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HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

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BY H. T. EDGE, M.A.

Seldom, if ever, do those whom the world numbers among the truly great gain recognition as such during their lives. Their work is on a large scale and consists chiefly in ground-breaking and seed-sowing for a future harvest. As reformers, they must often be in conflict with the fixed ideas of their day. Absorbed in their duty, they have neither time nor inclination to cultivate the arts of popularity; nor indeed would it suit their purpose if men should revere the personality of the teacher rather than his teachings. If we feel disposed to censure their contemporaries for blindness, and at the same time avoid the charge of being equally blind ourselves, it behooves us to exercise our perceptions upon our own times. It is the main thesis of these remarks that in H. P. Blavatsky we have an instance of a real Teacher, whose husbandry, though destined to yield a rich harvest, has passed unnoticed by her contemporaries.

Nothing would be easier than to write a panegyric on this theme; but what need is there for such a device where a plain statement of facts is sufficient?

H. P. Blavatsky was the founder of the modern Theosophical Movement; . . . consequently it is to her that we must give credit for inaugurating what this movement has accomplished and will accomplish. The work . . . has already won the attention of the pioneers of thought and progress; for the teachings of Theosophy, as brought by H. P. Blavatsky, are seen applied to daily life . . . in the multifarious expressions of Theosophical principles in literature, arts and crafts. In years to come, when this work shall have achieved fruition, and historical perspective given a just and comprehensive view of the influence of Theosophy upon human progress, men will recognize H. P. Blavatsky as one of those Great Souls or Messengers who, appearing at rare in-

tervals, have profoundly changed the world.

The writings of H. P. Blavatsky constitute a phenomenon—a twofold phenomenon, that of their nature, and that of their reception by the world. Scholarship and criticism seem to have decided to let them alone; and this circumstance will doubtless afford something for historians of the future to exercise their minds upon, as well as ground for some Bacon-Shakespeare theorist of posterity to assert that H. P. Blavatsky's works were not extant in her day. An adequate or even a passable review of *The Secret Doctrine* is still awaited and would be much welcomed by Theosophists, and an invitation is hereby extended to any genuine scholar who is willing to read that work and give a candid opinion upon it. Theosophists, however, have much positive evidence (of kinds that can easily be guessed) that *The Secret Doctrine* is actually a great force in the world of literary expression and intellectual speculation; and it may be claimed of books, as of Teachers, that those which gain ready approval and those which achieve results are usually in two different classes.

The Source of Her Greatness

The influence of this real Teacher is thus seen to be vast and far-reaching, and we are led to inquire into the source of so much power. No such influence can be wielded by any one whose purposes and ideals are merely personal. History provides us with instances of great men who have identified themselves with a great impersonal purpose and have thereby achieved great results; but who, falling into some snare of personal ambition or pride, have forthwith sped to rapid ruin. H. P. Blavatsky never fell; impersonal, universal, her purpose remained while she had breath; and the work she founded has not failed, nor will ever lack of workers devoted enough to prevent it from failing.

Devotion to a high and impersonal ideal is thus one of the reasons for H. P. Blavatsky's power. But an ideal alone can accomplish nothing; behind it must stand an Individuality, a Soul—what ordinary language calls a "great personality." And H. P. Blavatsky was truly a great Individuality. In her we see a personality of far more than ordinary strength, subdued and turned into an obedient servant by the still greater power of an awakened Spiritual Will. She was an example of the truth that he who rules himself can rule the world.

If the history of her life should be written in chapters, the titles might run as follows: (1) Compassion—for humanity's plight; (2) the search for Knowledge; (3) the finding of the Light; (4) self-devotion to the office of Light-Bringer to Humanity; (5) achievement and triumph, won for humanity by services faithfully discharged. Here, then, we have an epitome which sums up her life and explains it; such was the secret of her power.

Every Soul enters corporeal life with a definite purpose to be fulfilled, a written destiny to be unrolled. But how few of us are even dimly conscious of the purpose of our Soul! In rare flashes of intuition, perchance, the inner Light may reveal as much of itself as the wandering mind is able to reflect; we may know that we have been face to face with our very Self; or we may fancy we have had a visit from some divine personality. But apart from such rare illuminations, our mind is the theater of many a passing scene; and perhaps only at the moment of death, when the liberated Soul casts up its accounts, can the real purpose of the life be discerned. Nevertheless the purpose is there, though we know it not; and our life is guided by it and not by our whims and wishes.

Like other people, H. P. Blavatsky entered life with a purpose; but she was more prescient thereof. Like other strong souls, she soon found out the bitter contradiction between life as it is and life as it can and

should be. But her dauntless energy brooked no compromise; she started forth with on her pilgrimage in quest of the Light, thus entering at once on the fulfillment of her life's purpose.

Her Quest of Knowledge

Finding Western civilization still in the crudeness of youth, she turned, as others have done, to the older nations, whence there ever proceeds the aroma of an ancient sacred lore. She traveled in the Orient, but found there far more than falls to the lot of the ordinary traveler or scholar. For, unlike them, she bore passwords that could open doors and unseal lips closed to those unable to give the challenge. And what are these passwords? Courage undaunted by every obstacle; manifest devotion to the Sacred Cause; sympathy; appreciation; docility. The oracle of the East vouchsafes to all suppliants that for which they ask: to the curious, learning; to the covetous, gold; to the ambitious, fame; to the sceptical, a confirmation of his doubts; to the scoffer, something to scoff at. To the searcher for Wisdom, in like manner, the Oracle gives what is asked; and he who asks for the Truth receives the Truth. H. P. Blavatsky was treated like the rest; and if she won more, it was because she asked more, dared more.

She discovered that there were in the East (and in the West) Teachers whose only condition was the presence of a disciple—of a disciple willing to learn, ready to observe the conditions of Knowledge, able to sacrifice all of lesser worth. If at this point any should ask why such Teachers do not court the favor of the world's acquaintance, let the world's reception of H. P. Blavatsky be his sufficient answer. They seek nothing of the world; and their one purpose, to help the world, they know best how to fulfil. Compassion being the dominant note in her character enabled her to fulfill the conditions of discipleship.

Besides traveling in the East, she also visited the West, the Americas; for the

West is the home of the New Race that is to inherit and carry on the ancient lore of the East. These extensive travels gave her an intimate and comprehensive knowledge of human character in all its phases; especially as her journeys did not follow the paved roads of tourists but penetrated into the byways and intimacies of the national life.

This brief outline may serve to account for the power of her individuality, the beneficence of her purpose, and the vastness of her knowledge. Yet, as to the last, it was from no mere accumulation of garnered lore that she drew, but from an inexhaustible and ever-accessible source. For all the knowledge contained in human minds or recorded on scrolls of memory or of parchment is accessible to him whose inner senses are opened; and this may explain H. P. Blavatsky's strange power of being able to write erudite works, full of quotations from recondite sources; without the aid of libraries and literary research.

Knowledge of the human heart, the Teacher's power to discern character, must be included in the number of her attributes. In order to estimate the efficacy of this power, we have only to reflect a moment on the feebleness of our own resources in this respect. Our hearts and minds are sealed books to each other; instead of perceiving the minds of others, we see but the image of our own prejudices; our own familiar friend may take his life in the depth of his despair, and we none the wiser till the deed is done. Sympathy is the key to knowledge; not sentimental self-indulgent sympathy, but the strong and fruitful kind.

Entry Upon Her Work

With such a character and such a mission, it is not surprising that H. P. Blavatsky produced remarkable effects among men wherever she went. She was like a center of electrical energy, to which many lesser bodies are drawn, hovering to and fro, or gyrating in more or less distant orbits around the source of power. Her primary purpose was to form a nucleus from which

might grow an organic body. She was like the potency of germination entering the soul. As she herself has said, she had been intrusted with a handful of seeds to sow.

