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ANNIE BESANT

BY J. M. PRENTICE

It is just over fifty years, by a matter of a few weeks, since I met Annie Besant, for the first time *in this incarnation*. The Impact is as clear today as then. She remains, in mind and in imagination, the greatest feminine personality I have ever met. After making the fullest allowance for the tragic deficiencies in her human make-up she is still great.

Mrs. Besant had made one previous visit to Australia, in 1894. The Judge crisis was looming and she arrived with plenipotentiary powers from President Olcott, to found a new Section, in order to provide additional strength for the anti-Judge party. The Australian Theosophists were already split into opposing factions, but her magnificent oratory and her superb genius for organization left the Judgeites a shattered remnant. The visit of Katherine Tingley and her Crusade in 1897 failed to remove the Besant influence. One curious thing was that a policeman, present to maintain order at one of her lectures, was so carried away by her eloquence that he joined the T.S. and remained an obscure but faithful member until his death, many years later.

Her arrival at the Spencer Street railway station in Melbourne was colourful, to say the least. After successful appearances in Perth and

Adelaide, she stepped from the railway carriage, wearing garments of the 1888 period rather than 1908, a disreputable hat and elastic sided footwear in a material called *prunella*, as her vegetarian principles forbade her to wear leather. She carried a king of reticules, as they were then called, stuffed with bank notes. She has refused to pay the exchange demanded by the banks, and brought the money with her!

Her stage appearance at this time was quite extraordinary. She was within days of her sixtieth birthday. Her youthful beauty had been miraculously preserved. On the platform she wore sweeping costumes of heavy white silk, appliquéd with what was then known as "Point Lace", all hand worked. Her short hair was a froth and a foam of snow white curls, a strange contrast to her youthful complexion. Her oratory was spellbinding. She had some gestures, but not many; such as the tossing aside of a handful of notes, in order to create an air of spontaneity; the production of a letter, said to have reached her that day, which served as a peg on which to drape an elaborate address, as though *ex tempore*. Across the years that golden voice, that exquisite use of our English tongue, that perfection in the choice of words, still echoes.

Before continuing, let me say that to understand Mrs. Besant it is necessary to recognize two things: one, that she was so utterly deficient in a sense of humour that it is doubtful if she ever laughed heartily in her long life, so that any criticism, any correction of the particular cause which she was espousing was instantly construed as a personal attack on herself, and brought down on the critic the full measure of her wrath. This had already been commented upon by one of her Secularist friends in 1888. The slightest suggestion of opposition to views expressed by her became a personal attack on her knowledge, her veracity, her towering ability. I was destined to experience the full bitterness of this, a little later on. I recall that in 1910 I evoked thunderous applause when I told a crowded Convention: "I will follow Mrs. Besant as long as reason and logic support her contentions; when logic and reason fail me I will follow blindly, suppressing my own inclinations in the light of her greater, more occult knowledge!" Within five years I was compelled to eat these words, when logic and reason forced me into an opposition which remained with me through the years and darkened my Theosophical life in this incarnation.

The other thing to be remembered is that never once in her long career did Annie Besant ever think one original thought. She was the superb embodiment of a person who could take other men's ideas and present them far more brilliantly, with greater enticement, than the originators. And always, in the shadowy background, there had to be an inspirer—usually a man—from whom she derived her ideas, her inspiration. Her own occult path is still strewn with the bodies of those from whom she derived her themes and, later on, discarded when they no longer served her purpose, or opposed new

ideas which she had espoused. And here I throw out a challenge: it is many years since I have opened one of her many volumes, but even now if you mention a name of any one of them I will instantly tell you who was the inspirer of the ideas which it so brilliantly presents.

Reverting to Melbourne and 1908: her most brilliant efforts were restricted to meetings of the ES. She corrected our pronunciation of Sanscrit passwords; she confirmed us in the faith that she was the occult mouthpiece of the White Lodge. But her outstanding effort was the night when she rose dramatically, ordered us all to put away our note books and pencils, and told us that the way was being made ready for some one of greater occult stature to replace her as the agent of the Lodge, as the Outer Head of the E.S. She said that this would be Damodar Mavalankar, who had disappeared into Tibet more than twenty years earlier. (She had unveiled a portrait of him in the Shrine Room at Adyar on White Lotus Day of that same year, in order that he would be recognized on his return.) It may be that she had been impressed by a horoscope which had been published about 1896, wherein the Astrologer Walter Gorn Old ("Sepharial") had said that she would die in the sixtieth year of her age, that the golden voice would sink into silence, that her lovely presence would disappear in the smoke of the funeral pyre. She was within days of her sixtieth birthday when she made this statement.

Many other memories come flooding in. I was received at a private audience at the home of her daughter, Mabel Besant-Scott, where she was staying. I was gravely concerned over what has become known as "the Leadbeater case" and sought her guidance. She eased my mind and relieved my anxieties—for the time being. There was much in this

interview which cannot be recorded even now without a breach of faith. But it will be recorded eventually for students of a later period, if I survive those others directly concerned.

Mrs. Besant had changed her attitude to Mr. Leadbeater under curious circumstances. After the storm broke in 1906, the year I joined the T.S., he had been living quietly in the obscurity of Taormina, in Sicily. While on her journey to England for her yearly series of lectures Mrs. Besant left the ship at Naples and went to see him. This was her first contact since her repudiation of him two years earlier. "Judge has fallen; Leadbeater has fallen; perhaps I, too, may fall" had been her pitiful admission in 1906. But Mr. Leadbeater convinced her that they had taken the initiatory degree of Orhat together, that they were indissolubly linked in the White Brotherhood, and must work together. If only there had been sufficient sense of humour to laugh at this suggestion, of which she admitted she had no personal knowledge, and which she was foolish enough to take as true, the whole subsequent history of the T.S. would have been different. Mr. Leadbeater, now described by her as being "on the threshold of Divinity", returned in triumph to Adyar, to initiate the Krishnamurti *mythos*, to write that masterpiece of occult blackmail *Rents In The Veil of Time*. (In which his friends were given high occult status and his enemies—that is, those who refused to accept him as a great occultist—were lampooned or else treated very shabbily. I know many people who were chained to his chariot by this remarkable record; one lady told me that if she turned her back on C.W.L. she risked going back millions of years in her occult career!).

I would interpolate here that I met Mr. Leadbeater first in 1914. There was a mutual antipathy. I saw him

again in 1923, in the bitter Convention of the Australian Section of the T.S., which split the Sydney Lodge into two sections the following year, when Mrs. Besant descended into Sydney and was severely rebuffed. But this is another story. . .

