

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XL, No. 3

TORONTO, JULY-AUGUST, 1959

Price 35 Cents

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LIFE AS EDUCATION

BY MOLLIE GRIFFITH

Students of Theosophy are all familiar with the teaching of Reincarnation, but in articles and papers we usually touch upon this subject to some extent, because these may fall into the hands of persons to whom this teaching is not familiar and who might be puzzled upon meeting the concept for the first time.

Briefly, we believe that life is like a school, to which we return over and over again, passing from grade to grade till its lessons are learnt and we are ready to pass on to a greater sphere of existence. To go to an ordinary school and observe the differences in the pupils is to do on a smaller scale what a person with a knowledge of the teaching of Reincarnation does on a larger scale when observing the world in general. We see in a school all conditions of pupils, from the seniors with their acquired knowledge and sense of responsibility, to the new pupils who have little or none. We see some excelling in one thing and some in another. We see some being "kept in" for some infringement of the school rules, while others are out playing. None of this surprises us because we see everything in relation to the age and ability of the pupils and to the events which have taken place at the school on previous days and years.

We know that the younger boys and girls work their way up to the higher grades and that the one who is being kept in today will be out playing tomorrow. We see masters too, who come to teach, not specifically to learn.

It is the lack of this same understanding in viewing the world in general, that makes this world so puzzling to those who believe that we live only one life on earth.

We might as well look at a school with its manifold activities, and its groups of unevenly developed pupils, with the idea that they only spend one day there, as look at the world, with its manifold activities and its millions of unevenly developed people in all their varying environments and believe that one life on earth is all that they ever experience.

I do not want to go into this any further, as this is not a direct article on Reincarnation although this teaching has an important bearing on it. First let us look around the world and try and sense what are the various aims of its manifold population and I think that on the whole we shall find that most people, at least in the West, seek to get what they call "the most out of life." To "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die" in perhaps a more refined sense is still a popular theory and this

is not surprising since we have been brought up to think that we have only one life on earth, only one chance to taste of its beauties and pleasures. It is true that something was added to this, namely that an eternal future of bliss or its reverse would be our lot depending on how we lived this life, but our apathy towards this palpable injustice shows that neither our minds, nor our hearts, could accept it.

Nevertheless, despite all this, we do see people living very fine lives, and this is true whether those people are Christians, or Atheists, Buddhists or agnostics, or followers of any other form of belief or non-belief. They instinctively live up to a very high standard, even if they cannot explain why they do so, and this seems to be to emphasize the fact taught by all great Teachers and Philosophers, that *within* each one of us, a guide for our actions is to be found. Truth, as Browning says, is *within* us all.

What then, it might be asked, is the use of our great Teachers and Philosophers, and the answer seems to me to be, that their object is to inspire and help us to find our own Truth, our own guide, our own inner God, as they have done before us. They are like people, who, having travelled the road that we all have to travel, come to us and tell us what pitfalls to avoid, what equipment we shall need on the journey, what useless baggage we need to get rid of before we start. The special message stressed by our Theosophical Teachers is that the rules of the road are fair, and that every human being or non-human being, has time and opportunity to reach the goal.

Let us imagine a race of people living in the valleys and on the lower slopes at the foot of a mountain, and let every day they live there symbolize a life lived on earth. As children, they play

and eat and sleep and quarrel and live a carefree life. They begin to grow up and they start to explore. They climb some of the lower slopes; they walk by the river bed; they follow the highways and byways to see where they lead, and they have many adventures, pleasant and unpleasant. Then they grow tired of this too, so they climb a little higher where the air is more rarefied, where there are less people, and one day they meet a man who has climbed, or nearly climbed, to the summit of the mountain and he tells them wondrous things, wondrous but a little awesome. He cannot describe the glory of the view, or the sense of freedom, peace and purity experienced there, but he inspires his hearers with the conviction that life lived in the valleys is darkness compared to life lived on the heights. Then when they begin asking him how they too can get there, he tells them chiefly of all the things that they will have to get rid of, of all the familiar things they will have to leave behind. He tells them, too, of the equipment they must have to face the dangers and difficulties of the ascent. Then, when some look discouraged he reminds them that there are many paths to the mountain top, some easier, therefore slower, than others, and in any case all of them can start getting rid of those things which they can never take with them, and improving their essential equipment, until one day he says you will find your own path to the top of the mountain.

Now, it goes without saying that an elementary paper such as this is not addressed to those who have already decided to take the short but steep road up the mountain side, this road which is called the Path of Tao, and which is described in an Eastern Scripture as being sharper than the edge of a razor. Such people are, in an evolutionary sense, far beyond most of us. We are

the people who are a little tired of the valleys and the lower slopes with their fascinating roads and byways that so often seem to lead to nowhere. We are tired, too, of the failures of the many schemes put forward by the leaders of our valley people, which are supposed to cure our many ills, but which never do. We are, in fact, growing up. So we study religion, perhaps, or philosophy, or we listen to those whom we feel have some inner knowledge or faith which we lack, or perhaps we find in the teachings of Theosophy the way which will open the door to our understanding.

Now the teachings of Theosophy are both simple and obscure, or rather we might say that in them are to be found simple and beautiful ideas which any of us, even the most elementary searchers after Truth, can understand, as well as teachings to inspire the older pupils in the school of life.

The teaching that should appeal to all is, that perfect justice rules the world and every living unit in it, and that there is no room anywhere for accident, chance or ill luck. It should appeal to all, but actually in our Western world we have been so imbued with the idea of someone else bearing our burdens and being sacrificed for our sins, that we are a little afraid of the idea of perfect justice, particularly for ourselves.

The idea is so different from what we have been brought up with, that on first coming in contact with it, it often happens that we spend a great deal of time arguing as to whether there is not some way in which we can mitigate or alter the results coming to us from previous actions.

We hear much about the fact that we are just as much answerable for our thoughts and emotions as we are for actions, and if this is a new idea or one

that we have never considered seriously, no wonder it gives us food for thought and some anxiety. We feel that we have often transgressed the law of life which is harmony, in our present life, and we hate to think how much we might have transgressed it in previous ones. I heard a good deal of discussion about this a few weeks ago and one argument in particular sticks in my mind. Someone suggested that if a man committed a murder and then afterwards was filled with remorse he might wipe the murder off his slate by leading a life of self sacrifice, perhaps by being a Coast Guard and finally giving his life in saving the life of someone else.

Now, personally speaking, and of course all our ideas on Theosophy are our own limited interpretations of these ideas, I do not think that that is the best attitude to take regarding the law of Karma, though most of us have played with such ideas, for in it is an element of fear. The law itself is not so hard to understand. It is simply this: the law of life is harmony or equilibrium, and when we disturb it on any plane, physical, emotional or mental, either intentionally or in ignorance the law reacts on us as disharmony which we call pain. Now, we have all created disharmony many, many times, and since we are not such very old pupils in life's school it is not unlikely that we shall do so again, even a good many times, so instead of taking deliberate means merely to save ourselves from the results of our actions would it not be better to strengthen our characters in every way we can and widen our understanding, so that when these painful results of our own actions appear we shall meet them with courage and understanding, knowing that they are necessary for our growth. Of course we should try to right wrongs

we have committed but not with the sole object of saving ourselves from pain.

Within each one of us there is a guiding spirit and this guiding spirit is able to judge impersonally and can be trusted to provide us with the exact set of circumstances that will give us the opportunity to pay our debts and learn our lessons. The important point for us being not what those circumstances are but how we meet them, and though some circumstances do seem to us almost unbearable, we know, in the light of our teachings, that the sooner we absorb the lesson they are intended to teach, the sooner we shall be free from such circumstances.