The methods adopted by her to fulfil this purpose were those best suited to success; so it is not surprising that they differed considerably from the stereotyped methods which ordinary people would have adopted. Such a difference was indeed necessary if her methods were to succeed where other means have failed. Had H. P. Blavatsky followed well-meant advice, instead of following the Light within, she might have created a fashionable body or a literary cult, or, worse still, a psychic craze, instead of the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood founded on a common recognition of eternal truths. But she declined to make principles bend to the alleged necessity for propitiating predilections. Theosophy was not to be for any body of elect or select. She carried her message wherever it was needed, and held aloft the Light that all who would might follow.

As in every age there are those who work unseen for the preservation of the Truth, so there are those who work behind the scenes for its destruction; history tells us this. These latter powers, at all events, recognized H. P. Blavatsky for what she was; her mission they both understood and feared. A determined attempt was early made to bring that mission to an end by ruining its leader. The world knows but the visible machinery by which such attempts are carried out; the powers behind the scenes it knows not. But though in most ages the resources of conspiracy and calumny are well-nigh invincible, they could not succeed against the Messenger of Truth; a few half-hearted disciples fell away, but the Teacher found enough loyal disciples to enable her to establish living centers of Theosophy in many lands.

In accordance with present-day conditions, the activity was mainly literary; for literature provides the great channel of intercommunication. Hence the magazines,

books, and pamphlets. Lectures, public meetings, and receptions by the Teacher, afforded other means of spreading the message.

The essential difference between H. P. Blavatsky and the founders of sects and cults was that instead of offering a theory, religion, or philosophy to the approval of the world, she *pointed out the way*. This is characteristic of all real Teachers. They do not theorize or philosophize; they point out the Truth. Columbus dared the trackless ocean, found a new world, and brought back tidings. "Believe me not, but go and see!" Newton demonstrated that his generalization of the law of gravity explained the dynamics of the solar system, and Copernicus offered the heliocentric system to the approval of observation and common-sense. H. P. Blavatsky directed attention to certain *facts*, restated in modern terms certain ancient truths, appealed to observation and common-sense. She was a revealer.

Theosophy A Great Moral Force

Morality is not a code of manners, as some try to make out, but it rests on Spiritual truths or facts. Hence great Teachers are always uplifting powers in the world; they remind men of the eternal Spiritual facts upon which morality rests. The true destiny of man, his full self-realization can only be achieved by the road of compassion and self-denial; or, to put it philosophically, by transcending the limits of personality. The first steps in Occultism must consist of lessons in this principle, otherwise the aspirant would be treading a path that deviates toward delusion and tribulation. Thus in Theosophy the ethical element is paramount; and any system (even though the name of Theosophy should be claimed for it) from which this element is absent or in which it is secondary, it not Theosophy. H. P. Blavatsky was a great *moral force*. One of her chief works is *The Voice of the Silence*, and the above statement needs no more for its proof than a

reference to this book, which was written specially by her for the guidance of her pupils in Theosophy.

The Voice of the Silence, like *The Secret Doctrine* as mentioned above, is a work upon which the opinion of competent scholars would be much valued. Whether they admit that the precepts are derived from the source claimed by the author, or whether they say that she composed them herself, the result is equally remarkable and significant. In either case these precepts constitute a most exalted, and also a profoundly philosophical, code of moral principles and practical instructions. But internal evidence alone is more than sufficient to vindicate the prefatory statements of the author as to their origin. That these precepts are indeed those of a genuine and actually-existing school of the ancient Wisdom admits of no doubt from a candid and competent reader. To quote from the Preface:

"The following pages are derived from "The Book of the Golden Precepts," one of the works put into the hands of mystic students in the East. The knowledge of them is obligatory in that school, the teachings of which are accepted by many Theosophists. Therefore, as I know many of these Precepts by heart, the work of translating has been relatively an easy task for me . . .

"The Book of the Golden Precepts—some of which are pre-Buddhistic while others belong to a later date—contains about ninety distinct little treatises. Of these I learnt thirty-nine by heart, years ago. To translate the rest, I should have to resort to notes scattered among a too large number of papers and memoranda collected for the last twenty years and never put in order, to make of it by any means an easy task. Nor could they all be translated and given to a world too selfish and too much attached to objects of sense to be in any way prepared to receive such exalted ethics in the right spirit. For, unless a man per-

severes seriously in the pursuit of self-knowledge, he will never lend a willing ear to advice of this nature . . .

“In this translation, I have done my best to preserve the poetrical beauty of language and imagery which characterizes the original . . . “H. P. B.”

Following this, a few quotations from the book itself may be made; which, inadequate though they must necessarily be, may serve both to reveal its character and to invite further study. The book is divided into three parts, entitled respectively: “The Voice of the Silence,” “The Two Paths,” and “The Seven Portals.” In the first title, the Silence referred to is that which ensues upon the mastery of all the senses, both external and internal, which distract the mind and prevent it from mirroring the light of the Soul—the Knower. Herein we see the practical application of that universal principle of Philosophy—that the *mind* is a mirror which reflects either the fires of passion or the tranquil light of the Knower (the Spiritual Soul), the latter being the real source of knowledge. Explanatory of this theme, then, we find the following:

Before the Soul can see, the Harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusion . . .

Before the Soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united, just as the form to which the clay is modeled, is first united with the potter’s mind.

For then the soul will hear and will remember.

And then to the inner ear will speak—
The Voice Of The Silence

The following maxim will be recognized as pertaining to the groundwork of truth common to all religions:

Give up thy life if thou wouldst live.

This sentence is explained by a note as follows: “Give up the life of physical *personality* if you would live in spirit.” Subjoined are other quotations, needing little or no comment:

If through the Hall of Wisdom, thou

wouldst reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of separateness that weans thee from the rest . . .

Ere thy Soul’s mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out; the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection . . .

Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain, like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

Let not the fierce Sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer’s eye.

Search for the Paths. But, O Lanoo (disciple), be of clean heart before thou startest on thy journey. Before thou takest thy first step learn to discern the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the everlasting. Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom, the “Eye” from the “Heart” doctrine . . .

Mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner to blend thy Mind and Soul . . .

Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child . . .

To live to benefit mankind is the first step; to practise the six glorious virtues is the second . . .

Sufficient has now been quoted to show that the chief importance of this book is in distinguishing between the true Path of Occultism — Divine Wisdom — and those false roads that lead towards destruction. The true Path is characterized by compassion and the absence of personal desire. It is the Way spoken of by all religious Teachers, and leads to the Peace; its follower benefits all human-kind. The false roads are those by which the deluded one strives to obtain knowledge and power without first cleansing his heart and mind. He falls victim to his weaknesses, which he has not overcome but merely sought to evade. H. P. Blavatsky never flattered the desires of those who sought knowledge

from curiosity or any interested motive; but never denied it to those who could fulfil the conditions under which Teachers must teach. A few who have tried to evade these conditions have lost their way in wildernesses of folly and self-deception; but the cause of true Theosophy has even been protected by the wisdom and firmness of H. P. Blavatsky.

"The Secret Doctrine"

The Voice of the Silence has been mentioned in connection with the ethical aspect of the Teacher's message, but in truth it is difficult to divide that message under headings. For the Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine, of whose existence and significance she reminded the modern world, is a synthesis of Knowledge, and such distinctions as Ethics, Philosophy, Science, etc., pertain rather to the limitations of our minds than to the nature of Knowledge. Since, however, these limitations have to be recognized, we can pass on to a mention of *The Secret Doctrine* as a work dealing more with the philosophical and scientific aspects of the great question. And in *The Secret Doctrine* again we have a piece of evidence that cannot be refuted and can only temporarily be ignored.

The main thesis is to demonstrate the actual existence of that ancient and universal body of Knowledge described as the Wisdom-Religion of the Secret Doctrine and to reveal its character. As a demonstration, and not as an assertion, the book therefore appeals to the unprejudiced judgment of scholars, which is all that the author asks of them. She states in her Preface that

These truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore now made public for the first time in the world's history. For what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early Europeans relig-

ions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole. The sole advantage which the writer has over her predecessors, is that she need not resort to personal speculations and theories. For this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation.