In 1910 the genius of Mr. Leadbeater—evil or otherwise—created the Krishnamurti legend. Mrs. Besant, who had already lost the support of many of the old time supporters of the Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky when she reinstated Mr. Leadbeater in 1908, gave the fullest possible measure of her support, and now alienated the respect of many Indian members in particular. They recalled her enthusiastic support of Mr. G. N. Chakravarti (whom I met in 1933) before and after the Judge episode, and her subsequent repudiation of him. They knew that her present occult teaching was based on Leadbeater's *ipse dixit*, and in him they had no confidence. There is no time to rehearse the long and sorrowful story, of hearts that were sickened by hopes deferred, of the collapse of an imposing structure, which included the magnificent Amphitheatre here in Sydney, which resulted in a total loss of from £70,000 to £100,000 . . . The real showdown came in 1926, when Mrs. Besant, under the aegis this time of Messrs. Wedgwood and Arundale, announced that the Twelve Apostles for the reincarnating Messiah had been selected. In Sydney, Mr. Leadbeater only heard of this when it was publicized in *The Herald of the Star* magazine. I have been told by two members of his entourage at this time that his anger was titanic. He said: "This is madness; I know nothing whatever of it!" and he wrote a furious letter to Mrs. Besant repudiating the whole thing. He received in reply a cable in which Mrs. Besant told him that if he doubted her word, that if he refused to

corroborate what she had said, it would display such a want of confidence in her that her only course left would be to resign the Presidency of the T.S. As his own status in the Movement was entirely based on her rehabilitation in 1908 and her subsequent support, he had no other option than to conform to her line, and he did so, but with far less than his usual enthusiasm. From then on until her death in 1933 Mrs. Besant was more or less a mouthpiece for others; her mental powers had deteriorated and she was no longer Master in her own House, although she remained a towering, spectacular figure . . . and president of the T.S.

There is one other point: I read recently that Mrs. Besant was supposed to have voluntarily renounced her occult powers of clairvoyance and so on in 1915. I heard nothing of this at the time, as I was busily engaged in fighting a war supposed to be the war to end ALL wars. But I was in London in 1917 and called on a friend who was one of Mrs. Besant's oldest and closest disciples. I found her in great distress over what had been happening; rather reluctantly she produced a letter written a year or so earlier and in Mrs. Besant's characteristic writing. This lady had been advised by Mrs. Besant that she was laying aside her spiritual work in order to enter into the hurley burley of Indian politics. The recipient of this letter had immediately replied saying that she feared this was a retrograde step, and would it not be better to remain the great spiritual leader? It was the reply to this that I was permitted to see. There was one sentence which seemed to be in letters of fire: Mrs. Besant wrote: "*While I was engaged in this spiritual work, don't you think that I did it rather well?*" She saw new heights to scale and a new, historical position to be achieved.

Mrs. Besant has left almost a library

of literary productions. Two of her earliest books stand out: *In the Outer Courts* and *The Path of Discipleship*. They are masterly. As Theosophical manuals they have never been surpassed. Practically everything she produced after 1908 is worthless Theosophically speaking, however well it reads. The last worth-while book was *The Wisdom of the Upanishads*. This has an authenticity not found thereafter. Her book *The Pedigree of Man* was given a send-off by a statement in ES circles that while she was delivering the lectures the Master M was presenting a series of mental pictures which unrolled before her inner vision. Doubts regarding her interpretation of what she saw arose when it was found to differ materially from the outline of occult history in *The Secret Doctrine*.

And at this point this brief profile must be concluded. Across the years I still salute Annie Besant as the greatest woman I ever met . . . the echo of her matchless oratory still rings in my ears. *Ave atque vale*—until we meet again!

REVIEWS

Theosophists: Reunite! by F. Pierce Spinks, published by The Christopher Publishing Company, Boston, 1958, 387 pp., \$4.85.

This is a book which may have a profound influence in the Theosophical Movement and one which is worthy of a careful reading by all members. The author considers that the present state of insularity and partizanship among the various Theosophical Societies is wrong, and that if this continues it will lead to a process of disintegration within the Movement, perhaps even to its virtual extinction as an effective instrument. Mr. Spinks examines impartially the causes of former schisms, pleads for the cessation of hostile attitudes which are against the spirit of the Movement, and suggests that all Theosophical

students reunite in one body in which their common interest in Theosophy can be used effectively to serve the original purpose of the Movement, the presentation of the Ancient Wisdom and the ideal of Universal Brotherhood to the modern world.

Quotations from *The Mahatma Letters*, and from the writings of H.P.B. show that both K.H. and H.P.B. were strongly opposed to the formation of separate societies. In 1880 K.H. warned Mr. A. P. Sinnett that the establishment of a proposed Anglo-Indian Branch, separate from the main body, "would be a mortal blow at the Theosophical Society". H.P.B. wrote in 1886 to Rev. Arthur Gebhard "But for you to talk of forming an 'independent branch' . . . I find a treason to the Masters. And how can you ever suppose that the Masters will have anything to do with, or even notice a Society if it has nothing to do whatever with the Parent T.S.? . . . But do not talk of independent Societies if you are Theosophists and if you do not want to renounce the Masters . . ." Other appropriate quotations are used including H.P.B.'s often quoted sentence from her last Message to the Boston Convention in 1891, "Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T.S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood".

The author summarizes the history of the Movement from the death of H.P.B. in 1891 to the founding of The United Lodge of Theosophists in 1909, a period in which the main cleavages took place, the first and most important of these resulting in a separate Society in America in 1895. The historical portions of the book will be subject to careful scrutiny and, because these deal

with controversial matters over which strong feelings still exist in some quarters, the author's summaries and his comments thereon may not be accepted without question. However, Mr. Spinks has well-documented all his references and shows no favoritism for one Society over another. That the original differences arose over personalities and not doctrinal matters was the opinion of Mr. Robert Crosbie founder of the U. L. T., and an examination of the evidence indicates the correctness of this view. Today, doctrinal differences are the stumbling block but in an organization which has no creeds and which affords full freedom to all individuals to hold whatever beliefs they find valid, even diametrically opposite views should not be barriers.

The Theosophical Society in Canada and its official organ, *The Canadian Theosophist*, are mentioned several times in the chapter "Statement of the Problem" which sets out the situation and deals with some objections to the author's aim. Mr. Spinks notes with approval the example of the Canadian Section in remaining within the Parent Society even though a majority of its members disapprove of certain policies and doctrines of that Society. While deploring acrimonious criticism of one group by another, the author states that "it must be clearly understood that the abolition of constructive criticism is not being advocated".

A basis for unity among the Societies already exists in their acceptance of the principal Object of Universal Brotherhood; their unanimous agreement that H.P.B. was the messenger of the Masters; and their common assent to the four doctrines of man's divine origin, evolution, reincarnation and karma. ". . . as long as the different Theosophical organizations agree on the basic teaching and the main object, all other teachings—which may be classi-

fied as supplementary teachings—can be considered in the nature of researches; and if the different Theosophical Societies disagree on these supplementary teachings, these disagreements can not be considered valid grounds for disunity". But general acceptance of these doctrines does not imply that they are the beliefs of any Society. No Theosophical Society can have any creed, statement of belief or concordat of accepted teachings, otherwise sectarianism would arise. Each is basically a student body and if any teachings are emphasized, this is because they have found common acceptance among students, not because of any official endorsement or the acceptance of any authority.

In the chapter "Some Disagreements" Mr. Spinks deals briefly with five principal points of disagreement which were and still continue to be obstacles to reassociation. These are:

- (a) Which is the original Theosophical Society?
- (b) The development of psychic powers.
- (c) Claims to representing the Masters.
- (d) C. W. Leadbeater—
 1. The Liberal Catholic Church which he founded;
 2. His alleged teaching to certain boys.
- (e) The validity of books on Theosophy published by The Theosophical Society (Adyar).

