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WHITE LOTUS DAY SEVENTY YEARS LATER

Seventy years ago this month, on May 8th, 1891, H. P. Blavatsky, who brought Theosophy to the West, laid aside her ailing physical body, and passed from the sight of men. She was sixty years of age at the time, and the greater part of her life had been spent in service for the Masters, a service which reached its most intensive period during the sixteen years between the founding of the Theosophical Society, in 1875, and the date of her death. This was the period of her tremendous literary labours, in which were produced *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, her brilliant articles and editorials in *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, and countless other articles in magazines and newspapers. It was as though a dam in the river of her consciousness had given way, and a flood-tide of ideas came falling forth.

But of her more important books H.P.B. was a compiler rather than the actual author. The encyclopedic knowledge revealed in her writings came from sources outside the personality of the writer. In *Old Diary Leaves* Colonel Olcott gives a very interesting account of the writing of *Isis Unveiled*. A few sheets of this were written in the summer of 1875, but these were put away, and the work was not resumed till September 1875, when H.P.B. was staying with Professor and Mrs. Corson, of

Cornell University in Syracuse, N.Y. However, after the formation of the Society, the work of writing *Isis* went on without break or interruption until its completion in 1877. Of this period, Colonel Olcott writes "In her whole life she had not done a tithe of such literary labour, yet I never knew even a working daily journalist who could be compared with her for dogged endurance or tireless working capacity. From morning till night she would be at her desk, and it was seldom that either of us got to bed before 2 a.m. During the daytime I had my professional duties to attend to, but always, after an early dinner we would settle down together to our big writing table and work as if for dear life until actual fatigue would compel us to stop. What an experience! The education of an ordinary lifetime of reading and thinking was for me crowded and compressed into this period of less than two years. I did not merely serve as her amanuensis or a proofreader, but she made me a collaborator; she caused me to utilize—it almost seemed—everything I had ever read or thought, and stimulated my brain to think out new problems that she put to me in respect to occult and metaphysics, which my education had not led me up to, and which I only came to grasp as my intuition developed under this forcing process. She worked on no fixed plan, but ideas

came streaming through her mind like a perennial spring which is ever overflowing its brim”.

Some of the material she appeared to be copying from manuscripts or books which she was examining clairvoyantly. Colonel Olcott mentions that even her handwriting changed, and that one could discover in the writing three or four variations of her familiar style. In one case at least H.P.B. was not even a writer of the manuscript. Colonel Olcott reports that one morning when he came down to breakfast H.P.B. showed him a file of 30 or 40 pages of beautifully written manuscript, which H.P.B. said had been written for her by one of the Masters. It was perfect in every respect, and went to the printers without revision. But H.P.B. was not merely a passive receiver of knowledge; her own Self, her character and her attitude were injected into the writing of the book, and at times her higher Self, not the personality, became the author. Of this she reports “At such times it is no more I who write, but my inner ego, my ‘luminous self’ who thinks and writes for me.”

Her writings, her vital personality, her command of occult forces attracted much attention during her lifetime, but only a relatively small number of persons joined the Theosophical Society and associated themselves with her in the work. The world was not yet ready; the time was not ripe. The new science of this century which has supplanted the science of the past had not been born—the new science which was based on scientific observation and deduction of the truth which H.P.B. knew of her own inner wisdom, namely, the “infinite divisibility of the atom”. The new sense of the enormous reaches of time had not come into being. During the 19th century, Bishop Ussher’s pronouncement that creation took place in the year 4004 B.C. strongly influenced religious thought, and science did not entirely escape its influence although, of course, geological and palaeontological evidence indicated that the good Bishop’s estimate was ridiculous.

World thought has changed significantly since H.P.B.’s time in almost every field of human endeavour, and the world has moved into an atmosphere in which the popular acceptance of the ideas put forward by her can come more readily than was possible seventy years ago. We are not at the end of this process, for, as H.P.B. stated it is during this and the coming centuries that the truths of the teachings put forth in *The Secret Doctrine* will be more generally understood.

Shortly before H.P.B.’s death, Mr. William Q. Judge asked her what the chance was of drawing people into the Society in view of the enormous disproportion between the number of members and the millions of Europe and America who neither knew of or cared for it. H.P.B. replied:

“When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the wide-spreading influence of Theosophical ideas—however labelled—it is not so bad. We are not working merely that people may call themselves *Theosophists*, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing. You were not directed to found and realize a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulation can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view.”

On this White Lotus Day, the 8th of May, 1961, theosophists all over the world will meet together to commemorate the passing of H. P. Blavatsky, the great Theosophist, the bringer of the Ancient Wisdom, whose devotion and efforts in the closing years of the past century, have done so much to change and guide aright the thought of this century and will continue to influence the thought of centuries

to come. On this day we honour the memory of one of the great ones among mankind, one of the advance guard of the humanity yet to be. We can best honour her memory by being faithful to the charge she laid upon us, to work steadily and faithfully to understand correctly and to put forth for the consideration of men those ancient doctrines which are at the heart of the Theosophical attitude towards life.

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

It would be difficult to discover another book which contains so much in so small a compass. Physically, it is a small volume of a hundred and twenty five pages, some four and a half by five and a half inches, and within those limits sums up with astonishing completeness the doctrine of the Path in search of enlightenment and ultimate liberation. While it is well known in circles widely different from the Theosophical movement, it is, strangely enough, little spoken of even within that movement. Passages from it are read, occasionally, as an introduction to a meeting or a lecture, much as national anthems are sung as a suitable introit to the serious business to follow. There is, within the knowledge of this writer, only one discussion class in a Lodge that gives consistent, continuous and analytical study to this remarkable little book.

Before touching on the impact and intent of the book itself, one must pause briefly to examine its origins, and claims to authenticity. It is stated by Madame Blavatsky in her own preface to the work that it is derived from the "Book of The Golden Precepts", a collection of esoteric instructions put into the hands of mystic students in the East, a knowledge of which is obligatory in the occult schools. Elsewhere it is stated that the Book of The Golden Precepts forms part of that literature from which the Stanzas of Dzyan

were in their turn derived.

The Book of The Golden Precepts is described as consisting of some ninety distinct little treatises, of which H.P.B. had memorized thirty-nine. The word "translation" is used to describe the manner of their rendering into English, but careful consideration leads to the conclusion that a free running rendering would be more nearly a description of what actually was done. The original texts were partly in a Tibetan script, and partly in a system of ideographs, or picture writing. H.P.B. herself, in her introduction to the Secret Doctrine, points out the futility of trying to render Tibetan scripts literally, and the interpretation of an ideograph is largely a matter of individual choice of the words in which the idea is to be conveyed. Internal evidence is conclusive that the work is not a translation in the sense, for instance, that the Standard Version is a translation of the available Hebrew, Septuagint and Vulgate texts of the Bible. It is something more than doubtful that the Lamas and Adepts who composed the work would have fallen into the marvelously mixed metaphor involving the Isle and the Deer (pages 59-60).* Again, the phrase—"Before he casts his shadow off his mortal coil" (page 40) seems clearly

*All page references are to the Third Impression of the Centenary Edition, 1931.

to be an unconscious recollection of one of those expressive phrases of Shakespeare (Hamlet's Soliloquy) that have slipped into the general store of the English language while their origin has been largely forgotten. It is open to grave doubt that Shakespeare borrowed it from Tibet, or that he was even aware of the possibility of such a source. It was a happy phrase, and no doubt expressed the meaning of the original, though it never appeared there in that particular form.

None of this, however, in any way detracts from the value of the work regarded as a faithful reproduction of the basic teachings of the Occult School, rendered in a free flowing and highly poetic form. There is, however, a warning against any attempt to base dogma or Theosophical sectarianism on textual interpretations. That *The Voice* is fundamentally sound in its exposition of the Mahayana School of esoteric Buddhism is sufficiently vouched for by the Tashi Lama of 1888 through his Secretary Mr. B. T. Chang (pages 113 to 121).

