the occult doctrine. It is by this means that the Mahatmas must first be known. What is a Mahatma? Is it his physical body? NO! The physical must perish, sooner or later. But the Mahatma lives in his higher individuality and, to know him truly, he must be known through that individuality in which he is centered. The body is merely a fulcrum of the lever through which physical results have to be produced. But, for him, the body is like a house. He inhabits it so long as it serves his purpose.

Knowledge increases in proportion to its use. That is to say, the more we teach, the more we learn. In the same manner, the more that an organ is exercised, the greater is its functional activity increased; provided, of course, that too much is not expected of it at once. So also is the will strengthened, the more it is exercised; and the more one meets with temptations—which can only be possible if he lives with his companions—the greater opportunities has he of exercising and thereby strengthening the will. In this process, there does come a time when the constitution of one is so changed as to incapacitate him for work on the physical plane. He must then work upon it, through higher

planes into which he must retire. But until that time arrives he must be with humanity, and unselfishly work for their real progress and advancement. This alone can bring true happiness.

*"The Word",*  
October 21, 1904.

## KARMA AND ACCIDENTS

*(Continued from page 127)*

stay in the warm house until the last possible moment. One of the choirmen had become engrossed in the writing of an important letter; another was delayed because he had to attend to his two small boys in the absence of his wife. And so on; seventeen persons would have been in the church at the time of the disaster and all would doubtless have been killed except for the seemingly trivial causes which delayed them.

It was subsequently found that the accident was not caused by any carelessness on the part of the minister in lighting the furnace; gas had leaked into the church under the frozen soil from a gas main outside and had been ignited by the fire in the furnace. Again the question could be asked, why did these seventeen persons not die. One answer is given in the articles above referred to, "This was an act of God,—which is another way of saying that we do not know, but find satisfaction in ascribing the event to the intervention of an unknown Being. Act of God, chance or the operation of the law of Karma are the three possible answers and if one accepts the concept of Karma, then these seventeen did not die because they were kept from the scene for reasons within their own beings as they had no karmic link with the impending disaster of such a nature that would require them to be its victims.

"Karma", said H.P.B., "guards the good and watches over them in this, as in future lives; . . . and punishes the evil-doer—aye, even to his seventh re-birth—so long, indeed, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the Infinite World of Harmony has not been finally readjusted." (*Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. 704).

"We produce *Causes*, and these awaken the corresponding powers in the Sidereal World, which are magnetically and irresistibly attracted to—and react upon—those who produce such causes; whether such persons are practically the evil-doers, or simply 'thinkers' who brood mischief. For thought is matter . . . every thought, in addition to its physical accompaniment (brain-change) exhibits an objective—though to us supersensuously objective—aspect on the astral plane." (*Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. 149).

Thinking is an act and sets in motion its own chain of cause-effects even though one's thoughts may not be communicated to others. If there is communication then others are directly affected, but H.P.B. has indicated in the above passage that all thoughts, whether communicated or not, become objective on the inner planes. The holy man meditating in his isolated retreat is affecting the Mind common to all men and to which all men have access, as Emerson said. Similarly, the evil thinker, the mischief maker, is projecting on the inner planes disharmonious, baneful and pernicious thought-forms which contribute to the confusion and evil of the world.

Thoughts and feelings are intermingled and it would seem that to the thoughts which become objective on the astral plane, there would be added feel-

ings of resentment, revenge, sensuousness and all the horde of lower feelings and desires of the evil thinker. These too have their karmic effects. Mr. Judge states in the *Aphorisms*, "Three fields of operation are used by each being by Karma: (a) the body and the circumstances; (b) the mind and the intellect; (c) the psychic and astral planes." On all three fields 'accidents' are born.

In our mechanical and complex civilization wherein it is part of our mode of life to be daily in command of machines which multiply enormously the power of an individual, accidental deaths and injuries are numerous. In the home workshop, power tools take their toll of cuts and amputations. Motor car accidents cause thousands of deaths and injuries each year and on a holiday weekend it is not unusual for the casualties to equal those of one of the battles of the late war. Some of the causes may be extraneous to the individual directly concerned, such as mechanical faults and so on, but in the majority of cases, the cause can be attributed to the psychology of the person involved. He is the karma-producer and he sets in motion the wheel of the law.

Karma is not a law which has been imposed upon mankind from without; it is part of our inner nature which is derived from and is indissolubly linked with the whole universe of being. Each man's manner of acting, thinking and feeling affects the universe. Accidents, which occur without any direct intention to produce the effects which come into being, are the results of some man-produced cause and will not cease to be phenomena of our daily lives until thoughts, acts and feelings are purged of selfishness, until man ceases to create mischief and disharmony in his own life and in the lives of others. The race of man has a long history of intermingled karmas and before attempting to judge individual cases, we should remember the wise words of Mr. Judge, "The indissoluble unity of the race demands that we should consider every man's troubles as partly due to ourselves, because we have been always in the race and helped to make the conditions which cause suffering."

