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ST. PAUL AND WOMEN

For hundreds of years certain passages from the letters of St. Paul have been quoted as indicating that in the Christian pattern of thought, women were definitely secondary to men and that their innate deficiencies were such that women should never be permitted to preach in the churches. The familiar condemnation of St. Paul for his alleged attitude towards women is repeated in the interesting article, "Should the Priestess Return" by Esme Wynne-Tyson, which appeared in the March-April, 1961, issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*. Mrs. Wynne-Tyson writes, "Paul, who lacked the feminine nature, failed to recognize it in his Master, and in true Jewish fashion, he insisted that the female should be subordinated to the male. His injunctions, found in 1 Corinthians 14: 34-35, and 1 Timothy 2:11-12, have undoubtedly largely contributed to the tragic failure of Church Christianity to regenerate and heal mankind." The verses quoted read as follows: "Let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask of their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for a woman to speak in a church." 1 Cor. 14:34-35 and "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in silence." 1 Tim. 2:11-12.

It must be admitted that a surface reading of these verses supports the view that

Paul, if he were not in fact a misogynist, did believe that women should be subordinate to men. Such a superficial interpretation of these words was accepted in the early and middle centuries of the Christian era and contributed to the low opinion of women held by some bigots who regarded woman's nature as inimical to that of the spiritually superior male sex. Women were termed "sinks of iniquity" whose wiles and powers of evil had seduced many a saint from the strait and narrow way necessary for salvation. Some sex tormented fanatics, unable to release their minds from their obsession of sex, hated all woman-kind, and abhorred the fact that they themselves had been born from women's bodies. In the modern church where the women members are in the majority and where the works performed by women are largely responsible for keeping the organization alive, these verses are seldom referred to and if considered at all, are dismissed as evidence of a minor fault in Paul, although of course, as Mrs. Wynne-Tyson points out his words "let the women keep silence in the churches", have strongly influenced the opposition to women ministers or "priestesses".

But as students of Theosophy should we be content with the literal meaning of St. Paul's words? "Paul was undeniably an Initiate" wrote H.P.B. (S.D. Roman III, 123) and on the same page and on the page following she quotes from *Isis Unveiled*: "Take Paul, read the little of original that

is left of him in the writings attributed to this brave, honest sincere man, and see whether anyone can find a word therein to show that Paul meant by the word Christ anything more than the abstract ideal of the personal divinity indwelling in man . . . Paul declares that; 'according to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise *master-builder*, I have laid the foundation.'

"This expression, *master-builder*, used only *once* in the whole *Bible*, and by Paul, may be considered as a whole revelation. In the Mysteries, the third part of the sacred rites was called *Epopteia*, or revelation, reception into the secrets. In substance it means the highest stage of clairvoyance—the divine; . . . but the real significance of the word is 'overseeing' from *optomai*—'I see myself'. In the Sanskrit the root *ap* had the same meaning originally, though now it is understood as meaning 'to obtain'.

"The word *epopteia* is a compound, from *epi* 'upon' and *optomai* 'to look', or an overseer, an inspector—also used for a *master-builder*. The title of *master-mason*, in Freemasonry, is derived from this, in the sense used in the Mysteries. Therefore, when Paul entitles himself a '*master-builder*' he is using a word pre-eminently kabalistic, theurgic, and masonic, and one which no other apostle uses. He thus declares himself an *adept*, having the right to initiate others."

Other portions of *The Secret Doctrine* might be quoted to support the view that H.P.B. had a high regard for St. Paul and considered him to have eminent status in the fraternity of Teachers. Is it likely that such a one, an 'adept' and an 'initiate', would refuse an earnest enquirer the right to seek spiritual instruction in a "church" and tell her to take her questions to her husband? Are all "husbands" especially endowed; are they all superior in wisdom to their wives, and are they all capable of teaching the ancient wisdom?—surely not!

But if the verses read; "let the novices keep silence in the Lodges . . . and if they

wish to learn, let them ask of their own Teacher in a Household of Study," then we would have a rendition which would make sense and would be in accordance with teaching procedure in occult study.