Various editions of *The Voice* have appeared from time to time, and one in particular gave rise to more than a little controversy in relation to the idea of the possibility of a "selfish Pratyeka Buddha" (page 43). It appeared to the editors of that edition that it was impossible for a fully illuminated Buddha to display selfishness, and they accordingly eliminated the passage, adding as further justification that H.P.B. in a post-mortem communication had admitted that she had made a mistake, and charged them to correct it. Unless we are to reject completely certain trenchant passages of *The Mahatma Letters*, together with most of H.P.B.'s own writing on the subject, the empty shell is the most that any seance could have contacted, and that would have admitted anything that was in the mind of the medium at the moment. The real H.P.B. had passed beyond all earthly contact long before. One is irresistably reminded of Kipling's poem "The Disciple"—

"It is His Disciple
 (Ere those bones are dust)
 Who shall change the Charter
 Who shall split the Trust
 Amplify distinctions
 Rationalize the claim
 Preaching that the Master
 Would have done the same

 But his own Disciple
 Shall wound Him worst of all."

Quite apart from the extreme doubtfulness of the alleged authority, it is the considered opinion of this writer that original texts should never be amended by later editors to read in a way those editors think they should have been written instead of the way they actually were. It is quite impossible to evaluate a teaching unless one is allowed to know what it actually was, and not what someone else thinks it should have been. It was the monkish habit of personal interlineations and marginal notes that got embodied in the text of subsequent copies that has bedevilled the efforts of translation of the Bible, and led to more sectarian battles than enough.

There seems, too, to be a certain failure properly to comprehend the real meaning of the doctrine of Karma. Karma is simply a matter of cause and effect, not a matter of judgment or evaluation of actions by some Third Party. The earthly Karma of the illuminated Buddha may have been exhausted before his entry into Nirvana, and assumption of the Dharmakya Robe, or State, if one prefers the latter idea. But, by that single action, a cause was set in motion, and an effect must follow. The Eastern Schools knew nothing of "eternity" in the orthodox Western sense. They knew only of "age-long" periods. In passing, it might be noted that the Greek words translated "eternal" and "eternity" in the Christian scriptures actually means "aeon-long" or age-long, and we are here again up against an editorial correction to fit a preconceived dogma. To the Eastern Initiate, his Ages were the Days and Nights of Brahma. The Nirvanic State would not

be eternal in the Western sense, but there would always come a re-awakening at the end of Pralaya, and a re-emergence into another form of manifestation, at which time the effect of the cause set up could be relied upon to come to its fruition.

It is not possible within the limits of a brief magazine article to enter into a detailed appreciation of the text of *The Voice*. The utmost that can be done is a broad and general summary, leaving fuller analysis to many sessions of a Study Class, as earlier suggested. The book was written, as H.P.B. indicates in her own opening lines, for those ignorant of the dangers of the lower Iddhi. The Theosophical movement had been founded somewhat in an atmosphere of the marvellous, and there was a strong tendency among many of the earlier adherents to look and hope for the acquisition of "powers". *The Voice* teaches quite clearly that powers, if attained, cannot be used for selfish purposes, and that the path of spiritual purification that must be followed before their attainment would, in itself, destroy any ambition to make a personal use of them.

The keynote of the teaching is struck in the earliest pages: "In order to become the knower of ALL SELF, thou hast first of Self to be the knower". The parallel with the doctrine of The Master of Nazareth is clear. The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and must be sought in the inmost recesses of the human heart, not from sources without, however authoritative and inspired. Illumination is a personal thing. As the late Roy Mitchell used often to say Initiation is a "going within", and not something that can be conferred upon one by any other Master than the Divinity that is enshrined within the hidden chambers of the heart. The path leads from Ignorance to Knowledge, and finally to Wisdom (page 6) but withal "The way to final freedom is within thy SELF" (page 39).

The second fragment outlines The Two Paths, the Open and the Secret. The first one leads to the goal of Nirvanic liberation, the second to the self-immolation of

the Nirmanakaya who renounces Nirvana to remain behind for the teaching and help of humanity. (page 41). It is the Nirmanakaya who says "Follow me. I am the Way the Truth and the Life. I have trod this path in lives past. I know the way, because I have been there. Follow." And, inevitably, the Nirmanakaya is despised and rejected by the majority to whom the austerities of the Path seem a form of foolishness, and the ultimate reward open to something more than doubt.

The third fragment carries the title of "The Seven Portals", giving the seven keys which give entry to each—Charity, in the classic sense of "caritas", love immortal, Harmony, Patience, Indifference to pleasure and to pain, Energy, Contemplation of truth, and finally the capacity for Clear Perception. (pages 47 and 48). The stanzas which follow expand and illuminate the basic ideas of the introduction.

Considerable value can be obtained by a study of *The Voice* in parallel with W. Y. Evans-Wentz' *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, not only in its text, but in the several scholarly and painstaking introductions and comments which cover the first 84 pages of the third edition. We have here a careful translation of still available manuscripts, supervised by an initiate Lama who was also a Professor of English at one of the Indian Universities. The authenticity of the rendering is beyond doubt, and the close conformity of *The Voice* and *The Book of the Dead* in their treatment of the three states of Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya is a striking vindication of H.P.B.'s claim to have set out faithfully the kernel of the Northern Buddhist Mahayana School. Both *The Voice* (Preface, Page IX) and *The Book of the Dead* are freely conceded to contain a certain amount of pre-Buddhistic teaching, which in no way detracts from the value of either, in fact it rather enhances it. At no time did Gautama the Buddha claim to be the apostle of a new revelation. Rather he endeavored to be a reformer of primitive Hindu occultism, which over the centuries

had become overlaid with Bramannical embroidery, and lost much of its original significance.

The evidence of eyewitnesses at the time is that H.P.B. then living at Fontainblau, sat down one evening and began to write, carrying on more or less continuously till the resultant *The Voice of the Silence* was complete. Nothing in the way of either manuscripts, dictionaries or a grammar was before her, and she herself frankly states that she was transcribing from memory fragments which she had previously learned by heart. One thing is not in doubt. H.P.B. was possessed of extraordinary clairvoyant powers, attested to by her frequent quotations in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* from books that never were in her physical possession, or even readily

accessible to persons other than the custodians of the libraries where they were carefully kept. Years of painstaking and scholarly research have done nothing but verify the accuracy of the quotations she made, and the few minor errors turned up, mostly in the matter of the transposition of numeral figures have only served to illustrate the mirror characteristic of genuine clairvoyance, which tends to read and see things in reverse. If the plates, discs and parchments of *The Golden Precepts* were not physically before her when *The Voice* was written, the fact is quite immaterial. *The Voice of the Silence* well repays close and repeated study, and is worthy of a more prominent place in class material than appears at present to be accorded to it. —C.M.H.

THE MYSTERIES OF SLEEP AND DEATH

IVERSON L. HARRIS

(Continued from page 23)

Let us take the Overture to 'William Tell' for example. The orchestral player who has long loved and performed this piece will listen to every note of the beautiful 'cello-solo at the beginning, hoping that the performer will end up on the last high harmonic in perfect and even tone before the first rumblings of the storm in the strings is heard at the opening of the next movement—that storm with the rain-drops sounding in the flutes, clarinets, and oboes, breaking shortly into a crashing thunderstorm, with roaring brass and rushing strings and wood-winds, dying down at last with the lovely bird-notes of the flute. Then comes the lilting oboe-solo with sparkling flute-obbligato. Can't you hear it now? And then the stirring fanfare of the trumpets introducing the whirlwind *Finale*. If this piece of music means so much to the mere performer, think what it must mean to the conductor, who hears every note, who knows the score by heart, and can under-

stand and interpret from this little point of the needle every *nuance* and turn conceived by Rossini when he composed this overture.

And this takes us a step farther and leads us directly to the land of dreams and their interpretation. The composer heard this music with his inner ear before it was recorded with clef and staff and notes and later reproduced therefrom by strings and brass and wood-winds. Where did he get it from? He heard it in the inner worlds; and being for the time a fit channel through which the inner realm of harmony and inspiration could manifest itself in this outer world, he revealed to his fellow-men what he, with his inner ear, there perceived.

Now to revert to our world of dreams and their interpretation: to the casual untrained man, his dreams mean absolutely nothing except, perhaps, a warning not to eat so heartily at the evening meal, a reminder to take more physical exercise and

indulge in fewer emotional storms, or to live a decent, wholesome, kindly, well-balanced life. But to the student of Occultism his dreams become both an adventure and an initiation, through which he catches glimpses of the inner causal realms and begins to experience at first hand the mysteries of spiritual life when loosened from the bonds of the flesh—partially during sleep, completely after death.

