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INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

BY MOLLIE GRIFFITH

Those teachings of Theosophy which deal with vast periods of time seem rather overwhelming to those who are used to thinking of life as it has been lived for the last few thousand years. To those people, a period of approximately three score years and ten is, they feel, all that they will experience of what we call physical life, before they plunge into some other form of existence, which to them is vague and shadowy.

To a believer in Theosophy, this same three score years and ten is only one of many such periods, and this gives us a hint as to how we can think of these vast periods without being lost in our efforts to understand them. We have to remember that everything moves in cycles, so that, broadly speaking, whatever we see happening around us, has happened before and will happen again, though at a different level. We know that Spring follows Winter and that day follows night, but what is only beginning to be understood in our Western world is that birth follows death, not immediately, for part of the cycle is passed in the inner realms, but just as certainly. There are vaster cycles than these, the rise and fall of lands and continents, the great ages of humanity, or of any other kingdom which are known as, the golden age, the silver age, the

bronze age and the iron age, this last being the one in which we find ourselves today, and which is known in the East as the Kali Yuga, the age of materialism. We can even go beyond these ages to vaster and vaster ones, involving the stars, the planets and universes, until we get to that cycle, so poetically called in the East, the out-breathing and the inbreathing of Brahma. During the outbreathing the various units of life from the most glorious beings, beyond our present comprehension, to the most infinitesimal, come forth from a state of unity to follow once more, their appointed paths in the manifested worlds.

Spirit and matter which are really one, have drawn apart, unity has given place to diversity, harmony to disharmony, rest to effort, and we who are so individual as a result of living countless existences in a period of manifestation, have come to consider ourselves as separate from nature, from our fellow man, and from the great beings beyond man.

This is the "great illusion", that our teachers, like all great teachers, are trying to dispel. They say in effect "whenever you look at the stars, or the sea, or the earth, at a good man, or a so-called bad man, at a flower or a weed, at a beautiful building, or a small

broken-down shack, you are looking at an expression of that one life, the source of your own being. You are affecting and being affected by everything and everyone that exists, for there is in reality no such thing as separateness."

Now what concerns us, is of course "us" and if unity is a fact, what is our responsibility, as parts of that unity to each other, and to the whole. What should our relationships be towards our family, our country, the world, the animal and the vegetable kingdom, and lastly, but most important, that inner world, which is man himself.

I want to run over our more ordinary relationships quickly, because after all our ideas on those relationships are not so different from those of anyone else, but there are certain differences. For one thing, anyone striving to be a Theosophist knows that growth is the important thing, even sometimes at the cost of personal happiness. This does not mean that he turns away from friendship or love or beauty or laughter, or any of the fine things of life. He accepts them thankfully when they come his way, but he knows that what he experiences are but the shadows of something greater, something more lasting, something more universal, something which can be shared by all, but which cannot be realized until we make the sacrifice of our own personal desires and wishes, but it must be *our* wishes which we sacrifice, not someone else's.

Now this growth can only be achieved down here on the physical plane, where disharmony exists, where we have to decide many times each day between doing this or doing that, and obviously our opportunity is greatest when things are the most difficult.

Most of us have felt some time or other, that we could have done better if our circumstances had been different,

or if we had lived in a different climate, or if we had had the opportunity to study this or that. If by doing better we mean that life might have been more pleasant and easier, or even more interesting, we are probably right, but if the purpose of life is growth or evolution, then any set of circumstances which forces us to assert our will power, to develop patience, compassion and understanding, is better for us, and by us I mean, not the fleeting personality but the real and lasting self, than a life of pleasure and ease. Therefore keeping that idea in view I am not going to dwell on our relationship with, and our responsibility to, the family and the country in which we were born, except to emphasize a few points. We have been placed, or perhaps we might say we have placed ourselves, in certain families and certain countries because it is there that we have the best opportunity to learn our next lesson. This does not mean that we should take a fatalistic attitude to the things that happen to us. It means that the problems that face us are ours to be solved, with all the courage and wisdom we possess. If we throw away this opportunity we are only putting off till tomorrow what we had much better do today.

There are two more ideas, perhaps a little obvious in this connection, but which might be mentioned here. Most of us have rather a deep attachment to the country in which we are born. We understand the people, we are taught sympathetically, though not always truthfully, of its history, and at our most impressionable age, we have seen and enjoyed the actual physical beauty of our land.

Now in the bigger school, which is life, countries are like classes, and when we have learned the lesson of one we may be born in another, so that our education will be well rounded out.

Once again we shall grow up to understand another type of people. Once more we shall be taught sympathetically of its history and learn to love the beauty of its land. Should not this idea even now arouse our interest rather than our criticism of people who seem to us so different from ourselves? Another idea that emerges from these teachings which we call Theosophy, is that no child belongs to its parents, in the sense so often met with in our Western world. There must be many reasons why someone is born into a certain family, but whatever the reason, he is a human being, the result of many ages of experience, with a definite character of his own. The parents provide him with something very valuable, an opportunity of further growth, and the more they understand these things, the more they will be able to help him.

You hear people say, "I can't imagine *my* child doing such and such a thing" as if it would be a reflection on them if he did. It could only be a reflection if the parents had not tried to help him. We all make mistakes, whosoever's children we are. It is one of the ways in which we learn.

Now let us turn to our relationship with and our responsibility to the vegetable and animal kingdom, for here there is far more difference between orthodox ideas and those of Theosophy.

The oneness of life is as we repeat so often the cornerstone on which the teachings of Theosophy stand, and speaking personally I find that there is less difficulty in sensing that relationship with the lesser kingdoms of nature, than even with members of our own human kingdom. We all of us have memories of certain days, hours or moments when we were thrilled with some form of beauty. It may have been an April day in England. The sky was blue; the sun was shining, and the air was very soft. Jasmine was blooming

on the sides of the houses, crocuses made golden patches in the grass and the first wallflowers scented the air; while the songs of the birds were particularly sweet.

Such beauty seems to expand our consciousness and make us aware of a state of harmony not always within our reach. It may be the sound of waves beating on the shore, the scent of pines or wild roses. It may be a storm, or a misty morning, but we feel akin to these things.

As would-be Theosophists, however, we are asked to do more than just acknowledge our relationship with the kingdoms of nature. We are asked to co-operate and work with them, but this we cannot do, unless we understand and remember that all life,—and what is there that is not life,—is growing as we are. That part of the one life, now gaining its experience in our rocks and our plants and our trees and our animals, will one day through such experiences develop the human qualities, at least the units comprising it will, and enter the kingdom of man. This knowledge should help us to realize our relationships with the other kingdoms for in one sense Theosophy is a doctrine of relationships.

In Aldous Huxley's book *The Perennial Philosophy*, he makes this statement, "Our present arrangements are based, in large measure, upon organized lovelessness. We begin by lacking charity towards nature, so that instead of trying to co-operate with Tao or the logos on the inanimate and subhuman levels, we try to dominate and exploit, we waste the earth's mineral resources, ruin its soil, ravage its forests, pour filth into its rivers and poisonous fumes into its air. From lovelessness in relation to nature, we advance to lovelessness to art, and so on."