Each of these is discussed and the item "Claims to representing the Masters" receives the strongest criticism. "It is this area which is fraught with the greatest possibilities of quackery, humbuggery, charlatanism and fraudulence" and one which has been used to traffic in the credulity of pupils. No Society has been exempt from some manifestation of this despite the warning of advanced students that those in

touch with the Masters would maintain silence on the relationship. In the Esoteric Schools it is assumed that the Outer Heads of the organizations are agents of the Masters. Such claims encourage segregation and are never verifiable. Secret groups are a problem in any organization and the potential political force of these is illustrated in a quotation from Mrs. Besant, ". . . on the other side we have an Esoteric body which is practically autocratic in its constitution . . . The existence of a secret body to rule the outer Society made the constitution of the T.S. a mere farce . . . The greatest power will always be in the hands of the E.S. and not in the head of the Society . . . We must recognize the danger and try to neutralize it."

In "Who is Infallible" the author points out that several Societies have their own "Voices of Authority" which are deemed to be infallible. He believes that "one of the greatest barriers to a rapprochement of all Theosophists is the dogmatic belief in the infallibility of certain Leaders . . . such as H.P.B., Col. Olcott, W. Q. Judge, Annie Besant, G. de Purucker, C. W. Leadbeater and others". Dogmatic beliefs lead to intolerance and unbrotherliness. H.P.B. said that the Founders were instructed ". . . to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching *dogmatic faith and fanaticism*—belief in *infallibility* of the Masters".

Dr. de Purucker of the Point Loma Society tried to bring about reunion in 1930 and the author believes that the failure of this attempt after an auspicious beginning, was due to his inability to take a realistic view of the situation.

A chapter has been included on cooperative trends among religions today which contains some interesting material on this modern trend. Inter-Theosophical relations have remained definitely static.

The author has appended the Memorandum of Association and the Rules and By-Laws of The Theosophical Society (Adyar); the Constitution of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma) and the Articles of Incorporation of The Theosophy Company, which is the organizational body of The United Lodge of Theosophists, which latter group declares that it "has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers". Comparison shows similarity of aims and purposes, but the bases of organization are respectively, democratic, autocratic and oligarchic.

Whether the author's ideal can be realized before 1975—or at all—depends upon the willingness of the members to attempt it. They must first be convinced that the best interests of the Movement will be served by an amalgamation and be prepared to bring this about. It cannot be superimposed on the Societies, but when the unitive qualities of brotherly love, sympathy and helpfulness towards all arise within individuals, organizational loyalties become relative to the more inclusive loyalty to the Movement and to all mankind. These qualities will bind us together as brothers in the same sacred cause, regardless of organizational separations.

Mr. Spinks has laboured well to produce this book; he has examined the records of the various Societies, gathered much pertinent material and has marshalled this according to his plan. His work has been one of unselfish love and service on behalf of the whole Theosophical Movement and its members. It is an important contribution to the Movement for which sincere thanks are due the author. His only hope is that this concept of a new way of life for the Movement, or rather the re-discovery of an old way advocated and practised in the early Society, will be thought about very seriously and

that mind and heart will combine to work for a re-united body which would be the Master's ideal of ". . . an association of affinities of strongly magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities centred around one dominant idea". It can be done. His book is a challenge and a test.

D. W. B.

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Experiment in Depth by P. W. Martin, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955, price \$5.50. (May be obtained from The British Book Service.)

This book has tremendous possibilities for individual or group study. It places within the confines of one volume the cream of the work and research of three of our contemporaries: C. G. Jung, the psychologist; T. S. Eliot, the poet; and A. J. Toynbee, the historian. It sets forth in plain view the dynamic potentialities of the deep unconscious, and of the constructive and destructive forces resident in the human psyche. A studious perusal will throw a great deal of light on the motivating forces behind many of today's mass movements, be they social, economic or religious.

A study such as *Experiment in Depth* could become a manual of progression. Any student of the occult sciences with some knowledge of metaphysics and religion could very well use it as a text book. This volume bears the same relation to psychology as does any university text book on electricity and magnetism or hydraulics or physics to engineering; it provides basic data, results of other people's experiences, and enough information for any person who has the moral courage to embark on the journey of Withdrawal and Return.

The importance of such a book should not be minimized. To any serious student of life or the affairs of life it opens new doors and reveals a new and

deeper understanding of the underlying forces and elements in man: the tremendous forces generated by man in social, economic, and political upheavals. Indeed, *Experiment in Depth* may be likened to an atom smashing machine. It has the technique and measured principle culled from the wisdom of the ages. It will smash the atom of personality and reveal the true self, and bring in its wake deep integration, a wholeness, an at-one-ment. Our direction today is towards collective existence and this manual can be used by a group as well as the individual. The requirements in all cases are those same qualities which our American pioneers had when they braved untold hardships in carving a new land out of prairies and forests. The spirit is ever the same, be it physical, ethical or moral courage that is required to pioneer into the vast hinterland of America or of the Unconscious.

For the braver souls here is a sample:

To those who decide to undertake the experiment in depth, dangerous and uncharted as it is, can any specific advice be given? Clearly, there is no universally valid instruction. The right course for one may be utterly wrong for another. In the end, everyone has to find his or her own way. But something can perhaps be said of how in the initial stages the experiment may be set up . . . Throughout recorded time there has been the recurring evidence that it is possible to break through to a different realm of being: where the truth experienced is a deeper truth; where love experienced is a deeper love; where the creative process is not a theory of what may be going on in the universe but an immediately experienced reality; where personality is not the scattered, frag-

mentary ego consciousness we know but a living in depth, the direct discovery of the 'different spiritual dimension'. What is to be our considered judgment on this? Is it no more than wishful thinking? Or is it, perhaps, the meaning of life?

Charles E. Bunting.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME

(4) *Eastern Philosophies and Religions*

The original and fundamental programme of our Society calls for a vast and compassionate comprehension of the religious impulses, and a penetrating discrimination and discernment between truth and error.

We welcome members steeped in every religious tradition in the world. They join with us because we and they are seeking truth. In that quest we have to discard error, but we can only do that when we see the falsity. We cannot force one another to truth. It is an individual path. Each of us has to make his own way. Each of us is entitled to considerate respect for his religious feelings and beliefs. So we find Mme. Blavatsky writing:

" . . . As a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined) —such a member incurred expulsion."

There has been hurtfulness in our history, and there have been some whom she would have expelled by that test.

But we are a truth-seeking body and error must be exposed. It is the manner of hurtful disrespect that is theosophically reprehensible because unbrotherly. The honest and impersonal

enquiry must be pursued, and we must be prepared for beliefs we advance to be challenged and put to the test of reason:

"The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything had to be encouraged."

This research had a specific direction, first made explicit in a circular drafted by Col. Olcott and H.P.B. in 1878:

"The Society teaches and expects its fellows . . . to make known among Western nations the long-suppressed facts about Oriental religious philosophies, their ethics, chronology, esoterism, symbolism; . . . to disseminate a knowledge of the sublime teachings of that pure esoteric system of the archaic period, which are mirrored in the oldest Vedas, and in the philosophy of Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster and Confucius . . ."

Earlier than this H.P.B. had written in her scrap book in 1875, commenting on an article praising the religions of India and China: "The Wisdom of India, her philosophy and achievement *must* be made known in Europe and America and the English made to respect the natives of India and Tibet more than they do". In the rules of 1879 thoughts about how to go about this emerged in an objective:

"To gather for the Society's library and put into written form correct information upon the various ancient philosophies, traditions and legends, and . . . disseminate the same in such practicable ways as the translation and publication of original works of value, and extracts and commentaries upon the same. . ."

and in the 1881 rules:

". . . To study Aryan literature, religion and science, which the Founders believe to contain certain valuable truths and philosophical views, of which the Western world knows nothing."

