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## JUSTICE

BY MOLLIE GRIFFITH

If there is one teaching in Theosophy that has both attracted and repelled those who have sought to learn something of these same teachings it is the Theosophical conception of Justice.

People everywhere subscribe to the principle of justice. We want justice in our law courts; we want justice in our political and business life; we want justice between nations; justice for our minority groups, and so on.

We are appalled at flagrant cases of injustice, as for example that meted out to Dreyfus in France, and all of us feel disturbed when our country does anything which we feel to be unjust.

It is this longing for justice that sometimes leads people to Theosophy, for in the light of only one life on earth, they can see no justice in the inequalities of circumstance, opportunity, health and character of the various members of the human race. In the light, however, of reincarnation these differences can be understood and that longed-for sense of justice restored to the human heart. It is not, however, this comforting and compelling aspect of the teaching that I want to dwell on, but on that other aspect which often repels people, at any rate at first sight.

Although it is true that most of us

want justice in the sense just mentioned, do we really want justice for ourselves? We have to be really honest in thinking about this, because the Theosophical ideas of justice are so very far reaching. If we accept them we must accustom ourselves to the idea that whatever happens to us, good, bad or indifferent, is the outcome of our former actions, for there is no such thing as luck or chance in this *scheme* of life. We must go further still and realize that our most secret thoughts and moods, let alone our words and actions, are the building stones on which will be erected the framework of our future lives.

Now it is not easy to accept this, particularly for those of us who have been born in the West, for we have dwelt more on the idea of the forgiveness of sins, than on the saying of the Master Jesus that "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap".

Leaving aside obvious faults, and even vices, let us consider the lesser ones that are so common amongst most of us, in the light of this teaching of perfect justice.

Suppose we are the gloomy, depressing type of person, giving way to our

moods and spreading depression around us. We like to read depressing books, hear depressing stories—we are interested in depressing subjects, not because we intend or perhaps can do anything about them, but just because they have a certain appeal to us. Instead of trying to get rid of this kind of thought, which is entirely negative, we dwell on it, sending it forth into the thought atmosphere, where it mingles with thoughts of a like kind, doing a lot of harm, and finally returning to us, its partial creator, strengthened and more depressing than ever.

What is the result of all this in the light of the Theosophical teachings of justice? First, our health will be affected as everyone now recognizes. Then we shall attract to ourselves things of a gloomy nature, for we have set up certain vibrations which surround us and these vibrations act like a magnet, drawing things of a like nature to us. We have affected other people, making their lives harder, and we have expended our strength on what is useless and harmful, rather than on what is useful and helpful. We have thereby established a vicious circle, for these moods and thoughts result in ill health, and ill health, in turn, causes depression. Therefore, life gives back to us exactly what we have given to life, until we have learned our lesson and begin to raise our thoughts more frequently to a higher level, dwelling on what is constructive and beautiful, and when we do dwell on the darker side of life it is with the intention of throwing our weight against it. This is the only effective method life can use to direct us back to the right path. It is also justice.

Suppose, on the other hand, we are the irritable sort of person. We give way to this irritation on the slightest provocation, annoying and upsetting other people, and never taking time to consider the various reasons from which

irritating situations arise. We, too, send thoughts of a harmful nature into the surrounding atmosphere, where like attracting like, they coalesce with thoughts of the same nature and eventually return to us, their destructive nature possibly accentuated. Once again life applies the same method to show us what we are doing and some day we shall find ourselves in close touch with irritable people who give us no rest. There is one other type of activity along this line, that may seem rather harmless, but is really not so. Those of us with imagination can, when we are discontented with reality, build up mental pictures, where life is what we think we would like it to be. Imagination is a great force. It is the instrument of artists: it is the foundation for all creative work, but when we use it to give ourselves personal satisfaction of a not very high nature, the result may not be at all what we expect. Our dreams may come true, if we dream consistently, for a dream is a seed that must come to fruition, but some of the mental pictures we make when we are discontented with life or people may not be at all what we shall welcome when they materialize at a future date in this or another life. Therefore we must be careful even of our most secret thoughts, for literally they are things, and once again life will give us what we long for, so that we may learn to desire only those things which are of true value and give us lasting satisfaction.

To sum this up, Theosophy teaches us that everything we do, think, desire or say, will have an effect on the world around us and most particularly on ourselves. We shall get back exactly what we give, not as a punishment, but as a practical lesson in discrimination.

There was a very good article in *Sunrise* a few months ago, which some of you may have read, called "Smog". This article pointed out that just as

smog is so physically unpleasant to us on the outer plane, so on the inner planes our thoughts, desires, and moods of the lower mind coalesce and produce a sort of inner smog which affects us all, whether we are conscious of it or not, for we are bathed in this inner smog all the time, unless we rise in thought above it. When we do this we are making a different sort of contribution to the inner world which is as helpful as the other is harmful, but it requires effort to keep for long on the higher levels. It is far easier to allow any kind of thought to wander in and out of our minds. This doctrine repels some people, for while we support the idea of justice in a general way, as mentioned before, we none of us find it so easy to accept it for ourselves or for those we love. As an example of this, I remember a man, who had just heard of this idea for the first time, saying, "Do you mean to tell me that *my* innocent children can be held responsible for what may happen to them in the future?" It was a natural reaction from someone who knew nothing about reincarnation and held the usual orthodox views about life, but it is a little hard to understand why people prefer to believe in blind chance, or luck, which they can do nothing about, rather than law, which we can gradually learn to understand and work with for our own eternal good. The reason probably is that if we accept the law of justice, called in Theosophy, the law of *Karma*, then we have to admit that what we are and what happens to us is the outcome of our own actions in the past, not just some affliction visited on us for no known reason. To admit this does take courage, but before enlarging on this let us look for a minute at the world picture. Here we have much to be thankful for, and much to regret.

On the credit side we find in many countries that much more is done for

those who are now called the underprivileged. We see working conditions improved: we see the sick and the old taken care of—at least far more than in the past. We see nations genuinely trying to work together, and help being given by one nation to another, and although some of these things may have been forced on us by fear and necessity, I still feel there is a great deal of honest and unselfish endeavour to lighten the miseries of humanity.

Not often in history do we see the forces of light clearly arrayed against the forces of darkness, and at present the struggle is made so much worse because of the instruments of destruction we have at our command.

We are accustomed at critical times in history to see in some minor incident the cause of some world conflagration. We say, for instance, that if we had stopped Hitler at various stages in his career, when we had the power, there would have been no world war II; or we say, "had we taken a different attitude towards the civil war in Spain, or the Italians in Ethiopia, there would have been no World War II", and so on.

Perhaps it cannot be denied that certain incidents do contribute to wars or any other world event, but surely the seeds which culminate in these events have come to fruition, not through the acts of one man or a few men, but through the combined thoughts, desires, and acts of the majority of mankind. We know that the greatest men and women could not carry out their ideals and bring them to fruition, were they not supported by others who hold these same ideals, even if only silently in their hearts, and the worst tyrants could do nothing were they unable to arouse tyranny in their followers.

One of the most popular methods resorted to in this age to spread any idea is propaganda. We hear it on the radio, read it in the newspapers, and shall no

doubt see it more and more on television, and this does have the effect sometimes of letting other people do our thinking for us.