Now when we consider the animal kingdom, though perhaps not so easy to

feel, it is easier to understand our relationship with them. They are nearer to the human kingdom and we can think of them more easily as our younger brothers. I am not going to dwell on this at length, because we are all conscious of the cruelty perpetrated on animals. It is said that we shall never have peace or happiness on this earth until this ceases, any more than we shall have peace or happiness until all forms of cruelty between man and man cease.

In India the doctrine of Ahimsa, or harmlessness particularly towards animals, is well understood and although it may be carried by some to a rather ridiculous extent, it is well worth thinking about.

As students of life in all its phases, we have to remember this. Our present animals will one day, in the far distant future, enter the human kingdom. When that day comes, let us try and see to it that they are not filled with fear, or cruelty, bred of fear, which will make their path more difficult than it need be. The impressions that they receive as animals will not leave them, because they have evolved to the human state, and for all we know some of us may have retained certain fears, brought over from the sojourn of our lower self in the animal kingdom. We expect the elder brothers of humanity to help us, so why should not the animal kingdom, to which we stand as elder brothers, at least be free to evolve in their own way without our exploiting them. I know this teaching will sound farfetched to some people, but it is a teaching given us by some of the more compassionate members of the race. It is not imposed upon us, but like all Theosophical teachings it is given to us for our consideration, and after all if brotherhood means anything it must include all units of life.

Now I want to pass from these outer relationships or responsibilities to the

relationship of man with his own inner being, and here we shall be speaking of ideas not so familiar in our Western world.

We have been brought up and most of us are used to thinking of man as a single unit. We say we are hungry, or we are angry, or we think this, or perhaps that. We have a strong intuition about that and without giving it much thought we assume that we, as single units, do or feel or think all these things. According to our teachings, that is *not* so.

Man is regarded as a sevenfold entity but for the purpose of this paper, dealing with our individual responsibility, I am going to deal with man as a threefold entity. Before doing that, however, one point must be emphasized, namely that man is a miniature or microscopic universe, and there is nothing in the universe that has not its correspondence in man. The animal, the vegetable and the mineral kingdoms are represented in man as are all the other inner and outer kingdoms. The powers of life are represented in him too, though obviously some of them are still latent, just as the human powers are still latent in the animal or as the oak tree is latent in an acorn. I used to think when I first came in touch with Theosophy, that it must be rather a lonely and strange feeling to find oneself, after death for instance, on a different plane from the one we are used to. That, of course, is an illusion. Even while here we function on, or are conscious on other planes.

We may be so deeply absorbed in thought that for us the physical world is obliterated. We may have the most vivid dreams while the physical body is resting. The mystics again are conscious on still finer planes. It is essentially a matter of consciousness of where our consciousness is centered, and just as we have five physical senses

to supply us with information about the physical plane, so we have finer senses attuned to other planes. We are offsprings of the one life and are at home on any plane to which we can consciously respond, and growth or evolution consists of an ever increasing awareness, another name for an expansion of consciousness. None of us could probably understand, in its deepest ramifications, Einstein's theory of relativity, but if we studied it persistently some light would dawn and our consciousness would have been that much expanded.

There are ways of strengthening our will power; there are experiences which develop our compassion, and all experience can be used to increase our wisdom. The difference between a seeker after Truth or Philosophy and one who has no interest in these things, is that the former seeks to learn life's lessons consciously, while the latter must wait for life's lessons to come to him. It may be said, however, that most people have some philosophy of life whether they are conscious of it or not.

Now let us return to the threefold division of man, always remembering that these divisions are in a way mental crutches, by which we are trying to help ourselves to understanding. The highest unit in man's constitution, the root of his miniature world, is the Inner God called in Christianity, "The Christos" and in Buddhism "the living Buddha" within. This inner God is our spiritual parent, our inspirer, and our link with universal life.

Sometimes by an act of intense unselfishness, or self discipline or aspiration, we can swing open the door a trifle and breathe for a moment the purer air and peace and light of a higher world than is normally ours. All that is finest in us is a reflection of this light, and one day in what seems to us now the far distant future, we like the prodigal son, will return to our real home and will be

able to say, "I and my Father are one."

Leaving the highest unit of our world from whom at our stage we can only hear faint whispers, let us consider the lowest, and when we say lowest it is in no sense a reflection on that lowest, for all is a question of development and growth. We do not criticize the acorn because it is not yet an oak tree, nor a child because he is not yet a man. Our lowest, or what we sometimes call our animal self, or soul, is a very great being, in comparison perhaps to an atom in a piece of coal, but to us it is going through a stage which we should be leaving behind, but with which we unfortunately so often identify ourselves.

Our animal soul consists of our bodily appetites and lower desires and passions and the reason it can be so much more harmful than any unit of the animal kingdom is because man, the thinker, *we* in other words, join forces with it, to obtain what it wants.

Now every part of our small universe and every unit of consciousness which is a part of it, has certain rights, just as every human being has certain rights. The animal soul must be fed and exercised. It must have sufficient rest. Its natural desires must be either transmuted or given expression, but although it cannot be suppressed without danger it must be controlled. We cannot allow it to take over the reins of government and make slaves of us.

So now at last we come to *us*, the stage of thinking self-conscious man, the stage of evolution which we have reached today through endless striving, through making mistakes, through a multitude of different experiences. We stand in the central position of our world, between the Inner God and the animal soul, a position of responsibility.

Now the mind is dual. We use it in all our ordinary activities. It is the medium of our concrete thoughts which,

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A NEW LOOK AT PHILO JUDAEUS

BY ESMÉ WYNN-TYSON

To the layman who enquires into the origins of Orthodox Christianity, it may come as something of a shock to realize what an immense influence the outlook and writings of the famous Jewish priest and ambassador, Philo Judaeus had on what is called "Christian" theology.

Even as the theologians of the Early Church were to find that they could not attract Jewish and pagan congregations to the New Faith without making some sort of compromise with their former beliefs, so Philo, the Hellenistic Jew, realized that the literal presentation of his own primitive Scriptures would not be acceptable to the cultured Greek or Roman unless they were allegorized and explained in the Greek idiom. The curious result of his masterly syncretism was an exposition of Judaism which formed a perfect framework to enshrine the Catholic theology evolved by the Alexandrine Fathers. This was, of course the last thing that Philo, who regarded Moses as the Perfect Man, would have desired. Yet, ironically enough, his work proved to be the means whereby Judaism was perpetuated in Western civilization by the followers of one who intended to purge the ancient religion of many of those errors which, owing to the efforts of Philo and the Church Fathers, have survived under the cloak of the new Faith.