From its early days then our Movement has included a scholarly and educational function—to enlighten the West about the wisdom of the East. In this there was a deep purpose; it was to bring a realization that beneath all religions lies one common body of Truth—a universal, hidden underlay, obscured "as systems began to reflect with every age more and more the idiosyncracies of nations", veiling the original truths "with the overgrowth of human fancy".

To be effective this uncovering had to be done gradually and progressively. The members were "to study the philosophies of the East—those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings". Again, ". . . from the exoteric religions . . . we have to dig out the root-idea before we turn to esoteric truths, lest the latter should be rejected . . . Every symbol—in *every* national religion—may be read esoterically, and the proof furnished for its being correctly read. . . To thoroughly comprehend the idea underlying every ancient cosmology necessitates the study, in a comparative analysis, of all the great religions of antiquity; as it is only by this method that the root idea will be made plain." Out of this excavatory work we were to bring to light the convincing evidence for the original and perennial wisdom-religion. In Mme. Blavatsky's words:

"No one can study ancient philosophies seriously without perceiving that the striking similitude of conception between them all—in their exoteric form very often, in their hidden spirit invariably — is the result of no mere coincidence, but of a concurrent design: and that there was, during the youth of mankind, one language, one knowledge, one
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"THE GOLDEN STAIRS"

Theosophic Light on Daily Living

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

'A loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of Truth, once we have placed our confidence in and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it.'

We individualists of the West are inclined sometimes, I fear, to shy off a bit from this idea of loyalty to a Teacher—especially if we belong to the class of mind that prides itself on its independence. It is, of course, manly that we should retain our own self-respect as thinking human beings and not become mere 'Yes-men'. But the bigger we are ourselves, the more capable shall we be of recognizing the greatness of a true Teacher. There is nothing more ennobling to a real man than the capacity to appreciate and love a wise Teacher who also exemplifies fine qualities of personal character and high ideals. Some of the greatest minds of the West, like Carlyle, Emerson, and Victor Hugo, have extolled this attribute quite as earnestly as have the Sages of the East, where the traditional reverence due a *Guru* or Teacher makes loyalty to one more universally prevalent.

Suppose some one should tell you with such conviction that you would know it was true, that there were living in the world today such Teachers as Carlyle spoke of, who could deliver you out of darkness into light, or as Victor Hugo referred to, who could be your guides and point the way, or as Emerson reminds us of, who could admit you to the feast of being: would you not accept such fact as the gladdest tidings you had ever heard? And would you not then rejoice in the opportunity to show 'a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of truth, once we have placed our confid-

ence in and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it'?

'A Courageous Endurance of Personal Injustice'

There is no philosophic truth, I believe, so well calculated as is the Theosophical doctrine of *karman* to give a man the fortitude to endure personal injustice with courage; because a student of Theosophy knows that somewhere, somehow, at some time in the immediate or distant or very remote past, in this life or in some previous incarnation, his real ego, the inner self, the enduring individuality, 'the man that was, that is, and ever shall be, for whom the hour shall never strike', sowed the seeds that are now bringing forth their due fruition in his present suffering or so-called 'personal injustice'. As we read in *The Light of Asia*:

That which ye sow, ye reap. See
yonder fields!

The sesamum was sesamum, the
corn

Was corn; the Silence and the Dark-
ness knew.

So is man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he
sowed,

Sesamum, corn, so much cast in
past birth;

And so much weed and poison-stuff,
which mar

Him and the aching earth.

Compare the above with almost the
identical teaching given six hundred
years later by the Syrian Sage, Jesus:

Ye shall know them by their fruits.

Do men gather grapes of thorns, or
figs of thistles? Even so every good
tree bringeth forth good fruit; but
the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil

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NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The following message sent last October speaks for itself: "Felicitations to Indraprastha Lodge on celebrating its Double Diamond Jubilee. It is a wonderful achievement worthy of its great country. None of us will ever forget that it is to India we owe so much for the spiritual endowment which pervades the world today: *Ex Orienti Lux!* May your endeavours continue to expand and the Truth you exemplify ever shed its radiance far and wide to enlighten the seeker, fortify the lagging and serve to close the ranks in order that we may present a united front for the unfoldment of the coming Dispensation. Congratulations and best wishes from the Theosophical Society in Canada."

DR. BHAGAVAN DAS

Many will regret the passing of Dr. Bhagavan Das who died last September at the fine old age of ninety. At one time Dr. Das was General Secretary of the Indian Section. Not only was he a great scholar, educator and writer for which he was internationally known, but he will be particularly remembered by all students of Theosophy for the illuminating and thought provoking contributions he made to our literature. We have lost a great advocate and his passing will be deeply felt. One of his sons is the present Governor of Bombay, is a member of the Society, and is following in his father's footsteps.

MR. CHARLES F. VATER

Nearer home I regret to announce the death of Mr. Charles F. Vater who died on November 1st. He was one of our oldest members having joined the Society in 1916. The members of his lodge, the Orpheus, sent me an obituary notice which testifies to the love and esteem in which he was held and I print it here in its entirety. "The

fellow students of Charles F. Vater deeply regret to announce the death of a true and loyal friend and Charter Member since 1916 of the Orpheus Lodge, Vancouver. In spite of illness which he fought most of his life, he never failed to attract people by his warm friendliness and the irrepressible buoyancy of his spirit. There was a toughness of fibre which they also recognized as an essential part of him. He was a dedicated student of Theosophy and he centred his life upon the teaching. Charles Vater knew what he wanted and he sought, in a practical way to embody the Eternal Values of the Spirit.

"My spirit to yours dear brother,
Do not mind because many sounding
your name do not understand you,
I do not sound your name, but I understand you,
I specify you with joy O my comrade
to salute you, and to salute those
who are with you, before and since,
and those to come also,
That we all labour together transmitting
the same charge and succession,
We few equals indifferent of lands,
indifferent of times,
We, enclosers of all continents, all
castes, allowers of all theologies,
Compassionaters, perceivers, rapport
of men,
We walk silent among disputes and
assertions, but reject not the disputers
nor anything that is asserted,
We hear the bawling and din, we are
reach'd at by divisions, jealousies,
recriminations on every side,
They close peremptorily upon us to
surround us, my comrade,
Yet we walk upheld, free, the whole
earth over, journeying up and
down till we make our ineffaceable
mark upon time and the diverse
eras

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All Letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publication should be sent to The Acting Editor,

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Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

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29 Rebecca Street, Hamilton, Ontario.

Till we saturate time and eras, that
the men and women of races, ages
to come, may prove brethren and
lovers as we are."

A worthy tribute to a departed comrade
to which I would add the sympathy and
admiration of the Section in general
and to Mrs. Vater our consolation in
her sad and irreparable loss.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

The following is a copy of the
Auditor's report dated December 12th,
1958. "I have examined the records of
the Receipts and Expenditures of the
Theosophical Society in Canada for the
years ending June 30th, 1957, and June
30th, 1958, and found everything in
good and satisfactory order.

Signed Ralph A. Webb."