There are many things, I feel, that we can do to help ourselves to meet with courage the misfortunes and difficulties which meet all of us during our many lives on earth and at our stage one of the most important is to try and gain a true sense of proportion and of values. A study of Theosophy should help us greatly here, for it expands our vision and shows us what is important and what is not important, and one of the things that is not so important as we had hitherto conceived is that our lives, or the lives of those dear to us, should run on too easy or even a keel. There are other things which are not so important as we had considered them either, such things as worldly success, fame, popularity or riches.

When we were evolutionary children we had little sense of the real purpose of life, and these things meant a lot to us, perhaps they do still, but we are growing up and should begin to see that the things that separate us and make us feel different from others are the childish things that we must learn to set no store by. If they should come to us we must see them in their true value and remain unchanged by them, for the aim

of personal success has to be replaced by that of the impersonal life, and instead of wanting to be someone in our own right, we should now aim at being the channel of a greater life. We can call that greater life what we will, the Christ spirit, the Buddha within, the Higher Self, or God, but when we have cleared away the rubbish in our natures, and have got rid of the ugly spots, so that we can really act as a channel for this higher life, then we shall have climbed to the top of our mountain. The mountain, needless to say, is within each one of us.

Now, in thinking about and observing all the different types of humanity that make up our world, there is one special group to whom I wish we could make real our teachings of Theosophy and that is to that vast number of people who feel themselves to be failures and rather useless. They plod along and possibly keep a cheerful face but inwardly they are depressed. They see other people travelling far and wide and leading a full and interesting life, but they seem to have nothing. They may have dreams and visions, but they see no chance of their fulfillment, and so they go wearily on till their smile becomes mechanical rather than an expression of pleasure or mirth. They are like the boy who is being kept in at school while others are playing, but without any knowledge that there will be a tomorrow.

The tragedy of their lives is that they cannot see any reason or purpose in the sacrifices they have to make, the monotony they endure, or the responsibilities that fall on them. As well ask a person to enjoy hours of practising scales and arpeggios on the piano without any hope of improving his musical ability, or telling someone to go into strict physical training without any hope of becoming physically fit. Now suppose that we all knew that life on

earth is lived for the purpose of growth, then our attitude could be very different. We could then accept life's challenge, knowing that all experience is a prelude to something greater and we could train our instruments or faculties just as an artist trains his hands or his vocal chords so that one day he may truly express the music that wells up within him.

There is another thought here which is very important. We may have a very dull or monotonous outer life, but except in rare circumstances, we can all cultivate a rich inner life.

I remember reading, when I was very young, about a girl who said to her uncle, "Uncle Sam, what a terribly dull life you lead," and he answered, "Yes, my child, but think of the rich inner life." Although the phrase stuck in my mind, I never quite knew what it meant, but now in the light of Theosophy, I am beginning to understand.

Never let us forget that within each one of us is this guiding spirit. We have to become ever more and more aware of it, and learn how to come in touch with it and once we catch even the faint whisper of its voice, no other pursuit, we are told, will ever again give us complete satisfaction. Mr. Perkins, the National President of the Adyar Theosophical Society in America, was speaking here a little while ago, and to illustrate this point he cited one of Aesop's fables:

"An ant was hustling very busily backwards and forwards one day, when he saw a chrysalis within which he could just see the end of a caterpillar. The ant was full of pity for this creature, which could not move as he did, so he congratulated himself on his own good fortune. A few days later a beautiful butterfly touched the ant with the tip of its wing and said, 'Look at me. I can come down to earth, or soar into

the heavens. I have more freedom than you'."

Now, most of us are like the ant. We hustle backwards and forwards, unceasingly taken up with our own affairs so that we never take time to grow the wings that will enable us to soar to higher planes, to the only true freedom there is. Now the question always arises here as to how this can be done, especially by busy people, many of whom have to earn their own living. How can they find time to make such an effort to get into conscious touch with this inner guiding spirit. First, of course, we have to grant the possibility of the existence of such a guiding spirit, but having done this how shall we proceed?

This is something, I imagine, we shall all have to work out for ourselves. It is the goal towards which our many experiences on earth are leading us, and like the ascent to the top of the mountain it will be accomplished by each of us in our own individual way, for, of course, it is the same thing. There are, however, many hints and much advice given on this subject and we would be foolish indeed to disregard it, seeing it is offered by those who have and are making this the main object of their lives. We must not be like the people who say that because they cannot give a thousand dollars to a worthy cause they will not give one. Because we may not yet have decided to take the Kingdom of heaven by storm there is no reason that we should not do something to make us ready for that mighty effort when that day or that life arrives.

If we are honest we know that every day provides us with opportunities for growth, even the busiest of us.

Now, the most important and the

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MITHRA — THE FRIEND

Esme Wynne-Tyson

In my recently published book, *MITHRAS: The Fellow in the Cap*, reviewed in *The Canadian Theosophist* Jan.-Feb. 1959, I dealt with the Cult of Mithras in the degenerate form it assumed after its contact with Western barbarism, when Mithras, described in the *Zend-Avesta* as "truth-speaking and a hater of lies", a wholly beneficent god of Light who fought the wars of Ahura Mazda (the Good Mind) against Ahriman (the Father of Lies) in the purely spiritual realms, was brought very factually to earth by the Western materialists and used to inspire the Roman legionaries and many famous warriors to feats of daring, endurance and conquest on the battle-fields of the Empire-Builders.

The materialization of exalted spiritual concepts is always dangerous. It has been a persistent feature of exoteric religion with often fatal results. But there could scarcely have been a greater *Volte face* than that of turning Mithra, the sun-god, whose Persian name MIHR means "The Friend", and whose whole purpose was to bless humanity, into the warrior-god whose demands for self-discipline, physical courage, non-attachment, and insensitivity enabled the Roman Legionaries so effectively to subdue and conquer the Western world. For the more that is learned of this so long and carefully concealed cult, the more obvious becomes the inspired nature of some of its basic teachings derived from Zoroastrianism, which taught that the Supreme Being is the Good Mind, and that those who entertain only good thoughts are protected thereby from any attacks of Ahriman, the fallen angel and Father of Lies, who, in his relation to deity, is as the shadow to the sun. This concept

has an obvious affinity with the Platonic conception of Reality as Divine Mind and The Good, with Neo-Platonism and with the Vedantic definition of That Which Is as 'Pure Consciousness'. It also coincides with the views of such modern scientists as Eddington who wrote that "the stuff of the world is mind-stuff", and Sir James Jeans who tells us that "the universe can best be pictured . . . as consisting of pure thought."

Although Zoroastrianism is usually described as a dualistic system, it hardly seems more dualistic than a Christianity which teaches the existence and power of a devil. Indeed, the New Testament description of this entity (or non-entity) as "the Father of Lies" suggests that Judaism borrowed this concept, as it borrowed so much else, from the Persian and Babylonian religions. And it has been said that Zoroaster himself was a monotheist who regarded Ahura Mazda as the Supreme Power and visualized a time when, by the perpetual maintenance of good thoughts in the human consciousness, their opposite, and with them their author, would be naughted, reduced to nothingness, and the Good Mind seen as ALL; a concept which might be said to be found in the philosophies of most of the greatest moral teachers of the human race.