It is not possible within the limits at our disposal to give even an adequate summary of the contents of these two large volumes. The scope is vast and indeed infinite, and any one of the fifteen hundred pages that may be selected at hazard will be found replete with details, hints, and points of departure for side issues not followed up. Still a rough outline may be attempted.

Volume I treats of Cosmogogenesis, and Volume II of Anthropogenesis. Herein we have a major twofold division of the subject into the Universe and Man. As indicated by the titles, each of these topics is treated as a *process*—an evolution, in fact. Yet how immeasurably does the word "evolution," as thus used, transcend the meaning given to it in modern science!

The main thesis of the book may be described as a demonstration of the actuality of that body of knowledge called the "Secret Doctrine," and sometimes the "Wisdom-Religion," or "Occult Science"; of its identity in all ages and lands; and of its preservation in the records, symbolical, religious, etc., of all races and times. In the accomplishment of this task the author has evinced an erudition and scholarship which must surely be a marvel to the candid reader; for she quotes from a multitude of sources, many of them rare and almost inaccessible. In the extent of this erudition, as well as in the colossal

intellectual power manifested in its arrangement and interpretation, we can but see the results of that training and instruction which, as said above, H. P. Blavatsky's single-minded devotion enabled her to receive at the hands of her Teachers. Or, in other words, *The Secret Doctrine* is standing evidence of the claim that such devotion is the gateway to an illimitable knowledge and capacity.

Each volume is subdivided into three parts; the first part in each case being devoted to the interpretation of certain stanzas from the "Book of Dzyan," an ancient work on the Esoteric Philosophy, not contained in European libraries, but whose teachings may be found, in more or less altered and veiled form, scattered throughout Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese religious and mystical writings. These Stanzas describe in symbolic language the evolution of Cosmos and of Man. They must be judged by internal evidence; and it is sufficient that, with the explanations and commentaries of H. P. Blavatsky, they actually afford that light and instruction which is the sole object of the true student. The second part of each volume treats of universal religious and mythological symbolism; and the third part contrasts the teachings of Occult Science with those of modern science . . .

Volume II deals with Anthropogenesis and is subdivided on the same plan as Volume I. Herein we learn about the evolution of the first four great human Races, the evolution of the animals and their relation to Man, the Fall of Man, the gift of Intelligence to mindless Man by the Sons of Mind, the Human Races with the Third Eye, Lemuria and Atlantis, the Builders of the Dolmens, the Divine Instructors of Man, the Interpretation of *Genesis*, Anthropoid Apes and Darwinism, etc., etc.

This work, together with *Isis Unveiled* and other writings, has been the source of great advances in several distinct fields of speculation. Nobody has done more than

H. P. Blavatsky to reinstate Religion by demolishing the case for dogma and sectarianism. Her expositions of religious symbolism have demonstrated the common source of all systems and taken away the last supports of dogmatism. Through her initiative we now find representative theologians openly avowing doctrines for which she was condemned in her day; and the Mystic Christ, the immanence of the Deity, and the salvation of man by his own inner Divinity, are now almost commonplaces in our advanced religious thought. In science, it will be found on reading *The Secret Doctrine* that the lines since taken by biology, chemistry, physics, and astronomy were forecasted; and this should claim our attention for this book in view of the future of science. But it is in archaeology, ethnology, and anthropology that the greatest confirmations of her teachings and forecasts have occurred. The ancient teachings as to the antiquity of civilization have been attested by modern discoveries and admissions in a remarkable degree. But a further consideration of this point must be reserved for a special writing on that subject.

We must briefly refer to *The Key to Theosophy*, written in the form of question and answer for the express purpose of meeting inquirers; as this work (in so far as it goes into the subject) constitutes accessible evidence as to what Theosophy really is and what H. P. Blavatsky's teachings actually were, those who wish to know what Theosophy is and what it is not can therefore use this touchstone.

The Theosophical Path, Nov. 1913.

"The mind requires purification whenever anger is felt or a falsehood is told, or the faults of another needlessly disclosed; whenever anything is said or done for the purpose of flattery, or anyone is deceived by the insincerity of a speech or an act."

Practical Occultism

THE TARGET

Fourteen years ago a Mrs. Gertrude Marvin Williams produced a book, *Priestess of the Occult*, which was published as a biography of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, but which was actually a scurrilous attack upon her. Last year, John Symonds' *Madame Blavatsky, Medium and Magician*, was published, equally scurrilous and equally false. Symonds appears to have drawn heavily upon the Williams' material. Both books were deliberately "slanted", using the dishonest method of allegedly giving an impartial life of H.P.B., but actually presenting a very biased picture. In both cases, reviewers in many periodicals seized upon incidents in the books to produce sensational reviews and in both cases, many of the reviews were malevolent and vicious. In both cases, also, several reviewers added statements which were not in the original books, all designed to present a black and destructive portrait. An outstanding example of this in 1946 was the review of *Priestess of the Occult* in the *Catholic Register*, later condensed in the *Catholic Digest*. Neither book attempted to present the outstanding contribution of H.P.B. to world thought through her voluminous writings on comparative religion, philosophy, occultism and mysticism.

As it is very unlikely that there is sufficient popular interest in the life of Madame Blavatsky to justify, on economic grounds, the publication of two biographies within a space of fourteen years, questions arise as to possible sponsorship, subsidization and motives. Who, or what organization would be deeply concerned in making certain that periodical attacks on H.P.B. are published from time to time? There is one organization whose memory is long, whose resources are enormous, whose will is implacable and which would have the motive to oppose Theosophy—but it is not alone in its opposition, the hierarchies of all dogmatic religions would be happy if

the disturbing influence of Theosophy were eradicated. Madame Blavatsky, in her writings, made it clear that Theosophy and all forms of priestcraft were diametrically opposite.

During her lifetime, H.P.B. was the target for many attacks, not because she was an extraordinary individual, but because she and Theosophy were identified, and Theosophy was, and is, a destroyer of false idols. Although she died sixty-nine years ago—long enough, one would think, for all interest in a mere "cheat, liar and charlatan" to have died out—she is still the target for the opposers of Theosophy.

While the arrows are directed against the Messenger, it is the Theosophical Message which the opponents wish to destroy and to endeavour to nullify its ever-growing influence upon world thought—and it is to this end that one of the noblest and wisest women of the age is periodically caricatured and hung up for derision. The Message itself is not criticized, either because the writers are incompetent to do so or are perhaps reluctant to give any publicity to this potent Message, even in criticism. The attack is ever against the physical personality of the Message Bringer, but though the ghoulish fingers probe into the long-dead flesh, the great heart of Madame Blavatsky escapes their grasp and her great soul is ever beyond their reach.

Why should the Theosophical Message arouse so much opposition in certain circles? Obviously the answer is that it is designed to set men free from the thralldom of superstition, dogma and false beliefs—and the freedom of man to choose his own path in spiritual matters is evil in the sight of those who live by irrational beliefs. The Message proclaims the ancient truth that "the soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit", that "each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dis-

penser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment". It speaks of the divinity of man and of his indissoluble link with the One Life of the Universe, whose shrine and altar should be "on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through the 'still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their Spirit the sole mediator between them and the Universal Spirit, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*."

White Lotus Day this year—the anniversary of the death of Madame Blavatsky

and the day on which all Theosophists unite in honouring her memory—finds the influence of her Message more firmly established and receiving more widespread acceptance than ever. Today it is being realized, as never before, that Theosophy, that body of doctrines and principles presented in the writings of H.P.B. and in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, is true and is being recognized as true by more and more persons both in and outside the various Theosophical Societies. The memory of Madame Blavatsky may continue to be attacked, but the growth in influence of the Movement to which she gave her life, is proof that she was in truth a Messenger of the Ancient Wisdom, the selfless bestower of a great boon upon mankind.