To the Catholic theologians, from Justine to Augustine, Philo's allegorizations must have seemed a God-sent dispensation. For having made the initial mistake of constituting the often very doubtful testimony of the Hebrew prophets the test of their Master's Messiahship, instead of making his nature and works the test, as he did himself,

(Matt. 11:2-6; John 5:36; and John 14:10, 11), they were faced with the necessity of persuading the Gentile congregations to hold the Old Testament Scriptures in the same reverence as they were held by the Jews and to believe that everything therein was the revealed Word of God. But the cultured Gentile world, familiar with the lucid thought of Socrates and other Grecian philosophers, lacked the unsophisticated credulity of the primitive Palestinians. They were familiar with the idea of the Supreme Good, described in the *Symposium* as "responsible for the things that are good, but not responsible for the evil", and were not likely to be attracted by the predatory, jealous and vengeful Jehovah of the Hebrew Scriptures. It was therefore necessary that a white-wash brush wielded by the intellectual power of a Philo should be applied to this all too frank depiction of his race's highest idea of the The Good.

To the modern reader he seems to have been only moderately successful, for his works hold many contradictions. While they are liberally peppered with the assertion that God is wholly good, and makes and is responsible only for the good, the record of His acts, despite the allegorizations, persistently denies this statement, although Philo hopefully represents His predilection for war and vengeance as benign and beneficial chastisement. But in his Jewish preoccupation with evil—especially the evil of women—Philo constantly forgets his original Greek premise. Fortunately for him, the Fathers of the Early Church, already prejudiced in favour of the Jewish Scriptures by reason of their Master's origin were equally illogical.

And both Justin Martyr in *The Dialogue with Trypho* and Origen in the *contra Celsum* were able to ensure that neither Orthodox Jew nor pagan made, in these works, the sort of objection that would have exposed the weakness of their all too Catholic arguments.

And as time went on, and Judaism and Paganism, which were both firmly rooted in the ancient religions of Babylon and Chaldea, became securely established in the all-embracing Church of Rome, the distinction between them and the teachings found in the Gospels was gradually obliterated, until today it is forgotten that there ever was such a distinction, except by those who return to the works of these old Christian theologians and discover, with a shock, what Christians living nearer the days of Jesus Christ actually did believe.

They believed, for instance, that Jesus had cancelled observance of the Sabbath, since, for the Christian, every day must be dedicated to the Lord, so that, as Tertullian wrote in his *Answer to Jews*, "to Christians Sabbaths are unknown". Physical circumcision was forbidden, as Jesus had taught that purification must be of the mind and Spirit. Until the Fourth Century, Christians were pacifist, Origen stating in the *contra Celsum* that the lawgiver of the Christians had forbidden entirely the taking of human life since "he did not consider it compatible with his divine legislation to allow the taking of human life in any form at all." (Book 3:7, 8.) Moreover, in those days, spiritual healing was still practised, Origen writing of the Christian healers that "upon those who need healing they use no other invocation than that of the supreme God and of the name of Jesus together with the history about him. By these we have also seen many delivered from serious ailments, and from mental distractions, and madness, and countless other diseases which neither

man nor daemons had cured." (Ibid 3: 24.) In other words, until the third century, Christianity had largely remained the way of non-violence, mercy and healing that we find so clearly depicted in the Gospels; the Judaism and Mithraism that had already been absorbed by the Church, and had greatly influenced the teachings of the new Faith, were still latent, as far as Church policy was concerned. It was not until the time of the accommodation with Constantine and the State that they sprang into action, and it became apparent that the old errors that Jesus had striven to eradicate were firmly ensconced in what was meant to be his church; and for this the influence of Philo Judaeus was largely responsible.

In *De la Philosophie d'Origene*, Denis writes, "All the elements of Christian theology were already prepared in the religious and philosophical eclecticism of Philo and other Jewish Hellenists."

That the teachings of Plato should be traceable in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is natural enough. If we accept the fact that Truth is one and indivisible it is inevitable that we should find the great Masters of spiritual thought arriving at the same conclusions. The truth is no less true because it appeared in primitive sun-worship and the Mystery religions before it appeared in Judaism and Christianity. The Super-human wisdom that inspired the ten commandments is no less wise because the lawgivers of Egypt and Babylon happened to enunciate some of them before the advent of Moses. Indeed, as Bernard Shaw reminded us, "The test of a dogma is its universality". We have confidence in the Golden Rule, not only because it works but because it is a central feature of the ten great world faiths; and it is a central feature of those faiths because it has everywhere been found to be true in the experience

of mankind. But while unity at the summit of understanding is natural and beneficial, attempts to synthesize teachings that belong to different phases of evolutionary development must result in a dangerous dichotomy. The gulf between Moses and Socrates was wide enough, but to add, as a third element, a creed that transcended both, and was often in direct conflict with the teachings of the former, was to invite disaster, the great disaster of ensuring double-mindedness in a large portion of the human race.

Christianity had a contribution to make to the spiritual life that was diametrically opposed to certain concepts held by Philo's Perfect Man. To the followers of Moses, Justice was the highest virtue; while the highest Good for the Christian was compassionate Love. Where Justice would stone the Magdalene, compassionate Love would forgive her and set her free. Where Justice would call down fire from heaven, Love would mourn over the intractability of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Where Justice would fight a righteous war, Love would remain compassionate and non-violent even though its reward was the cross. In other words, Christianity included the gentler 'womanly' attributes and virtues that Philo despised and detested. Throughout his entire works he equated Woman with frailty and sin, his attitude being epitomized in the statement that "the female is nothing else but an imperfect male". It is not surprising, therefore, that throughout his immense works, there is no single reference to the compassionate Love which was the chief characteristic of the nature of the Man of Galilee. Yet it was this love, manifested by each individual, which was, according to Jesus, to save mankind from its own hatred and violence, its

inheritance from the jungle; but it was precisely this love, this merciful tenderness and compassion that was lacking in the moral philosophy of Philo by his exclusion of those virtues that he considered soft, womanly, and beneath the dignity of the male. "A woman", he pointed out, "by reason of the weakness of her nature, is disinclined to and unfitted for war". Therefore, "Nature which has given women protection from all such contests does likewise by so doing plainly deprive them of their right to share in what is put forward as a reward for encountering them." (Book II. xxxi.)

Woman, he informs us, was made out of a rib instead of, like man and the other animals, out of the earth that she "might not be of equal dignity with the man."

His despisal of women is the obverse side to his exaltation of the male, who, according to him, is the creature nearest to God, being equated with mind, while woman is equated with the outward senses, and the serpent—the third member of a trinity which is a prominent feature of his system—stands for pleasure, or lust. This tempts the outward sense which, in turn, captivates the mind, hence, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat".

Throughout, the blame for man's sins is thrown upon the woman, despite his superior position in possessing more godlikeness, and therefore, presumably, more power. "There are two kinds of souls—the one a masculine soul, belonging to men; the other a female soul, as found in women. The masculine soul is that which devotes itself to God alone—but the female soul is that which depends upon all the things which are created, and as such are liable to destruction . . . clinging to a generation

which admits of an innumerable quantity of changes and variations, when it ought rather to cleave to the unchangeable, blessed, and thrice happy divine nature."

How this lesser soul has the power constantly to lead the higher to forsake its heavenly preoccupations and descend to her more earthly kind is never explained. Enough that woman is the culprit in all cases. Even God, Philo suggests, hesitated to curse man for his fall "since all intellect is a divine inspiration", and blamed, first the serpent and then the woman who "being imperfect and depraved by nature, made the beginning of sinning and prevaricating; but the man as being the more excellent and perfect creature, was the first to set the example of blushing, and indeed of every good feeling and action."