Like Taoism and Pythagoreanism, and the great Indian religions, Mithraism taught the oneness and continuity of life, and the enduring essence of all sentient beings which, to the Indian, is known as the *Atman*. In the Persian Faith it was known as the *Fravashi*. As L. Patterson writes:

The Fravashi was independent of the circumstances of life and death,

an immortal part of the individual which existed before man and out-lived him. If this is so, the ancient Persians believed in the pre-existence of the soul. On the other hand, the impure soul is said to go into the bodies of animals. This view would be similar to the doctrine of metempsychosis or reincarnation, as held by the Pythagoreans and the Buddhists.¹

It was this idea, according to Porphyry, who is one of our chief authorities on the subject of the Mithraic cult, that accounted for the animal masks worn at the initiation ceremonies, indicating the twelve degrees of initiation, or of spiritual evolution, and ranging from the Soldier to the heavenward-soaring Eagle, the Bird of the Sun.

In the *De Abstinencia* Porphyry writes of the Persian religion:

In all the highest grades the doctrine of metempsychosis is held, which also is apparently signified in the mysteries of Mithra; for these through the living creatures reveal to us symbolically our community of nature with them.

This belief, based on the instinctive feeling of man's kinship with the lesser animals has, of course, been rationalized by the modern theory of evolution, and it was widespread in the ancient world. In the East it led to a compassionate and humane attitude towards the lesser creatures, and to a general reverence for life. Plotinus writes of it:

Humanity is poised midway between gods and beasts, and inclines now to the one order, now to the other; some men grow like to the divine, others to the brute, the greater number stand neutral. Those that have maintained the human level

are men once more. Those that have lived wholly to sense become animals . . . If, on the contrary, the Man is able to follow the leading of his highest spirit, he rises; he lives that spirit; that noblest part of himself to which he is being led becomes sovereign in his life.²

This is a recognizable description of the Mithraic symbolism, showing man as evolving through the degrees of initiation from the cave of physical existence to the heavenly realms—a concept common to all the Mystery religions.

It is interesting to note that many evolutionists of the present day are teaching that evolution is not inevitable, and that devolution is also possible if man does not live up to his highest potentialities. Ouspensky went so far as to suggest that too much socialization may send humanity literally back to the termitary.

The idea of the continuity of life was not only a feature of the Eastern and Greco-Roman Faiths; it is also found in the earliest Christian teachings. Jesus apparently saw nothing to rebuke in the implication that he might be a reincarnation of an earlier prophet. Indeed, in *Matthew 17: 10-13*, we find him confirming the belief that John the Baptist was Elias reborn. This ancient teaching survived for centuries in the Early Church and was strongly supported by Origen, while as late as the beginning of the 5th Century A.D. Synesius, Bishop of Cyrene was praying, "Father, grant that my soul may be merged into Light and be no more thrust into the illusion of earth." It was only during the reign of the Emperor Justinian that the idea of metempsychosis was declared anathema by a Church Council assembled in Constantinople, and re-

1. *Mithraism and Christianity*, by L. Patterson, M.A. (Cambridge University Press).

2. PLOTINUS: *The Enneads*, Trans. by Stephen Mackenna (Faber and Faber Ltd.).

placed with the illogical conception of a soul originating with the birth of each body, and somehow managing to achieve immortality, despite the rule that what has a beginning must also have an end.

Unfortunately the theory of the oneness of Being that led to reverence for life in the East was perverted and debased by the Western exponents of Mithraism. Mithras' slaying of the Bull, which metaphysically meant the conquest of man over the brute still within his own nature, degenerated into the sacrificial slaying of the external animal, the obscenities of the Taurobolium, and, in the present age, the Bullfight. Julian the Apostate, one of the most ardent Mithraists, gave praises to heaven, in a letter to a friend, that he had been able to sacrifice hecatombs of oxen to his Deity. Yet the idea underlying this pagan butchery was the need for purification, symbolized in the Christian Faith by the Baptism recorded in the first chapter of *Mark*. In the *Vendidad Farg.* V. 21, we read:

Purity is for man, next to life, the greatest good, that purity that is procured by the law of Mazda to him who cleanses his own self with good thoughts, words and deeds.

The demand for chastity was a notable feature of even the Roman version of Mithraism, a fact which surprised Cumont who pointed out that militarism is seldom synonymous with chastity. But in an evolutionary religion purity must obviously be an important feature of the conquest over the beast.

Dominion over matter by mind and will was as much a part of Mithraic discipline as it was of that of the Stoics, and has survived in some modern mental systems. It produced hardy, courageous and disciplined warriors, such as Mithridates VII considered by Cicero to be "the greatest monarch who

ever sat on the throne." But there is reason to believe that before the time of its Western materialization, the power of the Good Mind over matter had also been used in a more constructive and humane manner, namely, for spiritual healing. For we read in the *Zend-Avesta*:

One may heal with holiness, one may heal with the law, one may heal with the knife, one may heal with herbs, one may heal with the Holy Word; among all these remedies this one is the healing one that heals with the Holy Word; this one it is that will best drive away sickness from the body of the faithful: for this one is the best healing of all remedies.

And in a collection of magical charms by Zosimus we find:

Let me then also exalt heaven's real gift, which alone in our daily experience rises above the material, for this is the medicine that is potent to heal, the Mithraic mystery.

In the Eastern form of Mithraism, the deity was not, as Kipling later hailed him, a soldier, except in the sense that Truth wars with error. He was the wholly beneficent Mediator between man and the most High God. As Cumont writes in *The Mysteries of Mithra*:

It was Mithra, the protector of truth that presided over the judgment of the soul after its decease. It was he, the mediator, that served as a guide to his faithful ones in their courageous ascent to the empyrean; he was the celestial father that received them in his resplendent mansion, like children who had returned from a distant voyage.

It would seem that Mithra, originally the friend of all, became, in the imperialistic West, the particular friend and patron of Kings and Emperors, bringing them victory in war. It was he,

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THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME

(6) Science—Collated by T. H. Redfern

The first by-laws of our Society (Oct. 30, 1875) set forth its objects in simple scientific terms—"to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe"; but it was made clear that the Inspirers of its founding propounded conceptions of those laws which went far beyond the "exact science" of the day. "The Society . . . expects its fellows . . . to oppose the materialism of science" (1878). When the "more ardent exponents" of materialistic science "attempt to wrench the formation of Kosmos and its *living* Forces from Spirit, and to attribute all to blind Matter . . . the Occultists claim the right of disputing and calling in question their theories".

Theosophy challenges only scientific error, and welcomes every contribution to true knowledge. "Every true fact is part and parcel of Theosophy." (H. P. B.) "There can be no possible conflict between the teachings of Occult and so-called exact Science, wherever the conclusions of the latter are grounded on a substratum of unassailable fact". Provided correct inferences are drawn from accurate premisses, "every Theosophist and Occultist welcomes respectfully and with due admiration", the scientists' contributions "to the domain of cosmological law". "Theosophy is . . . the ally of honest science, as distinguished from much that passes for *exact*, physical science, so long as the latter does not poach on the domain of psychology and metaphysics".

Physical science tends to materialism by its self-imposed bondage to data derived through the physical senses. The original programme for our Society included: "to oppose materialism . . . by demonstrating the existence of occult forces unknown to science, in nature". In quoting a phrase

by Dr. Balfour Stewart about what may be "beyond the scrutiny of the human senses", an Adept Brother commented: "Of *physical* 'human senses' he must mean, since he knows little, if anything, of any other senses".

Here is the crux of the issue. Occult science goes beyond physical science because it goes beyond the physical senses. Furthermore it is "at war with the whole current practice . . . of scientific investigation", because it declares that whatever can be learned through the physical senses is in the nature of "illusory effects, transitory *secondary* consequences of the real underlying fact . . . for all the forms of this world and its material combinations are but pictures in the great dissolving view of evolution".