—D.W.B.

A REMARKABLE POWER

"Oh sad no more! Oh sweet No More!

Oh, strange No more!

By a mossed brook bank on a stone

I smelt a wild weed-flower alone;

There was a ringing in my ears,

And both my eyes gushed out with tears,

Surely all pleasant things had gone before.

Low buried fathom deep beneath with thee,

No More!"

Tennyson (*The Gem*, 1831)

In his *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky*, Bertram Keightley tells an interesting story, involving the above quotation and illustrative of H.P.B.'s remarkable power to have knowledge of and to quote from rare and little known books without having access to the books themselves. Mr. Keightley and his nephew, Dr. Archibald Keightley, worked closely with H.P.B. during the period of the production of *The Secret Doctrine*, marshalling the material, typing drafts of the scripts and checking and re-checking sources. Mr. Keightley was also sub-editor of *Lucifer* and his story relates to an art-

icle in that magazine. He writes:

"H.P.B. always wrote the Editorial herself, and also many other articles under more than one *nom de plume*, and she had a fancy for very often heading it with some quotation, and it used to be one of my troubles that she very seldom gave any reference for these, so that I had much work, and even visits to the British Museum Reading Room, in order to verify and check them, even when I did manage, with much entreaty, and after being most heartily 'cussed', to extract some reference from her.

"One day she handed me as usual the copy of her contribution, a story for the next issue, headed with a couple of four line stanzas. I went and plagued her for a reference and would not be satisfied without one. She took the Ms. and when I came back for it, I found that she had just written the name 'Alfred Tennyson' under

(Continued on page 44)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

It is with deep regret I announce the passing of Mr. David B. Thomas who died March 16. A former president of the Montreal Lodge and for a time member of the General Executive, he came to us from Krotona in June 1919 and for many years was an indefatigable worker on behalf of Theosophy. The Lodge especially remembers with gratitude "That nothing was too much trouble for Mr. Thomas in his services to the lodge; nor his many acts of kindness at times, unknown even to the members". For the past ten years Mr. Thomas had been domiciled in Florida where Mrs. Thomas still lives and we extend to her and family our sincerest sympathy and condolences.

* * * *

Has anybody any volumes or issues of Judge's *The Path* available for purchase, exchange or gift? Those interested should drop me a line at 52 Isabella St.

* * * *

Members attention is especially directed to the notice "The General Election" elsewhere in this issue.

* * * *

"Young Theosophists" in Surabaja, Indonesia have made an especial appeal to me for books and theosophical literature generally, and incidently are very appreciative of our magazine. I feel we should do all we can to meet their requirements and will do my best to meet them.

* * * *

In the editorial of the current Federation Quarterly a strong plea is made for amalgamation with the Canadian Section. We appreciate this brotherly approach and agree it is "a consummation devoutly to be wished" but it naturally requires much thought and consideration. We await with the greatest interest the editor's suggestion that his members write him, giving their pros and cons on the matter, which he says

will be published in due course. Perhaps our own members will air their views also in the same way. This friendly gesture should be met in the same spirit. More anon in the next issue.

* * * *

I have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members into the Society: Mrs. G. Aleida Newman, of the Vancouver Lodge; and Mr. Graham A. Bush, of the Hamilton Lodge. E.L.T.

THE GENERAL ELECTION

Nominations from the lodges have been received. One nomination was received for the office of General Secretary, Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O.; eight nominations were received for the Executive, namely C. E. Bunting, C. M. Hale, Miss M. Hindsley, G. I. Kinman, J. Knowles, Mrs. K. Marks, W. E. Wilks and Emory P. Wood. Most of the nominees are well known to the members generally and need no introduction. The new ones are: Mrs. Kathleen Marks, an earnest and practical member, founder and Past President of the Phoenix Lodge and now Secretary; Mr. J. Knowles nominated by the Montreal Lodge in lieu of Miss Jean Low who leaves for Vancouver shortly, an enthusiastic young member indefatigable in the work of his lodge and in theosophy generally.

It should not be forgotten when voting that the members are not electing persons to represent their lodge, but an Executive Council to represent the whole Dominion. If any member in good standing does not receive a ballot by May 31, he should at once report the omission to the General Secretary as ballots must be in by June 15. The proportional representation ballot will be used as hertofore. Upon receiving their ballots, the member should mark them in the order of their choice of candidates, numbering ALL the names up to the total number of the candidates. Each ballot should be placed in the envelope provided,

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on which the member has written his name and lodge, so that it can be checked without violating the secrecy of the ballot. It should then be mailed without delay.

THE QUARTERLY MEETING

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, on Sunday, April 10.

Members present: Miss M. Hindsley, Miss Jean Low, Messrs. C. M. Hale, G. I.

Kinman and the General Secretary. Mr. Dudley W. Barr, ex officio.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The Financial Report was read by the General Secretary, Moved and Carried. Mr. Kinman Moved that a Vote of Thanks be accorded Mr. Ralph Webb, for his work in auditing the accounts; this was Seconded by Mr. Hale and Carried. Mr. Barr reported progress in connection with *The Canadian Theosophist*. Col. Thomson notified the meeting of the present condition of the Dewey Estate negotiations and it was decided that the Executive should meet on May 8th, in view of further developments. A hearty Vote of Thanks was accorder Mr. and Mrs. Iverson Harris for their work in connection with the disposal, etc. of the late Mark Dewey's bequest of books. The books marked by us for acquisition had now been received. The question of the printing of Dr. Wilk's article on the Mahatma Letters was again discussed and Mr. Hale Moved and Mr. Kinman Seconded "That the publication of the article be suspended until after the new edition of the Mahatma Letters had been considered", Carried.

Nominations of Officers for the coming year had been received. Col. Thomson was nominated for General Secretary, and eight nominations were received for members of the Executive. As this means an election Mr. Kinman Moved that the necessary preparations be made, Seconded by Mr. Hale and Carried.

Col. Thomson read the Editorial in the current Federation Quarterly suggesting amalgamation with the Canadian Section. There was discussion but in view of its importance the matter was left in abeyance until the next meeting. He then reported on his recent visit to Montreal and the coming Convention.

The next meeting was arranged for July 10th, and there being no further business the meeting adjourned. E.L.T.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor,

The Canadian Theosophist

Sir:

May I submit the following in reply to Alvin Boyd Kuhn's commentary on my letter which appeared in your September-October 1959 issue? The quotations are from H. P. Blavatsky's article, "Occultism Versus the Occult Arts."

"There are those whose reasoning powers have been so distorted by foreign influences that they imagine that animal passions can be so sublimated and elevated that their fury, force, and fire can, so to speak, be turned inwards; that they can be stored and shut up in one's breast, until their energy is, not expended, but turned toward higher and more holy purposes: namely, *until their collective and unexpended strength enables their possessor to enter the true Sanctuary of the Soul* and stand therein in the presence of the *Master*—the Higher SELF. For this purpose they will not struggle with their passions nor slay them . . . Oh, poor blind visionaries! . . . the human soul is a compound, in its highest form, of spiritual aspirations, volitions, and divine love; and in its lower aspect, of animal desires and terrestrial passions imparted to it by its associations with its vehicle, the seat of all these. It thus stands as a link and a medium between the animal nature of man which its higher reason seeks to subdue, and his divine spiritual nature to which it gravitates, whenever it has the upper hand in its struggle with the *inner animal*. The latter is the instinctual 'animal Soul,' and is the hotbed of those passions which, as just shown, are lulled instead of being killed, and locked up in their breasts by imprudent enthusiasts. Do they still hope to turn thereby the muddy stream of the animal sewer into the crystal-line waters of life? . . . It is only when the power of the passions is dead altogether, and when they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will, when not only all the lusts and long-

ings of the flesh are dead, but also the recognition of the personal Self is killed out and the 'Astral' has been reduced to a cipher, that Union with the 'Higher Self' can take place . . . The aspirant has to choose absolutely between the life of the world and the life of occultism. It is useless and vain to endeavor to unite the two, for no one can serve two masters and satisfy both. No one can serve his body and his higher Self, and do his family duty and his universal duty, without depriving either one or the other of its rights . . . Sensual, or even mental, self-gratification involves the immediate loss of the powers of spiritual discernment; and the voice of the MASTER can no longer be distinguished from that of one's passions, or even that of a *Dugpa*; . . ."