The depiction of the bashful male as all that was noble, and who might never have fallen had he not been presented by God with such a dubious 'help-mate' is sustained throughout Philo's voluminous works. He never seems to have considered that in persistently reviling and denigrating the woman he was criticising the wisdom and conduct of her Maker. Referring to the eating of the forbidden fruit, he writes: "It was suitable that immortality and every good thing should be represented as under the power of the man, and death and every evil under that of the woman. But with reference to the mind, the woman, when understood symbolically, is sense and the man is intellect."

This attitude towards women is also found among the Mithraists, Mithras being said to have so hated women that he procreated in a rock. But it is a complete, and rather ingenious reversal of the ideas found in the earlier Mystery religions, those of Isis, Ceres and

Cybele, where the goddess was not only the Mother of all living, but was also the Mother of the Gods and, as such, the source of all wisdom and knowledge. Ceres was said to have been deified for having taught the Greeks the art of agriculture; Cybele was known as the Idaean Goddess, who, in her wisdom, tried to deter her impetuous son—the sun-god in the form of Attis—from begetting in the cave of matter; hence the castration ritual which was incorporated, according to Julianus, into the Mysteries of Mithras. The Greeks worshipped knowledge, and their trinity consisted of the spirit of the God which impregnated the virgin Oracle by means of the Tripod on which she was seated, whereupon she gave birth to the word of prophecy and wisdom. The Oracle at Delphi, Herodotus tells us, was known as the Pythoness, evidently the spiritual bride of the Python, that snake-like form which Apollo was said to assume whenever he visited women of eminence, such as the mother of Augustus Caesar. But for the Jews this serpent, worshipped by the Greeks as the embodiment of Wisdom, was regarded as an evil to be resisted, and she who received his spirit and conceived his Word was no virgin or goddess but a fallen woman, responsible for the greater fall of God-like man. It is interesting to note how the spiritual conception and birth of the Word was reintroduced into Christianity by the Myth of the Nativity.

This, however, did not prove sufficient to outweigh the Judaic suppression of the woman and her qualities that had permeated the new Faith, and for which Paul, among others, was responsible. The virgin Goddess of Mercy was at best an intercessor, a mediator between man and her Son. This did not restore equality, the essential male-

female equipoise so much a feature of the character of Jesus, which made him, as the pattern, or Archetype Man, the saviour of mankind from its lack of balance, the all too great preponderance of masculinity, which rated power, violence and physical endurance so far above mercy, gentleness, non-violence and compassionate Love, those 'feminine' attributes that were beneath Philo's consideration. Whatever its source may have been, his prejudice against women effectively prevented him from recognizing the divinity of true Womanhood. Obsessed with his all-male conception of deity he never realized that what he was worshipping was only one half of the Ideal Man who had already appeared on earth, unknown to him, in the form of Jesus the Nazarene. For Philo, the ideal being was Moses, the lawgiver of his race whom he describes as "The greatest and most perfect man that ever lived."

We have only to compare the thoughts and acts of that man—his merciless demands for the extirpation of alien cultures (Ex. 34:11-16); his revolting and cruel directions for animal sacrifice (Lev. chapters 3 and 4); his demand that a man should be stoned for picking up sticks on the Sabbath day (Numbers 15:33-35); his obsession with the law, his entire lack of compassion—with the healing, merciful, dynamically loving Christ to realize how far Philo's ideal fell short of complete manhood—the sort of man who must come if the primitive man of savagery and violence, that half-man, half-animal depicted in the Old Testament, is ever to go. But by ensuring the same bibliolatry, and the same unquestioning reverence for the Hebrew lawgiver, in the Gentiles that already affected the Jews, Philo Judaeus and the Alexandrian Fathers who borrowed so liberally from his teachings, perpetuat-

ed values that were intended to be replaced by the more evolved idea of the Highest Good found in the New Testament. The attempted acceptance of both these books as of equal spiritual value has resulted in such violations of the Christian ethic as the Crusades, human beings tortured on the rack and burnt at the stake, the slaughter of the Albigenses; generals who went to battle with the Bible in one hand and a rifle in the other, and finally a Christendom that has indulged in two world-wars in less than half a century. None of these things could possibly have arisen from the acceptance and practice of the teachings in the four Gospels. They could, and have arisen from the perpetuation of Judaic and pagan influences preserved in the Church under the cloak of Christianity. And Philo Judaeus undoubtedly played a considerable part in bringing this about.

Say not then that this Way is contrary to Nature, and that in Simplicity of Satisfaction of thy Needs is Perfection of thy Path. For to thee, who hast aspired, it is thy Nature to perform the Great Work, and this is the final Dissolution of the Cosmos. For though a Stone seem to lie still upon a Mountain Top, and have no Care, yet hath it an hidden Nature, a Task Ineffable and Stupendous; namely, to force its Way to the Centre of Gravity of the Universe, and also to burn up its elements into the final Homogeneity of Matter. Therefore the Way of Quiet is but an illusion of Ignorance. Whoever thou mayest be now, thy Destiny is that which I have declared unto thee; and thou art most fixed in the True Way when, accepting this consciously as thy Will, thou gatherest up thy Powers to move thyself mightily within it.

Liber Aleph vel CXI. The Book of Wisdom or Folly. No. 26.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY
THE GENERAL SECRETARY

With this issue of *The Canadian Theosophist* our long association with the printers—The Griffin & Richmond Co. Ltd., of Hamilton—will come to a close. It is with sincere regret that after a relationship of thirty years the increasing cost of production makes it necessary to end the partnership. Thus it is that the next issue, starting a new volume, will be in the hands of The Beamsville Express, Beamsville, Ontario, which is, by the way, in close proximity to the new home of our Editor, Mr. Dudley W. Barr.

It is with deep regret I announce the passing of Mrs. Gail Wylie on Nov. 30. Mrs. Wylie was well known to most of us in Toronto having accompanied her husband, Mr. Sam Wylie, on his periodical lecturing visits, and on these occasions played the piano at the meetings and made many friends by her charming manners and quiet disposition. Our deepest sympathy is expressed to Mr. Wylie in his irreparable loss and is extended to his family.

The Librarian of the Adyar Library is appealing to members and well-wishers who might have books to spare and would like to donate same to this world famous institution. Especially wanted are works by the Greek and Roman classicists, French and Russian novelists, Scandinavian authors, and copies of Roger Bacon, Scott, Carlyle and any other well known English writers. Any one willing to donate should contact the Adyar Library, Adyar, Madras, India who will gladly answer any queries in connection with same.

It is with deep regret we learn that the Society has lost by death one of its most distinguished members. Shri G. N. Gokhale, who passed away last October, was born in 1887 and joined the Society

in 1914. He was for nine years General Secretary of the Indian Section and did inestimable work on behalf of the Society. Mr. Gokhale was a man of great independence of mind, and his services on behalf of Theosophy will long be remembered with the deepest gratitude.