"The field of scientific investigation is . . . bounded by physical nature. When once its limits are reached, enquiry must stop, and their work be recommenced" . . . turning "their 'matter' over and over again; . . . but . . . the daring explorer, who would probe the inmost secrets of Nature, must transcend the narrow limitations of sense, and transfer his consciousness into the region of Noumena and the sphere of Primal Causes. To effect this he must develop faculties which, save in rare and exceptional cases, are absolutely dormant in the constitution" of Europeans and Americans.

These faculties the initiated Eastern Adepts claim to possess; so when Professor Crookes wrote of "a world . . . we can never enter . . . and in which we must be content to observe and experiment from without", meaning the realm of subatomic physics in which radioactivity takes place, his Adept commentator declared: "we have long since

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NOTES ON REUNIFICATION

Judging from the reviews of and comments upon Mr. F. Pierce Spinks' book, *Theosophists, Reunite!* we would assume that Theosophists are regarding this plan with as little enthusiasm as the Protestant Churches are viewing Pope John's invitation to an Ecumenical Council. Some of the objections are:

1. The past sins, theosophical and otherwise, of now-deceased members of the Adyar Theosophical Society were so heinous that joining that Society is unthinkable unless there is first denunciation of those members and the systems of thought which are promulgated in their books, and a return to the Theosophy of H.P.B. and the Masters.
2. There is no need for one united *organization*; the students of Blavatsky Theosophy, who are in every Society, constitute in themselves the "organized, living and healthy body" and the "numerous and united body of people ready to welcome the next torch-bearer of Truth" referred to by H.P.B. in the last chapter of *The Key to Theosophy*.
3. One single society would be vulnerable to political manipulation by power seekers.
4. Separate bodies maintaining friendly relations with one another but each following its own line of endeavour in its own way, can do more for Theosophy than one large organization.
5. Communication between the various societies and the members of the different organizations is by no means as rare as Mr. Spinks claims. The old rigid lines of separation are disappearing and over the coming years we can expect that co-operative tendencies will increase. In this natural and normal process, a

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AU REVOIR

A Message

(John Tyssul Davis, whose obituary notice was printed in "The Inquirer" of February 21, was a remarkable man. He died at the age of ninety, and was described as saying good-bye to his ministerial colleagues, four years before, like a King. He left behind him for his friends a message which he describes as "The Last Little Message". It is printed below. Tyssul Davis, at one time in his career, was for over two years the Principal of a Buddhist College in Ceylon.)

My dear Friends: When you receive this note, it will be an intimation that the writer will have passed out of sight, and started upon that journey through the spheres, back homeward. It is nonsense to talk of a journey, for, as Swami Vivekananda says: "Where is the place to which it shall go, when all space is in the soul?" Beginning the post-mortem existence, then, shall we say? He may not be aware of the actual passage over. He will probably just wake up in time-space of another dimension, in accordance with natural law, and with some surprise that he should still be the same person as he used to be, *minus* his physical body. He can already anticipate the tremendous release, no longer to be hampered by the mortal coil. He may be met and welcomed by a few folk interested in his birth to their world, for he has outlived so many of his companions. He may spend some time in what have been called *Homes of Rest*, to recuperate after his change, after which will begin the by no means easy task of Rehabilitation, consisting of strenuous endeavours of converting or translating the earth experiences into a form that may be imagined to be a distillation, or sublimation, of the accumulated material into an essence capable of being

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NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

The Convention is over and I am happy to announce that it was an unqualified success. A full report appears elsewhere in this issue of the magazine. Now that the ice has been broken and experience gained there seems to be no valid reason why such an event should not be held again. It was evident from the enthusiasm displayed that it was a long-felt want and vivified brotherhood and theosophical work in a marvellous manner. And by the same token I do not see any reason why this Eastern Convention should not be duplicated by our Western Lodges. Will the West consider this matter? I think it would be productive of much good.

* * * *

My three weeks' visit to England was very enjoyable. Besides visiting relatives and renewing acquaintance with the past, I spoke at five Theosophical centres and met many new friends. I would like to expatiate on it but space forbids; however, I have a curtailed report, for those interested, in this issue.

* * * *

At headquarters, besides Convention, we have had quite a few out-of-town visiting lecturers: among them Mr. Iverson L. Harris of Los Angeles, Dr. R. G. Katsunoff, Montreal; Mr. David Wallis, F.B.I.S. (Space Flight Scientist) and Mr. F. P. Spinks, San Francisco (*Theosophists, Reunite!*). With such a variety of outlook there is little chance of anyone getting into a rut!

* * * *

I regret to announce the death of Miss Helen Mills of the Montreal Lodge who passed away 29th May, 1959. She was an old and valued member having joined the Society in 1923.

The following members have been demitted: Mrs. Nancy Creeth, Canyon

Lodge to the American Section 12. 11. 58; Mr. and Mrs. Duguay, Montreal Lodge to the Can. Federation July, 1958; Mr. I. Deimel, Member at Large to Can. Fed. June, 1959.

I welcome the following new members Mrs. Melita Waterman, Mr. E. T. Sawyer, Miss Andree Jackson, Miss Nellie A. Potter, Mr. Donald H. Woodall, Miss Elizabeth Siegal all of the Toronto Lodge and Mrs. Elizabeth Forster of the Victoria Lodge.

E.L.T.

THE CONVENTION

The Eastern Canada Theosophical Convention held on July 3-5 was an unqualified success. Not only was this the first convention ever held by the Canadian Section but it was also the occasion of celebrating the 40th year of its existence as a section in the Theosophical Society. Colonel Thomson presided and thanked Toronto Lodge for its full support which went so far to make the convention possible. Congratulations and messages of good-will were read and came from all parts of the world including a cable from the President, Mr. Sri Ram. The Eastern Lodges added their quota and the Federation Lodge in Toronto turned out in force. A charming letter from the Secretary, Miss Joan Morris, helped to give the proceedings a very brotherly flavour. The Guest Speakers, Miss Clara Codd, Mr. Boris de Zirkoff and Mr. Sam Wylie were on the platform and on being introduced responded to the warm welcome accorded them. The opening session was thus devoted to formalities but closed as a social function, with tea served by the ladies of Toronto Lodge.

The following day had a full programme including a symposium, meditation, meetings and lectures. All were well attended. Mr. Wylie spoke on "Brotherhood" and Miss Codd on "The

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST
THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

Published Bi-monthly.

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



Subscription: TWO DOLLARS A YEAR

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To whom all payments should be made, and all official communications addressed.

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Miss L. Gaunt, B.A., 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

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

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

Real Meaning of Prayer". The supper provided by the ladies of the Hamilton Lodge was exceptional and the day terminated with refreshments provided for a large crowd which was loud in its expression of the excellence of the lectures and the various items of the day's programme.

Sunday, the last day was as good if not better. The Secret Doctrine Class, over which Mr. de Zirkoff presided, was crowded and the presence of so many guests gave an added interest that was greatly appreciated. The meetings of the Lodge Presidents and Officials were productive of a number of ideas and suggestions that will be inaugurated in the near future. The symposia "Amalgamation" and "Theosophical Trends" were productive of

much thought and brought enlightenment to all who heard the various opinions on the subjects.

The two final lectures "Men to Match the Atom" by Mr. Boris de Zirkoff and "The Real Road to Happiness" by Miss Clara Codd aroused considerable interest. It is worth noting that tape records were taken of both symposia and lectures and are available if and when lodges desire to make use of them. The supper was arranged by the ladies of the Phoenix Lodge and matched that of the Hamilton Lodge and that is saying a good deal. Each day the weather was very hot and humid, but that did not diminish the attendance, such was the attractiveness of the programmes provided! The general feeling was that this was an occasion that was not to be missed. At the close of the convention Colonel Thomson was accorded a standing ovation but, as he said in thanking the assembly, the success of the event was not because of what he had done but was due to the whole-hearted devotion and the co-operation of those who had helped so willingly in the work.