D.W.B.

(The quotations from *Venture to the Interior* are used with the consent of the publishers, The Hogarth Press, Ltd., London.)

## INDEX to *The Canadian Theosophist*, Vol. XXXVIII.

PAGE	PAGE		
Annual Election .....	131	Buddhist Society, London .....	39
Baldwin, Laura .....	62	Confucius, The Wisdom of .....	73-80, 101, 106, 110-11, 131
Barr, Dudley W. ....	63, 82, 117-19, 126-129	Convention, The American .....	84-6
Blavatsky, H. P., The Road .....	13, 38	Correspondence .....	13, 86, 132-133
Madame .....	25-30, 40-5, 140	Dalzell, Mrs N. ....	49-54
Writing of <i>The Secret Doctrine</i> .....	68-71	Damodar Mavalankar .....	141
Golden Stairs, The .....	71	Gaunt, Laura .....	97-101
Brotherhood .....	66-7	General Secretary, Notes and Com- ments by .....	10-11, 34-6, 58-9, 83, 109, 130-131
Brook, Hazel .....	66-7	God that Walks Like a Man .....	82
Brotherhood and Theosophical Movement .....	94-5		

## INDEX—Continued

	PAGE		PAGE
Griffith, Mrs. R. H.....	25-30, 40-5, 54, 7, 121-125, 137-140	Candles in the Sun .....	117-19
Hammer and the Anvil .....	14-16	The Theory of Eternal Life .....	134
Harris, Iverson L. ....	73-80, 87-9, 101-106, 110-11	“Till We Meet . . .” .....	134-136
How Shall We Pray? .....	20-3	The Wisdom of Confucius ....	136-137
Kaleidoscope, The .....	62	Road, The .....	13, 38
Karma .....	16-7	Roberts, Sir Chas. G. D., The Mystic .....	6-9
Karma and Accidents ..	126-129, 142-143	Rossetti, Christina .....	86
Letters, Mahatma Trust Library ....	38-9	Row, T. Subba .....	80-1
Mahatma, The .....	140	Rule 10—More on .....	90-3
Masters of Wisdom, The .....	49-54	Secret Doctrine, The Writing of the .....	68-71, 109-10
Morrow, Creating Thy .....	16-7	Sir Gawain and the Green Knight .....	97-101
Obituaries:		Spinks, F. Pierce .....	111-16
Belcher, Mrs. Elizabeth .....	60	Stairs, The Golden .....	71
Harrison, Mr. A. J. ....	11	<i>Theosophical Movement, The,</i> May, 1953 .....	119
Henderson, Miss Mary .....	131	How Shall We Pray? .....	20-3
Kinman, Mrs. Mary .....	107	Theosophical Society, 81st Inter- national Convention, 1956, Presi- dential Report .....	1-5, 17-20
Tallman, Mr. Harry J. ....	107	Theosophical Society in Canada, Executive Meetings of .....	11-13, 36-7, 110
Williams, Mr. Cecil .....	62	General Election .....	37
Occultism, What is .....	80-1	Annual Meeting .....	59-60
Orpheus Lodge .....	14-6, 31-3, 45-7	Standing of the Lodges .....	61
Phoenix Lodge .....	13, 38, 108	Financial Statement .....	61
Pomeroy, Elsie .....	6-9	Theosophical Unity .....	111-16
Prayer .....	20-3	Theosophy, a Doctrine of Relationships .....	121-125, 137-140
Ram, Mr. N. Sri, Presidential Address to 81st In- ternational Convention .....	1-5	Theosophy, Practical, The Hammer and the Anvil .....	14-16
Real Knowledge .....	141	The Truth Seeker .....	31-3, 45-7
Redfern, T. H. ....	90-2	Tiplin, Winifred .....	16-17
Reincarnation		Toronto Lodge .....	64
We Have Been Here Before .....	54-7	Truths, The Three .....	47
Reviews and Notes:		Truth, Seeker, The .....	31-3, 45-7
Opening of the Doors of the Mind .....	63	United Lodge of Theosophists, Annual Letter of the .....	65-6
Have You Lived Other Lives? ....	63-4	Uphill .....	86
Sea Priestess, The .....	64	We Have Been Here Before .....	54-7
Esoteric Philosophy of Love and Marriage .....	64		
Through the Gates of Death .....	64		
An Historian's Approach to Religion .....	87-9		