A great many of the things we hear about and read about are spectacular things, gossip, tragedies, accidents, cruel actions, and rumours of war. True, we see and hear inspiring, encouraging and educational things, too, but the overall picture is at the present time rather dark. We have to remember, however, that in all countries there are many people, very many people, leading decent, hardworking, kindly, and often courageous lives, and that these people whether they are ever heard of or not, to a large extent influence the history of the world of the future. The reason why *they* are not so often heard of, lies in the fact that we live mostly in our emotions and lower minds, and we like excitement, but as their number grows, (which is one of the aims of the teachers of Theosophy), we shall travel more swiftly along the luminous arc, for we must never underestimate the importance of seemingly small, unselfish acts and thoughts done in a true and constructive spirit. Indeed, we are told that whenever we control the lower forces of our nature by an act of will, we are giving ammunition to those same forces of light, represented by all the truly great of our own humanity, as well as those who have gone even further; ammunition with which to fight these same forces of darkness, represented by the most evil of our own humanity, and those we call the Brothers of the Shadow.

In looking at the world, both at the good and the bad enacted here day by day, we have to realize that any Utopia we long for will take a very long time to materialize, at any rate as we regard time, for daily there are being sown seeds of cruelty, lying, crookedness, ex-

ploitation, and every form of selfishness, and these seeds must come to fruition as those responsible for sowing them reap what they have sown. Happily, there are also being sown seeds of courage, compassion, self-sacrifice, endurance, and every form of unselfishness, and these seeds too will come to fruition. Since there is no one, not even the humblest of us, who cannot, if he will, plant these seeds in profusion, the day will come when beauty will overcome ugliness and we will start to live up to those ideals impressed on the infant human race a very long time ago.

Let us go back to our theme of justice and think what it will mean to us, if we accept the Theosophical idea that not one human being in the world is in reality suffering an injustice. Will it make us hard? Will it stop that flow of sympathy which helps to lighten the world's burdens? If it does, we have not understood the fundamental ideas of Theosophy. If it does, we have forgotten that all life is one, and that we are struggling together towards a common goal where the success of one is the success of all and the failure of one is the failure of all. We are, in fact, so interlinked that we cannot advance alone. We are like the members of an orchestra playing a great composition, where any discord will affect its harmony. So it is with us, for although it is true that some day we can, if we have the tremendous stamina required, graduate from the school of life and pass on to the inner realms, most of us, it is hoped will remain in touch with this world, to help those still struggling, thus joining our forces to those of the great Masters of Compassion. Therefore, our sympathy, understanding and goodwill should be increased a hundred-fold towards our fellow men, and not only to men, but to animals, and all other forms of life. This understanding and goodwill must not take the form of

weak sentiment, but be something that gives courage, confidence and inspiration to those we want to help. We have to remember, too, that life is like a school in which all pupils are at different stages. Therefore, since we are not advanced enough to judge accurately at what stage a person is, and since we do not know the hidden causes of their behaviour, we should be very slow to judge. Rather should we align ourselves with all that is best in our fellow man, thus stimulating that best, while hoping perhaps that other people will perform that same kindly function for us.

In talking to people about Theosophy we may find among them some who seem to have had more than their fair share of human afflictions, for they may be blind or deformed or be subject to continual pain, and obviously you cannot go to these people and simply say that this is justice, that this is their *karman*... These people are inwardly needing light, help and inspiration to enable them to face life, just as all of us are, and even more than all of us are. Therefore, we have to seek to convey this knowledge to them in such a way that they will realize that hard as their path may seem it can lead them swiftly along the path of evolution; for to face pain and frustration with courage is a mighty stimulus to growth. Actually most of us have deformities and blind spots in our inner natures, our lower minds and emotions, and these could perhaps manifest as actual physical imperfections in some future life, if we do not try to rid ourselves of them, for the physical is the last stage of some deep-rooted disharmony. Some of these people have wonderful minds and abilities as they have shown, and when at some future day they come once more to the physical plane with bodies like their minds that are healthy and whole, they will have much to contribute to the

world in general, and the steep hill they climbed may find them ahead of some of us who have wended our way more slowly on a gentler incline.

The beauty of this law of justice is that whenever we make a mistake and suffer for it, life gives us a chance, if we will take it, both to repair the damage we have done and to learn a valuable lesson which will not only help us, but others as well, for we gain in sympathy and understanding. This sympathy and understanding will lead us on towards wisdom and compassion, those qualities personified in their perfection by those whom we know and reverence as the Masters of Compassion.

It is really a reflection on any of us, a reflection on our understanding, when we wish ill to members of the human race and enjoy hearing ill-spoken of them, however much they may have upset us personally, for although we must obviously condemn certain actions of certain people, all of them are our fellow travellers, treading the self same path. Although it is true that some do fall permanently out of the race because of their continued and absolute attraction to matter, their numbers are very few. The numbers of us, who, to put it in ordinary human language, fail to pass our tests at certain critical periods is far greater, and although this does not imply final failure, it does imply an enormous waste of time, as we regard it, and is certainly not to be desired.

Now I do not think, and as always it must be remembered that when anyone gives a paper or talk on Theosophy it is merely his or her limited interpretation of this great subject, I do not think that Theosophy is for those who are merely seeking for comfort. To me it is for those who are seeking Truth: for those are trying to become self-reliant: for those who may not be very brave

but who are seeking to become so. It is for those who may still be selfish and personal, but who want to become unselfish and finally impersonal: for those who may have been just drifting, but who now want to follow a charted course. It is also for those who have seriously broken nature's laws but who now seek to repair the damage, pay off their debts, and take the Path which ever leads inward, but it is not, in my opinion, for those who seek short cuts and an easy way out for they will find no satisfaction in this doctrine, nor is it for those who seek personal aggrandizement in any sense. Of course, actually it is for all people without exception since it is the fundamental explanation of life, but what I mean is that it will not appeal to any of us until we start to search for something beyond the personal. When Winston Churchill during the war promised nothing but "blood, sweat and tears," he aroused a quality in the British people that brought them victory. It is this same quality that Theosophy tries to arouse in us while fighting in a still greater war.

Theosophy is like pure, crisp mountain air. It stimulates us arousing us to effort and ceaseless vigilance. It does not remove our worries and fears, but shows us the reason for them and how to remove them. It points to the fact that we are self-conscious beings, creating our own destiny and since this destiny is to become Godlike beings, if we run the race successfully, we must be prepared to sacrifice all those things about us that are mean and petty, those things which cannot live on the spiritual planes. That leads us to that subject, usually mentioned in our Theosophical teachings, the teaching of justice in those conditions in which we find ourselves when we pass through the portals of death. We are taught that man is a composite Being, which means that

while the sense of "I am" remains with him always, he can focus his consciousness on many different levels and he builds bodies or produces bodies for himself on these different levels, or at least on the lower ones so that he can function thereon. We could not, for instance, contact the physical plane had we not physical bodies with their various senses with which to contact it.

The process of Death consists mostly of discarding our lower bodies, whilst we recede inward to the more spiritual levels, but the kind of life we have lived determines how quickly we can reach our goal, called by some the Heaven world, and some *Devachan*. We discard our physical bodies with their etheric counterpart and the life force called *prana* fairly quickly, but where our consciousness may be held for a shorter or longer time is on the plane of desire or *Kama Loka*, for it is from this plane that a good proportion of our impulses during earth life come.

We are told that some people pass unconsciously through this plane of Desire called *Kama Loka* and reach that state of consciousness called *Devachan* in what seems to them no time at all, but these people are rare and there are two factors that contribute to this more speedy journey, one that they have had unusual self control during life, their interests being of a high and selfless calibre, and the other that they have lived to a ripe old age when desire has burnt itself out.