Very sincerely,

George Cardinal LeGros

Editor, *The Theosophical Reminder*

☆ ☆ ☆

Editor,

The Canadian Theosophist

Sir:

Dr. Kuhn is tilting against windmills again. This time it is "ye olde debil sex" and poor Mr. LeGros the target. From the whole tenor of Mr. LeGros' letter, and above all, from his quotations taken from *The Voice Of The Silence* and *Through The Gates Of Gold*, it becomes quite clear to the student of initiatory disciplines that Mr. LeGros is *not* addressing himself to the average member of the Theosophical Society. His appeal goes forth to those few who are called Sotapanna (he who has entered the stream) in Pali-Buddhism, and "accepted cheias" in modern theosophical terms. As a married man and deeply versed in *The Secret Doctrine*, Mr. LeGros should be well aware of the ambiguous role of Sex in the human and the cosmic constitution. He certainly does not mean to convey that you have to set up neuroses and hysteria by suppressing your natural instincts, which are *perfectly right on their own plane*, and wrong only when they invade other planes,

and set up alien tyrannies. And it is exactly these other planes Mr. LeGros has in mind.

Dr. Kuhn says "either life is good or it is evil; and if good, the means ordained for its propagation must be accounted good." This sort of two-valued logic was outdated already before the times of Aristotle. Life is neither "good" nor "evil" unless we make it so. And when Jehova pronounced his work good, I would rather take my stand with the Perfect Enlightened One (the Buddha) who asserted the exact opposite and proved his contention for everyone to see.

Albert M. Fehring, PH.D.,
Vice-President
American Buddhist Association

☆ ☆ ☆

Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist
Sir:

Re: Aid to Tibetan Relief Fund

We would appreciate a little space in your paper to ask for aid to above Fund. Donations should be sent *direct* to Marion Swift, Social Service Dept. The Theosophical Order of Service, 36a Marion St., Brookline 46, Mass., U.S.A. This Order was founded by Dr. Annie Besant in 1908.

The problems of our Tibetan friends may not be resolved by money. It helps.

Yours truly,
Frederick E. Tyler, F.T.S.

☆ ☆ ☆

Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist
Sir:

Re: The Problem Of Sex

Since it appears likely that Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn's admirable article in *The Canadian Theosophist* will provoke much thought and comment on the part of readers, I both wish to congratulate Dr. Kuhn on this his newest masterly contribution to theosophical thought and to append some comments in support of his thesis.

It is indeed a deplorable truism, that the modern Theosophical movement seems to have assimilated and preserved so much of the prudish and squeamish attitude in regard to sexuality which was peculiar to the Victorian Era within which the Society had its inception. The present writer heard many complaints uttered by persons educated in a certain now-defunct theosophical colony in Southern California where the officials maintained an attitude toward sex which reeked of medieval monkish fanaticism. Also we have knowledge of a contemporary theosophical teacher of some note who in his classes positively forbade even the mentioning of the word "sex". Such instances are unfortunately more frequent than one may wish.

Some students refer us to statements of Hindu and Buddhist origin in support of their anti-sex bias. It is important to note in this connection that modern academic scholarship has discovered that this prudish attitude is by no means a part of the ancient historic heritage of India, but was assumed by western-educated Hindus in their attempt to justify the "moral status" of their religion and culture before the self-righteous Victorian white sahibs. I quote the words of Prof. Alan W. Watts (then dean of the American Academy of Asian Studies and recent author of a remarkable work: *Nature, Man and Woman*, Pantheon Books, 1958,

"Indian art in its portrayal of the human form, specially the feminine form, and its portrayal also in very frank terms in the relief sculptures of Indian temples of sexual relations, has shown an attitude as far removed as could possibly be from the modern, Gandhian Neo-Vedantist, westernized, christianized hostility to everything to do with sexuality . . .

(Sex) always "seems to have been regarded in Christianity as 'a purely animal act of copulation' but it was quite otherwise in the (Hindu) system of Tantra where the sexual relationship be-

tween man and woman was raised to heights which have rarely been found elsewhere."

The above from a radio address over Station KPFA, Berkeley, California.

"Left hand path! Black magic!" will shout some theosophists, whose information regarding oriental thought is restricted to books published by the Theosophical Society or in the late 1800s rather than today. But I should like to call their attention to the newer literature authored by such scholars as Sir John Woodruffe (Arthur Avalon) and W. Y. Evans-Wentz. They will find the concepts contained in these works vastly different from the admittedly sinister "sex magic" of western cultists like the late Aleister Crowley of inglorious memory.

It is a regrettable fact that many of the followers of the "Back to Blavatsky" movement (with which the present writer is in deepest agreement) are singularly blind when it comes to recognizing or accepting the results of reputable academic scholarship; witness Mr. Victor Endersby in *Second Look at the Third Eye* (Canadian Theosophist, Vol. XXXIX, Nos. 5 and 6) who calls the universally respected Tibetan Bardo "a device for aborting the whole fruition of a lifetime" and makes the members of the older red hat sects of Tibet responsible "for all the occult evil in the world" (!!) It is to be expected that now Dr. Kuhn and myself will share in the distinction of being called brothers of the Left Hand Path. But if theosophists maintain such notions it is only natural that academic scholarship will regard them as a group of rather ignorant and supremely fanatical cultists. With all due respect to occult authority, many times it would do more good to use our intelligence and common sense than to quote H.P.B.

In conclusion and in support of Dr. Kuhn's views may I quote a statement of high occult authority, by the Adept Serapis: "Where a truly spiritual love seeks to consolidate itself doubly by a pure, per-

manent union of the two, *in its earthly sense*, it commits no sin, no crime in the eyes of the great Ain-Soph, for it is but the divine repetition of the Male and Female principles, the microcosmal reflection of the first condition of creation . . . Man's Atma may remain pure and as highly spiritual while it is united with its material body; why should not two souls in two bodies remain as pure and uncontaminated notwithstanding the *earthly passing union of the latter two.*" (From: *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series, p. 49.)

Yours fraternally,

Stephan A. Hoeller

BOOK REVIEW

Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. Edited by Felix Guirand, published 1959 by Batchworth Press, London; 500 pp. 63 shillings.

The name of Larousse has been a byword for excellence in dictionaries and other reference books for over a hundred years. The traditional quality is maintained in *La Mythologie Generale*, the recent translation of which by Richard Aldington and Delano Ames results in a magnificent volume deserving a place in every Theosophical library.

Conveniently divided into sections for each of the mythological systems, it is written by various experts in factual essay style, and supported with a generous number of illustrations. Indeed, the selected photographs form a collection which not only complements the text, but also offers an aesthetic pleasure to those who respond to the beauty of ancient art.

It is certainly a boon to the student to have all this information packed between two covers. Not the least of its worth lies in those sections devoted to the lesser known and sparsely documented myths of the Celtic, Teutonic and Slavonic peoples. Although classical mythology has been fairly well served in recent years, it has

never been easy to obtain detailed information on those myths which developed independently of the Greek and Roman systems, but this large volume covers what is known in the field from prehistory onwards.

The value of this well-produced encyclopedia is revealed not only in its usefulness as a reference work, but also in its poten-

tiality as a basic text book of comparative mythology. The information is presented precisely, with little apparent editorial content, allowing each student to form his own conclusions.