What must not these dreams mean to the Adept who understands and can interpret what he experiences consciously and periodically during sleep and death? For, there, behind the curtain of Maya its vapours and deceptive appearances are perceived by the adept, who has learned the great secret how to penetrate thus deeply into the Arcana of being.

He is the Master-Conductor; he knows the score; he is not deceived by the illusions of time or of space; he hears every note of the symphony—it may be, alas, of the cacophony—which life in the invisible worlds reveals. And moreover, like the composer at his highest moment, the Adept, when he chooses to exercise his will to do so, hears the 'Music of the Spheres,' reads in the akasic records the great thoughts of the Buddhas of Compassion, the Masters of Wisdom, who have preceded him, and interprets them for his fellow-men in the form of the majestic world-religions, philosophies, and sciences, which spring from their mother—*Theosophia*, the Wisdom of the Gods, *Gupta Vidya*, the Secret Doctrine of the ages.

This may we also learn if we will. For, in the words of Dr. de Purucker, in his first lecture on 'The Mysteries of Sleep and Death':

When a man while alive on earth can ally himself with his own inner god, with the divine entity at the very root of his being, then he dreams no more but becomes divinely self-conscious—becomes god-like in his consciousness; for then his consciousness takes cosmic sweep, expands to embrace the solar system and even beyond; and though living on earth

walks among his fellows as a god-man. This not only can be done but has often been done, and done again and again; and the great titanic Seers and intellects: the great spiritual visionaries of the human race, were just such god-men: the Buddha, Sankaracharya, Jesus the Syrian, Lao-Tse, Krishna, Pythagoras—oh! a host of them—were such god-men; some were greater than others, but all, each one of them, in greater or less degree, had become at one with his own inner god, with what the modern mystical Christian calls his immanent Christ, the Christ dwelling within him: we Theosophists say the inner god. . . . O my Brothers, why not become at one with this divinity within you?

Addendum

In order to make clearer certain of the passages quoted from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, the following questions were asked of Dr. de Purucker, to which he very kindly dictated answers. The spelling of the original in *The Mahatma Letters* has been followed in the questions.

Question 1—On page 186 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, we read:

Every just disembodied *four-fold* entity . . . loses at the instant of death all recollection, it is mentally *annihilated*; it sleeps its akasic sleep in the Kama-loka.

Please explain the significance of the phrase 'every just disembodied *four-fold* entity.'

Answer by G. de P.—The reader should bear in mind in reading *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* that all answers were given to more or less elementary questions asked by individuals who had virtually no idea whatsoever of the Esoteric Wisdom nor of its intricacies, nor again of the very stringent regulations forbidding the divulging of the ancient teachings except to those who had, at least in some degree, pledged themselves to keep these teachings secret. However, answering this question, the phrase 'every just disembodied *four-fold* entity' refers to the seven-fold constitution of man just after death, who thereafter be-

comes a four-fold entity, because the physical body, the Linga-sarira or model-body, and the pranic currents belonging to it, have been shed or cast off. Three of the so-called 'principles' thus being dropped, the entity remaining is obviously a four-fold entity or double duad. But this four-fold entity is all the best part of the man that was—in fact, all of the man except the outermost carapace and its vitality and astral pattern.

Question 2—On page 187 of *The Mahatma Letters* occurs the following:

That remembrance will return slowly and gradually toward the end of the gestation (to the entity or Ego), still more slowly but far more imperfectly and *incompletely* to the *shell*, and *fully* to the Ego at the moment of its entrance into the Devachan.

What is the meaning of the words 'gestation' and 'shell' in the above passage?

Answer by G. de P.—The 'remembrance' here referred to by the Master K.H. is that panoramic vision or reviewing of the events of the past life which occurs to every normal human being at least twice after death, and in some cases three times; but this is another story. The 'gestation' is a word used in those early days of the Theosophical Society to signify the preliminary preparation of the entity entering into its devachanic condition or state of consciousness; just as the gestation of a child precedes its birth on earth into physical life, so is there a gestation of the devachanic entity before it enters into the devachanic state.

The 'shell' here refers to the kama-rupic entity or 'spook' which is cast off at the second death, which second death takes place virtually shortly preceding the entrance of the entity into the devachanic state, and therefore at the end of the gestation-period alluded to. The meaning is that after death the four-fold entity is in a more or less unconscious, semi-conscious, or dreamlike state; and the panoramic vision or remembrance returns slowly to the Ego at the end of the gestation-period, but fully so when the gestation-period is completed and when the entity stands, as it were, on

the devachanic threshold. The remembrance returns very imperfectly and incompletely to the kama-rupic shell more or less at the time the kama-rupic shell is dropped; and this remembrance is incomplete and imperfect, because the shell, being a mere garment, although to a certain extent vitalized and therefore as it were quasi-conscious like the physical body, it obviously can retain no complete or full recollection of all the past life, because it is incapable of retaining the spiritual and noble intellectual vistas of the life just lived. The 'remembrance' is obviously therefore 'imperfect' and 'incomplete.'

Question 3—On page 188 of *The Mahatma Letters* one reads:

. . . from the last step of *devachan*, the Ego will often find itself in *Avitcha's* faintest state, which, towards the end of the 'spiritual selection' of events may become a *bona fide* "Avitcha."

What is meant here by the 'spiritual selection' of events?

Answer by G. de P.—Before answering the question I must point out that 'Avitcha' is of course a miswriting by the chela-amanuensis for *Avichi*. The 'spiritual selection' of events is but a phrase, which rather neatly and graphically describes the selecting by the devachanic entity, as it enters into the devachanic state, of all the spiritual and noble intellectual vistas, events, with his emotions and aspirations, of the life just lived. If these vistas and events, etc., are few to *re-collect* or select, the devachanic state is not high and is probably a rupa-lokic Devachan. Similarly, if these vistas and events are extremely few, then the Devachan is so low or faint that it is practically the same as verging towards the highest part of *Avichi*; because the highest part of Kama-loka blends insensibly into the very lowest conditions or states of the Devachan, while the Kama-loka's lowest part blends insensibly into the highest conditions of the *Avichi*. In other words, there is no solution of continuity as between any of these three; for both Devachan and

Avichi are states: they blend insensibly into each other.

Question 4—Again on page 188 of *The Mahatma Letters* one reads:

Yes: *Love* and *Hatred* are the only immortal feelings; but the gradations of tones along the seven by seven scales of the whole key-board of life, are numberless.

What are 'the seven by seven scales' referred to above?

Answer by G. de P.—'The seven by seven scales' referred to above are the forty-nine steps or degrees on the ladder or scale of consciousness: *i.e.*, of life as experienced in our hierarchy by a conscious or quasi-conscious entity. Consequently, the gradations of tones along the forty-nine scales are virtually innumerable or 'numberless.' We must here understand not only whole tones, to adopt the musical phraseology, but half-tones and even quarter-tones, and perhaps eighth-tones. It is a mistake to suppose that even in the musical diatonic scale the notes are actually distinct, entitative vibrations without intermediate connecting links. The chromatic scale proves this. As a matter of fact any musical scale is only apparent. There is in fact one universal sound divided into seven times seven, or forty-nine, gradations of pitch or scalar differences; but these differences or degrees or steps are more or less illusory and depend upon the receptivity or lack of it of the percipient consciousness.

Question 5—On page 198 of *The Mahatma Letters* occurs the following:

Deva Chan is a state, not a locality. Rupa Loka, Arupa-Loka, and Kama-Loka are the three spheres of ascending spirituality in which the several groups of subjective entities find their attractions.

Please explain the three words 'Rupa Loka,' 'Arupa-Loka,' and Kama-Loka,' and the phrase 'three spheres of ascending spirituality.'