However, many of us, I imagine, will be held in *Kama Loka* for a shorter or longer time, not in any sense as a punishment, but because we have entangled ourselves to some extent in lower forms of activity and it takes time to withdraw from them. It is something like the process of digestion. If we eat what is good for us, we are unconscious of this process, but if we do not we suffer great discomfort.

This, too, is nature's way of teaching us discrimination.

To sum up this idea, we have to realize that at death the component parts of this being we call man break up the atoms of the lower principles, or bodies, which go to build up the lower kingdoms of nature, while the higher principles wing their way to the divine spiritual realms where it is the individuality's destiny to join them when purification is complete.

The desire body, which is a mere shell by that time, slowly disintegrates, for death really consists of shedding the bodies we have used to enable us to function on the outer planes and withdrawing to the inner planes. I think there is a great lesson for us all in this, for it shows us that we can here and now refine our desire bodies so that they do not impede our passage to the higher and more spiritual realms, when our time shall come. We can use our will power to do this when we are here, but when once the silver cord is broken and we have left this plane, the plane of causes, and find ourselves in the plane of effects, we have not the same opportunity. We must never forget that there is no outside Being, meting out punishment to us. There are simply laws of life which we can gradually learn to know, understand, and live by, if we desire true happiness or harmony. What a pity it is that we are not aware, or so constantly forget the tremendous chances offered us by a life on earth, for when once it is over it will be a long time before such a chance occurs again. Instead of realizing this we so often seek the comfortable, easy, enjoyable way of life which lulls us to sleep and makes us temporarily incapable of rising to more spiritual levels. Happily nature does not permit this for long.

Let us suppose that we accept the Theosophical conception of Justice, which we call the law of *Karman*, what

should our attitude be towards our future life or lives? Life is a school to which we have come over and over again. We have probably made many mistakes in our past lives as we have most of us done in our present lives, for it is not only our acts which we are considering, but our thoughts, desires, motives, and moods as well. Beyond even this it is not only what are called our sins of commission which count, but also our sins of omission.

Let us concede then that as most of us are average people we shall have both pain and joy to meet as we gradually wend our way on our homeward journey. People sometimes try and think out plans by which they can counterbalance the disharmony they have caused, and thus save themselves pain, and although possibly something can be done along this line, I feel it is better to say to ourselves that we will accept the difficult and perhaps even tragic circumstances that may meet us in life and try to discharge our debts as generously and courageously as we can; for although this is a truly hard thing to do we are at our centre spiritual beings and can draw strength from that source. We can also set before ourselves the ideal of service not only to our fellow beings but to the kingdoms below man. In this way what happens to us personally will not throw us off our balance so much, rather we shall begin to recognize these happenings as special problems for us to solve in such a way that light will come out of darkness.

If we can learn to be detached even in small things we shall be able to pay our debts to life without resentment, and that will leave us free to follow our inner ideals for although this is exceedingly difficult to do we should remember the heights towards which we struggle.

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# THE OCCULT BACKGROUND IN WAGNER'S 'NIBELUNGEN'

BY I. S. SCHNEIDER

Because of his geographical position as well as his unusual capacity of mind to assimilate impressions, the German artist was able to receive and use Greek, French, Italian, and English influences. But he longed for an original form of expression born of innermost want and desire and found this in the incomparable German Drama. Richard Wagner, the last-born of Germany's really Great Ones, was its creator and he shaped a synthesis between the poets of the word and the poets of music, evolving a new dramatic form, 'The Word-tone Drama', as the Germans say.

From the occult standpoint it is interesting to observe that Wagner's life consists of two symmetrical halves. Exactly 35 years after his birth and 35 years before his death a decisive turning point occurred in his life affecting the external as well as the internal man. Until that time he lived as an ordinary member of human society occupying successive positions as an orchestra leader. In 1849 he was expelled from Germany on account of politically dangerous ideas. He wrote then, "Resolutely I turn my back to the world to which in my innermost being I do not belong anymore". In order to express his creative art and "release the demon of creative energy that lived inside him, struggling, clawing, scratching"\*, he had to stand apart from the world. The period of the conscious creative Will was dawning. "I had to clean up a whole life behind me," wrote Wagner in 1850 to Liszt.

In this respect he belonged to those individuals who, at the hemicycle of life, experience occasional illuminations and

attainments of a broader consciousness which for the time being render them utterly unfit for meeting the practical conditions of life. During the time of this intense creative activity he was in continuous material want and demanded and received help from supporting friends, protectors, and admirers without accepting the slightest degree of responsibility. As to the "endless procession of women in his life" the student of occultism knows how the upper and higher stands in mutual relationship with the lower and more animal. The higher creative force cannot be aroused without raising to an equal degree the alter ego of the same force on the terrestrial plane. Students of occultism must learn to control both aspects of this force. Surely 'the sickly body with the bad nerves' which contained the creative genius of Wagner could not have been a good vehicle to work with and certainly he did not succeed in transmuting the force of the lower into spiritual gold. The imbalance of the composer is reflected in the ecstatic and often irresponsible states of consciousness frequently induced in the auditors of the Music of the Walkuries or Isolde's 'Liebestode'. Perhaps the most notable example of this was Hitler—Wagner's operas became a ritual for the Nazi elite.

About the time of this greater awakening of consciousness occurred one of the most important events in Wagner's life; he became acquainted with the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer. Under Wagner's feet there had been no firm foundation of a true metaphysics and there had been no mystical heaven of religion above him. Schopenhauer,

\* Deems Taylor.



the exponent of Kant, gave him both. "It came into my loneliness like a gift from heaven" wrote Wagner to Liszt in that Spring of 1854. Supporting himself upon this foundation he achieved the security of the individual who has experienced the last ripening of complete harmony within himself. How the creative inspiration worked in him is set forth in the following passage in his autobiography:

"... I stretched myself, dead tired, on a hard couch awaiting the long desired hour of sleep. It did not come but I fell into a kind of somnolent state in which I suddenly felt as though I were sinking in swiftly flowing water. The rushing sound formed itself in my brain into a musical sound, the chord of E flat major which continually re-echoed in broken forms; those broken chords seemed to be melodic passages of increasing motion yet the pure triad of E flat major never changed but seemed by its continuance to impart infinite significance to the element in which I was sinking. I awoke in sudden terror from my doze feeling as though the waves were rushing high above my head. I at once recognized that the orchestral overture to the 'Rheingold' which must have long lain latent within me, though it had been unable to find definite form, had at last been revealed to me. I then quickly realized my own nature; the stream of life was not to flow to me from without but *from within*. I decided to return to Zurich immediately and begin the composition of my great poem."