The balloting for a President of the Society has taken place in our Section and on Sunday December 6 the votes were counted. There were two contestants and the result was as follows:

Sri N. Ram	128
Mr. Geoffrey Hodson	63

Total	191
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The scrutineers appointed were Mr. T. B. G. Burch and Mr. T. G. Davy under the supervision of the General Secretary. The number of ballots sent out was 354, and the result show that just under 50% took advantage of their prerogative. Some ballots came in after the closing date and could not be counted.

Annual Election—For some years now the officials of the Canadian Section have been returned to office seemingly as a matter of course. Whether this is a good thing is a moot point. I would suggest that those who have the interest of the Society at heart should take the matter "Into the Silence" and seriously consider whether a change would not be in order. Please give the idea immediate attention for now is the time as per notice appearing elsewhere in this issue.

A well-wisher who desires to be anonymous has generously given a large number of "Daily Quotation Calendars" to the Section which are being distributed free of charge among the lodges and can be sold to augment their financial status. Some lodges have not replied to our query as to whether they

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IN CANADA

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OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

GENERAL SECRETARY

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

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

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EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

All letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publications should be addressed to the Editor, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5.

Editor: Dudley W. Barr.

Associate Editor: Miss Laura Gaunt, B.A.

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

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wish to participate—however there are still a few on hand and we await requests.

* * * *

The Canyon Lodge has lost an outstanding member in the person of Mrs. Dora Jefferson who passed away recently much regretted by all who knew her. She was a member of long standing in the Society and was at one time private secretary to the late Mr. Albert Smythe. Her loss will be deeply felt not only by the lodge but by Theosophy generally. Our sympathy is extended to Mr. Jefferson in his personal loss and to the family.

* * * *

I welcome into the Society a new member, Miss Velta E. Busch, who joins as a member-at-large.

The many friends of Mrs. Kathleen Marks of the Phoenix Lodge will be glad to know that after the serious accident which she suffered recently, she is now convalescing nicely having weathered a serious operation.

* * * *

And now that the New Year has come with hopes abounding I trust that it will bring to each one of you, joy, peace and happiness and the same to men of good-will the world over.

E. L. T.

THE ANNUAL ELECTION

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made during March and should be received at Headquarters by April 1. Will the officers of each Lodge kindly have this matter brought before their Lodge and then have the nominations sent AT ONCE to the General Secretary. According to the Constitution, nominations must be made through a Lodge and the consent of persons nominated should be obtained.

Nominations should be sent in a separate letter to the General Secretary, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

E. L. Thomson,
General Secretary.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, on Sunday, Jan. 10. Members present, Miss M. Hindsley, Messrs. C. E. Bunting, G. I. Kinman and the General Secretary; Miss Laura Gaunt and Mr. D. W. Barr attended ex-officio. The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The Financial Statement, which showed a balance of \$1309.22, was then read and approved. There were five new members and five new subscribers to the Magazine during the past Quarter.

BOOK REVIEWS

Mr. Barr reported progress for the magazine; the General Secretary then read a letter from Dr. Wilks respecting the publication of an article, "The Reliability of the Mahatma Letters". The article will be read by the members of the Executive.

The General Secretary reported that there had been an unforeseen difficulty in the settlement of the Mark Dewey Estate and read correspondence relating to his endeavours to obtain an accurate statement of the amount bequeathed to the Society. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Kinman, seconded by Mr. Bunting: "That this meeting approves of the action of the General Secretary in arranging for an independent form of Attorneys in Los Angeles to act on behalf of the Theosophical Society in Canada. This motion was adopted. The meeting also authorized the General Secretary to dispose of the books, magazines, pamphlets, etc., in the Estate in accordance with the recommendations which had been made. Two replies only had been received to the request for suggestions from the members of the Executive respecting the use of the monies, but as it now appears that there will be a considerable delay, these were held over until a later meeting.

The General Secretary reported that he had not yet been able to visit Montreal Lodge but hopes to do so next month.

Copies of the book *To Form a Nucleus*, by Dr. Hugh Shearman has been received and one copy will be sent to each of the Lodges.

Respecting the proposed Convention; this is under consideration and will be arranged later.

The next meeting of the Executive will be held April 10.

E. L. T.

The Lost Key to the Scriptures, Alvin Boyd Kuhn, Ph.D., Revised and Reprinted by The Academy Press, Elizabeth, N.J., 64 Pages, \$1.00.

Many key words used in the Scriptures have meanings startlingly different from those commonly accepted by ministers and the laity. In "The Lost Key to the Scriptures," Alvin B. Kuhn, Ph.D., selects specific words whose meaning is precisely the opposite to that attributed to them. For example, "death" was spoken of the soul and not of the body, and "death on the cross" means the incarnation of the soul in the mortal body. The Christian and Hebrew Scriptures as well as the ancient books of Greece and Egypt consistently embody this meaning and become rational only with this construction of the word. Dr. Kuhn cites this and a number of other misinterpreted words and phrases and clarifies several muddled theosophical concepts by the pure light of reason. Scriptural material divulges new meaning when it is regarded as spiritual allegory, the evolutionary history of the soul, rather than history. The secret meanings become the true key to the Scriptures.

Students of Theosophy will profit from Dr. Kuhn's extensive knowledge of etymology and sympathetic examination of ancient writings. *The Lost Key to the Scriptures* should do much to dispel the gloom of error associated with conventional Christian interpretation.

Ruth Playle.

On the Nature of Man, an Essay in primitive Philosophy, is the title of another book by Dagobert D. Runes, published by the Philosophical Library Inc. of New York, containing 105 pages and priced at \$3.00.

Dr. Runes writes as one who has a mystical sense of the oneness of the Universe—but also as one whose mystic vision is beclouded by emotion and is expressed through a mind of circumscribed range. Infinitude and limitation; rebellion and acceptance; flights on the wings of the spirit towards the great Unknown, and the tread of heavy feet; delicate fabrics woven by the intuition, and tool-marked thoughts hammered out on the anvil of the brain, all greet us in this book.

The vigorous imagery in which Dr. Runes' ideas are presented arouses thought, but a coherent and comprehensive philosophy does not emerge.

D.W.B.

The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed by the Reverend Doctor Charles Francis Potter, A Gold Medal Book, published 1958 by Fawcett Publications, Inc., Greenwich, Conn., 128 pp., paper-back, 50c.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, which were accidentally discovered some twelve years ago in caves about fourteen miles from Jerusalem near the ruins of an ancient Essene Community, have been and doubtless will continue to be the focal point of many theological arguments. In *The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed*, Dr. Potter has made an important contribution to the ever-growing literature concerning the Scrolls and has set forth the reasons for his belief that the so-called "eighteen silent years" in the life of Jesus between the ages of twelve and thirty were spent in the Qumran Essene Community. "Scholars are gradually admitting the startling parallels between his doctrines and vocabulary and those of the Essenes and their 'Teacher of Righteousness', who was probably crucified nearly a century before the birth of Jesus. It is to his title and authority that Jesus probably succeeded."