Answer by G. de P.—'The three spheres of ascending spirituality' are, in their proper order, Kama-loka, Rupa-loka, and Arupa-loka, and are a brief way of express-

ing the three generalized conditions or states both of matter and of consciousness between the lowest astral and the highest devachanic spheres. Kama-loka is the lowest; the next higher is the Rupa-loka; and the highest of these three is the Arupa-loka. Kama-loka is the astral world, the world of shells, of cast-off kama-rupic entities or spooks; and is itself divided into different steps or stages of ethereality, ascending from the lowest Kama-loka or that which is nearest to earth-condition. The Kama-loka then merges into the Rupa-loka, a Sanskrit phrase which means 'Form-world'; and the Rupa-loka is in this connection the lower part or half, so to speak, of the devachanic sphere of being. The Rupa-loka in its turn is divided into ascending grades of ethereality, so that the highest of the Rupa-loka merges insensibly into the lowest of the Arupa-loka or 'Formless Sphere.' It is through these three 'spheres of ethereality' (rather than spirituality) that the average excarnate entity passes in his post-mortem adventure, beginning at the moment of death in the lowest part of the Kama-loka and ending with the highest part of the Devachan. Please recollect very carefully that, although the Kama-loka, the Rupa-loka, and the Arupa-loka may be considered as actual localities or spheres, they are merely so because all the entities inhabiting them must have place or position in space. The Devachan *per se* is a state of consciousness just as the Avichi is.

Question 6—At the bottom of page 198 of *The Mahatma Letters*, the words *Alaya Vynyana* are used in the sense of 'hidden knowledge.' Are they synonymous with Gupta-Vidya? And are these last words, in turn, synonymous with the Guhya-Vidya which Dr. de Purucker refers to in his *Occult Glossary* (under *Vidya*) as 'the Secret Knowledge' or 'the Esoteric Wisdom'?

Answer by G. de P.—*Alaya-Vijnana* is a Sanskrit compound which indeed can be translated metaphorically as 'hidden knowledge,' but which more comprehensively means 'discernment' (or 'recognition') 'of

the imperishable': *i.e.*, of the Kosmic Soul or *Anima Mundi*. It is obvious that when an entity is able to vision the Alaya-Vijnana it becomes instantly percipient of all the 'hidden knowledge' that the Kosmic Soul is enabled to pour into its more or less limited capacity. Consequently Alaya-Vijnana is not technically synonymous with Gupta-

Vidya, because Gupta-Vidya, although literally meaning 'hid knowledge' refers rather to the doctrines of the Secret Wisdom today taught in the Esoteric School. Guhya-Vidya is synonymous with Gupta-Vidya, both signifying 'the Secret Knowledge' or 'the Esoteric Wisdom.'

DID BUDDHISTS VISIT EARLY BRITISH COLUMBIA?

BY ELOUISE R. HARRISON, LL.B.

Around the year 1893, a relative of the writer was presiding over the assizes in the Cariboo county of British Columbia, as Supreme Court judge. After he had just heard a murder trial and was holding a recess, the Chinese court reporter hustled up to him with some very thrilling news. Some Chinese Freemasons and some friends of his had made a startling discovery.

When prospecting for gold around Hazelton, beyond Barkerville, these Chinese had found, in an indentation in the soil formed by the upturning of a large tree, the cover of a jar buried in the earth there. They dug deeper and excavated the jar, which was found to be filled with ancient Chinese disks, made of bronze. There were sixty-four such disks in the jar.

The Chinese explorers were very puzzled as they looked at the disks. They were well educated in the languages of their country but not one of them could read the very ancient Chinese inscriptions on the disks and the hieroglyphics on the lid of the jar.

They had not been examining the disks for long before an Indian appeared from the nearby woods. They showed the disks to him and after looking at them for a few minutes, he remarked that the Chinese and Indians were in reality blood-brothers; that both could trace their lineage to the same ancient ancestors, who had come to British

Columbia in a giant canoe, far back in the early mists of time. The Chinese looked dubious and expressed their doubts.

Thereupon, the Indian assured them that he could show them more circumstantial evidence, pointing, perhaps, to a Chinese Buddhist past. He drew forth from a blanket pack the bright religious vessels of Northern Buddhism—the bell and dorje, censers for incense, and other relics from Mahayana Buddhism. These, too, he remarked, had been found buried in the earth around that area.

Several weeks later, the Chinese explorers went back to their tong in Victoria. There they distributed the strange disks to many of their friends. Great monetary value was placed on the ancient objects.

The Chinese court reporter had several; one he presented that day to my grandfather, the only white man to be presented with one.

Photographs were taken of both sides of the disk, and these photos, together with the ancient disk, were sent to Orientalists for their interpretation.

The first translation of the bronze charm reads as follows:

"On one side: The Eight diagrams from the Book of Changes with the names in ancient Chinese characters. On
(Continued on page 41)

OBITUARIES

In our last issue we reported the death of Mr. Alexander Watt of Kitchener Lodge in a motor accident on January 23, and also reported that Mrs. Watt was severely injured and was in the hospital.

Mary We are sorry to report that Mrs. Watt did not recover from her injuries and passed away on March 27. Our deep sympathy is extended to the two sons and their families, doubly bereaved in this tragedy.

* * *

Mrs. Buchanan, President of Vancouver Lodge, has notified us of the death on April 2 of Mrs. Gertrude Daykin, a long time member of that Lodge. Mrs. Daykin had been ill for some time and had been in the hospital and later in a nursing home since June 1960. She became a member of the Theosophical Society in March 1921 and during her forty years of membership she was a faithful and loyal student of H.P.B. A funeral service was held on April 6 under the auspices of the Vancouver Lodge.

Mrs. Daykin left a family of six children, five of whom had been members of the Lotus Class of Vancouver Lodge in the early twenties. To them and to their families, our sincere sympathy is extended.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Quarterly Meeting of the General Executive was held on Sunday, April 9th, at 52 Isabella Street, with the following members in attendance: Miss M. Hindsley; Messrs. C. E. Bunting, C. M. Hale, G. I. Kinman; Mr. Ralph A. Webb as Treasurer, and the Acting General Secretary.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and approved. The Financial Statement which showed a balance on hand of \$733.45 was adopted. Mr. Barr reported progress for the Magazine. A suggestion was made by Mr. Kinman that the Magazine be issued monthly instead of bi-monthly. This point will be considered lat-

er. Five Lodges sent in nominations for the election of the General Secretary and members of the Executive for the coming year. The standing members were re-nominated, together with Mrs. C. P. (Sally) Lakin, Secretary of the Hamilton Lodge, and Mr. Reginald Stevens, President of Hamilton Lodge. The Acting General Secretary was instructed to make the necessary arrangements for the holding of an election. Considerable discussion took place respecting the shares in the Moore Corporation which had been bequeathed to the Society by the late Mark Dewey, but it was considered that no action should be taken in connection with these at the present time. The suggestions and recommendations which had been received from the Lodges respecting the use of the money if the shares, or some of them are converted into cash, will be considered at a later meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Executive will be held on July 9th, 1961.

—D.W.B.

THE GENERAL ELECTION

There was but one nomination for the office of The General Secretary, namely, Dudley W. Barr, the Acting General Secretary. Nine nominations were received for the Executive, namely, Chas. E. Bunting of Hamilton Lodge, Chas. M. Hale, Miss M. Hindsley, George I. Kinman, all of Toronto Lodge; Mr. John Knowles of Montreal Lodge; Mrs. C. P. (Sally) Lakin, and Mr. Reginald Stevens of Hamilton Lodge; Dr. Washington Wilks of Orpheus Lodge, and Mr. Emory P. Wood of Edmonton Lodge. All nominees, with the exception of two, are well known to the members through their previous years of service on the Executive. Of the two new nominees, Mrs. Lakin is the Secretary of Hamilton Lodge and has been a very active member there for some years. Mr. Reginald Stevens is President of the Hamilton Lodge, and he too has also been a very active worker.

It should be remembered that the mem-

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ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY
 D. W. BARR

52 ISABELLA ST., TORONTO 5, ONT.
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EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

ALL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ARTICLES AND REPORTS
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EDITOR: DUDLEY W. BARR.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: MISS LAURA GAUNT, B.A.

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candidates, numbering *all* the names up to the total number of candidates. Each member should sign the ballot on the detachable portion of the ballot slip, and return the entire ballot, duly signed, to the General Secretary, in the addressed envelope which will be enclosed. The voting closes on June 15th, but the ballots should be sent in as quickly as possible.

—D.W.B.

AMERICAN CONVENTION

We have been informed by Dr. Henry A. Smith, National President of The Theosophical Society in America, that the Seventy-Fifth Annual Convention of that Society will be held at Olcott, Wheaton, on July 7th to 10th inclusive. The Summer School will follow, beginning on the 12th and continuing through until the 16th of July.