It was when he had finished a fair copy of the Rheingold score that he came across Schopenhauer's book '*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*' (The World as Will and Imagination). Wagner wrote in this regard:

"What fascinated me so enormously about Schopenhauer's work was not only its extraordinary fate but the clearness and manly precision with which the most difficult metaphysical problems were treated from the very beginning. Like every man who is passionately thrilled with life I, too, sought first for the conclusions of Schopenhauer's system. With its æsthetic side I was perfectly content and was especially astonished at his noble conception of music, but on the other hand the final summing-up regarding morals alarmed me as indeed it would have startled anyone in my mood for here the annihilation of the Will and complete abnegation are represented as the sole true and final deliverance from the bonds of individual limitation in estimating and facing the world, which are now clearly felt for the first time. For those who hoped to find some philosophical justification for political and social agitation on behalf of so-called 'individual freedom' there was certainly no support to be found here where all that was demanded was absolute renunciation of all such methods of satisfying the claims of personality. At first I naturally found these ideas by no means palatable and felt I could not readily abandon that so-called 'cheerful Greek aspect' of the world with which I had looked out upon life in my '*Kunstwerk der Zukunft*' (Art Work of the Future). As a matter of fact it was Herwegh who at last by a well-timed explanation brought me to a calmer frame of mind about my own sensitive feelings. It is from this perception of the nullity of the visible world—so he said—that all tragedy is derived and such a perception must necessarily have dwelt as an intuition in every great poet and even in every great man. On looking afresh into

my Nibelungen Poem I recognized with surprise that the very things that now so embarrassed me theoretically had long been familiar to me in my own poetical conception. Now at last I could understand my Wotan and I returned with chastened mind to the renewed study of his book. I had learned to recognize that my first essential task was to understand the first part, namely, the exposition and enlarging of Kant's doctrine of the ideality of that world which had hitherto seemed to us so solidly founded in time and space and I believed I had taken the first step towards such an understanding by recognizing its enormous difficulty. For many years afterwards the book never left me and by the summer of the following year I had already studied the whole of it for the fourth time. The effect so gradually wrought upon me was extraordinary and certainly exerted a decisive influence on the whole course of my life."

But Wagner's philosophy, especially his appreciation of Schopenhauer, is only one link in a chain. It formed the basis of the writing on a doctrine for the regeneration of humanity to which he dedicated the last years of his life. Yet in Wagner's consciousness dwelt, all at the same time, metaphysical negation, practical affirmation and religious belief. His optimistic doctrine of a practical regeneration of man side by side with a pessimistic philosophy, running, so to speak, *basso continuo*, is somewhat difficult to understand. Absolute negation and art are incompatible. Schiller thought that only through art can man return to nature and Wagner based his hope upon a regeneration through the immense power of an ideal art, not the unartistic, immoral culture of his time.

Artistic creation presumes an optim-

istic mind, an inexhaustible force of desire, of faith, and hope. The artistic Seer cannot be satisfied to find the world bad. He is a proof that the world is beautiful. And this beauty cannot become real outside this world. The philosopher may not be in need of other men, he may retire into the forest, into the 'ivory tower', but the artist is dependent upon others as upon an element of life. Therefore, although the doctrine of negation has in the East produced one great Spiritual Ego after the other, it cannot produce a great artist in the Western sense.

It is therefore wise not to mix Wagner's art and philosophy too seriously. Schopenhauer's metaphysical view of life was for Wagner not an end in itself but a basis for his spiritual life. In this sense this philosophy of renunciation proved very stimulating to Wagner's artistic production. The music to the Walkure, the idea of Tristan, the figure of Parsifal were created at this period, that is, in the year 1854, although *Der Fliegende Hollander*, *Tannhauser*, *Lohengrin* and *Der Ring der Nibelungen* in which the philosophy of renunciation is also met were created before his acquaintance with Schopenhauer. Especially is this evident in the *Fliegende Hollander* in which both heroes solemnly renounce life, the one through suffering, the other through intuitive compassion. In the *Nibelungen* we see through the whole action the struggle in the heart of Wotan between realization and desire. In this epic of the thirteenth century and in the translations from the Nordic, Icelandic and Norwegian folklore we have the Odyssey of the North. The whole drama centers around the possession of the Ring, the symbol of World Power. Out of the tragic love of Wotan's children, Siegmund and Sieglinde, is born Sieg-

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

There has been much activity around headquarters since the last issue of the magazine. The long-looked for visit of the President has come and gone. This I have dealt with separately.

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I regret the demise of one of our older members in the person of Mrs. Gertrude Lawrence who passed away in June after prolonged inactivity due to illness which was borne with great fortitude and patience, solaced by her devotion to our teachings. A beautiful service was conducted at the Crematorium by Mr. Dudley Barr. Our deep sympathy is extended to members of the family in their irreparable loss.

I also deeply regret the passing of another member of long standing, Mr. Frank Sutherland whose record of service appears elsewhere in this issue.

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Dr. Alvin B. Kuhn made his usual annual visit which extended over a week when he gave a series of talks which were well attended. He also visited Montreal and spoke to the lodge there and aroused quite a deal of interest in that city. Mr. Sam Wylie, of Ann Arbor, Mich., was a welcome visitor also and gave one of his inimitable talks which was greatly appreciated.

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My visit to Montreal was very successful; here is the notice sent in by the Lodge:—"On May 1st and 2nd the members of the Montreal Lodge enjoyed one of Col. Thomson's all too infrequent visits to our city. The first evening was spent in addressing the lodge members on the many aspects and problems that arise in administration of lodges and of the General Secretary's office was discussed. The following evening Col. Thomson delivered an absorbing lecture on The Great Pyramid at the Mechanics

Institute. A good crowd was in attendance and was well rewarded by an extremely interesting talk on the purpose and history of that intriguing edifice of Ancient Egypt. The time passed all too quickly, but we are happy to have the Colonel's promise of a longer visit in September to give a series of lectures. This will give a good impetus to the Fall season. Our thanks and best wishes to Col. Thomson and we hope that we shall see him again soon."

I also visited and spoke to the Hamilton and Phoenix Lodges and was very happy to note the signs of activity and interest displayed in both centres.

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One of our members, Major Conn Smythe recently won the Queen's Plate, the blue ribbon of the turf, at the Woodbine. A great honour in the racing world. We offer our congratulations.

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It is with much pleasure I welcome the following new members into the Society:—Mrs. Constance Shepherd and Mr. Daniel Evans, both of the Phoenix Lodge, Hamilton.

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In my forthcoming visit to Convention at Olcott, I anticipate seeing quite a few of our members and I know we shall have a fruitful and pleasant time.

E. L. T.

## THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT

Mr. Sri Ram arrived in Toronto by plane from Chicago on Tuesday, June 17. On the following evening he was welcomed at the Theosophical Hall and on ascending the platform was accorded an ovation from a large audience. That great interest aroused by his presence in the city was evinced by the fact that members came long distances to be present. Groups arrived from Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton and Kitchener, and

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many stayed on for the period of the visit in order to hear both of his lectures.

The President's discourse on "The Message of Theosophy to Modern Living" was a learned and intensely interesting exposition of the Teachings as applied to conditions existing to-day. He was listened to with rapt attention and at the close answered the many questions put to him. As many of our members wished to meet him personally, a social affair was arranged at the close of the meeting thus bringing him into contact with his admirers. On Thursday the General Executive entertained him and his secretary, Miss Elithe Neiswanger, at a luncheon at the Royal York Hotel, where ten persons

partook of an informal repast which was of a very happy nature.

At the lecture on the following night another large audience greeted Mr. Sri Ram when he spoke on "Creative Living". The platform was decorated with bouquets of flowers and suitable music preceded the lecture. Again there was no doubt of the pleasure of the audience in listening to the speaker. His quiet exposition of the subject, and his utter sincerity were much appreciated and made a deep impression. The Chairman, in his closing remarks, expressed the inspiration aroused by the President's visit, and his reference to the aura of good-will, sincerity and pleasure that pervaded the hall, seemingly expressed the feelings of the audience judging by the persistent applause that called Mr. Sri Ram to his feet several times. There is no doubt that his gracious personality, deep sincerity and wide vision has endeared him to us all. Thus closes a memorable visit.