The Guest Speakers also helped to a marked degree in bringing this about, not only by their lectures which were of a high order but by the unusual manner in which they entered into the spirit of the proceedings. By precept and example they partook of the chores, as it were, of the programme generally, and actively assisted in making everybody feel at home; this was an example of co-operation that will not be forgotten by theosophists in Toronto. Nor will the Guest Speakers readily forget the warm feelings expressed by the audience when they made their closing remarks and *au revoir*.

To everybody who helped in this venture there is but one thing to say and that is "Thank you". It would be invidious to mention names. Everybody was happy, and enthusiastic and so

fully bent on making this convention outstanding that words are inadequate to convey the enthusiasm that was present on this thoroughly enjoyable occasion.

(Continued from page 58)

United Theosophical Movement will come into being and the now-existing and any future Theosophical Societies which may be formed will tacitly accept this without any society giving up its own organization.

As anticipated in the review which appeared in a previous issue, most of the criticism concerned Mr. Spinks' treatment of historical facts and of the implications he drew therefrom. These portions of the book have been judged biased and based upon inadequate knowledge of facts. In our opinion this is the weak portion of the book and we would have preferred that it had been omitted. Mr. Spinks considered that a summary of the historical background should be introduced, but once this was done the case was wide open to critics.

Younger members, as a rule, do not find the history of the Movement of such absorbing interest as do some of the older members. What Mrs. Besant said in 1894, what Mr. Judge said in 1896 and what Mrs. Tingley did and said in 1898, is all past. Mistakes were made, human failings involved the Movement in much bitterness, but the exact right and wrong of each situation has no usable value today. Let us forget the past and build a new structure worthy of the precious talisman which has been entrusted to us.

Mr. Spinks' book is devoted to an idea, a fine idea, an idea which is a challenge to all theosophists. "Plato was right: *ideas* rule the world; and as men's minds will receive *new* ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world will advance."

D.W.B.

LODGE NOTES

Toronto Lodge has successfully completed a winter project, a study of "The Tibetan Book of the Dead", by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, under the able guidance of Miss Madeline Hindsley.

About twenty students read and discussed these ancient instructions for the guidance of the soul, before and after the passing of the human ego from the earth, to another plane of existence.

Miss Hindsley's knowledge of the ancient wisdom, Sanskrit, and Tibetan, enriched her lectures, and brought realization to the members that the reading of this text would not be half so rewarding an experience, without the benefit of her intellect. Her lovely habit of closing the sessions with the reading of a poem, stimulated the creative powers of the students, who consequently wrote some poetry of their own, which was read to the group. A gay little party on the last evening ended the sessions on a happy note.

EACH NEW BABE

A Master Weaver rises from the
ground,
Where-on he labored at the loom of
Life,
Fashioning eternal vestments of the
soul and tapestries
That throb on Temple walls.

Behold! Within the shadow of the loom
A mother smiles upon her newly born
Who comes to weave upon that golden
warp
A worthy *peplos* for the shrine of
Love—
Where dwells the Risen Gene, who
labored long
For this—That Love shall Reign.

J. A. McLaughlin.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the General Executive, Theosophical Society in Canada, took place at 52 Isabella St., Toronto, on Sunday, July 12th, 1959. Members present were Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. C. M. Hale, G. I. Kinman and the General Secretary. Miss Laura Gaunt, representing the Magazine, was present ex-officio. Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. The Financial Statement read by the General Secretary, was also approved. Miss Gaunt reported progress for the magazine. Col. Thomson reported that the Convention had been an unqualified success and proceeded to outline the probable cost. Mr. Kinman moved that "The Society offer to share all expenses (with the Toronto Lodge) on an equal

basis" this was seconded by Mr. Hale and carried. The General Secretary stated that notice of an election for the Presidency has been received and called for nominations for same. Mr. Kinman moved that "Mr. Sri Ram be nominated for the office of President of the Theosophical Society", seconded by Mr. Hale and carried. It was decided, in view of the importance of this motion, that all members of the Executive not present be notified and given an opportunity of stating their views on the subject, and that the dead-line for their replies should be July 31. Other business of a minor nature was then dealt with and October 4th decided upon as the date for the next meeting. Adjournment then took place. E.L.T.

The Theosophical Society in Canada Annual Elections, 1959

TOTAL VOTE—204. MEMBERS TO BE ELECTED—7 QUOTA—26

NAME OF CANDIDATE	1st Count		2nd Count		3rd Count		4th Count		5th Count		6th Count	
	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total
BUNTING	17	3	20	1	21		21	4	25	16	41	
HALE	10	6	16	10	26		26		26		26	
HINDSLEY	38	14	52	-26	26		26		26		26	
KINMAN	59	-33	26		26		26		26		26	
LOW	19	1	20	5	25		25		25	8	33	
MARKS	19	1	20	2	22		22	2	24	-24	0	
WILKS	30	5	35	2	37	-11	26		26		26	
WOOD	12	3	15	6	21	11	32	-6	26		26	
TOTALS	204		204		204		204		204		204	

The ballots in the election of the General Executive were counted on Sunday June 21 under the supervision of Colonel E. L. Thomson. The scrutineers were Mr. Joseph Brook, Mr. John Gaunt and Mr. Ralph Webb. In all 204 votes were counted and the quota under the proportional representation system was 26. The above diagram shows the various counts and the transference of surplus votes which resulted in the election of the new Executive as follows: Chas. Bunting, Chas. E. Hale, Miss M. Hindsley, George I. Kinman, Miss Jean Low, Wash. E. Wilks, Emory P. Wood. The General Secretary, Col. E. L. Thomson, was elected by acclamation.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY IN ENGLAND

After an absence of forty years I once again visited the land of my fathers. Returning from a visit of but three weeks, which included a theosophical itinerary, it is somewhat difficult to compress within a short article the many and varied activities that I experienced. Fortunately the huge Sabina plane considerably reduced the traveling hours required to get there and back. Landing in Manchester I took train to London in time for the English Convention there. It was a pleasure to meet Dr. Laurence Bendit, the General Secretary, and the coterie of leading lights associated with the Society in England. The programme was full and varied and the lectures of a high order. It was a delight to meet so many congenial friends and to answer the many questions on Canada, which, by the way, is a subject England seems to be very interested in. I looked over the premises which are large and lofty, and was especially interested in the fine library with its many rare books. These, I was told, we could obtain on loan if we were interested. On the closing day I gave my lecture "Theosophy and Me" which seemed to go over very well, judging from the large number of questions I had to answer. So closed the convention in London and I was very happy to have participated in it, and to have met so many new friends.

A few days later I spoke to the Blavatsky Lodge on "Theosophy in Canada" and as usual found that there was the greatest interest taken in anything connected with our country. The intervening days were spent in the metropolis. The highlights being visits to the Chelsea Flower Show and the Royal Academy. The former was a feast for the eyes. Never have I seen such a

floral display, and as a prelude, as I entered the grounds the Guards Band was playing, of all things, my regimental march! Was it a coincidence? The Royal Academy was holding its 119th exhibition; in the same beautiful Burlington House as heretofore. And what an exhibition it was! The latest in British Art, and I mean ART in capital letters. There were some efforts by the so-called moderns, but these were relegated to special rooms. St. Paul's Cathedral came in for a special visit for I wanted to renew my acquaintance with "The Light of the World", my boyhood's favourite picture. Then lunch with relatives at Fortnum & Masons, and other visits to haunts of the past, and I hied away to the south of England. Very beautiful this part of the country is at this time of the year. However, my chief interest was in visiting relatives in Eastbourne and Littlehampton.