Mr. Geoffrey Hodgson will be the guest of honour, and Dr. Laurence Bendit, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England, and Mrs. Bendit will be present and will take part in the program.

Dr. Smith has kindly issued a cordial invitation to the members of the Theosophical Society in Canada to attend.

HAMILTON LODGE LIBRARY

The formal opening of the new Library room of Hamilton Lodge took place on Sunday afternoon, April 16. About fifty members and friends were present, including some members from Phoenix Lodge and many out-of-town guests, including Mr. G. I. Kinman and Miss Janes Angus, President and Corresponding Secretary respectively of Toronto Lodge, Mr. and Mrs. Critoph of the Blavatsky Lodge, Toronto, Mr. John Oberlechner of Kitchener Lodge, Miss Gertrude Burgar and Mr. G. Bush from Galt, Mrs. McGlashan and Miss Almas from Hagersville.

Mr. Reginald Stevens, President of Hamilton Lodge was Chairman of the meeting and after his introductory remarks, called

bers are not electing persons to represent their Lodge or any particular Lodge, but an Executive Council, to represent the whole of Canada. The ballots will be sent out early in May, and if any member in good standing does not receive a ballot by May 31st, he should report the omission at once to the Acting General Secretary. A proportional representation system of voting will be used as heretofore. Upon receiving their ballots the members should mark them in the order of their choice of

upon the Acting General Secretary, D. W. Barr, to introduce the principal speaker, Rabbi Bernard Baskin, of Temple Anshe Sholom, Hamilton. Rabbi Baskin, who has lectured for both the Hamilton and Toronto Lodges and is well known in Hamilton through his many activities, gave an excellent address, stressing the importance, significance and the effect of books in our lives. After his address, Rabbi Baskin cut the white ribbon across the Library door and declared the Library open.

After a brief period to allow inspection of the Library, where the books of Phoenix Lodge were also on display, tea, coffee and refreshments were served, Mrs. Holbrook, former President of Hamilton Lodge, and Mrs. D. W. Barr, pouring. Later a delightful buffet supper was provided for the out-of-town guests through the kindness of Mrs. Phyllis Lomas and Mr. R. Stevens.

This was a very happy occasion for the opening of the Library is an important step forward by Hamilton Lodge which in the past has been handicapped by lack of facilities for its books. The Library is a bright cheery room, and the members of Hamilton Lodge have worked enthusiastically in painting, hanging new curtains, sorting, repairing and arranging the books. We sincerely hope that it will be the means of attracting many new visitors to the Lodge.

Mrs. C. P. Lakin,
Secretary, Hamilton Lodge

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist
Sir:

The article in the March-April *Canadian Theosophist*, entitled "*Should the Priestess Return?*" by Esme Wynne-Tyson is indeed a splendid one. Women *should* regain a spiritual status instead of becoming more bestial by imitating the worst traits of men and thus lowering the race.

The *Bhagavad Gita* recognizes that the lack of religion and piety is very detri-

mental to women, as in Krishna's statement that:

"From the influence of impiety the females of a family grow vicious; and from women that are become vicious are born the spurious caste called Varna Sankar."

Krishna does not define what this caste was. However, as our prisons and schools for delinquent children are growing in numbers daily, it is not difficult to see the types he was referring to.

The study of Theosophy by as many women as possible is thus seen to be one of the main necessities of today.

It should also be remembered that Madam Blavatsky said that women, having been left with the perfect number ten, were deemed higher and more spiritual than men. Hence, as your author affirms, they have definite characteristics of a spiritual nature that should be encouraged and developed, for the good of humanity.

Fraternally,

(Miss) E. R. Harrison, LL.B.

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, yet remain silent for lack of speech.

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 lawgiver, 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.

Idyll of the White Lotus

BOOK REVIEW

The Sacred Mushroom. Key to the Door of Eternity, by Andrija Puharich, published 1959 by Doubleday & Co. Inc. \$5.00.

In May, 1957, *Life* magazine published the story of a Mexican mushroom cult in which a variety of the fungus was dispensed by *curenderas* (priests) to 'carry you there where god is'. Gordon Wasson, foremost expert on the mushroom unearthed this strange sect while on a field trip to the Mixeteco district in 1955. Since then, credible theories have been put forward to suggest strong possibilities existed that the ecstatic properties of certain mushrooms were known and used in other religions, in different places and earlier times. In his recent essay, "Centaur's Food", Robert Graves attempted to show that in classical Greece, the various 'foods of the gods,' ambrosia, nectar, etc., were in fact nothing less than a combination of hallucogenic drugs obtainable from the *amanita muscaria* variety of mushroom. Using a similar deductive technique with which, in *The White Goddess* he elucidated the esoteric language of the Celtic bards, he expounds a most believable hypothesis.

In view of fact and theory, it is not really surprising to come across, in this book, an association of *amanita muscaria* with the religion of Ancient Egypt. What is surprising—shocking, even—is the means by which the evidence was obtained. This is a story with 'Bridey Murphy' undertones and descriptions of fantastic phenomena. Dr. Puharich is a researcher in extra-sensory perception, and at one time operated a laboratory for this purpose in Maine. In 1953 he conducted experiments with a young Dutch artist who unaccountably fell into deep trances during which his body was apparently used by one Ra Ho Tep, an Egyptian priest living roughly at the time of the building of the Great Pyramid. Although there was some oral communication, in both Egyptian and English, the most interesting part of the manifestations was the scribbling in readable, and in most

cases translatable, hieroglyphs and pictographs. Many of the messages seemed to describe priestly rites in connection with the sacramental use of *amanita muscaria*.

Having described the unusual psychic events, and introduced some of the personalities involved, the author attempts to interpret the cause and meaning of the phenomena. Although he does not reach any conclusions which seem satisfactory to him, he summarily rejects the idea that there might have been a reincarnation link spanning the 4,500 years between the supposed events and their exciting re-manifestation. While Mr. Graves's essay mentioned previously, is an intellectual *tour de force*, leaving one spellbound by his erudition, Dr. Puharich, on the other hand, writes sensationally and emotionally, and his easy-going, chatty style gains in readability but loses in scientific verisimilitude. Part of his natural excitement, however, is almost bound to brush off on the most sceptical reader, and it must be admitted that he has witnessed and narrated some most unusual happenings, the true explanation of which must await the revelation of some so far unexplained laws of nature. Some original notes on mushroom etymology add to the interest and value of the book.

Besides being a useful contribution to ESP literature, this book would have been worthwhile if it served only to inspire a different approach and fresh study of early Egyptian writings.

—TED DAVY

If thy soul smiles while bathing in the Sunlight of thy Life; if thy soul sings within her chrysalis of flesh and matter; if thy soul weeps inside her castle of illusion; if thy soul struggles to break the silver thread that binds her to the MASTER; know, O Disciple, thy Soul is of the earth.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THE REVENGE OF THE GODDESS

BY ESME WYNNE-TYSON

At the end of November 1960, a terrifying report appeared in British newspapers of a false alarm having been received of a missile attack on the U.S.A. which for a tense half-hour, came near to starting off a nuclear war, until it was discovered that the radar station in Greenland had been picking up echoes from the moon that were translated by the electronic brain at Thule as "apparently a mass attack by ballistic missiles coming from the East and aimed at the United States"; the situation being rendered more alarming when Thule suddenly "went silent" owing to a submarine cable being cut by an ice-berg.

Thus the moon came perilously near to starting up a war which might very well mean the end of life on this planet. And that would be an act of classical deific vengeance, a Nemesis equivalent to the sending of the Flood by the Lord God to punish man for his violence. For, throughout the ancient world, the moon was for thousands of years worshipped as the Queen of Heaven, the Goddess of Wisdom, Love and Peace, who disapproved of violence even more than Jehovah—who really had no right to complain considering the example he set—and was always having to restrain her husband, the Sun-God who was a blood-thirsty deity with an insatiable appetite for sacrifices both animal and human. She did her utmost to put a stop to these by insisting on unbloody sacrifices of honey-cakes, incense and wine being offered to herself. We read in the Old Testament of women making cakes for Ashtoreth (Jer. 7:18) which was the name under which the Queen of Heaven was worshipped by the wise King Solomon, to the horror of his Jehovah-loving subjects. But how could a wise man refuse to worship Wisdom?