E. L. T.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,

*The Canadian Theosophist.*

Dear Sir,

I wonder if you would comment from the Theosophical point of view on the enormous increase that is now taking place in the world's human population.

If Theosophical theories are correct, then as the world's population increases, the population of the Kamalokic and Devachanic planes, must be decreasing in the same proportion.

Madame Blavatsky has stated that although the number of egos is enormous, yet there is a definite limit to this number. I believe it is also a Theosophical doctrine that no animals can advance to the human stage in this round. Many centuries ago the populations of certain areas, such as Mesopotamia, Peru, Central America and elsewhere,

were probably much greater than at present, but nevertheless since censuses have been taken, the population has increased and is increasing enormously.

Some of the increase can be accounted for by the increase in the average length of life, but this hardly begins to account for all this huge influx of human egos.

Yours truly,  
T. B. G. Burch.

Mr. Sinnett raised a somewhat similar question with the Master K. H. in 1882—"Is there any way of accounting for what seems to be the curious rush of human progress within the last two thousand years?" The answer is given on pages 149-50 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* beginning with the words, "The latter end of a very important cycle." The question dealt with conditions, not population, but the answer gives some thoughts on this also.

This question of the increase in population must be in the ether as two other persons have raised the point recently. Have any of our readers any thoughts on the subject, or have any made any calculations as to the number of egos connected with earth?

#### MR. W. FRANK SUTHERLAND

It is with deep regret that we record the death on June 9, 1958, of Mr. W. Frank Sutherland of Toronto Lodge. Mr. Sutherland joined the Society in 1927 and brought to his Theosophical studies a mind of extraordinary capacity, well trained in science and philosophy, while at the same time possessing an intuitive capacity which fully appreciated the mystical and occult values of basic Theosophical literature.

Mr. Sutherland made many contributions to Theosophy through his lectures, his articles in *The Canadian Theosophist* and through informal talks with his many friends. He first contributed

to the magazine when the late Mr. F. B. Housser was the editor of the section "Theosophy and the Modern World". After the death of Mr. Housser in 1936, Mr. Sutherland edited the section for many years, writing a number of the articles himself. He later continued to contribute articles, notably several on Greek and early Christian thought which attracted much attention.

Mr. Sutherland was in poor health for several years before his death, but his interest in his studies was maintained and his mind was keen and alert until the end.

A Theosophical funeral service was held in St. James Crematorium on Wednesday, June 11.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Mrs. Sutherland and to their daughter Lois, Mrs. J. Birkenshaw.

#### MRS. W. A. PRATT

The sudden death of Mrs. Mary Ann (Winifred) Pratt on July 2 came as a shock to her family and many friends, and removed a link with the very early days of the Toronto Lodge. Mrs. Pratt's father joined the Society after meeting Mr. A. E. S. Smythe on the ship to Canada and Mrs. Pratt, as a child, often walked with her father to the first meeting place on Yonge St. Later she became a member and a very active worker in the Library and Lotus Circle. Mrs. Pratt was also a member of the Theosophical Society in New York of which Mr. Charles Johnson was the head. Her daughter Goldie (Mrs. D. H. C. Woodall) is now a member of, and an active worker in the Lodge and is thus a third generation Theosophist.

A Theosophical funeral service, followed by cremation, was held on July 4.

To Mr. and Mrs. Woodall, Mr. Bertram J. Pratt and to other members of the family we extend our deepest sympathy.

## A HISTORICAL MEETING

An event of great significance, Theosophically, took place quietly in Los Angeles on May 12, 1958, when a joint meeting was held between two prominent members of the United Lodge of Theosophists, Mr. Sri Ram, President of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, and Mr. F. Pierce Spinks of San Francisco.

So far as we are aware, this is the first time that such a meeting has been held. Let us hope that it is indicative of the coming of the time when the old barriers between Theosophical organizations are broken down and the various organizations will work together cooperatively for the One Cause which they all revere.

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## JUSTICE

*(Continued from Page 55)*

The way pointed out by our leaders as well as by other great teachers, is straight and narrow and at times even dangerous, but since we all have to tread it to reach that state of "glory which hath no limit"—we must consider all things in the light of this age old teaching of the "Path".

I have heard the question asked and it is a good one, as to whether it is possible to plan our future lives during this one, and think the answer is, "Yes, to some extent". I sometimes hear of one of our members who has had a most dreadfully difficult life to live, and marvel that she has the strength to go through with it. When asked about it she says, "but it is only my personality that is suffering". To my mind such a person is an advanced soul, for she sees the real beyond the unreal and is able to raise her consciousness to that level.

We are told that before birth we are given a picture, a sort of general plan of the life to come, and that at that moment we realize its justice, so perhaps when we see people bearing

trouble so heroically, it may be that they have retained some dim perception of this fact for there are people of all faiths—and perhaps even of none—who seem to accept trouble in this spirit. It may be, too, that in some former life they realized, as all of us do, that they had debts to pay to life and had determined when the time came to pay them to the full, and who can doubt that when these debts are paid, they will emerge strengthened and purified, and better still will have acquired a deep compassion, which will enable them to become the real servants of mankind.

So I think we can make certain resolves in this life which will influence our future lives, but since we have a gleam of knowledge about evolution, the greatest resolve we can make is that in all our actions we will seek the guidance of our own higher self, for in this way we shall make fewer mistakes, become more impersonal and in so doing will earn the opportunity of spreading the light.

There is another question some people ask. They say, "If you believe these things, why do you not give up everything you possess and seek and give out the Truth as the great Teachers have done?" Of course this is a question which everyone must decide for himself, but most of us I think feel that we have not yet reached this point. We feel that the life we find ourselves with, its responsibilities and problems, contains ample opportunities for self sacrifice and growth, and can be a splendid training ground for that further step which in some life we may feel compelled within ourselves to take.

The Master K.H. as quoted in the *Mahatma Letters* said to Mr. Sinnett to whom he was giving certain teachings:—

"It is true that the married man cannot be an adept, yet without striving to become a 'Raja Yogi' he can acquire

certain powers and do as much good for mankind and often more, by remaining within the precincts of this world of his. Therefore we shall not ask you to precipitately change fixed habits of life, before the full conviction of its necessity and advantage has possessed you". (M. L., p. 17).

And once more from the Master K.H. "Ambition, the desire of securing happiness and comfort for those we love, by obtaining honours and riches, are praiseworthy feelings, but when they transform man into an ambitious cruel tyrant, a miser, a selfish egotist, they bring untold misery on those around him, on nations as well as on individuals".

Theosophy is the acme of common sense and balance. Its leaders do not ask people to do certain things until they themselves feel an irresistible inner urge to do them, but they do ask us, if we have become convinced of the Truth of this teaching, to strive towards certain ideals and to avoid certain dangers that not only hurt us, but other people as well, so before ending let us run over some of these.

We are not asked, at our stage at least, to alter the outer circumstances of our lives so much as to alter our attitude towards them, for we have to accept these circumstances as being the results of former lives, providing us with ample opportunities for growth. What we are asked to give up, above all, is any feeling of separateness from any member of the human kingdom, the superhuman kingdom, and all those kingdoms below this level. We are asked to give up our destructive and negative thoughts, our prejudices, our dreams of personal aggrandizement and any of those private weaknesses that feed the ego. We are asked to seek for Truth and to try and live it in thought, word and deed, and we are asked to give of ourselves generously in order to bring light to this world, realizing our

complete identity with all that lives—and what is there that does not live? We are asked to practice self control over the lower forces of our being, and so to live that the lesser lives which make up this small world, which we call man, will be influenced for their eternal good. We are warned not to dabble with the lower psychic forces, since they are fraught with danger, and may even be a bar to true spirituality, for although there will come a time when we shall develop our finer senses, and so enlarge our field of consciousness, most of us at present have all we can do to live sanely in the one in which we find ourselves. We are asked if our *karma* is such that we have the time to study these great teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, and then give them out to those who are seeking for them, without becoming impatient and dogmatic. Above all we are asked to realize the ultimate justice of life and to live our life in accordance with that belief.