For the first time in many years we
now have bound volumes of *The Can-
adian Theosophist* up to date and on our
shelves. Complete sets are available
with the exception of Vol. 7 which is
very scarce but at a pinch we could get
unbound copies together. Since the
magazine was issued bi-monthly it has
been possible to bind two volumes (two
years) in one binder. However the
price is the same viz \$3.50 per binder
post paid. The supply is limited, first
come first served.

* * * *

A delightful little book entitled
"Happiness for you now" is on my desk
and I would like to bring it to your
notice. It is a Way of Life simply told,
embodying in it the precepts of theoso-
phical teachings in a practical manner.
I have been given a few copies to dis-
tribute and will send them to the lodges
for general reading. Copies may be
obtained from the Theosophical Pub-
lishing House, Adyar, India at the
modest price of 1 Rupee each.

* * * *

It is with much pleasure I welcome
the following new members into the
Society: Mr. George Green, Member at
Large; Mr. Joseph Oinas, Mr. Horace
P. Watson, Mrs. Louise Fisher and
Mrs. Rose Wiggan all of the Toronto
Lodge.

EASTERN CANADA T.S. CONVENTION

Many members having expressed a
desire to hold such a convention it is
being thoroughly investigated and
prospects seem very favourable. Tent-
ative arrangements are being made and
it is proposed to hold it in Toronto
about the *beginning of July*. Further
information will be given in due course.

E.L.T.

REFERENDUM BALLOT

December 1, 1958.

The following is the result of the Referendum Ballot held at Toronto on Sunday January 4th, 1959. Under the supervision of Mr. T. B. G. Burch, the Scrutineers Mr. E. E. Lovis and Mr. Ralph A. Webb counted the votes which numbered 234 with the following result:

Questions: Are you in favour of

(1) That Art. 7 of the Constitution be amended to read "The Annual Dues be set at the discretion of the General Executive as they think fit from time to time?" and (2) That the dues for 1959/60 be set at \$3.50 per annum?

YES - - - - -	225
NO - - - - -	9

Total ballots cast 234

Certified by T. B. G. Burch,
E. E. Lovis,
Ralph A. Webb.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Quarterly meeting of the General Executive, Theosophical Society in Canada met Sunday January 11th. The following members were present: Miss M. Hindsley; Messrs. C. E. Bunting, C. M. Hale, G. I. Kinman and the General Secretary. The Minutes of the last meeting were duly endorsed. The Financial Statement was Moved and Carried. Col. Thomson reported the demise of Mr. Mark Dewey and informed the meeting of the latest development regarding certain dispositions of property bequeathed to the Canadian Section. Col. Thomson then outlined his proposal to hold an Eastern Canada Convention in Toronto next July. This was well received and a Motion was made that the General Secretary bring the matter before the Toronto Executive with the support and approval of this Executive. The next meeting was arranged for April 19.

E.L.T.

Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist.
Sir:—

The May-June, 1958 issue of the *Canadian Theosophist* contains a reprint of an article by Christmas Humphreys from the Nov. 1957 copy of *The Middle Way*. Mr. Humphreys' article is entitled *Theosophy and Buddhism*, and on page 37 he states that "... Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism*, still selling steadily" was "approved as 'pure' Buddhism by the Sangha of Ceylon."

Mr. Humphreys's statement contains both a misunderstanding and an error of fact. First of all, the approbation by the Mahathera Sumangala of the Ceylon Sangha was given only and exclusively for the small Sinhalese translation of Olcott's *Catechism for Children* and not for the enlarged English edition, now "selling steadily." Secondly, in a letter to Col. Olcott, dated 21st of September 1905, the above named spiritual head of the Sangha *officially* withdrew his approbation for the enlarged English edition by pointing out a whole series of doctrinal errors, which made the present edition unacceptable for the use in southern Schools of Buddhism.

Therefore, the Certificate of Approbation by the Mahathera of the Ceylonese Sangha, if it appears in Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism*, is misleading and should be deleted from all further editions of Olcott's book.

Fraternally yours,

Albert M. Fehring, F.T.S.,
Member, American Buddh.
Association (Chicago).

c/c: Mr. Humphreys.

* * * *

Dear Mr. Fehring,

Thank you for your letter of December 3rd enclosing a copy of your letter to the *Canadian Theosophist* of Decem-

ber 1st. I am not very interested in your comment about Olcott's BUDDHIST CATECHISM. I am aware that the Maha Thera Sumangala's approval was originally given to the Sinhalese translation of Olcott's CATECHISM. Nevertheless, succeeding generations of Buddhists in Ceylon have used succeeding editions of it, and I found, when I was in Ceylon in 1946, that the reputation of Colonel Olcott was still extremely high. Whatever may be included in present editions of the CATECHISM is no concern of mine.

Yours sincerely,
Christmas Humphreys.

BOOK REVIEW

Mithras: The Fellow in The Cap, by Esmé Wynne-Tyson, published by Rider and Company, London, 1958, 227 pp., price \$3.25.

Well annotated and scholarly, with bibliography and index, Esmé Wynne-Tyson's *Mithras: The Fellow in The Cap* begins by asking 'Who was Mithras?' and concludes by querying 'What has become of Christ?'

Both questions are satisfactorily answered without a backward glance at the esoteric Mithra of an earlier civilization as, in a stimulating account, she makes clear that Mithras, the invincible God of the Roman legions little by little infiltrated 'an obscure society of sincere, friendly and dedicated people' until that society became 'a symbiosis of paganism and Christianity'. This symbiosis superseded Mithraism as the official religion of Rome and found its ultimate apotheosis in Louis XIV, *Le Roi Soleil*. The steps by which this was accomplished should be noted with horror by every Theosophist who still hopes that the original grand message of the founders may be preserved, however obscurely, for a later age.

Esmé Wynne-Tyson points out that the Christ taught compassionate love and non-violence; he taught that the highest goal was the attainment of at-one-ment with an all-beneficent God, the loving Father of all. Or so we must believe if we study carefully the things which he actually said and taught. He himself was the Great Example for men who must, like him, cease to identify themselves with the animal creation and must, instead, put on the whole mind of God and know themselves for his spiritual sons. The historic Jesus was a simple, even comparatively unlearned man, and a strictly monotheistic teacher who by precept and example urged the individual to personal search for the Kingdom of God and obedience to the demands of the Sermon on the Mount and the Decalogue. His disciples were also simple men who met together, over a plain meal, 'to thank God for the advent of Truth brought to the world by His Son, Jesus Christ'.

Then, asks Esmé Wynne-Tyson, from whence have come the oriental robes, the jewels, the incense, and the teaching that man's salvation may be ensured by the fact that the Teacher had been hung on a Cross? Whence come these unceasing wars to spread his gospels and secure his church? And she answers that they have come from Mithras, the warrior Sun-God of the Roman legions.