And yet the high priests of modern

science, who are knowledgeable but far from wise, have had the effrontery lately to take potshots at this once universally acclaimed Goddess! Those who know her history might well expect some manifestation of deific wrath and feel that humanity is fortunate in having been so far 'let off with the caution' from Thule.

For the Queen of Heaven has far more serious charges to make against Western mankind than the recent sniping from Russia. She has the great grievance of having been abandoned, ignored and despised since the days when patriarchal government and religion in the West banished her from the hearts and councils of mankind. In the days of the matriarchate which is believed to have preceded patriarchal rule, she was the chief of all deities, and women, in those days were respected as her representatives on earth. Referring to Genesis 6:1, 2, 4. Clement of Alexandria in Strom. V:10, mentioned the belief that Truth first came to earth when the fallen angels confided it to the daughters of men that they had taken for wives. The Italians believed that the Sibyl of Cumae, who was about 700 years old when Aeneas met her, was the first source of Wisdom to mankind, and her oracles were used as an aid to government until at least as late as the reign of the Emperor Aurelian who complained in a letter to his Senators:

I wonder that you, holy fathers, have so long hesitated about opening the Sibylline books, just as if your consultations were held in some church of the Christians and not in the temple of all the Gods.

It was natural in the earliest days of history to regard woman as the educator, instructor and ruler. She attended to the home and tilled the soil while the men went away on the hunting expeditions which

were their chief occupation in primitive times. The women learnt the secrets of nature from the growing things, discovering when to sow and reap; which herbs were edible and which good for healing; how to bake and how to spin—miracles to the more animalistic hunter-man. Therefore, in their eyes, the supreme Deity took the form of a goddess rather than a god: the Mother-figure, the wise instructress bearing an infant on her knees, which appeared in all the ancient Mystery cults from the time of the founding of the earliest of them, the Chaldean Mysteries, in which we are told by Hesiod the great Queen Semiramis, the wife of Nimrod, had a hand. Deified as Rhea, the Mother of the Gods, after her death, statues were made of her with the infant sun-god in her arms, and worshipped throughout the civilized world. From Babylon these Mother-Child figures travelled to Egypt where they were known as Isis with her son, Horus. But that they were really only an Egyptian version of the Chaldean myth, is shown by the fact that Isis, like Semiramis, was said to have been an Ethiopian and both of them were credited with bringing a knowledge of agriculture and other skills to the human race.

In Phrygia the Wisdom-Goddess was known as Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, and wore the crown of turrets that identified her with Semiramis, the builder of the walls and towers of Babylon. In the Old Testament we find the same Goddess called Astarte, or Ashtoreth, from Ash-Turit which means "The woman that made the encompassing wall."

In Greece appeared Ceres, a wise woman who taught the son of the King of Greece everything about agriculture and the making of bread; and to show his gratitude the King instituted the Eleusinian Mysteries in her honour. These were the greatest of all the Mystery Cults in the West. Bishop Warburton wrote of them in his *Divine Legation of Moses*:

Of all the Mysteries, those which bore the name by way of eminence, the

Eleusinian, celebrated in Athens in honour of Ceres, were by far the most renowned, and in process of time eclipsed and, as it were, swallowed up the rest . . . We are told in Zosimus that "these most holy rites were then so extensive, as to take in the whole race of mankind". Aristides called Eleusis the common temple of the earth.

And, indeed, right up until the second century A.D. Ceres, or Isis, was acknowledged to be the chief deity in these Mysteries, for in his book, *The Golden Asse*, Apuleius, after identifying Ceres with the Moon, makes her say:

I am she that is the natural mother of all things, chief of powers divine . . . Queen of Heaven, the principal of the Gods celestial.

In fact, the cult of the Wisdom-Goddess lingered on in the Roman Empire until Theodosius the Great extinguished Vesta's fire and finally closed her temple. Can it be wondered at that the Roman Empire did not long survive this abandonment of Wisdom, and that the Dark Ages followed?

The teachings of the Goddess were similar to those of the Essenes, from whom, as we have recently discovered from the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jesus gained much of his wisdom. They taught that man was originally perfect but had fallen from his high estate to a material sense of life and that his one aim should be to regain his God-likeness. This could only be done by self-purification. Tully wrote of the Mysteries:

In my opinion your Athens . . . has . . . given nothing better than those Mysteries, by which we are drawn from an irrational and savage life, and tamed as it were, and broken to humanity. They are truly called INITIA, for they are indeed the beginnings of a life of reason and virtue.

They provided the means of self-perfecting, and we learn from Ouvaroff's *Eleusinian Mysteries* that they were called 'Teletae', i.e. 'Perfections', and that those who were purified by them were named *Tetelesmenoi*, meaning 'brought to perfec-

tion'. Therefore when Jesus, in his famous Sermon on the Mount said: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect", he was but echoing the wisdom of the Goddess.

But because this wisdom has been abandoned, man no longer seeks to perfect himself, but to perfect and conquer the outer world in the hope that, in some way, he will become better with the improvement of external conditions. Instead of aiming at the heaven which Jesus said was *within* man, he aims at colonising the moon with earth's surplus population. But mankind will be no wiser when they are living on the moon than when they inhabited the earth, and, as our crime statistics last year—the highest ever to have been recorded—plainly show, men of this scientific age are not getting better but worse. This is mainly due to the lack of all moral leadership. When they apply to patriarchal religion for guidance, they are likely to be advised to read Lady Chatterley's Lover, whereas the Goddess, like Jesus Christ, always demanded purity of thought. The modern world shows how completely her instruction has been rejected. And the incident at Thule suggests that unless humanity ceases its irreverent tampering with the heavenly symbol of the Mother-Goddess, and once more seeks her guidance and protection, it may well be exterminated as the result of this rejection.

DID BUDDHISTS VISIT EARLY BRITISH COLUMBIA?

(Continued from page 34)

the other side: 'The Heaven is Round while the Earth is square.' Then follow the six mathematical rules and nine mathematical formulas in between. With this there is the invocation: 'Wherever the God of Charms goes, all evil spirits shall disappear.'"

This Orientalist thought that the charm was a Taoist one, and that the inscriptions were of a very ancient Chinese and Persian origin.

Taoism is usually associated with the philosopher Lao-tze, though scholars believe that its origin is obscure and cannot be attributed to any one adherent. One of the main ideas in the philosophy is that a person should act in such a manner that "he undertakes no activity and yet there is nothing left undone." Taoism is the enemy of formalism, artificiality and ceremonies. In government, the principles of *laissez faire* obtains—"The best kind of government is that which is not even noticed by the people . . . the rulers . . . accomplish their task . . . Nevertheless the people say that they simply follow nature." The philosophy confirms both "eternal being" and "eternal nonbeing." From these two principles comes Tao, "the universal principle of existence," the "source of Heaven and Earth", and the "mother of all things." To reach Tao, one must adopt the simple life, discard strong desires, eliminate selfishness, and repay all evil with kindness. Nature, as well as man, must be in a state of quiet but incessant self-transformation. This is the path of Tao.

After the fourth century, Taoism weakened. Buddhism greatly influenced it, and even interpreted its philosophy in Taoist terminology. Taoism took in Buddhist ideas, and finally became "a handmaid to Buddhism." It was at this period that the making of charms, such as the disk, became a common practice of the priests or hermit brothers.

The second translator believed that the disk records a Chinese Emperor's order to his subjects to keep the law of the six rules and nineteen chapters. This translator disagrees with the previous one that the charm is of Taoist origin. Rather, he thought that the wording on the disk refers to the fundamental beliefs of Kwas philosophy.

The third translator did not hazard a guess as to the time period in China that it came from; nor the philosophy to which it refers. However, he renders the wording thus:

"Tai Shang's charm says: Heaven is round and earth is square." He then

mentions the six rules and nine regulations. "Wherever the spirit of this charm shall visit, all devils shall be exterminated. Let this immediate command be carried out with all dispatch."