Surely these things are enough to test our sincerity, our strength and our endurance, and although they may not be considered by some as spectacular steps along this age-old Path, they are the steps that help us to ascend the luminous arc and so find our way home. The beautiful "Sermon on the Mount" is not spectacular either, but it comprises, when rightly understood, a sure guide to this same goal which almost every man seeks.

In this article I have purposely used the word "justice" rather than the word "*Karman*" because for some reason the word "*karman*" or "*karma*" seems to convey to some people an unpleasant or unhappy experience. Actually it doesn't mean that at all. It simply means that whatever action we perform on whatever plane, calls forth from life its just result, and that result can bring us happiness or unhappiness according to the nature of the action.

The beauty of Theosophy is that it

teaches us to perform those actions which even if they arouse temporary pain in the personality, will result in ultimate harmony or happiness. What we have got to decide for ourselves is, at what level do we seek happiness, and that depends on our place in evolution. We must always remember, too, that Truth never changes, but our understanding of it does, and that depends on our evolutionary development, too.

Before closing this article I would like to quote a very beautiful passage from the *Secret Doctrine*. It runs:—

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

And one more quotation from the Lord Buddha, who says:—

“The man who foolishly does me wrong I will return to him the protection of my most ungrudging love; and the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me”.

These two quotations show the true spirit of Theosophy.

There is one eternal Law in nature, one that always tends to adjust contraries and to produce final harmony. It is owing to this law of spiritual development superseding the physical and purely intellectual that mankind will become freed from its false gods, and find itself finally—**SELF-REDEEMED**.

H. P. Blavatsky,

*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 420

## THE OCCULT BACKGROUND IN WAGNER'S 'NIBELUNGEN'

(Continued from Page 58)

fried, the pure in heart. He awakens the wonderful Walkure Brunnhilde and makes her his wife. This daughter of the Gods is also a daughter of the wise Earth, the mother of man. Brunnhilde sacrifices her divinity out of pity as she protects Siegfried's father against Wotan's wish. Later for love she sacrifices her divine knowledge. She represents the imprisoned Spirit in Man which by its descent loses its former power and wisdom but reveals the all-embracing heart and the capacity to suffer inhumanly.

In direct contrast to Brunnhilde stands Siegfried ‘the guileless, cheerful fool’ whose soul ‘without envy’ cannot be touched by fear, greed and gold. He represents the ascent of Man to his former divinity. The occult meaning of the drink that was given to Siegfried may be found in the drink of Lethe and the return of memory through the sight of the ring is reminiscent of an earlier Indian drama, Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*. In Siegfried, Man is seen in his most natural, happy fullness of expression, in his necessary out-pouring of the restless innermost fountain of life, in the fullness of his highest most direct power and doubtless incomparable charm. Brunnhilde who has regained the ‘heavenly knowledge’ is immolated with Siegfried on the funeral pyre after returning the purified ring through fire to the daughters of the Rhine.

In order that this struggle for power and world domination should enfold the whole earth, Wagner has employed symbolic forms such as the gnomes who steal the gold from the innocent nymphs, the superior Gods who employ cunning, the giants who obtain the ring through physical power, the proud Princes of men; all stretch their greedy



hands out but all are smitten by the curse that lies upon this radiant tinsel.

In an early sketch on Parsifal Wagner closed with the words:

“Great is the enchantment of desire, still greater the strength of renunciation.”

By means of this doctrine of Buddhism which stresses the purification of the senses, Wagner has achieved great dramatic significance. Virginity in man has not a moral but a psychological and physiological value. It is part of the myth and legend of all the folklore of the world that only a virgin youth has power to kill the dragon. When Siegfried killed Fafner he had not known woman but before he went out into the world Brunnhilde became his wife. When he was the virgin youth not even the slyness of the wise Mime could seduce him for then he could understand the warning voices of the birds but the later Siegfried could be misled by sensuous desires and unsuspectingly drank the draught of forgetfulness.

It was not enough to put Wotan in the middle of warring powers and to see that all the threads of the story were running through his hands; an inner conflict had to be presented, arising in the depth of the heart and solved there, for only he who renounces love may through the Gold, gain world domination. In Wotan's struggle which tears his own heart, a struggle for power on the one hand and a yearning for love in the depth of his soul on the other, lies the seed of his inevitable doom.

The curse that Alberich bestows upon the Ring is only an external gesture; the Ring is already pregnant with doom because obtained by crime against the most holy in the heart of man, against love:

“Wie durch Fluch er mir geriet, verflucht sei dieser Ring.” (Since it was obtained through a curse, be this ring cursed.)

This monumental work is a synthesis of the tragedy of desire and the tragedy of destiny or Karma. Wotan is the hero of the tragedy of desire, Siegfried the hero of the tragedy of destiny, and Brunnhilde, whose life is most intimately related to both, through desire loses her divinity in the ‘death sleep’, then, aroused by Siegfried to a new life as a human, destiny forces her to cause the death of the one Beloved. Through Siegfried's death she again becomes spiritually clairvoyant and here in her inner consciousness the two tragedies meet—the one of desire and the one of destiny. She is aware of the concatenation, the chain of events from Wotan's dream of endless glory until the murder of the ‘magnificent hero, the treasure of the world’. She purifies the Ring through fire and returns it to the deep waters. By following Siegfried into death voluntarily she redeems the last sin. She carries out Wotan's desire and achieves redemption for the world.

Although Wagner said that he wrote Tristan and Isolde when under the influence of the philosophy of Schopenhauer, who affirmed that negation has its essence not in the abhorrence or avoidance of suffering but in the dismissal of the pleasures of life, yet this whole drama affirms exactly the opposite. It is the highest glorification, the apotheosis, of the desire for life. For Tristan the world contains only Isolde, the object of his desire, and Isolde, for her part, dies the love-death. The ‘night’ is the Night of Love. Indeed, it is a ‘Nirvana’ which neither the holy Gautama nor the wise Schopenhauer dreamt of. Tristan lies in the arms of his beloved ‘heart upon thy heart, lips upon thy lips’; these are not the words of a yogi, a sage or a Jivamukta. If the lovers curse the sun it is because it is inimical to their love. Any philosophy in this drama affirms the will for life and love. Buddha fled from

his beautiful young wife in order to become wise but Tristan had only one purpose in life, the consummation of his passion for Isolde. Indeed, in the love-death of Isolde Wagner has glorified woman in marked contrast to Schopenhauer who was a misogynist and completely satisfied to drink from the ascetic's wells of pure thought on the mountain of Hindu Philosophy, wells which do not often water blossoms such as Wagner's art. It is as though the composer's own thirst for sensation had permeated the truly noble allegory of the Soul's descent into matter and painful re-awakening through the immolation of self.

## THEOSOPHY AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

In San Diego, California, a group of students is carrying on Theosophical work under the name of "Theosophy and Contemporary Thought". It is not affiliated with any Theosophical Society but some of its members, and presumably those who formed the group originally, are former members of the Point Loma Theosophical Society. The aims and objects of the group are well presented in the opening remarks of the Chairman, Mr. W. Emmett Small, at its first meeting and these are given hereunder.