Systematically Esmé Wynne-Tyson goes through the Gospels pin-pointing those later additions and perversions which mark each doctrinal compromise with the older, triumphant faith: The Miracle of the Marriage in Cana; The Cursing of the Fig Tree; The Sabbath Day; The Sacrament of Marriage; The Purging of the Temple; The Miracles of Healing; The Founding of the Church Itself; The Eucharist; The Crucifixion; The Resurrection; The Atonement; The Kingdom of God; The Parousia; and The Last Judgment. On

each occasion the world-transcending spiritual teachings of the Master were given an earthly garment borrowed from Mithras, but, says the author, 'it is bitterly ironical that in order to popularize the Creed of Christ it had to be perverted'. She goes on to add:

Jesus's immense contribution to the universal evolutionary process was his example; he was the transitional man, showing not only that the transition could be made, but how it could be made. Without such proof humanity would have no sense of direction, would not know in what its salvation consisted and could have no assurance that the thing could be done. (p. 139)

Not content with establishing Mithras as the moving spirit of the early Christian Church Esmé Wynne-Tyson succinctly describes the dispute between Bossuet and Fénelon when Quietism seriously challenged the Mithraic concept of world-domination by returning, through the teachings of the Spanish mystics, to the esoteric Christianity of world-transcendence. Unhappily Fénelon and Madame de Maintenon were unable to prevail upon the mind of Louis XIV and expediency as usual triumphed over truth. If it had been otherwise the history of Western Europe might conceivably have been altered:

With a truly repentant pacifist King insisting on justice for the people, lightening the burden of taxation, remedying social wrongs, there would have been no Voltaire and his Encyclopaedists, for there would have been no hypocritical Church or autocratic State to criticize and condemn. And without them and their influence there would have been no revolution to set a vogue for unlimited violence and rule by the lowest elements,

that culminated in the tyranny of Stalinism and the whole levelling down process of an atheistic, socialist age. The Creed of Christ has always called men to go higher in the evolutionary scale. The way of Mithras, or materialism, is to keep humanity at its present level and govern it by force and thought-control. (p. 211)

Do not be deceived by present-day atheism and agnosticism, says our author, Mithras is still with us for he, the god of the slain bull, flourishes upon the self-immolation required by science and rejoices in the brotherhood of 'Brother Ant, the co-worker, the fellow-cell'.

That Esmé Wynne-Tyson knows what has become of Christ is evident. He is still there waiting, as he has waited for nearly two thousand years, and as he will wait until the end of time, for those men and women who will discover for themselves, by practising the virtues He exemplified, that truly the Kingdom of God is at hand and is no farther than a breath away.

L. Gaunt.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME

(Continued from page 129)

universal religion, when there were no churches, no creeds, no sects . . . And, if it is shown that already in those ages which are shut out from our sight by the exuberant growth of tradition, human religious thought developed in uniform sympathy in every portion of the globe; then it becomes evident that born under whatever latitude, in the cold North or the burning South, in the East or the West, that thought was inspired by the same revelations, and man was nurtured under the protecting shadow of the same *Tree of Knowledge*."

(to be concluded)

THE GOLDEN STAIRS

(Continued from page 130)

fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. — *Matthew VII, 16-18.*

Again, in *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky translates:

Learn that no efforts, not the smallest—whether in right or wrong direction—can vanish from the world of causes. E'en wasted smoke remains not traceless. "A harsh word uttered in past lives is not destroyed, but ever comes again." The pepper plant will not give birth to roses, nor the sweet jessamine's silver star to thorn or thistle turn.

If one uses the Röntgen Rays of utter candor with himself in throwing light upon this question of reaping the results of his own sowing, one finds that there's a tendency to place in too remote a past, especially in some former incarnation, the sowing of the seeds of which we are at present reaping the unpleasant harvest. My own experience has been that most, though of course not all, of the difficulties and so-called 'personal injustices' which I have endured, can be attributed to thoughts entertained, emotions indulged, deeds committed, words spoken and adventures undertaken right here in this present life while incarnated in this body. Indeed, much that most of us suffer, I verily believe, can be traced back to the seeds sown within a few hours sometimes, often within a few days, generally within a few months, and nearly always, at least within a few years; though in some instances, to be sure, the so-called injustices which we endure—hopefully with courage because with knowledge of the law of consequences—do owe their origin to seeds sown in previous lives. Such knowledge should give us a philosophic basis for enduring all personal injustices with courage and equanimity.

Mang the Philosopher, the great expounder of Confucianism, best known in the West under the Latinized form of his name, Mencius, has given some inspiring thoughts to those who have to endure defeat and personal injustice:

When Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first disciplines his mind with suffering, and his bones and sinews with toil. It exposes him to want and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings. By all these methods it stimulates his mind, hardens him, and supplies his incompetencies.

One's thoughts turn to Lincoln, Dickens, Franklin, Columbus, Cervantes, Gandhi, Mohammed, and other heroes in less conspicuous rôles, who have rendered great services to mankind, after undergoing in the school of adversity such training as Heaven thus vouchsafed them. By no means is it always those who have the easiest berth to lie in who are the most favored of Heaven. Generally it is the baby-egos of the race who are born with silver spoons in their mouths. They are not strong enough to stand adversity's stern discipline nor to receive its great guerdon. The challenge, the lesson, and the reward of adversity are admirably told by Kipling in his immortal poem *If*—ending with the words, "You'll be a man, my son." Some years ago, when I recited these lines to my keen young nephew just out of high school, he commented sagely: "A man? You'll be a Master." He was right. It is truly masterly to be able to endure personal injustices with courage and equanimity.

'A Brave Declaration of Principles and a Valiant Defense of Those Who Are Unjustly Attacked'

Light is always shed upon our daily lives by anyone who, with calm conviction, bravely declares sound principles, even though they be for the time un-

popular ones. We think, for instance, of the lustré shed upon human nature by Emile Zola when he dared boldly to buck the whole of entrenched officialdom in France by his valiant defense of the wrongly accused Dreyfus. Though few of us will ever be so placed that we can as conspicuously make a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked as did this courageous Frenchman, still there are occasions in the lives of all of us when we can bravely declare our principles and thus shed some Theosophic light on daily living. In our own restricted spheres we can always declare for decency and generosity and understanding, and valiantly defend those who may be bullied or misrepresented or otherwise unjustly attacked. If we fail to do so, then, as John Massfield, England's Poet Laureate, in his verses entitled *A Creed*, which are an undiluted exposition of the Theosophic doctrines of Reincarnation and Karman—says in one couplet:

The brave word that I failed to speak
Will brand me dastard on the cheek.

And H. P. Blavatsky reminds us: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin." There are two passages in *The Mahatma Letters* which are appropriate to these two steps on the Golden Stairs—"a brave declaration of principles" and "a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked":

I believe the time fully come when social and moral safety demands that someone of the Theos. Soc. should speak the truth though the Himalaya fall on him.—*M.L.*, p. 204.

Those who have watched mankind through the centuries of this cycle, have constantly seen the details of this death-struggle between Truth and Error repeating themselves. Some of you Theosophists are now only wounded in your "honour" or your purses, but those who held the

lamp in preceding generations paid the penalty of their lives for their knowledge.—*M.L.*, p. 322.

'A Constant Eye to the Ideal of Human Progression and Perfection Which the Secret Science Depicts'

What is this 'ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts', and to which we are enjoined to keep a constant eye? We have been taught that it is the pilgrimage of the deathless center of consciousness in man, the immortal individuality or Monad, starting as an unselfconscious god-spark, at one with Spirit, and descending age after age through increasingly dense spheres of ethereal substance, until it reaches this earth-sphere, the densest of all, the most material. Here it goes through all the experiences of incarnate existence in life after life, learns all the lessons to be learned here, and then ascends along the luminous arc through countless aeons of time, progressing ever higher and higher, until it finally joins again the Spirit from which it emanated—not then as an unselfconscious god-spark, but as a fully self-conscious god, one of the spiritual rulers of the Universe. Thus, if we use the Christian terminology, the Monad ascends to become 'at one with the Father in Heaven', or, as we Theosophists say, it journeys to the portals of the Sun, and thence to its Parent Star. What a conception!