This little book is written in very readable style and contains much information respecting the Essenes, the Scriptures which they collected in their vast Library, and the probable effects that the re-discovery of these books will have on orthodox Christianity. Some 'defenders of the faith' have endeavoured to assure their congregations that there is nothing in the Scrolls which will in any way change the orthodox view. The author, however, is a Unitarian Minister and does not labour under the handicap of being compelled to support orthodoxy; as he points out, "Now that the proven Mother of Christianity is known to have been the prior Community of the New Covenant commonly called the Essenes, the momentous question challenging the conscience of all Christendom is whether the child will have the grace, courage, and honesty to acknowledge and honour its own mother".

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

(Continued from Page 125)

combined with our desires, is our ordinary centre of consciousness. This is the region of the human soul or personal self and this is where most of our attention is focussed, but the mind is a medium of greater activities than ordinary concrete thoughts. It can reach upwards, it can seek truth, it can interpret beauty, it can aspire. All our highest and most unselfish feelings, all our inspirations come to us through this higher part of our mind, which we call the Re-incarnating Ego. It is thus called because it gathers up from the life when over, at the dissolution of the personality, all that is worth preserving. This is added to the sum total of its experiences and serves to enrich the next personality, projected by it into earth life. *We* are such personalities and thus our characters have been formed.

Now there comes a time in our various sojourns in physical existence when we begin questioning the why and wherefore of life, and when we question *sincerely*, we generally get an answer. That is why most of us are here. We are tired of tossing backwards and forwards like driftwood and would like to take a hand at steering our own course, but we cannot do this as intelligently as we might, unless we have some knowledge of the plan of life, some intuition of reality. This, it seems to me shows that we are growing up and are ready to assume a certain amount of responsibility, and at this point we find that, instead of the emphasis being placed on the outer world we are told to look within, to put our own world in order. Work in the outer world is necessary but since its value will depend on the source from which it comes, we must see to it that that source is the highest from which we can draw. The outer world is a reflection, in many ways, of our combined inner worlds and in it we have some influence, but in our *own* individual inner worlds, we are in a position of power and trust. We are not the supreme voice, but we can be the interpreters of that supreme voice.

I like to think that we are regents, that we have a kingdom over which to rule, but we shall never make a success of our job if we step down from our position and identify ourselves with all the lower elements in our nature. And here I am going to interject another idea that will seem fantastic to some, but which would have seemed much more fantastic a few hundred years ago. We have heard a great deal these last years from the scientists about the composition of matter. Instead of it being solid, in the way we used to think it was, we now know that matter is composed of whirling centres of energy and that in composition they resemble a solar system. Our physical bodies are

made up of these atoms and according to Theosophy the material side of our other principles are composed of them too. They are to us tiny units of life, but units that are growing and evolving just as we are. They flit in and out of our bodies with what to us seems lightning rapidity. These atoms are parts of our universe, and they receive certain impressions from their contact with it. They may form part of our physical body or our etheric body, or our emotional or mental apparatus, but we affect them for good or evil, just as we do everything else. This is an unusual type of responsibility to contemplate I know, but I mention it to show that there are myriads of small lives that share in our greater one.

Now to return to ourselves, the first question we might try to answer is, "When I say '*I*', of whom am I talking?" Do *I* get angry, depressed, irritable, critical, jealous; am *I* hungry, do *I* love comfort to the exclusion of better things? No, these are not the activities of the real and lasting *I*, if we are considering the *I* as the higher self. They are the activities of the animal soul and the personality. Someone might well say here, "But we are our personalities", and in a measure that is true, but would it not be more correct to say that we assume personalities, as an actor takes a part, every time we enter physical life. It is true that most of us take our parts so seriously that we do identify ourselves completely with these personalities, but when once more we enter the higher regions after death, *we* shall remain, but our personalities as such will be dissolved, although the experiences gained through them will never be lost. Therefore we must begin in some measure at least to separate ourselves, in thought, from the activities of our personalities and identify ourselves with the real and lasting *I*, which knows itself as one with all life.

There is another way I picture to myself this inner world of our being, I imagine that we are all given some land and told to develop it. The land, which corresponds to our personalities, has certain beauties which we must preserve. It has healthy flowers which we must water and feeble ones that must be given extra attention. It has trees and streams and lovely coloured rocks, and animals and birds, but it has other things. It has ugly barren spots; it has weeds; it has parasitical plants; it has some fierce animals, and growths that shut out the sun and light. It is our job to clear away these blights, to make the barren spots beautiful, and finally to leave the gates to this land open, so that anyone who wants to, can find rest and inspiration there and perchance if their need is great, they, like we, will feel the presence of the real inspirer of this place, whose creation it really is. Maybe that is why a great teacher is referred to as a light that comes to lighten the world, for there is nothing in him to impede that flow of light that dwells in the heart of each one of us.

I read of two symbols, the other day, which had reference to the different principles, the different modes of consciousness of man. The first was that of a cord in which there were knots tied at various intervals, the knots representing the principles. Gradually we shall untie the knots and then the higher life will flow through our whole being and instead of many voices there will be one voice. The other symbol is that of a Chinese sage Chuang Tsu. He says:— "Suppose a boat is crossing a river and another boat, an empty one, is about to collide with it. Even an irritable man would not lose his temper. But suppose there was someone in the second boat. Then the occupant of the first would shout to him to keep clear, and if he did not hear the first time, nor even when called to three times, bad

language would inevitably follow. In the first case there was no anger, in the second there was because in the first place the boat was empty; in the second it was occupied, and so it is with man. If he could only pass empty through life, who would be able to injure him?"

This means, of course, that while we have dominant, self-seeking personalities, we shall be continually bumping into the personalities of other people. Eventually, however, if we are sincere and in earnest, we shall cease to use our personalities for our own ends, but will use them for greater work in our chosen field.

It is a strange thing, though perhaps a natural one, at our stage of growth, that although we must realize if we think about these things at all, nearly all our troubles come through these same personalities, or rather through their misuse. We cling to the poorer side of them like a drowning man clings to a plank. It is one of the hardest things in the world to become impersonal, even when we think we are working for good ends. If we manage to push it down in one place, it appears serenely in another, and when we deliberately try to control it, it puts up a terrific fight. We do not, however, have to wage this battle single handed, for while we stretch out one hand to raise the personality our Inner God will stretch out a hand to us.

This deliberate effort to fulfil life's purpose is spoken of in religion and philosophy as the Path, the one which the Bible speaks of as sharp as the edge of a razor, and one reason I think that we hesitate so long to start on this journey is that consciously or unconsciously we feel that in giving up so much that seems of great importance to us, personally, we shall have nothing left. This is indeed the voice of the Personality itself.

Did we have nothing when we came across some beautiful scene in nature, that almost took our breath away, or when we were absorbed in music? Did we have nothing when we were so interested in a book or play that all sense of time or ourselves was lost? Does the artist have nothing when he is creating, or the humanitarian when he is relieving suffering? Do the Masters have nothing?

This brings me to the last relationship on which I am going to touch, our relationship to the Masters.