It is always of interest to learn of the formation of such groups. Unattached to any parent organization and coming into being through their own self-directed efforts, they are free to chart their own course as they judge best from time to time.

### OUR PLATFORM

A few words are fitting in explanation of the purposes of these meetings and our overall program.

There are here in San Diego a number of individuals who have been for years interested in basic concepts of life: con-

cepts which deal primarily with man, the intricate pattern of his nature, his far distant origin, the destiny towards which he gropes; concepts which deal likewise with the universe, the cosmos, with the birth of its uncounted suns, the constitution of its ultimyriad galaxies; and above all, interested in the definite relationship between this microcosmic world of little Man and the macrocosmic Universe of infinite time and space.

Knowledge of these ideas has been always in existence, but new impetus and clarified vision have been given to them through the titanic genius of one of the world's great figures, H. P. Blavatsky, in her exposition of the Secret Doctrine, known also today as the Ancient Wisdom, God Wisdom, Theosophy. These individuals, above referred to, have been for the most part for many years members of the Theosophical Society, but because of present internal dissensions in the organizational framework of that Society, they now find their best channel of activity freed from those loyalties and restrictions. They are interested in presenting and forwarding the ideals and basic elements of this ancient wisdom, the source of enlightenment of the world's Sages and Saviours. To draw illumination from a study and application of the teachings emanating from this Source, and to share this vision and understanding, and the warmth and courage and hope gained from friendly association, is the object of these gatherings. It is not an effort to win people away from associations to which they already belong and where they feel at home with fellow-students. But it is an effort to create a center, an atmosphere shall we call it, where individuals from many and even widely diversified groups, who yet have the basic love of humanity as their motivating interest, may come, feel heartened, and periodically take back to their organizations

what they here may have felt and learned.

Such work as this is fundamentally, of course, non-sectarian and undenominational. It has no leader, but is composed of individuals who are earnest in their desire to further the objects of understanding and sympathy among men, to work toward basic universal brotherhood, to seek to understand the science and religion and philosophy inherent in the very fabric of being, to recognize law and order in the universe, to become more and more cognizant of these universal operations of nature, and therefore likewise to know more of man's own inner being—in other words, to bring, through the expression of such a vital philosophy, more of light and joy to others, as well as a growing assurance and clarity to oneself of the basic purposes of life, which purposes, we may add, grow or deepen in accordance with our own expanding understanding and strength. "Light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect: all three are necessary before man can find real peace."

We believe that the Esoteric Philosophy, the Wisdom of the Divine, can help each of you to greater light, greater love, and greater understanding. To this end, therefore, this platform is open to all original thinkers dedicated to high ideals. Letters explaining our purposes have been sent to Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists in this city, to the Annie Besant Lodge of the Adyar Society, and to the Philosophical Society of San Diego. We hope soon they will join us in this work and that you may personally hear from them. Invitations have also been addressed to local members of the Pasadena Theosophical Society. And we hereby offer the hand of fellowship to members of the Masonic Fraternity, to members and groups belonging to various Churches, to scientific, religious and philosophical

associations. They are sincerely welcome. Common interest in the great issues of life, in the purposes and destiny of the human race, constitute the firm ground on which we meet.

But it should be made clear that this platform is not one consisting of a mere collection of lowest common denominators of the beliefs of varying religious and scientific groups, in a desire merely to please or placate; but it rests on a recognition of a living Root-Philosophy, based on the Workings of Nature, which is the Mother-Source and Fountain, the *fons et origo*, of all Ideative Thought, and from which the various great religions have emerged and flowered.

Pointing to this Source, we yet must be free from dogmatic assertion. For dogma kills, but inquiry into the sources of Truth gives life. The tyrant, the charlatan, as well as the fool, thrive where dogma, with its contempt for reasoned thought, commands. But philosopher, statesman, and child alike may breathe and dare to think and dream and aspire where flows unhindered the sunlight of unobstructed Truth. And the wise man knows that his own understanding is subject to the revelation a greater light may give, and so is but a reverent lifting of a corner of the far-flung veil of Truth.

What is here said is said with genuine interest in the work of all individuals and groups, their welfare, their problems, and their successes. *From nothing less than Truth* can they all derive the unfailing inspiration they seek. Accept nothing, however, merely because an individual says it. Weigh, consider. Then reject what repels: seize and make your own what you find to be good and true. It is a golden rule. Thus alone may you gain that Freedom of the Spirit that comes first from complete honesty with yourself, and is nurtured and sustained by a growing Vision of Truth.

On the basis of the platform thus briefly outlined, we welcome you as fellow-pilgrims on the age-old path, the

“still small path”, that leads to the Heart of Universal Being.—W.E.S.

# THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME

## (1) INTRODUCTION

BY T. H. REDFERN

Mr. Pierce Spinks' forthcoming book is destined to stimulate a lot of discussion about possibilities of theosophical union. No outer unification can be successful without a measure of inner accord adequate to withstand the inevitable tensions. Stresses are inescapable in the attempt. The prize is worth the price. How far the inner accord should precede an outer concordat is a matter of insight and discernment not readily reducible to an intellectual formula. To proceed prematurely and with insufficient preparation would risk abortive failure and, with 1975 in view, we have no time to spare for reluctance-breeding setbacks. To await full unanimity would be to fail by æonic postponement. If we are to get anywhere we must build a sufficiently strong core of common purpose and mutual understanding, and then act with decisive faith and courage, ready to master all difficulties and develop all discords harmonically.

In recent years there has been a fairly widespread suggestion that the original programme may well be the integrative centre around which the various sectors of the Theosophical Movement can cohere in harmony, and so it may be useful to enquire what we mean by the original programme. Do we mean the document in Mme. Blavatsky's handwriting, discovered by Mr. Jinarajadasa in the Adyar Archives and published by him in *The Theosophist* of June 1924 et

seq. and in book form in 1931 under his title as *The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society*? Or do we mean the formative documents and expositions of policy issued in the Society's early years? Or the general consensus of view indicated by the overall body of statements and comments about the Society's work that we have from the instigating Adepts, H.P.B. as their agent, and her collaborating colleagues? There may not be much difference whichever we take, but the broader the range of explanation and advice from original sources that we draw on, the more comprehensive our understanding is likely to be.

This series of articles aims to be exploratory rather than conclusive, inviting correction and amplification, and examining the meaning of the main features of the original programme and their practical application in our present circumstances. Initially these main features seem to fall naturally under these working heads:

1. Universal Brotherhood.
2. The Fraternity of Theosophical Fellowship.
3. Eastern Philosophies and Religions.
4. Christianity.
5. Science.
6. Spiritualism.
7. Occultism.

(To Be Continued.)

# THOUGHTS ON THEOSOPHICAL REUNION

Recently I received a letter from Mr. F. Pierce Spinks, covering an address which he delivered at Wheaton, Ill., in July, 1957. This dealt with Theosophical reunion, mostly in the direction of making the Adyar Theosophical Society the principal organization—a sort of Theosophical power paramount. I replied briefly that I was unable to cooperate with him, unless and until there was the complete repudiation by the Adyar Society of errors that have arisen within it, brought about by unrestrained psychism.

It seems to me that Mr. Spinks started off from a wrong premise. His opening gambit was that sixty-two years ago a schism developed in the Theosophical Movement. This is not so. The schism (if that is the right word) was in the Theosophical Society and not in the Theosophical Movement.