Such an interpretation is presented in a book, *Letters from Paulos*, by an anonymous author who used the pen-name of "Omikron". The author, in his introduction, states that for years he had felt that the Letters from Paul were "greatly wanting in intelligibility, dignity and consistency, and to be a hopeless tangle for any student who sought to unravel the threads of his teaching.

"At a very much later date, I conceived the idea that, in reality, these Letters might be references to teachings of a most profound nature addressed, possibly, to inner schools of chosen enthusiasts, and couched in special and symbolic terminology—not understood by any outsider, ancient or modern."

He then recounts his endeavours to find some key to the code of symbolism. There was no original Greek Text extant; only a multitude of divergent editions of post-Pauline date. He decided to try the unedited texts, hoping to find some clues by a process of comparison and in the non-accentuation and non-spacing of words which characterize the oldest Mss. "A further decision led me constantly to consult such ancient lexika and fragments of lexika as were obtainable; for I believed that in these ancient dictionaries of the Hellenes, the ancient scholars would have given apposite meanings, as well as clues to symbolic and allegoric expression. I paid particular attention to the strange *Hermeneia** of the old grammarians, supposing that they had good reasons for it, and even giving, usually more than one *Hermeneia* for the same word." He was engaged for years on the task and the results of his studies are

* Words to be translated in a special sense according to the Hermetic system of thought; secret; esoteric.

embodied in *Letters from Paulos*, which bears its own internal evidence of his painstaking scholarship.

Of Paul's several letters which form part of the New Testament, 1st and 2nd Corinthians only are translated, together with "Some Sayings of the Khristos" selected from various Gospels. The remaining portions of the book which deal with "Paulos and his Letters", "Paulos and his Work", "Symbolism", etc., contain many revealing clues concerning the secret teachings of Christianity, and of its links with the ancient Mysteries. Paul's teachings are summarized as follows:

1. That the Source of all things is in the rarest and subtlest order of Being—Spirit.
2. That there is, in the original story of the universe, an Outgoing from God, which is of a downward and densifying nature; or, put otherwise, of a self-robing description. Hence all things "Live in Him" Who is also resident in all.
3. That the ultimate of the densifying down grade is the realm of Nature, a changeful condition of things, where the outer forms, or robes, are continually arranged and re-arranged by the compelling, ever active, invisible Indwelling Life from God.
4. That the Indwelling Life is an endowment of initial power which is, in itself, to be enriched and fructified.
5. That the changeful realm of Nature is the matrix, the means, by which enrichment and fructification may be effected.
6. That All has Life, but that there is a descending and an ascending scale of degrees, as regards the intensity of its action.

On the long pathway of souls through the cycles of time, there are athletes and laggards; beginners and winners; aspirants and leaders; Paul was one of the winners, a master-builder, a Leader of the way, and he worked to enroll in the various grades

of his teaching order those self - selected ones, the Kletoi, the chosen ones, who were capable of learning the secret science. According to the author, Paul "implies, quite clearly, that the rare science of which he was a past master was not transmissible by books, and that its peculiar practices were not committed to writing.

"According to various clues to be gleaned from his missives, it appears that this quickened unfoldment was somewhat akin to the nature of an art, whose science was orally bestowed—but only bestowed on Kletoi. And obviously, the bestowal was only made, and could only be made, by those who had already attained a certain degree of proficiency. So that an Ekklesia, under these circumstances, was fundamentally a secret School; a School with various grades both in its pupilry and in its preceptorate. From one point of view, each Kletos was a pupil; and from another, each one was a teacher or guide. Everyone was a volunteer, accepting the discipline of some defined status as a necessary means towards the Goal which he or she was earnestly seeking."

Today the Ekklesia are churches, not secret schools where instructions can be obtained in the ancient art and science of self-unfoldment. Today, churches are open to all, but not so in the early days of Christianity; "The Christians wrapped up their rites in secrecy. They met by night and were pledged not to reveal the secrets of their religion. A long catechumenate was necessary in order to receive Baptism; and one who was not initiated could no more witness their rites or join in their worship than an Englishman can, at the present day, enter a Hindu temple." *Monuments of Early Christianity* F. C. Conybeare.