Now, I know that a lot of nonsense has been spoken about the Masters. I have heard it myself. We once had a speaker who said that five Masters were in the room, on the inner planes of course, when he was speaking. That sort of thing does a great deal of harm and brings ridicule on an idea that to me, at any rate, is one of the most inspiring of the Theosophical teachings. The Masters are the visible proof of what we are trying to become and just as Michael Angelo is an inspiration to a painter and Chopin to a musician, so *they* are an inspiration to all who are seeking truth. There is nothing more unnatural about a Master of Wisdom than there is about a Master of Mechanics or a master builder. In fact if there were no flowering of effort in any direction there would be nothing with which to compare our values. I should like, therefore, to quote a passage on the Masters written by one of our teachers. It says—"The Masters are perfect men, relatively speaking, whom Theosophists commonly call Teachers, Elder Brothers, Masters, Sages, seers, and by other names. They are indeed the Elder Brothers of Mankind: they are men, not spirits: they are men who have evolved through self devised efforts, in individual evolution always advancing forwards and upwards until they have now attained the lofty spiri-

tual and intellectual human supremacy that now they hold. They were not so created by any cosmic Deity, but they are men who have become what they are, by means of inward spiritual striving, by spiritual and intellectual yearning, by aspiration to be greater and better, nobler and higher, just as every good man in his own way so aspires. They are farther advanced along the path of evolution than the majority of men are."

"They are called Teachers because they are occupied in the noble duty of instructing mankind, in inspiring elevating thoughts and in instilling impulses of forgetfulness of self, into the hearts of men. Also they are sometimes called the Guardians, because they are in very truth the Guardians of the Race and of the records—natural, racial, national—of past ages, portions of which they give out from time to time as fragments of a now long forgotten wisdom, when the world is ready to listen to them, and they do this in order to advance the cause of Truth and of genuine civilization founded on wisdom and brotherhood."

Such then are the Masters of Wisdom, the advance guard of humanity. There is nothing mysterious about them. They have raised the personal self, been through the fire, and emerged on the other side, and since in mentioning them we think of their messenger Madame Blavatsky, I should like to close with her description of the final victory of one of these great souls, given at the end of her book, *The Voice of the Silence*. She says:

"Behold the mellow light that floods the eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth unite. And from the fourfold manifested powers, a chant of love ariseth, both from the flaming fire and flowering water and from sweet smelling earth and rushing wind. Hark . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex

of that golden light in which the victor bathes, all nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim, 'Joy unto you, O men of Myalba (or Earth).

A Pilgrim hath returned back from the other shore. A new Arhan (saviour) is born'."

THE IMPACT OF THOUGHT ON MATTER

(Summary of the De La Warr lecture at Caxton Hall)

Throughout many civilizations the ability of man to affect the growth of crops and the health of animals and human beings by other than material means has been established. Sagas and songs testify adequately to this ability, as do the biographies of saints. The Churches still observe the Rogation Day ritual. With the growth of physical science in the Victorian era, however, much of this earlier work was neglected and regarded as mere superstition, but there is no doubt that these paranormal qualities are possessed by individuals as much today as at any time in history.

As these practices are so universal we decided that there might be some distant connection between them and the work of the Radionic practitioner who can without doubt improve the health of animals and certain human beings and increase the growth of crops. We decided, therefore, to conduct experiments outside the field of organized religion and medicine to see whether or not it was possible for a human being of normal ability to obtain repeatable results in affecting living objects and some extremely interesting evidence has been obtained. We have, in fact, seen fit to call this work a study of the prephysical state of matter. After eighteen years' research into this subject three principles at least stand out clearly from the wealth of information we have obtained.

Principle No. 1. That it is possible for a person to detect a change in

certain simple apparatus when that person changes his thought.

Principle No. 2. That by a process of selective thinking it is possible to detect vibratory movements of all kinds whether they are simple frequencies or complex as in nature.

Principle No. 3. That cell growth can be stimulated or stultified by the thought processes.

These are facts and we must accept their existence. They are, of course, only pointers to a new meaning to life but it is high time that they were recognized and developed.

Establishing Resonance

I am going to use this term *thought resonance* quite frequently because when thought resonance is established with a mortal body there is in fact a physiological effect both in the thinker and in the mortal body. This is where a simple piece of apparatus comes in to detect the physiological effect and Principle No. 1 is observed in action.

"That it is possible for a person to detect a change in certain simple apparatus when that person changes his thought."

Dial Settings or Rates

There are appropriate dial settings for every thought covering diseases, anatomical cell groups and systems, hormones, minerals and elements. We have prepared over 4,000 of these rates.

By way of proving that thoughtforms exist I am showing you how they can affect a photographic emulsion. In

1926 a Japanese Professor Fukurai carried out 22 successful experiments under controlled conditions and was able to get a person to read a symbol and transfer it to a photographic plate. This plate was locked all the time in a sealed casket held by a committee. The person simply gazed at the piece of paper containing the symbol and after several minutes was able to say that the symbol had been transferred to the plate in the casket.

In 1935 a group of experimenters transferred thirteen thought images to a photographic paper under test conditions. The sheets of paper were placed one above another in a box and specific thoughts were chosen by the people present.

It is my contention that if a thought-form can be made to affect a photographic emulsion then there is an energy in thought that justifies our claims.

We now come to photographs that are taken on our special Mark I Camera but they are no longer only a thought-wave. There is now a stabilizing factor from the Camera due to the use of a sound wave and a two bar magnet. We have taken over 12,000 of these photographs and they are mostly repeatable. It is possible to obtain photographs of a kind without using the Camera but clearer definition is obtained by using the Camera and repetition is simple.

A representative soil sample was taken of 17 acres of the field in Scotland 400 miles north and was treated twice a day from our Laboratories in Oxford throughout the growing season. Samples 1 to 5 were taken from the untreated control area of 5 acres. The remaining 17 samples were taken at random by the Scottish farmer from the 17 acres that were treated. These showed a 20 per cent increase of crop and a much improved appearance.

Mr. de la Warr showed some interesting lantern slides which corroborated his statements and from which we saw very plainly the difference between those crops which had been 'blest' and those that had not.

He also showed a photograph of a test tube of water over which a priest from London had performed a fifteen minute Service according to the Sarum Rite during which the priest had visualized the symbol of a crucifix; and when the photographic plate was developed the cross was distinctly seen on the glass of water. It must be realized, Mr. de la Warr said, that this energy pattern remained on the water for some time and was not the transient thought. It would take approximately twenty minutes to perform the Rite and take the photograph. Later it gradually fades.

Conclusions

There is little to add in conclusion except to say that although we are able to repeat these phenomena, with all humility, of course, we have no idea how they occur. The results of our experiments on plants and soils are facts and they can be repeated in varying degrees by others. The implications are tremendous, and when our work is taken seriously by the scientist, I submit that he must inevitably review his whole concept of what constitutes matter. With the right thoughts and temperament it is possible for a person to evoke and direct this Divine Energy. Where then is the provision for this Energy in the equations of the scientist? How can he apply his law for the conservation of energy, if the power of mind is not included? Why should the physicist admit the presence of a Divine Source of life on Sundays and deny it on week days in his laboratory?