A thoughtful essay by Robert Graves, himself one of the foremost living mythological scholars, introduces this much-needed book.

TED DAVY

THE POWERS LATENT IN MAN

BY ROHIT MEHTA

It has been said that if astronomy is the oldest of sciences, psychology is the youngest. This is probably due to the fact that man turns to distant objects the first, while to himself he turns the last. But the vast and extensive exploration of the Universe in recent times has compelled man to turn to himself for the explanation of the mystery of the self-same universe which has been the subject of his investigation heretofore. Modern science, particularly Physics, has recognized the fact that in all acts of observation, the observer is as important, if not more, as the object observed. Thus, modern science seems to be stressing, consciously or unconsciously, the need for the study of the observer so as to make the act of observation as objective as possible, after eliminating the subjective factor. It is this study of the observer which truly is the province of psychology.

In the course of the last thirty years, psychology has made rapid progress and has brought much information regarding the workings of the human mind. It is true that, for many decades, psychology was studied only in its physiological aspect — even now this physiological approach has not been completely discarded so that there are psychologists even today who regard thought as a mere epiphenomenon, if not a secretion of the brain. But the re-

cent psychological researches have given a serious blow to all physiological theories with regard to the operations of the human mind. Among these researches, special mention must be made about that branch of psychology which is known today as Parapsychology. It has grown out of the experiments carried on by Dr. J. B. Rhine and others. There is a voluminous literature available on this subject — in fact these investigations are moving so fast that it is difficult to keep pace with them. Nevertheless, the subject of parapsychology is intensely fascinating for it deals with what is known as Extra-sensory-perception.

Our normal process of gathering knowledge of the external world is through the five physical senses. The senses bring to us information of the external world. But sense-data by itself is not what constitutes knowledge. Sense-data produces vibrations in the physical brain and unless these vibrations are interpreted into a co-ordinated whole by the mind there is no knowledge whatsoever. Thus, mind is essential for the gathering of knowledge but is dependent upon sense-data. The raw-materials of our knowledge are supplied by the senses. Whatever we know of the external world is because of what the senses have brought. The question that is engaging the attention of some psychologists is:

Can there be knowledge without the intervention of the senses?

Para-psychology deals with this subject and has, through countless experiments, proved that man has within him a power of cognition which is not dependent upon the senses. It was F. W. H. Myers who, many years ago, devised a word for direct communication between two minds. He called it Telepathy, which means communication of ideas from one mind to another, independently of the recognized channels of senses. Telepathy was one of the subjects of investigation by the Society for Psychical Research which was established in London in 1882. In the nineteenth century interest of medical men was also aroused by such phenomena as Hypnotism. Needless to say, hypnotism has much to do with mental telepathy and is today recognised as one of the accepted methods in the treatment of certain types of diseases. Some years ago, Upton Sinclair, a renowned thinker and writer, wrote a book called *The Mental Radio*. In this book he has described his own experiments regarding thought-transference. It is quite obvious that telepathy, hypnotism and spirit communications belong to a realm where physical senses are inoperative. They are parts of extra-sensory perception.

But the recent investigations by Dr. Rhine and others in the field of para-psychology have revealed greater things. Their researches have brought them to the recognition of a faculty known as Clairvoyance and Clairaudience. Dr. Raynor Johnson, M.A., Ph.D., D.sc., — author of "The Imprisoned Splendour" — describes Clairvoyance thus:

... awareness of some approximately contemporary event or some object in the material world, without the use of sense-organs or rational inference based on sense-data.

There are any number of books today on the subject of Clairvoyance — most notable among these are by Dr. Rhine, Arthur Osborn, C. W. Leadbeater, G. N.

M. Tyrell, Dr. Soal, J. W. Dunne, Dr. Raynor Johnson and others. The para-psychologists have collected much evidence to show that man has a power to break down the barriers of space in order to cognize events happening at great distances. But the most startling and puzzling of all para-normal phenomena is: Precognition. This is a faculty by which the human mind acquires knowledge of future events without any process of rational inference. This phenomena has been established beyond any shadow of doubt by the experimental work of Dr. Rhine, Dr. Soal, G. N. M. Tyrell and others. If in clairvoyant perception the barriers of space are broken down, in precognition and retro-cognition the barriers of time seem to be eliminated. After much experimentation, Dr. Rhine has come to the conclusion that these para-normal faculties are not uncommon and that probably most people have them in latent conditions.

A very interesting question here arises: Can man consciously cultivate these para-normal faculties? It must be admitted that para-psychology is completely silent on this question. It is the Eastern psychology with its different Yoga systems that throws light on the question of the cultivation of para-normal faculties. In the last section of *The Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, there is a mention of The Development of Powers or *Siddhis*. These *Siddhis* go far beyond the realm which Para-psychology has at present covered. It is only through Yoga discipline that these *Siddhis* can be developed. Who knows, perhaps that the Western Psychology, through para-psychological researches is being brought gradually to the door-step of Yoga? Apart from *The Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, there is mention of these "latent" powers in different schools of *Hatha Yoga* also. Aldous Huxley in his book *The Doors of Perception* has mentioned about latent faculties becoming active temporarily under the influence of *mes-caline*. In India, Hindu ascetics have known many a drug, the influence of which

is to open up, for the time being, paranormal doors of perception. Thus, researches of para-psychology will, sooner or later, bring the western psychologist to the recognition of the value and significance of Eastern Psychology, particularly the Hindu, the Buddhist and the Jain psychology.

It is necessary to mention here that the development of paranormal faculties through the practices of *Hatha Yoga* is much too dangerous for any lay man to adopt. We can today visualize the grim prospects of atomic energy being handled by people devoid of spiritual insight. In the case of paranormal faculties, developed through *Hatha Yoga*, the danger is million-fold. It has, therefore, to be strictly avoided. The development of these latent faculties through the Raja Yoga of Patanjali is the safest method — but involves a process which is long and gradual. However, the safety of these powers lies in gradualness.

A question may arise: What then is the value of a discussion of latent powers if man cannot come in possession of these powers immediately? Has the human individual to remain confined within his existing powers? If so, how is he going to solve the perplexing problems of life? Unless he has a wider vision, how can he be free from the limitations of everyday existence? It is necessary for us to note here that man's latent powers have a Quantitative as well as a Qualitative aspect. Quantitatively speaking, para-normal powers are only an extension of the physical senses. They bring more data to the mind than is possible for the physical senses to do. Our physical senses have an extremely limited range. They respond to a very restricted scale of vibrations. There is much that we do not see or hear. The *Siddhis* or the Paranormal faculties of Telepathy, Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, Pre-cognition, Retro-cognition, etc., seek to extend the range of man's response to external vibrations. Through these powers we are enabled

to see more and hear more. This extended perception will, no doubt, bring increased raw material before the human mind. But the interpretation of this extended sense-data will be done by the mind similar to what it does in the case of ordinary sense impressions. Now, if the mind is conditioned, if it is selfish, if it is biased and prejudiced, then surely its interpretation will be coloured by the same bias. In other words, the act of observation will be distorted because of the subjective prejudice which will be projected by the mind. Such distortion takes place with reference to usual sense-data; there is no reason why similar distortion should not take place with reference to extended sense-data if the interpreting agency of the mind continues to be the same. Telepathy, Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, Precognition, etc., are all quantitative extensions of sense-response. They constitute extensions of scientific methods to super-physical phenomena.

Now, in a scientific method, there is always a duality of the subject and the object. As modern science points out, it is the subject which seems to be interfering with the perception of the object. If this is the case at the level of things, much more is it the case at the level of persons. Thus, in human relationship, our perception becomes distorted due to the subjective factor of the mind. In a quantitative extension of sense-data, this subjective factor remains untouched. No wonder in such extension man's fundamental problems remain unsolved. It is because of this that the cultivation of such latent powers as clairvoyance and clairaudience is regarded as undesirable in all true systems of Yoga. They may come naturally, but in no case should they be forced.