In the Ekklesia of Paul there were various grades of students from novices to illuminates, and Paul seems to have adopted a more ancient system of designating the members of each grade; "Timaios says in the tenth book of his histories that he

(Pythagoras) used to say that those (souls) banding themselves together with Andres (Illuminates or Hero-Souls) received the names of gods, being called successively Korai (Virgins); Nymphai (Brides); Meteres (Mothers)." Diog. Laert. 8, 11. According to Omikron, in Paul's system, novices were termed "Brides, Souls-Newly-Wedded-to-the-Way"; if this rendering be substituted for the word "women" in many places where it appears in his Epistles, new light will be thrown on his thoughts, although a completely revised rendition is necessary to bring out the full inner meaning of his words. Read for example the 11th Chapter of 1st Corinthians where Paul seemingly fusses about women's hair and whether women should be veiled or unveiled, or shorn or shaven. According to H.P.B., hair is a symbol of maturity of growth and power. (See under "Hair" *Theosophical Glossary*). Novices should be "veiled" that is they should not expose their maturing power in a Lodge, unless their maturity of power and growth is such that it proves its own strength.

One interesting example of Hermeneia occurs in the 11th verse of 1 Corinthians 1, which reads, "For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them *which are of the household* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." The italicized words are in italics in the Revised Version, indicating that these words are not in the original text. The translators assumed that "Chloe" was the name of a woman, but the word means "ripeness" in its inner sense, a ripening of latent powers. Omikron translates the verse thus; "For in your case, my brothers it has been made clear to me (in vision) by the waxing powers of an Unfoldment of my life-force, that there are amongst you differences of a mere wordiness." In other words, that Paul, the leader of a group of disciples, knew within himself by his own inner powers of perception, that there was some dissension within the lodge which he had been guiding.

To turn once again to our original verses, here is the rendering as given in *Letters from Paulos*: "Your Wards, Souls-Newly-Wedded-to-the-Way must be silent in the Guilds. For no direction is given for them to recount experiences, but to be under guidance, and in such manner as our law includes. But if they wish to learn any particular thing, let them ask their own Illuminate Teachers for suitable instruction in a Household of Study. For it is beyond their power, for Souls-Newly-Wedded-to-the-Way to recount a competent experience in the Guilds of the Way of Wisdom."

The above is a very incomplete examination of a few points in Paul's Epistles, but perhaps enough has been suggested to induce those interested to pursue the study further. Paul, an 'initiate' and an 'Adept', who has been termed the real 'founder of Christianity' has suffered more than any other writer of the New Testament from faulty and partial translation.

—D.W.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

THEOSOPHY AND RELIGION

BY W. E. WILKS

In the July-August number of *The Canadian Theosophist* page 67, the Reverend Stephan A. Hoeller, D.D. uses some statements of mine regarding the attitude of the Founders toward organized religion for a dissertation on this matter in which he puts forward his many reasons why these various statements of the Mahatmas and H.P.B. need modification, if not reversal. I am glad Reverend Hoeller has brought this matter up as it affords an opportunity to try and throw some light on a confused and much misunderstood subject, a subject which goes to the heart of practical Theosophy.

First of all it is apparently necessary to make a clear distinction, a distinction which should be obvious, between Religion, meaning religious philosophy; and Religion, meaning a religious organization. It is the latter which is stigmatized in *The Mahatma Letters* as the source of nearly two thirds of all the evils (after making due allowance for natural evils) that pursue humanity. As to the former it is absurd to suppose that the Founders are opposed to religious philosophy when they themselves put a religious philosophy forward under the name of Theosophy, often referred to as the Wisdom Religion, by H.P.B. The Letter in question makes this abundantly clear when it goes on to say "It is the sacerdotal caste, the priesthood and the churches" and then continues . . . "unto that day when the better portion of humanity in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, destroys the altars of these false Gods". Could anything be clearer? It is to be hoped that we shall no more hear that the Mahatmas and H.P.B. are against all Religion, meaning religious philosophy.