In my opinion there are three factors involved—first Theosophy—*Theosophia*, the perennial philosophy, the Secret Doctrine, the Esoteric Tradition, an age-old body of doctrine with a spiritual basis, which is never fully promulgated, from which nothing can be subtracted, to which nothing can be added, but which can be experienced and confirmed by individuals willing to undergo discipline and to follow expert guidance, which will always be forthcoming as and when required.

The second factor is the Theosophical Movement. This is the restatement, from age to age, of the fundamentals of *Theosophia* itself, in forms suited to the requirements of the people and the period to whom and when it is revealed. Its most recent manifestation came through H. P. Blavatsky and her immediate followers and disciples.

The Theosophical Society was to be the vehicle of *Theosophia*, and the outer expression of the Theosophical Movement—its embodiment—for the century 1875/1975. Its mission was marred by a series of failures practically from its inception.

In my opinion if its message of Universal Brotherhood had been accepted both of the Global Wars might have been averted or else postponed. There were great Karmic currents which may have made them inevitable, but it does seem that the impact of this National Karma might have been cushioned, to say the least. But it was not to be; it did not work out that way.

The so-called schism broke out openly in 1895. There had been evidences of it soon after the departure of H.P.B. in 1891. Its real basis was the effort to add to the original body of teaching as outlined by Blavatsky, as the outcome of psychic experiences, etc., by individuals. In the Adyar T. S. the full flood made itself manifest after the death of the President-Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, in 1907.

The extent of this flood can best be realized by those who did not experience it (and the present writer did, having joined the Adyar T. S. in 1906) by reading the recent autobiographical volume *Candles in the Sun*, by Lady Emily Lutyens. This is a shattering and devastating *expose* of the credulity of some Theosophists, the machinations of some of the Leaders, and the fantastic nature of the psychic *débauch*! It is by no means complete, but it is the best and most revealing study to date. It is a *must* for all students of the period.

I am told, although I have no direct evidence, that the Adyar Theosophical Society is slowly trying to purge itself

of the aftermath of psychism that stemmed from Messrs. Leadbeater, Arundale and Wedgwood. There has been an increasing recognition that the clairvoyance of these individuals has produced the most misleading and untrue results. The most gigantic hoax is *Occult Chemistry*, although it was not so intended. It is the work of Mr. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, and it can be assumed that it was at the time that these so-called researches were being conducted that Mr. Leadbeater obtained his supremacy over Mrs. Besant, which became an increasing factor in her theosophical divergences and illusions.

In my opinion, before any serious student of Theosophy could affiliate with the Adyar Society there must be an absolute repudiation of all the writings of Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater and their immediate associates from 1908 on. There is so much that is misleading and—in some cases—deliberately untrue that no honest person could be associated with any society which sponsored them and retain his or her moral integrity.

So it seems to me, that Mr. Spinks is saying "Peace, Peace" where there is not, and cannot be, any real peace.

All this has been written without any resentment and with no real intent at recrimination. I was very fortunate that my first theosophical mentor was a scientist, who was deeply versed in *The Secret Doctrine*. He warned me in 1908, when the first of Leadbeater's revelations regarding the Sixth Root Race, subsequently expanded into *Man: How, Whence and Whither* was theosophically unsound. From then on my attitude was one of aloof but polite agnosticism, coupled with much study of the Blavatsky texts. Then came my open breach with Mrs. Besant in 1915 and my subsequent expulsion (on representations which were later admitted by my accusers to be untrue) in 1923. In the

interim I had satisfied myself that Mr. Leadbeater's clairvoyance was either very faulty or else non-existent.

In my opinion it is better not to try and reweave the seamless garment of one Theosophical Society. No matter how carefully a broken cup is repaired the breaks will show. Hence I am unable to walk in step with Mr. Spinks, although I have no reason to doubt or question his sincerity.

J. M. Prentice.

Repatriation General Hospital  
Concord, Sydney,

### FORGETFUL THEOSOPHISTS

Many Theosophists forget or ignore certain principles that should be constantly kept in mind, if they wish to have any regard for the welfare of the society to which they belong, or their own progress in the discovery of Truth. If we do not remember the difference between a belief and a fact, we run the risk of assuming we *know* things which are merely beliefs.

What most of us know about Theosophy we have read in books or have been told, either by those who phrase their opinions in dogmatic language, or by others whom we regard as "authorities". In matters of belief, each one of us is his own authority, as each must decide what to accept and what to reject of every idea presented to his mind. Many Theosophical leaders have warned us against accepting a belief as a fact. In her *Doctrine of the Heart*, Dr. Besant said: "Reason, Intuition and Conscience are our highest faculties, the *only* means by which we can know the true from the false, good from evil, right from wrong."

True religion is an individual thing. Every human being who can think, from the most primitive type to the philosopher and saint, has his own personal religion, which is the sum total of his beliefs at any one time or place, and

he lives according to those beliefs in the sense that he justifies to himself his actions, feelings and his thoughts. As he discovers his mistakes, his beliefs change, even when he is unable to conform his actions to his new beliefs. A belief that can be established as a fact is no longer a matter of religion but has entered the field of science.

The Theosophical Society has three and only three "objects", and in none of these is there the word "beliefs". But some members forget what their most quoted authority, H.P.B., wrote in *The Key to Theosophy*, page 193: "Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because sooner or later it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard and fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart."

Some of the off-shoots of our Society have reached that end. Those members of our own Society who have made their fixed ideas and beliefs into a religion, which they try to impose upon others who might otherwise be interested in Theosophy, are not only antagonizing prospective members, but are personally falling into the very error H.P.B. so clearly warned us against.

G. H.

### HESITATION

Deep within the dull cocoon  
 In blind, benumbed state,  
 On the stem to which she clings,  
 Does the grub anticipate  
 The glory freedom brings?  
 Does she see her narrow cell  
 As a kind of Hell?  
 Or does she hesitate  
 To leave the warm dark known  
 By way of splendid wings?

Laura Baldwin.

### A JOINT CELEBRATION OF H.P.B.'S BIRTHDAY BY THE THEOSOPHISTS OF ALL AFFILIATIONS TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 11/12, 1958

A West Coast Committee of theosophists from various theosophical organizations has announced that meetings commemorating the birth of H. P. Blavatsky, chief Founder of the Theosophical Movement, will be held simultaneously in Los Angeles and San Francisco on August 11th and 12th. A spokesman for the Committee said that the Birthday Commemoration meeting was conceived as an occasion when the natural unity among all theosophists, regardless of organizational affiliation, might be given expression. Sponsorship of the meeting is by the Committee, which, though representing no organization, is nevertheless made up of students of theosophy of various theosophical groups. The Theosophical Society in America (Adyar), has given these Joint Celebrations its blessings.

Theosophy Hall (United Lodge of Theosophists) on Grand Avenue at 33rd Street, Los Angeles, has been offered for the occasion, as probably affording the largest available facilities for such a gathering. In San Francisco the meeting will be held in the Native Sons Auditorium, 414 Mason Street (San Francisco Lodge of The Theosophical Society, Adyar). Both celebrations will commence at 8.00 p.m. and all theosophists and friends of H.P.B. are cordially invited to attend these celebrations.

The program of this H.P.B. Birthday meeting will present a consideration of the Three Objects of the original Theosophical Society, as conceived by H.P.B. "All theosophists," the Committee spokesman said, "subscribe to these Objects and work for their realization." H. P. Blavatsky was born on August 11-12, 1831.

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