But, there is a Qualitative aspect to man's latent powers. It has no concern with the extension of sense-response. It deals not with the limitation of the senses, but with the limitation of the human mind. To break down the limitations of the mind is fundamental to the unbiased perception of

men and things. And when the limitations of the mind are transcended there dawns upon man's consciousness a new faculty — the faculty which had hitherto remained latent. This faculty enables man to gain a new dimension of understanding. It is to this faculty that a reference is made in *The Bhagavad Gita* when it talks of *Buddhi* being higher than the Mind. In Western philosophy this is described as intuition, a faculty which transcends the limitations of the human mind. It is possible for each man to come to this new qualitative experience. It is a path utterly safe for each man to tread. The latent power of Intuition can dawn on the consciousness of man when the human mind is quiet. Such a mind is not engaged in interpreting the sense-data in terms of its own knowledge, but allows the Wisdom of Intuition to illumine its understanding. It is surely the function of the mind to interpret, but its interpretations can either be in terms of its own knowledge or it can be in terms of the illumination which comes to it in the moment of silence. The evaluation of a silent mind is free from bias and is, therefore, perfectly objective.

The subject of my talk is: The investigation of unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in Man. The investigation of latent powers can be either along the quantitative level of clairvoyance, telepathy, etc., or it can be along the path of Intuitive understanding. The title of my talk links up the latent powers of Man with the investigation of unexplained laws of Nature. The question, therefore, arises: What is that latent power which will enable us to investigate unexplained laws of Nature? What does the investigation of unexplained laws of Nature mean? It surely means the unravelling of the mystery of life. The unexplained laws indicate the existence of a mystery. It has been rightly said that life is not a problem to be solved, it is a mystery to be revealed.

Life is full of mystery and it is not given

to the human mind to unravel that mystery. Max Planck, the great scientist of the Quantum theory in Physics, says:

“.....science is never in a position completely and exhaustively to explain the problem it has to face. We see in all modern scientific advances that the solution of one problem only unveils the mystery of another. Each hill-top that we reach discloses to us another hill-top beyond. We must accept this as a hard and fast irrefutable fact.”

Thus in all scientific explanations of Nature, there is always something which is left unexplained. To carry the same scientific method to super-physical realms does not enable us to solve the mystery of life and nature. Such extensions of scientific methods, through Telepathy and Clairvoyance may enable us to explain some more details of life; but the mystery of Nature is not to be comprehended by the accumulation and examination of details. Such a process will all the time confront us with the unexplained mystery of life. And so, for the investigation of unexplained laws of Nature what we need is, not the quantitative extension of sense-data, but a qualitative expansion of consciousness. Such qualitative expansion is possible only when the mind of man is illumined by that which lies beyond it. It is only intuition that can comprehend the mystery of life — it is only *Buddhi* that can give to man the understanding of the unexplained laws of Nature.

Thus, to investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in Man is to unravel the mystery of life through that faculty which transcends the limitations of the human mind. It indicates an *intuitive perception* made possible in the hour of *complete silence*, not so much the silence of words as of *the Mind*. It is in the deep silence of the mind that the great mystery of life is revealed. To such a man of deep silence Nature is like an open book—there are no laws which remain unexplained to him. Nature reveals all her secrets to him

who approaches her not with the pride of mind-knowledge but with the humility of soul-wisdom. — From *The Theosophical Review*, August, 1959.

A REMARKABLE POWER

(Continued from page 34)

the verses. Seeing this I was at a loss; for I knew my Tennyson pretty well and was certain that I had never read these lines in any poem of his, nor were they at all in his style. I hunted up my Tennyson, could not find them; consulted every one I could get at—also in vain. Then I went back to H.P.B. and told her all this and said I was sure these lines could not be Tennyson's, and I dared not print them with his name attached unless I could give an exact reference. H.P.B. just damned me and told me to get out and go to Hell. It happened that the *Lucifer* copy *must* go to the printers that same day. So I just told her that I should strike out Tennyson's name when I went, unless she gave me reference *before* I started. Just on starting I went back to her again, and she handed me a scrap of paper on which were written the words *The Gem*—1831. 'Well, H.P.B.,' I said, 'this is worse than ever; for I am dead certain that Tennyson has never written any poem called *The Gem*'. All H.P.B. said was just; 'Get out and be off.'

"So I went to the British Museum Reading Room and consulted the folk there; but they could give me no help and they one and all agreed that the verses could not be, and were not, Tennyson's. At a last resort, I asked to see Mr. Richard Garnett, the famous Head of the Reading Room in those days, and was taken to him. I explained to him the situation and he also agreed in feeling sure the verses were not Tennyson's. But after thinking quite a while, he asked me if I had consulted the Catalogue of Periodical Publications. I

said no, and asked where that came in. 'Well,' said Mr. Garnett, 'I have a dim recollection that there was once a brief-lived magazine called *The Gem*. It might be worth your looking it up.' I did so, and in the volume for the year given in H.P.B.'s note, I found a poem of a few stanzas signed 'Alfred Tennyson' and containing the two stanzas quoted by H.P.B. *verbatim* as she had written them down. And anyone can now read them in the second volume of *Lucifer*; but I have never found them even in the supposedly most complete and perfect edition of Tennyson's Works."

The *Lucifer* article referred to by Mr. Keightley is "Karmic Visions", page 311, of the June 15th issue, 1888. In this instance it was extremely improbable—almost impossible—that H.P.B. could have seen the original text in the British Museum or that she could have been aware of the verses through any other physical means. In *Old Diary Leaves*, Colonel Olcott records many other instances of the exercise by H.P.B. of this remarkable power during the writing of *Isis Unveiled*. When the need for a quotation arose, she could obtain it by some inner power which is as yet unexplained by psychology.

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.

The Idyll of the White Lotus

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

Having been just re-elected President of the Society, it would perhaps be not inappropriate for me to make some remarks relevant to the whole business of an election, to the work of the Society as it stands at present, and the responsibilities of whoever happens to be the President. I want first to say how deeply I appreciate the trust placed in me by members in so many different parts of the world. I thank them all for the expression of their affection and good wishes.

The office to which I am called again is an office the responsibilities of which I ought to realize perhaps more than I did seven years ago. The President of the Theosophical Society is concerned not only with administration; in fact, that is only a small part of his responsibilities. He has also to edit *The Theosophist*, which is described as "the organ of The Theosophical Society," and inevitably members throughout the world look to him for some sort of guidance and direction. I always stress the fact that every single member should feel free to use his own judgment on all matters concerning the work, and in such a Society as ours, organized for Brotherhood, the activities of which must be based on mutual respect and freedom of the individual member, there can be no imposition from above, even with the best will in the world. Even so, the members do expect the President to disclose his mind and give a central lead with regard to matters which are important to all and concern the effective propagation of the Wisdom. It is not for him merely to go with the current, to echo the thoughts of others by finding out what everybody would like him to say, and then saying it. That would not be helping the work in reality. He has to strike that note which is needed and to which members in all parts of the world can respond in their freedom, out of their free

understanding. Only in that way can there be created the necessary solidarity in a Society where every Section, Lodge and member is free to follow its or his own line, and yet there has to be a unity. There has to be the spirit that will hold the body together in all its parts, and unity of action in the midst of the diversity of individual temperaments and capacities, without which the movement will prove ineffective.

The note which the President strikes has to be just that note which is needed at the moment, both by the Society and for conditions in the world in general. For what we call Theosophical work is work for the benefit of humanity, its advance in a real sense, and its welfare. It is very difficult for anyone of us to know precisely what is the truth that is most needed at a particular time, and in what form it should be expressed, considering the circumstances and tendencies which obtain.