The fourth Orientalist considered that the disk might have been a Taoist charm, as he believed the "Mighty Spell" indicated possibly a Taoist work. He rendered the translation of one side of the disk as "not orthodox" Taoism, however:

"The Mighty Spell says: 'Heaven is round, earth is square; the six notes and the nine sections tally. Wherever the good spirits come, ten thousand evil spirits will depart as speedily as Lu Ling (acting under) imperial orders.'"

The translator continued that the above quotation had reference to the fundamental concept in Chinese philosophy regarding the pairs of opposites, or *yang* and *yin*, the two principles whose interaction has produced everything in the phenomenal universe:

"The inevitable characteristic is that neither member of the pair can be understood independently of the other. Typical pairs of opposites are: light and dark; hard and soft; high and low; good and bad, etc., and by extension, day and night; male and female; heaven and earth; round and square; north and south, etc. In each of these pairs, the first member is characterised as *yang*; the second as *yin*. Obviously such a terminology may be expanded indefinitely and applied to any aspect of phenomenal existence."

The late Mrs. Henderson, a very earnest student of Madam Blavatsky's works had a student who was an expert in Chinese philosophy. So far, this student has offered the best explanation of the disk. Here are her comments, *inter alia*:

"This disk is certainly a Chinese talisman and might have been brought over to British Columbia by Buddhist priests

"The symbology of numbers has a great deal of meaning in China and one

finds three and nine constantly recurring in Chinese buildings, etc. The number eight (Pa) in Chinese is often recurring in numbers of temples. Eight is the symbol of entrance into a new state of regeneration. Note there were sixty-four (eight squared) disks in the stone jar found by the Chinese. Also, one side of the disk shows eight diagrams from the *Book of Changes*."

"The other side seems to be a formula built up on the numbers three and nine . . . With regard to the numbers three and nine—three is the number of perfection—the Higher Triad and nine, three squared—is the attainment of perfection—Initiation."

"I am reminded of these numbers in the Temple of Heaven in Peking which is supposed to have been built in the Ming dynasty (14th century). The temple itself is built with three cone-shaped circular roofs; manasic blue pottery tiles topped by a golden ball. The temple stands on a white marble circular base with three tiers of stairs leading up to it. Three plus three or three roofs plus three terraces."

"South of the Temple of Heaven is the famous circular marble altar (used by the Manchus for sacrifices to heaven), two hundred and ten feet across and open to the sky, built in an ascending marble stair in three tiers or terraces of nine steps each tier. The stairs are placed to face the four corners of the earth."

"Compare this with the Chinese talisman: 'six rules and nine formulas' or 'Heaven is round and earth is square.' This clearly would symbolize spirit and matter. 'Heaven' is symbolized in the blue temple with the number three repeated, and the 'Earth', the altar with its three tiers crossed by the four flights of stairs of nine steps."

It is interesting to note that in Chinese philosophy, the expression "Heaven of Mind" is a poetic rendering indicating cosmic ideation, from which ideation the whole phenomenal world has proceeded.

Aside from the above explanations there is another one that the disks may have come from a period antedating both Buddhism and Taoism. That there are very ancient carvings in British Columbia is actually stated in the *Secret Doctrine*, page 430, Vol. II, first edition:

“As said in *Isis Unveiled*: ‘Why should we forget that, ages before the prow of the adventurous Genoese clove the Western waters, the Phoenician vessels had circumnavigated the globe, and spread civilization in regions now silent and deserted? What archaeologist will dare assert that the same hand which planned the Pyramids of Egypt, Karnak, and the thousand ruins now crumbling to oblivion on the sandy banks of the Nile, did *not* erect the monumental Nag-kon-Wat of Cambodia? or trace the hieroglyphics on the obelisks and doors of the deserted Indian village, newly discovered in British Columbia by Lord Dufferin?’ . . .

Archaeologists admit that the rock carvings at Sproat Lake on Vancouver Island, and the petroglyphs in Nanaimo’s Petroglyph Park, definitely antedate the carvings of the British Columbia Indians or

their ancestors. The Indians themselves assert that they do not know who executed the work, but that their old legends refer to a much more ancient people, whose origin is shrouded in the mists of time.

Then there is the legend that Hwei-Shin under the name Fusang visited British Columbia in the year 499 A.D., in order to spread Buddhism here and in the rest of America. The Vancouver artist, John Delisle Parker, executed an oil painting of his supposed junk, the “Tai Shan” anchored off Nootka on the West coast of British Columbia, vividly picturing the supposed visit.

Today at the University of British Columbia, a young Chinese student is writing a thesis on the evidence leading to the conclusion that Chinese Buddhists may have come to British Columbia before the Spaniards did.

But the mystery of the strange disks has not yet been completely solved. Much more research is required, correlating the objects and artifacts found with like material discovered in other parts of the world, such as the archaeological researches being undertaken right now in the Aegean Sea area, and elsewhere.

ANTI-GRAVITY

In an article in *The Hindu* of Madras, Mr. Ansel E. Talbert writes of an extraordinary possibility, just now coming within the specific horizon, which up to a few years ago would have been scouted as ridiculous and fantastic in the extreme, namely the over-coming of gravity. Mr. Talbert says that there are scientists, both in the United States and Russia, who are now engaged in investigations on this problem. This undertaking, though a specialized activity in itself, has probably been stimulated by much other work being done on the problems of space travel which, except in the still highly problematical event of a break-through on the gravitation front, has to be attempted by conventional methods.

The whole possibility of neutralizing or even reversing gravity has arisen out of the identification of a certain particle in the course of laboratory experiments as “anti-proton,” possessing a negative mass. One could understand a substance or particle having no mass, because there can be less and less mass, approximating to zero; but a negative mass is like gravity in reverse.

Mr. Talbert mentions the names of some eminent men of Science who are convinced of the rationality of the anti-gravity idea: Dr. H. Vilman of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey; Mr. Tilgner, chief aeronautical engineer of Gruman Aircraft Engineering Corporation;

Dr. M. E. Rose, Chief Physicist at the Oakridge National Laboratory; and others of such standing. Apparently many experiments are being planned at the university level in the United States. There is less information as to what is being attempted in Russia; but we are told that Russian scientific journals and military commentators make frequent references to the subject. Obviously the country which first succeeds in overcoming gravity, even if it be only partially—there is talk of gravity insulators, reflectors and absorbers—will have an enormous military advantage over others.

It may here be recalled that H.P.B., writing in *The Secret Doctrine* round about 1889, declared that gravitation was an effect and not a law. The various bodies of the solar system and things generally were found to behave according to certain laws formulated by Newton, but those laws did not explain the cause of gravitation. Gravitation itself was dubbed the cause, or to use H.P.B.'s ironic description, the "God of matter". Thus it remains up to date as much of a mystery as ever. If gravitation is a force due to certain inherent factors, as yet unsuspected, then it must be possible to deal with it at the level of those factors, to counter it by another force, which can be made to come into existence under appropriate conditions. The levitation of the human body up to a certain height by psychic means used to be practised in India in the old days, and people used to talk of it freely. H.P.B. writes on this subject in *Isis Unveiled* and explains that such levitation is "a magneto-electric effect". The man who performs the phenomenon "has made the polarity of his body opposite to that of the atmosphere and identical with that of the earth". According to occult sources, some such method of countering gravity was employed in lifting the stones of the Pyramids, of Stonehenge and certain other colossal structures that now lie in ruins under the surface of the earth.

Now that we have a picture of negative and positive charges even in the smallest particles, and are asked to make room for "anti-matter" along with matter, we can see how various things previously thought impossible may become possible. Though we may as yet be far from knowing the nature of the so-called anti-matter, it is conceivable that we may be able to use it all the same.

The Theosophist, February 1961

THE SIGNS

Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
 Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
 And governed appetites; and piety,
 And love of lonely study; humbleness,
 Uprightness, heed to injure nought which
 lives,
 Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
 That lightly letteth go what others prize;
 And equanimity, and charity
 Which spieth no man's faults; and
 tenderness
 Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
 Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
 Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly
 mixed
 With patience, fortitude and purity;
 An unrevengeful spirit, never given
 To rate itself too high—such be the signs,
 O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
 On that fair path which leads to heavenly
 birth.

—*The Song Celestial*

"But I must tell you that during the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by those 'Masters', of whom I have spoken, to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity in a marked and definite way."