Following this I went to the Midlands, and spent a few days in my old home town of Northampton. I found very few changes. The chief innovation was the absence of tram cars and the substitution of double decked buses; by means of these I saw more of the old county town and its environs in a few days than I had ever seen before. The old house had been converted into shops but the back, the gardens and ponds were the same as ever. It was over seventy years since I saw it first and the nostalgic reactions were almost overpowering. In the words of the old song "I felt like one who treads alone some banquet hall deserted, whose lights are fled and garlands dead and all but me departed". Our other house, at Yardley Hastings some eight miles away, was as it was yesterday. Here we, as children, used to play among the ruins of the Priory and in the Tilt Field, both dating from the time of William the Conqueror.

After this nostalgic experience I returned to London to attend the Conference of the Camberley Research Centre where I was a guest speaker. Here I gave my lecture "Ye are Gods". I was particularly pleased at the outcome for Mr. E. L. Gardiner, an expert on the subject, expressed his appreciation and presented me with a copy of his latest book entitled "Whence come the Gods". Whilst here I was unfortunately troubled with a bad cough and was decidedly under par but the warmth of my reception and the pleasure of meeting so many new friends made ample amends. Tekels Park, Camberley, is a delightful domain originally owned by the Empress Eugenie and since purchased by the English Section who have changed it into a horticultural beauty spot. Dr. Bendit, Mr. Gardiner and other theosophists have beautiful homes on the grounds and the whole estate is a real theosophical centre. The gathering itself was composed of specialists in research work and others of kindred interests and I found it a delightful company. I have many pleasant memories of the visit and must not forget to mention specially Mr. and Mrs. Guy Stephenson, my charming and delightful host and hostess.

Leaving Camberley I went north to stay with my brother at Wallasay on the banks of the Mersey. As it was forty years since I last saw him I was agreeably surprised to find little change in him—more mature and settled down, perhaps, like me I suppose! From here I radiated back and forth and spoke to the lodges at Manchester and at Hyde. I felt at home here, for round about is the recruiting centre of my old regiment. It was a delight to meet Mr. Tom Redfern and Mr. Edwards and to see The Peace Lodge so well-known to all of us who read "Eirenicon". It was good to hear my introduction as "the General Secretary of the Canadian Section which has done so much to

uphold the best traditions of the Society under much adverse criticism" and words to that effect. At both these places I spoke on "Theosophy in Canada" and as usual was beset with questions about it. On my way to Pontefract I was motored across the Pennine Range, the backbone of England, and saw what must be the loveliest part of that enchanting isle. The peacefulness of the land, the slow tempo of life made unforgettable by the chiming of the church bells across the fields from the innumerable hamlets ensconced in clusters of trees on a lovely Sunday evening, was something I will never forget. Here was Gray's *Elegy* living in the sunset glow. And soon in Pontefract I renewed acquaintance with my old regiment. It was a joyful occasion and I am glad I had the opportunity of once more visiting the old stamping ground of my early military career. Another place of great interest to me was Chester, one of the oldest and most interesting towns of the Roman occupation. The large commercial cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and others had been badly hit by the Germans and there was evidence everywhere of the terrible times they had been through.

I will close with a few general remarks, and be it remembered they are but cursory. The people generally seem happy and well cared for. The powers that be seem to look after them "from the cradle to the grave". Working hours are short; holidays without question; siesta at midday; and a feeling of independence without arrogance. There seems to be a slower tempo in living; no scarifying head-lines in the press, very little advertising, no commercial jingles on the radio, and seemingly very little unemployment. My general impression was that England is undergoing a silent revolution of a kind that will astonish the world when it is fully recognized.

E.L.T.

A POET REVIEWED

The Solitary Singer: A Critical Biography of Walt Whitman, by Gay Wilson Allen (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1955), paperback, \$3.15.

Theosophists the world over are indebted to one poet more than any other for the most eloquent phrasing of the perennial wisdom found in Theosophical literature. No other poet has ever expressed, as vividly and unmistakably as Walt Whitman did, the knowledge which is the basic minimum of man's understanding of himself. It is for this reason that Whitman's collected verse, *Leaves of Grass*, is so widely read and revered and why it is so frequently found on library shelves beside copies of *The Secret Doctrine*.

The most recent biography of Whitman, and the one which purports to be the definitive one, is *The Solitary Singer* by Gay Wilson Allen. In paper covers and over six hundred pages (with page 403 appearing twice, once where 397 should be), *The Solitary Singer* is a detailed account of the day-by-day activities of the Brooklyn Singer, with detailed references and short analyses of Whitman's major poems.

Although it is less than sixty years ago that Whitman died, his biography was a long time in coming because of Whitman's strange life. He made his living by his pen but in no sense was he a literary man. His interests took him away from the haunts of intellectuals and writers but closer to the habitats of the working men. He met in passing most of the important literary figures of his day, but he seldom crossed their paths twice.

Whitman was born of Dutch stock in Brooklyn in 1819. His father was a self-educated carpenter and the Whitman family had a rather loose connection with the Quaker Church. Walter received the absolute minimum of

schooling but was able to secure employment as a printer, reporter, freelance writer and finally as a newspaper editor. He served voluntarily as a male nurse during the American Civil War and in his later years his prose and poetry—when it sold—sold surprisingly well.

His only real concern was his book *Leaves of Grass*. He published this in 1855 and continued to enlarge and revise it for the rest of his life. On his deathbed in Camden in 1892—the same year Tennyson died—Whitman was still adding lines and rewriting sections. He realized that his fame would rest in this work, which incorporated all of his verse, and not in his ephemeral editorials and temperance tracts.

Against this uncharacteristic life of seventy-three years, Gay Wilson Allen gives the details of the influences which affected him. He read his fill of Carlyle, Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Goethe and George Sand. He reflected an influence in the German Transcendentalists and when Thoreau asked him if he had read the "Oriental authors", he expressed an ignorance of them, but in later years he admitted to a study of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

His main influence, as Gay sees it, was "an idealization of Greek traditions". Human nobility, the perfection of man in the present life, the interpenetration of all life and the importance of ethical values came from his study of books on Greek life and thought. To this he added his appreciation of the beauty of the world and his glorification of process and progress in history.

Books on astronomy gave him a terminology and a feeling about the vastness of creation which was almost Miltonic. He saw his own ego and the material of the universe as the substance of flux. He depicted himself as volatile, continually changing and absorbing the things about him. As the child he writes

about, Whitman went out into the world and became what he saw; and as Adam, he named all the things he saw.

In order to communicate his concept of the universe as a dynamic organism and not as a static mechanism, his only motto was "Be simple and clear.—Be not occult." To accomplish this he perfected a method of versification which was absolutely original, which startled his contemporaries to no end but influenced posterity immensely. He was less interested in shattering regular rhyme and rhythm with his free verse than he was in creating a medium which would be both elastic and forceful.

His *Leaves of Grass* appeared in 1855 as a small volume selling for two dollars. The poems in it were loosely organized but the unmistakable sympathy with humanity of all classes and conditions was there. Ten years later, when he first observed suffering and death on a large scale, and saw that evil was more akin to misunderstanding and disease, that it was not, in itself, a force in the universe, Whitman rounded out his poetic vision in a typical Theosophical fashion. His elegy on Lincoln's assassination takes on heroic proportions and the undercurrent in it of a death-motif and a corresponding compassion is understandable in relation to the doctrine of Karma.