The character which the Society assumes and its effectiveness depend not only upon the President, but upon every single member who calls himself a Theosophist. The Society has to be a united spiritual republic in which there is harmony and co-operation but each one finds that law within himself, really the law of his uniqueness, by which his action and thought should be governed. Each one should discover the light that is in himself, and when he does so, he will shine with that light.

When I use the word "spiritual," it has of course a fullness of meaning which can never be completely expressed; but at least it has the meaning of unity and wisdom. Brotherhood means unity, and the first and most definite Object of the Society is the realization of the Universal Brotherhood, which is easy to speak of but much more difficult to accomplish in every aspect of one's living, in every context in life. It is not enough merely to realize our unity in

the abstract; it must inspire us to action with a wisdom which applies to existing situations and problems. Wisdom to judge and to act in every matter, whether great or small, has always at its root a sense of unity, but it has to take the form of knowing how to adapt one's own actions, which should spring from such truth as one realizes, to the views, actions, and points of view of others.

As regards the President of the Society, his judgment as to his policy has necessarily to be based upon some knowledge of the minds of the members, their difficulties and problems, as well as the trends of thought in the world at large, without which it would be impossible for him to afford any guidance that will really help or tell.

In the Society as it has grown and developed, there is room for helpful activities of whatever type. There are members who may say of something in which they are specially interested: This is most important. Perhaps, it is, in its own way and for them, but then there are other groups to which something else seems more urgent and real. But all these different points of view have in some way to be brought into harmony and synthesized by those who are responsible for the movement. In order to achieve such a synthesis one has not merely to have an attitude of inclusiveness, willingness to consider everything worthwhile, but also a discrimination which draws the line clearly between what is good and what not. We must know our dharma and not fall for things that do not come within our province, that might, gathering momentum, even take the movement off its proper rails.

The spirit of the Wisdom, which is always more important than any letter, than any doctrine, should be manifested not merely in talks from the platform, in what we say to others, but also in the way we conduct our work. As I have said at other times, in such a movement as The Theosophical Society, it is inconceivable to me that any individual who is a true Theosophist can

push himself forward, to the detriment of another. Therefore, all electioneering, overt or covert, which has in it the element of self-advancement seems to me to be completely ruled out. If I may take the liberty of intruding a personal reference into this context, neither this time nor in the previous election in 1952-53 have I ever suggested to anybody, either directly or indirectly, that he or she should vote for me. Standing as a candidate means to me only placing oneself at the disposal of one's fellow-members. If they ask one to act in a certain capacity and he finds he can do so, he accedes; otherwise he fulfils his dharma by doing something else. Above all, there should be a feeling of brotherhood, which means no rivalry, no competition, no attempt to outshine another, no seeking of any success except the success of Truth. I am saying this because such a spirit will greatly help the Society, giving it dignity and strength, whether in a Section, Lodge, or the Society as a whole.

It has been said by a Master of the Wisdom that the movement was brought into existence in order that the crest-wave of intellectual advance may be guided into channels of spirituality. One has only to look at the world, with its bombs, missiles, experimentation on animals, and other brutalities to see that the advance of modern civilization is surely not running in that direction. Yet there are aspects of modern thought and knowledge which are of value.

Theosophy being the old-young Wisdom, the form it takes must incorporate into itself the best elements of the world's thought, and carry it further. Obviously, this is a task which is imposed not upon some one person, but upon all. There must be all the time on the part of each one a sense of not only looking back to our sources, but also moving forward. This means moving forward not to any new position for oneself but out of one's present ruts and limitations. It is not seeking something new, discarding the old; for Truth is ageless. New meanings lie latent even in the

old truth as it has been stated. Our task is to make the relation between the old and the new, the ancient wisdom and modern thought, a relationship of beauty, of value and significance.

The world is moving inexorably, though almost invisibly, towards that unity in which alone lies the solution of its present troubles. And every Theosophist must help that movement, and also to establish in the world by degrees a purer, nobler culture than what obtains today, a less materialistic outlook with a greater regard for one's fellow-beings, more humanity, including humaneness to those creatures which belong to what we call the lesser kingdoms. Each and everyone of us has his duty, and he should not merely talk of the new era, but exemplify it in his life, in his actions, thinking, behaviour and relationships. We have all read about the new age in different terms, as the new humanity of intuition, the Race which is yet to come, the civilization of the future, and so forth but the spirit of that future should be manifested by us here and now. Humanity stands at the end of an old and at the very beginning of a new, somewhat more spiritual cycle. The spiritual is that nature in ourselves which is truly beautiful, which is kind, in which are the truest values and which in action is always an exemplification of the fundamental unity of all beings.

It is only as we thus think, act and live, that we lay ourselves open to the help and guidance of Those at whose instance the Society was launched . . .

N. SRI RAM

HENRY TRAVERS EDGE

(As the name of the author of our first article may be unknown to many of our readers, we are giving below some information concerning Dr. Edge taken from a brief sketch of his career which was compiled by his friend of many years, Mr. Iverson L. Harris. So far as we know, this

is the first time that an article by this writer has appeared in a magazine of the Theosophical Society (Adyar) since the unfortunate schism of 1895.)

"Henry T. Edge's first acquaintance with Theosophy was on July 15, 1887, when he read A. P. Sinnett's *Occult World* in the Library of Cambridge University, where he was matriculated. Late that same year he visited H. P. Blavatsky at 17 Lansdowne Road, Holland Park, London, N.W.; and in 1888 he received his diploma of fellowship in The Theosophical Society, signed by H. S. Olcott, President, and A. J. Cooper-Oakley, Secretary. Shortly thereafter he became a personal pupil of H.P.B.'s and was entrusted by her with private literary and office duties, which he continued to perform until her death on May 8, 1891.

"Mr. Edge's diploma was 'Endorsed valid under the Constitution of The Theosophical Society in Europe' by William Q. Judge as President, on September 23, 1895.

"In 1899 he resigned his post as Demonstrator in Practical Physics at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington, London, in order to accept Katherine Tingley's invitation to join the Theosophical Headquarters' Staff at Point Loma, California.

"At Point Loma Dr. Edge taught Latin and Greek, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Geology. He also conducted classes in *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, and the Bible.

"From 1888 until his death in 1946, Dr. Edge was an incredibly prolific contributor to various Theosophical periodicals, including H.P.B.'s *Lucifer*, the Point Loma weeklies, *The New Century*, *The New Century Path* and *The Century Path* (the three published in succession from September 30, 1897 to June 11, 1911); the monthly and later quarterly *Theosophical Path* (July, 1911 to October, 1935); *The Theosophical Forum* (published monthly, beginning in September, 1929, and contributed to by H.T.E. from 1929 until his death in 1946). As an illustration of his literary creativity,

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a collection of his contributions to *The Theosophical Path* between July, 1911 and December 1916 alone, under his own name or initials and under the pseudonyms H. Travers, T. Henry, Ariomardes, The Busy Bee, Magister Artium, T.H. and Student, includes 197 articles. He made numerous contributions defending H.P.B.'s memory, explaining her mission, and expounding her teachings continuously for more than half a century. Among his lengthier monographs are *The Universal Mystery-Language and Its Interpretation*, *Theosophical Light on the Christian Bible*, and *Manuals on Theosophy and Christianity*, *The Astral Light*, and *Evolution*. All his writings reveal the sound, balanced judgment of a Cambridge-trained scientist and scholar, illuminated by his life-long study and acceptance of Theosophy as he had learned it from H.P.B. and those who followed faithfully in her footsteps. His collected literary output would constitute a veritable *Encyclopaedia Theosophica Edgiana*.

"Henry T. Edge was born at Cubington, near Leamington, Warwickshire, England, January 6, 1867. He died at the International Headquarters of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma), then located at Covina, California, on September 19, 1946. His father: Francis Edge, a Clergyman of the Church of England; his mother, Cecilia Tarratt Edge. He was educated at Malvern College, England, from 1880 to 1886; thereafter at King's College, Cambridge.

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