Quarterly Review,
The Churches' Fellowship
of Psychical Study.

A NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTION

It all started in 1951 when Vinoba Bhave, a disciple of the late Mahatma Gandhi, was preaching the doctrine of non-violence in an area of India which was very disturbed by Communist activities. One night as he was talking, a landless villager rose and said "Communists are all around this village. They have promised much, they have promised to take land from the landlords and give it to the poor. We do not want Communism, but we do need land and have no money to buy it. Yet the landlords are rich and it is by our heavy labour that their lands are tilled and their crops reaped. How can such a problem be solved by your doctrine of non-violence?"

How could it be solved? In order to gain time, Bhave asked how much land the landless ones wanted. They considered together and replied "Eighty acres". Bhave then turned to the landlords and said, "You have heard this request. Some of you have hundreds, some thousands of acres of land. It belongs to you. Before you it belonged to your fathers. But why does this land belong to you? Did you or your fathers create it? Is it not God's creation and have not all children of God an equal share in it?" After speaking to them for a short time, he asked if anyone of them would fulfill the demand. One landlord arose and offered to give one hundred of his five hundred acres for the use of the landless families of the village.

In that moment the Landsharing Movement (Bhoodan) was born and since then it has collected without price and distributed free of charge, more than four and a half million acres of land. The success of the plan was due primarily to the utter confidence which all men had in the saintly character of Bhave, a man who was himself without property, money or family, yet one so

rich in character that all men trusted him implicitly. Gandhi himself trusted Vinoba Bhave and Bhave's name was at the head of the list of those who were worthy to engage in Gandhi's work; the second name was that of the present Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharal Nehru. Other factors contributed to its success. Fear of the rise of Communism may have moved some landlords, but in others—in the great majority, if one may judge from the reports—the response came from the heart. The land was given freely in compassion and brotherhood. A social revolution came into being and moved peacefully and directly to its goal.

Has this any significance to those of us in Canada? Perhaps not directly. We have no caste of landless peasants and land is available through effort. Vast areas still await cultivation.

But ideas and ideals concerning human relationships have significance, no matter where they originate. Ideas have no boundaries and in the world community, ideas which originate in one global area flow readily to all other areas. Today as never before in history there is a deeper and more widespread sense of responsibility to others, not to them because they are economic units, but to them as individuals whose well-being and dignity are important to others. Examples of this can be found in the work of Unesco, the Colombo Plan, changing attitudes in sociological work, education, criminology, and in such schemes as hospitalization, old age pensions, workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance and others.

All these are but newly come to the world. They indicate a changing psychology, perhaps even the beginning of a new upward surge in human evolution to a state in which all men will be truly brothers and a man's renown and honour will be determined by what he can and does *give* to others, not by what he accumulates and keeps.

"IT IS MINE"

The spiritual leaders of mankind have each stressed one fundamental requirement for all those who would approach the fane of the sacred science, namely, that the Doctrine is for the salvation of all men and that it does not 'work' if an individual attempts to obtain its benefits for himself alone.

There is a well-authenticated process by which a man can extricate himself from the prisonhouse of self. This process is the subject of innumerable treatises, for men have ever sought freedom, peace, self-realization. Men of various races and many lands have found the secret; orally and in writing they have set out their findings, and today there are many instructions on the subject available to men and women of all temperaments who would attempt the final and fundamental task of discovering their own true nature and their relationship to the universe of which they are parts. These instructions differ in modes of presentation for some were written or spoken thousands of years ago, while others are more modern. Some will attract the analytical, closely-reasoning type of mind; others will attract those whose approach is through devotion—but all agree in this that the first requirement is not concern for self-advancement and individual spiritual progress, but rather concern for others, charitableness, compassion, love.

"Hast thou attuned thy being to Humanity's great pain, O candidate for light?" is the first question asked of the candidate whose progress through 'the seven portals' is outlined in *The Voice of the Silence*. He is represented as standing before the first portal on the Path, the golden key to which is 'Dana, the key of charity and love immortal'. If he possesses this key he may pass through the first gate and enter upon

those self-disciplines which will finally unveil the object of his search, the divine self now hidden in his own heart. Later, after he has passed many trials successfully and has reached the stage when by virtue of faculties developed on the way, he could if he so desired take nirvanic refuge from the trials and tribulations of the world, two other questions are asked of him: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

Quotations could be given from other mystical literature emphasizing the same point—for example, from the Christian Bible, the words of Jesus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", or St. Paul's words, "Even so, in ascending scale, I will still point out the Way . . . though I may have knowledge from a seer's researches into divine things; and may realize all the secrets of the sacred keep and all practical wisdom . . . but have not the Love that truly serves I am nothing." (*Letters from Paulos*).

A story from India—one of the many hundred of little stories, aptly illustrative of one point or another, which have become embodied in the spiritual culture of that ancient land—tells of what happened when one disciple, well on his way to the desired goal, forgot the essence of the ancient doctrine.

Kandata earnestly desired salvation from his condition of misery and pain and, in answer to his constant prayers, a spider's thread from a web fixed high in heaven was let down before him. He was told to climb it. He looked in dismay at the delicate thread, but seized upon it and began to climb. To his astonishment the thread bore his weight, and with growing confidence he mounted higher and higher.

"Suddenly he felt the thread tremb-

ling and shaking, for behind him some of his fellow-sufferers were beginning to climb up. Kandata became frightened. He saw the thinness of the web, and observed that it was elastic, for under the increased weight it stretched out; yet it still seemed strong enough to carry him. Kandata had heretofore only looked up; he now looked down, and saw following close upon his heels, also climbing by the cobweb, a numberless mob of the denizens of Hell. 'How can this thin thread bear the weight of all?' he thought to himself, and seized with fear he shouted loudly: "Let go the cob-web. It is mine!"

"At once the cobweb broke, and Kandata fell back into Hell."

Kandata was still under the delusion of self, and although he had his hands upon the means to possible freedom, he did not realize it and failed to pass the first requirement. Kandata of the ancient story, is typical of candidates of every age who under one or another form of the delusion, seek first to establish their own place of security in the spiritual—and material—world before they will give themselves for others. The mind assures us that this is reasonable and quite in order, but we have been warned that in spiritual matters, the mind is the great slayer of the real. The spider thread of spiritual consciousness which has come to one individual will, through the miraculous power of compassion for humanity, become a cable from which the whole world might hang.

THE THREE TRUTHS

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.—Idvll of the White Lotus.

THE APPEARANCE OF ANGELS

It is difficult
to tell one
from another.

Their faces are featureless
and their skin, colourless.
Their garments are without seam.

When we see them
we are joined to them
like bodies to wings.

There is nothing
hidden in their faces
or occult behind their eyes.

It is not as if
you can extract something
from them, like a seed from a shell.

Rather it is their two selves
which, like a right hand and a left
hand,
are identical in their difference.

They are much like fire
but without heat,
a sea without shores.

To see them face to face
is to face the wind,
and to feel its movement.

Individually they resemble
themselves
more than anything else.

When we see them
we make of their identity
an attribute, a uniqueness.

John Robert Colombo.

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