"These are the golden stairs, up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom."

Don't fret at bolts and bars—
You forged them all, you know,
By your own deeds, not by your stars,—
And you can shape the keys
To win your own release
From acts of long ago.

Laura Baldwin.

SECOND LOOK AT THE THIRD EYE

BY VICTOR ENDERSBY

A major part of the book is taken up with very detailed descriptions of Tibetan customs, costumes, and manners, some of which are unquestionably accurate, though bizarre from our own point of view. (Nearly everything in Tibet is that anyway.) Unfortunately the authentic portions are not evidential; one knows they are authentic by having read about them in reputable travel accounts; and an English plumber's offspring can read too. I am not in a good position to judge of all these points; the details are voluminous and I don't know enough about Tibet. Many of them may or may not be authentic. The students of Tibet who set the detective on Rampa and ran him down as Hoskins evidently didn't think too many of them were authentic.

Anyway, the impression it gives me is that all this is a build-up to sell the reader on the truth of the story. If so, it was a howling success. If it really was the work of just Cyril Hoskins, with no occult element added he has some capacities that could be developed in better directions. Maybe we have underestimated the potentialities of the English plumbing background. In general the conclusion is that *if* the book is written by an authentic lama—in or out of the body—it is a redcap lama, not one on the white side.

One finds some contradictions to known facts about Tibet; and one also finds some odd correlations, of a sort that come in casually and without the emphasis that one might expect.

I will touch on a few points:

(1) He ascribes the invasions of Tibet, first by Younghusband's British army, then by the Red Chinese, to greed for Tibetan mineral wealth; gold, according to him, practically paves the stream beds. He mentions silver and

uranium. It is true that there is mineral wealth—gold, silver, iron, copper, zinc, mercury, cobalt, borax, sulphur and some others. Reliable data is lacking on uranium—which would not have been an object of interest to Younghusband in 1904 anyway. Trade was opened up somewhat from what it had been, by Younghusband, but no attempt was made to establish British exploitation of the minerals. In 1888 Sikkim was attacked by a Tibetan force which was repelled by the British. The peace treaty provided for the opening of a trade port in Tibet. Tibet failed to live up to this and Younghusband invaded to enforce it. But it is well known that Tibet had always been considered a danger point for Russian invasion of India and that Britain was anxious to get into the country and exert some influence. As to the Red Chinese a half century later, who knows? Very likely to establish a threat to India themselves.

(2) He says kite flying is a popular sport in Tibet; he describes kite duels in which the flyers try to cut one another's strings with powdered glass glued on them; also mentions dragon-formed kites. This is quite authentic—for China. Other writers have failed to mention it in Tibet.

(3) Strictly English types of solecisms occur: ". . . any subordinate can say exactly what they think." (Meaning "any subordinate may say exactly what he thinks.") "It is better to treat a person according to their astrological type . . ." and "lays down" for "lies down." A foreigner will make mistakes in English but they will not be typical or standard grammatical errors such as made by the poorly educated, such as these. Here the plumber's son stands out.

(4) P. 140. In this edition at least he dips into "flying saucers" in a manner that fits into the cult pattern that I have mentioned; his "guru" told him that these "gods" who navigated them were watching earth "in much the same way as humans watch wild and dangerous animals in a zoo." He hints that they are from other planets. I have found that the original manuscript contained a chapter on flying saucers that was deleted by the publishers. That would be interesting!

(5) P. 174 et cirq: the famous kite riding monks. Here we have something: Tibetan ascetics making expeditions into the high mountains to ride man-bearing kites as a sport; in a single session of which two of them get messily killed with no particular interruption to the sport or concern on the part of the others! I wonder whether one should really have to discuss this? But the narrative is interesting; the natural wind tunnel used for this is one of the better descriptive passages; I have seen many such locations in the Rockies and Sierra. The kites described are box kites; about the turn of the century the flying of box kites was a great fad for a while. One enthusiast did put a man aloft on a string of them, and it was seriously proposed that they be used for military observation. But Rampa's box kites have wings on them. This, in the lack of warp devices or ailerons, creates the same aerodynamic instability that killed so many early would-be flyers and held the art at a standstill until the Wright brothers recognized the problem. Kites constructed like those described would more likely have left two of the lamas to get home, than to have killed only two of them. Nevertheless the description of proceedings is full of very convincing detail.

(6) P. 200. A breed of Siamese cats used to protect the temples. These cats were originally bred as "watch-cats" to

protect Siamese palaces. Other writers have not mentioned their use in Tibet. Does anyone know about this?

(7) P. 226. Everyone travels astrally, in sleep. This is incorrect. Normally the astral does not leave the body more than a few feet, if that.

(8) P. 228. The "Racers." This is the name given a class of "yogis" who travel across country on foot at great speed and for great distances, moving night and day, in a semi-trance. Alexandra David-Neel, who probably got deeper into Tibetan magic than anyone short of H.P.B., saw this in action and gives it in considerable detail, but with differences. Rampa says that it is done by controlling the weight of the body "(not levitation)" and indicates that other than that it is simply normal running. As described by Madame David-Neel, the runner glides across the ground, touching it with the tips of his toes only at intervals.

She should know; one of them came through her camp and was under close observation for a mile or so. Of course modifying the weight of the body is simply levitation and nothing else anyway. Rampa says the terrain must be monotonous, with nothing to break the trance-state. According to David-Neel, the runner goes up and down mountains and crosses streams with no difficulty—but does have an interesting limitation—he can travel only in a straight line from start to stop. This must pose a nice problem in navigation, or ballistics, or what-have-you, when a few hundred miles are concerned. (I wonder whether there is a connection with the Chinese idea that evil spirits travel only in straight lines?) One would gather from Rampa that about everybody in Tibet can travel by astral projection; he says that this "running" has the advantage that you can carry some baggage with you. I don't think I'll try to comment on this.

(9) On P. 229 he perpetrates one of the hoariest superstitions of back-country England and America: "Have you ever tried to lift a heavy object when your lungs were empty of air? Try it and you will discover it to be almost impossible. Then fill your lungs as much as you can, hold your breath, and lift with ease." Well, I just checked with a 100 lb. sack of cement. Is that heavy enough? The only difference I found was in the other direction—when I filled my lungs as much as I could they got in my way. Maybe it works with people with less lung expansion—or more suggestibility. Suppose we all try it and see what kind of an argument we can get up?

(10) On page 229 also he says "correct breathing enables Tibetan adepts to sit naked on ice, seventeen thousand feet or so above sea-level, and keep hot, so hot that the ice is melted and the adept freely perspires." Now this art is known as "tumo". I wonder why he almost never uses a Tibetan word for these distinctively Tibetan things? It is an interesting story, but it isn't done by breathing. Readers who suffer from cold feet might look it up in the David-Neel book ("Mystery and Magic in Tibet"), but on the whole it is simpler to buy an extra blanket.