Whitman despised the old muse of western civilization, by which he meant its outmoded conventions and its distinction between body and soul. But this was augmented by a loud pantheistic appeal for a return to a religiously centered culture. This he envisaged in prehistoric India. In "Passage to India" the most lyrical and Theosophical passages are those which describe the union of the soul with the permanent oversoul, the transcendent and immanent Brahman.

But no man, not even Whitman, is completely characterizable in positive

terms. Gay Wilson Allen saw Whitman as a creature overcome at times by doubt and despair. The erotic elements in the "Calamus" poems are sometimes related to the death-desire and the mystic's description of the psychic attributes of both sexes (his androgynous view of life) in some of the others all give Whitman's life a balance which it might otherwise have lacked.

Gay also describes Whitman's friends, among whom was Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke, whose study, *Cosmic Consciousness*, was directly inspired by Whitman. Bucke succeeded in bringing the poet to Canada, which he had celebrated as "Kanada" in a number of poems, but Whitman was unhappy here.

Whitman died quietly and comfortably but he died a sick man. He had lived, though, to see the ideas he had so boldly espoused become common knowledge in the west. He had lived to see another man, Edmund Carpenter, continue his mission by singing his own song in, unfortunately, almost his own words. When he died, as he described it in one of his early poems, he died happily for he knew that his soul was like a bird, flying back to its own nest after a short period observing "the journeywork of suns and systems of suns . . ."

J.R.C.

THE COMING OF THE MASTER

"When the pupil is ready, the Master appears", so runs a statement in occult literature. And the statement is true—but who is the Master who appears? And how to recognize him, this mysterious being? How, where and under what circumstances does he appear? These and many other questions run through the mind of the aspirant.

On most occasions of "being ready" there is no Master. No particular individual will appear and in so many words say, "Come, son, (daughter),
(Continued on page 68)

(Continued from page 58)

absorbed by the soul into elements of character, faculties, thews of the spirit, grains of wisdom.

This preparation for life on the higher planes must obviously demand a drastic method of purification—a cleansing purgatorial process—which will entail grave and painful conditions, as well as its humorous aspects. The Law of Consequences has no regard for sentimental values, I suspect. It is on the absolute Justice of such laws that one should rely. It is not a qualification for heaven that should have any place in one's mind, seeing that the Swami Vivekananda has shamed such a desire by stating that among his people the desire to reach heaven was considered as a little vulgar. It is fitness for a wider and deeper life that should be our aim, both here and in the hereafter. For higher work; for loftier service; for becoming more of a human being; for evolving our inborn divine potencies. So the celestial scenery of the Blue Islands, or the musical grandeur of the lower Heavens offer no attraction to the student, when all study should be an austerity directed to a given end of knowledge, and the aim a getting rid of the self, not a discovery of new ways to charm it. Will the life hereafter help to make a man King over himself, or must he come back time and again to acquire that power?

*

That there are lessons one can acquire only by battling in a material body, I have always held from early years. Druidic heredity, confirmed by Eastern Yogis, has left me with unshaken conviction in Karmic Law, and the need for rebirth. I seem to be quite assured that the use of the after-death conditions is to further the evolutionary process, not to arrest or hinder it. Seed-time and Harvest. Sowing and

Reaping. Experimenting and observing results. Trial and Error. Blundering and stumbling. Learning by the effects of experimentation. Failures and successes of no value except as aids to convert potencies into powers, ambitions serving as a stimulus to further effort. A game to be played, to be played well, the satisfaction of desire its own condemnation of futility and stupidity. Existence here a Kindergarten School, other Schools elsewhere. Life full of carrots waved before a donkey's tramp. All the time, the hidden goal offering baits and lures. Follies galore, miserable disasters. But have they served the Divine purpose? That is the question. I hope to learn a lot about things before I come back again to take up the cudgels and move a little forward on the appointed way. My most ardent desire, at the moment, is to get rid of some of this Karmic debt hanging over my head, and to get a move on. I am bowed down by my inefficiency, my ignorance, my incapacity for real service . . . How pleasant it would be if I could delude myself that I am going to be re-made by my experience in the spheres. But, unfortunately, the Karmic Law is inexorable:

“The Song is to the Singer, and comes back most to him;
The Teaching to the Teacher, and comes back most to him;
The Love is to the Lover, and comes back most to him;
The Gift is to the Giver, and comes back most to him;
Comes back most to him. It cannot fail.”

*

Gerontius's attitude has the appearance of a correct humility:
“Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be;
And there, in hope, the lone night-watches keep
Told out for me.

Where I may soothe my stricken breast,
Which n'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish, till
possest

Of its sole peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and
Love.

Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting
day."

★

Or the more practical suggestion of
the poet, Ernest Dowson:

"When this my tired life closes, I am
ready to reap
Whereof I sowed, and pay my righteous
debt."

Emerson has been a lifetime's study
for me. After his son's death, he
wrote:

"What is excellent,
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain,
Heart's love will meet thee again."

He said: "It is the secret of the
world that all things subsist and do not
die, but only retire a little from sight,
and afterwards return again." He
quoted with acceptance: "The name of
death was never terrible, To him that
knew to live."

So, Au Revoir, and not Good-bye.

TYSSUL DAVIS.

The Inquirer, March 14, 1959.

(Continued from page 66)

henceforth I shall be your guide". No,
the next step on the path of progress
will be made through the sudden com-
prehension of a statement or an event
or action which has been a puzzle for
quite some time, perhaps years. Or the
pitiful plight of another individual may
throw a flood of light upon the out-
workings of the law of Karma. A word,
overheard or appearing upon a page,
will trigger off an avalanche of mental
and emotional states which, as an end

result, leave the individual further en-
lightened. A conversation with a com-
plete stranger may swing wide open
gates to new fields of thought and en-
deavour. An act of kindness towards a
suffering fellow human being will bring
as a reward a feeling of contentment
and peace, which condition will result in
an expansion of consciousness or some
other compensation for the doer of the
act.

The foregoing examples are but a
small fraction of the ways and means by
which one who is sincerely seeking after
knowledge, wisdom and expansion will
be helped to take the next step along
the path which will eventually lead
him out of darkness into the light.
The instruments of instruction are
many, varied and usually unex-
pected and the means employed are
even more numerous. The sincere
seeker will be instructed by evil (and
from evil experiences) as well as good,
because for him only the gold of truth
counts and the place, the giver, if any,
the good or evil of the giver or the sur-
roundings—all these are incidental and
matter nothing since they neither add
to nor detract from the value of that
which he has acquired. For such a
seeker there is no need of a Master for
all is his instructor and for him *all*
serves in the only way a Master can
serve, as a guide, an instructor, a way-
shower, a-helper-along-the-way. Such
a one need not seek a Master for he shall
himself achieve mastership in due order
because mastership is not conferred nor
found nor wished for, but earned—
earned every bit of it by living the truth
which has been found, seeking for
greater truth beyond that and sacrific-
ing one's lesser self so that it can
become a pliant, versatile and effective
instrument of the greater Self. And
the Master?—the Self, of course, what
or who else? The Means? The little
self expanding into SELF. B. F. J.

(Continued from page 53)

most difficult thing we have to do is to dethrone our egotistical personal selves from their position of paramount importance in all our activities. Instead of seeing things and judging things from the standpoint of how they affect us we must try and see them in the light of how they affect life in general. This guiding spirit, which is known by many names, exists on a higher level of consciousness than we as human personalities do and is above personal considerations therefore until we make some effort to rise above such personal considerations, too, we remain untouched by this indwelling life. The true artist is aware of it because he is trying to express beauty for its own sake. The true scientist is aware of it because he is seeking truth for its own sake too, even if it is on a more material level.