It is then not religion as philosophy which the Mahatmas denounce, but the uses made

by the sacerdotal caste in all parts of the world, in all ages, to profit by playing upon man's finer emotions and aspirations to his delusion and misery. Why is Theosophy opposed to organized religion? It is because Theosophy, in contradistinction to every form of organized religion, teaches that the redemptive power for Man resides within himself and can be found nowhere else. "For within you is the Light of the world—the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere". This is the thing which marks off Theosophy from all forms of organized religion. In Theosophy there is no place, or need, for priests, or for any mediator between man and the Source of his being, for only by wholly relying upon himself can man redeem himself.

The reason why the doctrines of Theosophy must always stand against all forms of organized religion is because the doctrines of organized religions, one and all, teach and demand dependence—dependence upon an imaginary God, upon priests, churches, Sacraments and Rituals, whilst Theosophy shows that only by a growing Self-dependence, Self-reliance, and Self-responsibility can Man awaken his dormant Spiritual powers.

The first duty of a student of Theosophy therefore is to strive to become an individual—one who has cut himself off from the herd life and who thinks and decides for himself. He holds no belief or opinion accepted from any authority, however great, but only as a result of reaching conviction himself. Until a student has done this in some measure, it is of little moment what he does; until he becomes his own man, taking full responsibility for his life, his thoughts, and actions, he is still due

for the "Button Moulder", of Peer Gynt. he is still a minor spiritually, and cannot be taken seriously. Individuals in this sense, are very, very rare. Life under the aegis of all organized religions stultifies all effort toward individuality. Their influence is always toward dependence upon authority.

It was because it was clearly seen that Theosophy cut at the root of all religious organizations that the forces behind these religious organizations attacked, and still attack, H.P.B. Unable to undermine or offset her philosophy, they tried to destroy her personally. Theosophy and sacerdotalism are poles apart; the one seeks to free man, the other to enslave him.

In the process of popularizing Theosophy over the last sixty years, this aspect of the philosophy has been lost to sight. The Forces behind the Missionaries who maligned H.P.B. when she was alive, found an easier way to their goal when she and the Mahatmas had retired and had left the philosophy in our care, to see what we could do with it on our own, for the benefit of humanity. Those Forces which automatically oppose any effort to bring Spiritual light to Mankind, found it not too difficult to work from within the Theosophical Society, gradually changing the outlook, the values, and the attitude of students back to the old view of all organized religions. First we saw a personal God, re-arisen in the Theosophical world, to be prayed to, propitiated, and to take responsibility for man's folly once more; then a re-arisen Christ as the World Teachers, absorbed all Theosophical energy for nigh a generation, then a new-old Church, spawned right within the Society, which became under the thrall of its Bishops and priests. It would seem we did not do so well when left to ourselves.

Nothing can be more important for the serious student of Theosophy than to become clear upon this matter of Theosophy versus Religion, so let us attempt to outline the difference in actual attitude of the two. The Theosophist stands erect facing

the world, he knows he has nothing to fear but his own past unwise living and that he has all the powers in the Universe within him, as he finds the courage, force, and determination to awaken them. He looks at the starry night sky in its majestic immensity and knows that he is a part of the Universe,—body, Soul and Spirit, and that an unimaginably glorious future awaits him, can he find the aspiration and the courage to demand it. The Religionist kneels with bowed head; he regards himself as a creature whose only hope lies in calling upon a power outside himself to his aid. He abases himself before his God, and glorifies in his own insignificance, because it enhances the greatness of his God. The qualities he values most are humility and obedience. The Religionist, from birth to death,—in the West at least, suffers from a sense of guilt because of the religious doctrine of Sin, which looms very large in his life and which has been used by the priests to keep him enslaved. The Theosophist, knows nothing of Sin. He knows much of stupidity, folly, ignorance and weakness. He looks upon himself as an Intelligence, in a personality which is composed of the forces which he himself has energised by his past living, which he is trying to control and mould into an instrument for the expression of his real Self. His job is to convert ignorance into knowledge, to use his follies as stepping stones to wisdom, and his weakness as a spur to Self-Mastery. When he meets with greatness, the Religionist feels his own insignificance, but to the Theosophist greatness is always a stimulus; it reminds him of what he, and all men, can one day become, when he awakens his own greater nature. The Theosophist seeks above all, power, and the power he most seeks "Is that power which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men" for he knows that Self-love alone stands between Man and his Spiritual nature.