The Key to Theosophy

THE SCEPTICAL APPROACH TO THEOSOPHY

"This, then, is the right ground of the sceptic—this of consideration, of self-containing; not at all of unbelief; not at all of universal denying, nor of universal doubting—doubting even that he doubts; least of all, of scoffing and profligate jeering at all that is stable and good."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

From the vantage point of 1961 we can look back with no little awe at the epoch-shattering intellectual upheavals which were obliging man to readjust his whole way of thinking from about one hundred to seventy-five years ago. These upheavals ranged all the way from scientific theories and discoveries at one end—the material end of the scale, to the re-release of the Ancient Wisdom known as Theosophy at the other. Whichever way man looked, what he saw was henceforth and forever afterward bound to colour, if not completely change his conventional thinking. To him who was not frightened by what he saw, an *honest doubt* of the validity of his long-held beliefs was necessary to commence an enquiry into them, and the new ideas which were being presented required much mental digestion.

A predisposition to doubt, or intelligent scepticism, is, of course, much preferable to the opposite path of credulity, which cannot but lead into the quick-sands of false knowledge. But scepticism is not an end in itself: it is a means, not an end. It is not enough to investigate an ideal, examine its structure, and form a conclusion or suspend opinion on it. That would merely be a sterile method of studying. The doubter must simultaneously explore even to the deep and dark recesses of his subject; he must possess inquisitiveness, intuition and imagination; he must passionately strive towards Truth. A desirable intellectual attitude is one which not only guards against *false* thinking, but which also encourages mental exploration. This is most

important, because any negative attitude, if taken to its logical extremity, ends up in complete nihilism. Honest scepticism first allows us to come nearer to Truth, and then helps us to make it more manifest.

The inborn urge to examine evidence—again, the predisposition to doubt—how much will this quality be needed by our scientists, theologians and philosophers in the coming years. For dogmatism and unwillingness to re-examine principles is not confined to religious sects; scientists are frequently prepared to defend with tenacity their *a priori* hypotheses. Only scepticism can combat and beat dogmatism.

"A sceptical approach to Theosophy" might seem a contradiction in terms to some, yet in the 19th century materialistic connection with the term is ignored, as it ought to be, there is no inconsistency. Should there be any real reason why Theosophy cannot be approached via an attitude which insists on examining every premise, every theory along the way? Of course there is not. The Divine Wisdom which is Theosophy will certainly stand up to any amount of investigation. An intellectual approach to Theosophy is not only possible, but desirable. The Master K.H. said: "It is not *physical* phenomena that will bring conviction to the hearts of the unbelievers in the 'Brotherhood' but rather phenomena of *intellectuality, philosophy and logic.*"
—*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, p. 246.

Many members have reached the Theosophical Society having started on the road of agnosticism, and there is no reason why a sceptic should not feel at home in our fellowship. The motto of the Society, "There is No Religion Higher Than Truth" should appeal to that student who has chosen to take the path of reason in his philosophic quest. For one thing, having perhaps on his own initiative removed the masks and

erased the paint which obscured his primitive beliefs, he is quite likely, if studiously inclined, to turn his mind to one or more of the studies included in the second and third objects of the Society. To this end, our libraries, and we hope, our past experience will be of no little help to the doubting searcher. Furthermore, and of far more importance, it does happen, that when falsehoods are shown for what they really are, and the student is hacking his way out of the jungle of lies and dogma, there comes a realization of unity, true brotherhood. Never mind if at first he calls it by some abstract phrase such as 'monolithic rational unity', it is still brotherhood, and he who possesses that enlightenment belongs in the Theosophical fraternity.

The Theosophical Society will play an increasingly important part in the years to come, years in which man will face more intellectual challenges than ever in the past. It is and will be a body of students with which a sceptic might well throw his lot for mutual gain. We have precious jewels of the mind and heart to share with him; he can show us new settings for those jewels. For who can know, who has not learned to doubt? It is extremely important that we are ready to take advantage of the new knowledge which is almost within our grasp; profit, if we can, by the mistakes that were made in the past, and stride forward to what must surely be universal brotherhood.

—T.G.D.

OUR CYCLE AND THE NEXT

What has the new cycle in store for humanity? Will it be merely a continuation of the present only in darker and more terrible colours? Or shall a new day dawn for mankind, a day of pure sunlight, of truth, of charity, of true happiness for all? The answer depends mainly on the few Theosophists who true to their colours

through good repute and ill, still fight the battle of Truth against the powers of Darkness.

If Theosophy prevailing in the struggle, if its all-embracing philosophy strikes deep root into the minds and hearts of men, if its doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, in other words, of Hope and Responsibility, find a home in the lives of the new generations, then, indeed, will dawn the day of joy and gladness for all who now suffer and are outcast. For real Theosophy is Altruism, and we cannot repeat it too often. It is brotherly love, mutual help, unanswering devotion to Truth. If once men do but realize that in these alone can true happiness be found, and never in wealth, possessions, or any selfish gratification, then the dark clouds will roll away, and a new humanity will be born upon earth. Then, the Golden Age will be there, indeed.

But if not, then the storm will burst, and our boasted western civilization and enlightenment will sink in such a sea of horror that its parallel History has never yet recorded.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Lucifer*, 1889

THE SOUL

That the soul is something immortal, both our present reasoning, and others, too, oblige us to own: but in order to know what kind of being the soul is, in truth, one ought not to contemplate it as it is veiled both by its conjunction with the body, and by other evils, as we now behold it, but such as it is when it becomes pure. As such it must by reasoning be fully contemplated; and he who does this will find it far more beautiful, and will more plainly see through justice and injustice.

—Plato. *Republic*.

THE DIVINE AFFIRMATIVE

Heed thou, *sans peur*, the Herald of thy
Heart,
Nor let the tumult of dissenting tongues,
The babbling "opinion" of the crowd,
Drown the quiet pleading of thy Silent Self.

Heed thou, Heroic Heart, thy Captain's call
To arm and battle mid the deathless Host
That *know* naught but Eternal Truth can
win
The fight for Man's supremacy, as MAN.

Kindle within thy fearless heart the flame
Of clear perception of the Master's Plan!

Heed thou, *sans peur*, the Herald of thy
Heart!
Bethink thee, denizen of many worlds,
Of the "Rung Ho!" of myriad battle-fields,
The old, heart-healing challenge from on
high:
"Fear not! But know thyself as GOD . . .
invincible!"

Embrace, then, "Fortune's favored Soldier",
The challenge of the Lord of Lords:
Leave thy pavilion, knowing that this Fight
Is LIFE; forsaking it, but loss of LIFE!

LIVE! that this heavenly triumph may be
thine!
BATTLE! that thou mayst deeply savor
LIFE!

Yield place to none, but be *thyself* the field
Thou wouldst command! Fling words away!
But grapple to thy heart the unspoken
pledge

To be the LIVING WAY . . . the heavenly
Field

Whereon the victory is won, unveiling thy
Eternal Oneness with thy GOD!

This surging forward, 'neath the guise of
STRIFE
Seeks but to tell thee: THERE IS ONLY
LIFE!!

—MONTAGUE A. MACHILL

LOVE

The Mystic, who claims to know from his own experience, tells us that the Mind and Heart are like the two sides of a coin, which we see as operating separately in the world of forms. To those of us whose consciousness is confined to the phenomenal world of opposites, they are separate instruments for the expression of thought and feeling. The Mystic experiences his illumination through a sudden emotional ecstasy, and explains that the mind cannot describe or convey this experience in terms of the thinking process, since the experience lies in the realm of the intuition beyond the field of the mind. However, may it not be that a long continued effort to understand, a burning desire to know, will bring about an intuitional comprehension akin to the Mystic's experience, which is beyond the mind consciousness but which exerts a constant pressure of understanding upon the mind? If this is true, then such a mind will have a firm conviction of the unity of LIFE, and become constantly aware of IT's expression in every form or instrument he contacts in the illusory world of time and space.

As evidence of this growth in understanding, he will find himself distinguishing between the love of one for another, lover and beloved, and the LOVE which is a state of being, in which heart and mind are one.

—G. H. HALL

In whatever place we may be, we are, Lord, subject to Thy commands; be we wherever we may, we are always with Thee. We say to ourselves, "Perhaps we may find a path leading elsewhere." How vain is this idea, for all paths lead to Thee.

—*Suji Writings*

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