In talking of dethroning the personal ego I do not mean that we should deny its true purpose and rights. Rather I mean that we should not let it prevent us from becoming ever more and more aware of life in all the kingdoms of nature which surround us, which seem to be separate from us but are really not. We should try, as it were, to draw that life into our own consciousness and understand it. When we see the sea and the mountains and the sky and the starry nights, or the flowers and the trees and the animals, we should try to identify ourselves with that life and beauty, refusing to let our personal self fill our minds with worry and trivialities and get between us and that which is *us* too in a greater sense. In all human contacts too, we should try to see things as they are untrammelled by our own self interest. In such ways we shall start to thin the mists that hide us from Truth and from this very epitome of Truth which is represented in us by this Inner and

Higher Self. Up to now the emphasis has been placed on the outer life. From now on the emphasis must be placed on the Inner life.

Let us take a simple example to illustrate the difference. We have, most of us, at some time, made a remark about someone else that we have subsequently regretted. If we are at the stage of considering the outer life the most important, we regret it, because we feel that such a remark may have made a bad impression, may have made us unpopular. If, on the other hand, we are more concerned with the Inner life we regret it, because we feel it to have been unkind and unnecessary. At this latter stage the quality of our thoughts and emotions, though unsuspected by others or indulged in when we are quite alone, are far more important than the impression we make on the outer world. In looking around the world at its different inhabitants, we see people at all stages of development. In an evolutionary sense there are people far beyond us, as there are people in the kindergarten stage behind us, but since life is a school we can no more criticize people for being in different stages, than we would criticize children at school for being in different grades. The only thing that we can criticize, and that criticism should be kept mostly for ourselves, is remaining placidly in one stage and making no effort to go any further.

If we consider that we are out of the kindergarten stage and becoming mature, then we must not be afraid of added responsibilities and of our own sacrifice of pet habits and personal interests. At this stage we should realize that the great teachers of all ages were not just uttering beautiful phrases, they were telling us of the way to approach the path of liberation. They were trying to help us and there is constant mention in teachings stemming

from the East of the practice of meditation. Many people regard this practice as unsuitable for Western people, but on the other hand there are Westerners such as Paul Brunton, and many of our own Theosophical teachers, who strongly advise it in a fairly simple form. I know little about it myself because I have never really practised it, but the idea is helpful and illuminating.

It consists of setting aside a certain time each day and trying to quiet the mind and the emotions so that the light from the higher self may be reflected down here in the personality, just in the same way as reflections in a lake are only possible when that lake is still. In other words we have to begin the task of curbing the mind and the emotions before we can expect to hear that inner voice.

A life of service, too, if led with no other motive than love and sympathy for one's fellow beings, or our younger brothers the animals, may draw a response from our higher self.

We, in particular, who have had the good karma to come into touch with the beloved Ancient Wisdom, whose modern name is Theosophy, have little reason to complain, for we have something that should help us and cheer us through this life and many other lives, and will stay with us through the periods between lives which we erroneously call Death.

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Cumont tells us, who first brought the dangerous idea of the Divine Right of Kings to the West. Many monarchs believed that they partook of the sun-god's divinity. Mithra's friendship had become partial. His original identification with the spiritually 'highest', whereby he blessed all mankind, degenerated to an identification with the earthly 'highest', and aided the Empire builders, but certainly did not bless the

common man by the endless wars fought under his *aegis*.

In fact it seems that the nature of this deity was, as is so often the case in all religions, the likeness of those who worshipped him. To the peaceable, gentle Asian he was Mitra, the Friend, who ripened the fruit and sweetened the vine; to the bellicose barbarians of the West, he was the inspiring warrior god to whom thousands of harmless creatures must be sacrificed.

Writing in the fourth century A.D. Martianus Capella, in *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, refers to the ancient universal sun-worship in the words:

The Latins call thee Sol, for that in solitary splendour thou art highest in rank after the Father, and from thy sacred head adorned with its twice six rays golden beams shoot forth, furnished thus, men say, to equal the number of the months and the seasons determined by thee . . . Thee the Nile reveres as Serapis, Memphis as Osiris, other cults as Mithra, or Dis, or savage Typhon. Thou are fair Attis, too . . . so under various names the whole world worships thee. As Renan was later to write in his *Lettre à Berthelot*:

Before religion reached the point where it proclaimed that God should be sought in the absolute and the Ideal, that is to say, outside the world, one cult only was reasonable and scientific, and that was the cult of the Sun.

A cult that can never be conceived as entirely vanishing, for even those who now seek and find God 'in the absolute and the Ideal' still regard that life-sustaining Majesty on High with love and awe as Mithra, the impartial Friend.

This is the sequence: an act, a habit, a character, and a destiny.

Golden Precepts of Esotericism by
G. de Purucker.

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entered and . . . gone beyond it, carried thither by our spiritual faculties and in our *spiritual bodies*".

In these spiritual realms "the mysteries of life as well as of death, of the visible and invisible worlds, have been fathomed and observed by initiated adepts in all epochs and all nations. They have studied these during the solemn moments of union of their divine monad with the universal Spirit, and they have recorded their experiences. Thus by comparing and checking the *observations* of one with those of another, and . . . having been able to ascertain that the visions of adepts who lived 10,000 years ago are invariably corroborated and verified by those of modern adepts, to whom the writings of the former never do become known until later—the truth has been established . . . a definite science, based on personal observation and experience, corroborated by continuous demonstrations . . ." (H.P.B.)

Some knowledge derived in this way is kept secret because of the dangers to mankind of disseminating such "perilous" information promiscuously. "Some of the discoveries of certain sciences—such as chemistry and physical science—ought to have been kept 'occult'. . . the secrets of gunpowder, nitro-glycerine, dynamite and the like . . . ought to have been withheld from the knowledge of the ignorant and unprincipled portions of mankind". (H.P.B.) What *would* she have said about atomic fission and fusion?

Here is the great gap between the Occult scientist and the materialistic scientist. "Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy—therefore, can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics" . . . "a Bacon or an Aristotle in knowledge" will "not even make his current felt a feather's weight

by us, if his power is confined to the Manas. The supreme energy resides in *Buddhi* . . . active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of 'Manas' . . ." "We see a vast difference between the two qualities of two equal amounts of energy expended by two men, of whom one . . . is on his way to his daily quiet work, and another on his way to denounce a fellow-creature at the police station, while the men of science see none . . . And why? Because every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world, and becomes an active entity by associating itself, coalescing we might term it, with an elemental . . . one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms . . . Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active, beneficent power, an evil one as a maleficent demon. And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses and passions", enduring "for a longer or shorter period proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action which generated it" (from Adept letters).

The Theosophical Society's purpose includes the dissemination of these ideas of a larger science than that of the physical forces, a science including in its scope soul-energies and spiritual powers, interacting with the physical in one hylozoic field. "You and your colleagues may help to furnish the materials for a needed universal religious philosophy; one impregnable to scientific assault because itself the finality of absolute science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name since it includes the relations of man physical to man psychical and of the two to all that is above and below them". With the help of this religious philosophy scientists may be enabled to regain a true basis of moral values and an enlargement of their understanding to

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embrace the sacred science of magic, “a science based on natural occult forces of Nature”. “The real, existing *white* or sacred magic . . . ought to be in the hands of science now” (H.P.B., 1875). Scientists would then be concerned only with physical experiments consistent with each purposively “peopling his current in space” with thoughts beneficent to mankind; and we should see an end, for example, of such “barbarous merciless and shameful practices” as occur in that “disgrace of our cultured age—the scientific slaughter-houses called ‘vivisection rooms’.”

(Part 7 in our next issue—Sept.-Oct.!)

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