Both the Theosophist and the Religionist believe in human brotherhood; the former because he knows that all men share

a common Life, and are one at the Source of their being: the latter because the fatherhood of God makes all men his children. These two conceptions of Brotherhood are very different, for they spring from two different levels of man's being. The Religionist is concerned almost wholly with the welfare of the personality of his brother, his freedom from pain, difficulty and frustration, etc., to succour him in pain, and comfort him in sorrow. The Theosophist, on the other hand, looks upon his brothers as fellow-pilgrims on a great and dangerous adventure, and is concerned not to let down, but ever to help strengthen the courage, determination, and aspiration of his brothers, as men in a common struggle against odds, rely upon the strength of each other. The one is an appeal to strength, to the individual beyond the personal; the other is an appeal to human weakness and

immaturity. Which of these two paths is the true one, is something which every human being will have to decide for himself.

Both organized religion and modern Communism appear to hold that the regimentation of men for their own good is the way to happiness on Earth, as depicted by Aldous Huxley in his *Brave New World*, but there will always be those, who although they realize the road of freedom is a rough road, dangerous and difficult with its full measure of suffering from mistakes inevitable, yet they prefer it to happiness at the expense of Self-responsible freedom, and they believe that all men as they reach to true manhood will find themselves forced by their own nature to choose it. How else can Man awaken his own dormant Spiritual powers?

THE MISSION OF THEOSOPHY

BY H. T. EDGE, B.A., M.A.

The mission of Theosophy is to bring back to mankind a knowledge of spiritual truths. These truths are of the practical kind, not the vague speculative and futile kind. Mankind has forgotten them. This bringing back of knowledge is a periodical occurrence; it occurs as part of the ordinary course of human history. The tendency of civilizations is towards materialism and absorption in the affairs of sense; spiritual riches give place to material wealth. But the light of knowledge is always kept alight, and great revivals take place at times when materialism and selfishness threaten to engulf humanity.

We can understand the mission of Theosophy better today than we could at the time when it was first promulgated. For a great change has come over the spirit of the times, particularly in the last decade. Everybody seems to be looking for just that thing which it was the mission of

Theosophy to afford—a dawning of light upon the minds of men. It is realized today better than ever before in recent history that Religion is a spirit or knowledge or power that dwells eternally in the human heart; that light comes from within; that man must be his own savior by means of the divinity that is in him. On all sides we find people expecting some revelation, some great synthesis of knowledge, some outpouring of the spirit of love and charity, or some wonderful manifestation of the brotherhood of men. Sometimes this expectation takes curious forms, owing to the mental twists that people have: thus some believe that a visible Christ will come and establish a kingdom of righteousness; and overweening vanity may even in some cases lead one to suppose that he himself is destined to play a chief role in that advent. But nobody seems to know just what form the advent or awakening is likely to

take.

Theosophists maintain that the awakening of spiritual knowledge will be a revival of knowledge that has been before, that has been the heritage of mankind from time immemorial. They regard the present age as a period of decline and darkness so far as real knowledge is concerned; though, so far as concerns material prowess, it may be considered an era of prosperity. Nor need Theosophists fear thereby to proclaim an unwelcome truth, since on every hand today they hear voices protesting the very same thing. The limitations of our present knowledge in comparison with what we feel we ought to know, are a constant theme of complaint and perplexity.