(11) P. 249; the Atlantean bodies. Rampa correctly claims that the sea once covered much of Tibet—in fact he says it was once an Atlantean seaside resort, of which I feel a little dubious. He says that he was shown the preserved bodies of three Atlanteans, two men and a woman, the former 15 feet high and the latter ten feet. They were in gold; he does not make it clear whether they were gold-plated bodies or gold statues. The description is interesting: "Their heads were large and somewhat conical at the top. The jaws were narrow, with a small, thin-lipped mouth. The nose was long and thin, while the

eyes were straight and deeply recessed." Now this is an excellent description of the Easter Island statues; but he does not make that connection. Its omission could be taken as favourable evidence—if one did not suspect that a dugpa adept might be just smart enough to let Theosophists make that connection themselves. The *Mahatma Letters* refer to Atlantean remains in a Himalayan cave—but as *skeletons*.

(12) On P. 252 he perpetrates a real whopper—an assault on science and Theosophy alike. He claims that the Atlantean disaster was caused by a wandering planet from outer space that struck the earth such a blow as to knock it out of its orbit and set it rotating in the opposite direction. Even if one does not credit Madame Blavatsky's account—a strictly planetary submersion caused by forces within the globe itself—this yarn is physically impossible. It would imply to start with that the earth was rotating in the opposite direction from all the other planets whose rotation is known. But physically an impact of that magnitude would render both earth and the planet molten or incandescent. There would not be the slightest possibility of any life at all surviving. He claims that he saw this in a vision of initiation. This is either pure hokum or the vision was a hypnotic one. But the radical contradiction of Theosophic doctrines fits into the pattern aforesaid. Nowhere does he mention the Teshu Lama, a very important spiritual figure in Tibet, though he claims personal close acquaintance with the Dalai Lama. Why? Of course on matters like the brotherhood of man, fair dealing, self-control, and the rest, he says all the right things—as who doesn't?

Which brings me to the series of recitals that point to dugpa origin of the book.

(1) His adventures as a war com-

batant would be against everything I know of the obligations of a right hand lama.

(2) He separates Buddhism from lamaism and calls Buddhism pessimistic and gloomy, "A religion of despair". Now true lamaism is *Buddhism*; the Mahatmas proclaimed themselves Buddhists; Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott did so likewise, even took *Pansil*, evidently with the full approval of their Teachers. And this is a very shallow view to take of Buddhism. Dr. Evans-Wentz, who studied it, not as a mystic but as a scientific investigator, remarks on its *joyous optimism*; and the most naturally happy man I ever met was a Buddhist monk from Nepal—Tibet's neighbour.

This accusation is sometimes levelled against Theosophy as well as Buddhism; it is distinctly a dugpa line and often allied with attempts to draw people into the dubious "joys" of hatha yoga.

(3) He claims that hypnotism is a normal method of teaching in the temples; refers to hypnotism frequently and approvingly. He speaks of the use of a Tibetan form of "Judo" used to make people unconscious for operations, etc.; and claims that those who were taught this had "hypnotic blocks" imposed on them to prevent abuse of the power. One would then conclude that the long and hard discipline of many lives imposed upon right hand chelas to prevent abuse of powers could have been avoided all these thousands of years by this simple method! The term "hypnotic block" used in this manner is part of the science fiction jargon that has grown up in recent years.

(4) The nasty treatment of neophytes in lamaseries by underlings. It is true that the right hand chela has to undergo terrible trials, sometimes costing him life or sanity in case of failure. But these are precipitations of his own karma, and on a grand scale. The petty

nagging, meanness, cheap tortures and sadism described are a far cry from this.

(5) He claims that Red Hat and Yellow Hat monks are merely members of different orders in lamaism, the chief difference in practice being that Red Hats are allowed to marry. There is no hint that the Red Hats are dugpas, black magicians, the rootstock of all the occult evil in the world. This is a dead giveaway. If the book is written merely by Cyril Hoskins, this could be due to ignorance of the facts and the observation by travelers that Red Hats and Yellow Hats are seen to mix freely in the temples. The war between the two is on the spiritual and astral planes—not the physical. In any case this puts him out of court Theosophically.

(6) He refers frequently to the "astral planes"; but never refers to higher states or the dangers of the "lower Iddhi".

(7) One of the most serious points is his propagation of the death-bed practices of the so-called Tibetan "Book of the Dead," the *Bardo Thodol*; though he does not refer to that work itself. If he is Cyril Hoskins, he got this from it. It is an authentic description of Tibetan practice, but *which kind of practice?*

Let us compare: in this ritual, as death approaches, the dying man is attended by a priest who talks to him constantly, from then until three days after death (Rampa does not mention the three days) giving him directions, instructions, descriptions of the various beings, gods, apparitions, he is meeting in the astral world on his journey. These apparitions seem to have a stereotyped symbolism in Tibet, which is explained to the beneficiary—or victim, who is not left for one moment during the death transition without this dogma pounding into his ears.

Now hear the authentic teaching of the real Mahatmas:

"We create ourselves our *Devachan* as our *avitchi* while yet on earth and mostly during the latter days and even moments of our intellectual, sentient lives. That feeling which is the strongest in us at that supreme hour; when, as in a dream, the events of a long life, to their minutest detail, are marshalled in the greatest order in a few seconds of our vision—that feeling will become the fashioner of our bliss or woe, the *life principle* of our future existence . . ." and "The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse . . . the man may often appear dead . . . yet from the last pulsation . . . the brain *thinks* and the Ego lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a death bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflections upon the veil of the future." *Mahatma Letters*.

Thus—the practice of the *Bardo Thodol* is a device for aborting the whole fruition of a lifetime, confusing the after-death states hopelessly, and throwing the victim into some strange and abnormal limbo from which he will be reborn more tightly than ever in the throes of the dogmas of red lamaism. It is of course his karma, a part of which is signified by finding himself in the hands of a Red Hat priest to start with at death. Heaven help us if that notion is ever introduced here in a practical way! Yet it has an appeal to the weak, the fearful of death, who are presented with an "infallible" guidance through the ordeal of death as in life.

The post-mortem vision is the one moment of the life-cycle when we see the true value of our past life as it really

has been, free from all error and personal limitations, and thus lay the basis for a better course and brighter life next time. It is the one moment of clear escape from all religious dogma, and freedom to see the Real as it is. Without it our reincarnations become just what the critics of the doctrine hold them to be—a dreary meaningless round of repetition of ancient folly and darkness. To interfere with that moment in this manner must be one of the greatest crimes against the soul.

The discrepancies and contradictions between these teachings and those of Madame Blavatsky and the Mahatmas sum up to quite a total; and besides the deleterious effect in themselves of some of these items they work against the reliability of H.P.B. and the Mahatmas. You cannot credit both. Hence those who accept Lobsang Rampa cannot accept Theosophy whether students of today or the potent Tomorrow.

More could be said, but the above should be sufficient proof that whether written by a plumber's son, a live lama, or a dead dugpa, the "Third Eye" leads on the left-hand path. It is impossible for a skeptical non-believer in the occult to credit anything but the plumber's son; many Theosophists will take the same view, and it may be true. My own inclination toward the live left-hand lama or dead dugpa is based largely on those private tape recordings. However, there is another significant development. People have begun to get "messages" via the astral plane, from "Lobsang Rampa". The real Tibetan who took over the Hoskins body—or if that was not what happened, some such entity who decided to "cash in" on the situation? Either is possible. The book, whatever its origin, is a left-hand book.

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