Since the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky were first promulgated, the persistent work of her followers has to a considerable extent rendered the public familiar with some of the broad outlines of her teachings. They are aware that Theosophy claims for the human race an immense antiquity; and not only for the human race is this antiquity claimed, but for civilization. Archaeology and anthropology have of late been forced, in so far as they have been faithful to the true principles of scientific research, to concede a far greater antiquity to civilization than it has been customary to accord. Yet their concessions, great though they are, are timid in comparison with what Theosophy claims and what archaeology itself will step by step be driven to allow. It is not necessary for present purposes to carry the imagination farther back than the beginnings of the present Root-Race of humanity; and it will suffice to say that this Root-Race is the Fifth and that it has been in existence from 800,000 to 1,000,000 years. It is called the Aryan Race (though it must be observed that this term is not used in any of the varied senses in vogue among modern scholars). It was preceded by the Fourth or Atlantean Race. Each of these seven great Root-Races is subdivided into seven sub-races, and we are

at present in the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root-Race. It is not proposed to burden the present paper with further details as to the scheme of the human races, which can be studied in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky or in the Theosophical Manuals based thereon. Thus much was rendered necessary to introduce the point about to be made. As we are in the fifth sub-race of the Aryan Race, it follows that we have been preceded by four other sub-races. This is a fact of which ordinary historians take no account, yet it is the key to many of the problems they find insoluble—as, for instance, the existence of the megalithic monuments like Stonehenge and the dolmens of Brittany.

If the records of archaeology are studied in the light of this key furnished by Theosophy, the facts no longer conflict with the theory or with each other, but on the contrary fall into line and confirm the teachings. The earlier sub-races, which preceded the present one, had passed through the entire cycle of their evolution, and had consequently attained to a greater height of knowledge than we have as yet attained in our cycle. Humanity progresses by a passing on of the light from one race to another, as a father passes on life and light to his offspring. Our knowledge so far has been a gradual recovery of knowledge ancient and lost; but there is still much more to be recovered. As a later race, and one that stands therefore farther on in the line of evolution, it is ours to carry knowledge and progress to a yet farther point. But at present we have to join our aspirations for the future with a retrospect towards the past whose heirs we are.

The mission of Theosophy, then, is to remind the world of the existence of such a store of knowledge and to make known many of the tenets included in that knowledge. Let us look back to the days when H. P. Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society. Her utterances at that time show that she anticipated a state of affairs like the present. She saw that the dominant

forces in the predominant civilization were of a self-destructive character, being both selfish and materialistic. She realized that, if these forces should continue to prevail, unchecked by any upbuilding forces, the result could only be the destruction of civilization. Further than this, another threatening phenomenon was taking place. There was beginning an era of renewed interest in psychism. It is quite in accordance with the law of cycles that an era of materialism should be followed by an era of psychism, and late history has proved this true. H. P. Blavatsky foresaw this. So did her successor, W. Q. Judge, who said that the forces at work in society were calculated to produce a race of black magicians or a form of society ruled by sorcery. This enables us to understand a pregnant saying of H. P. Blavatsky's that her mission was to *sow the seed of brotherhood in the soil of mysticism*. And that word "brotherhood" gives the key to the question. The resources placed at man's disposal by his discoveries in science were being misused through the overwhelming power of selfishness, and had already produced a civilization teeming with awful poverty, disease, and vice. What if the still greater resources that might accrue from psychism should also be abused? It was to prevent this awful catastrophe, then, that Theosophy was promulgated.

And turning again to the records of present times, do we not again find confirmation of the validity of H. P. Blavatsky's forewarnings—ample justification of her mission? If there is any one phenomenon more characteristic than another of the present time, it is surely the rise and spread of psychism—and that, for the most part, in forms which, when not actually selfish, are at least devoid of the element of true progress. Theosophy has not so much had to fight materialism as to fight psychism. But yet it is neither materialism nor psychism nor any particular thing except selfishness that Theosophy combats; for this evil enters into everything and turns good into bad.

It is everywhere admitted that civilization is in distress and that what we need is a strong moral and spiritual power which can take the place vacated by bygone forms of religion no longer equal to the task. There is no longer any hope that physical science or mere humanism can fill that place. As just said, men feel that something positive and not negative is needed, something that will explain the spiritual laws of life and not the biological alone. Theosophy supplies their need exactly; it has already influenced men's thoughts far more than they themselves suspect, and as time goes by it will do so more and more. For, however unwelcome an unfamiliar teaching may be, yet if it is true it must surely gain recognition from those who are seeking the truth.

Theosophists often read articles and books by earnest intuitive people who have recognized the universality of religion, the divine nature of man, and other principles which Theosophy has promulgated; but whose ideas are confused and cut short for want of such an item of knowledge as that of Karma and Reincarnation. It is impossible to make a consistent theory of life on the basis of conventional views as to the duration of the Soul's existence. Divine justice cannot be reconciled with the facts of life if we regard the present earth-life as the whole of our terrestrial career. Consequently these thinkers are put to sore straits in trying to evolve a theory that shall reconcile their intuitive perceptions of what is right and true with the facts of life as we find them. A little knowledge concerning Karma and Reincarnation would have removed all these difficulties. Therefore a part of the mission of Theosophy is to bring back to the recollection of humanity forgotten truths like these, for the lack of which we have been so sorely perplexed. With what theory of divine justice or unerring law can we reconcile the fact that people are born into this life with such unequal fates and opportunities? To what purpose is the little that a man can

accomplish in a single life, if that little lifetime is bounded before and behind by an ocean of eternity? Life is a sorry farce unless viewed on the larger scale. The old views might suffice for John Bunyan, but will not fit the present expansion of our knowledge.

Brotherhood is a word much used today; and again we find that Theosophy supplies the needed key to its realization. A brotherhood based on economic principles alone will not work, nor a brotherhood based on mere sentiment. Theosophy asserts that men actually are, here and now, interdependent and brothers in fact; and that consequently the question is not so much one of *creating* brotherhood as of *recognizing* its existence. Men are separate and disunited as to their *personal* nature; personal desires often conflict. But as to their higher nature men are united. The more they recognize their higher nature, the more union will prevail and discord cease. But the higher nature of man is too vague as ordinarily understood. Formal religion has made the soul too much an affair of the next world, and has emphasized the lower nature in this life on earth. Science does not profess to tell us anything about our higher nature. Psychism and such-like fads and speculations claim to tell us about our higher nature; but what they mean by the expression is usually only an extension of the personality and has nothing whatever to do with the spiritual nature of man.

How can we approach towards a realization of an ideal of solidarity that shall be neither formal and materialistic on the one hand, nor on the other hand weak and sentimental? Whether the teachings of Theosophy be nominally accepted or no, it is only on the lines laid down by those teachings that this solidarity can be realized. For it is Theosophy alone that has made intelligible and of practical utility the doctrine of man's dual nature—the God and the animal. Where all the members of a company are engaged in the attempt to express in action their highest and best

ideals, to that extent do they become inwardly united; and this inward union, once established, then tends to work outwards and thus to bring about the conditions of external harmony. Theosophy, by urging each man to seek the light within him, thus points the way to solidarity; and its teachings as to the nature of man have rendered the idea of the higher self intelligible and capable of being translated into action.

Perhaps the mission of Theosophy can hardly be summed up better than by saying that it is to re-establish among men the soul-life and to preach once again the heart-doctrine. All are agreed that we have too much of the body-life and the head-doctrine. The notion that intellect and feelings are antagonistic or unrelated to each other is a delusion. Our intellectual faculties are colorless; and if not guided by our higher aspirations, they will be ruled by our lower desires. This explains the various materialistic systems of philosophy and the reasoned advocacy of practices abhorrent to our better instincts. In seeking for the highest and best in humanity, many thinkers and writers have found their answer in the word "Love." This is a much-misused word, and one that it is often needful to avoid on account of misconceptions. Nevertheless, in its highest meaning, it stands for something great and sacred that can rescue us from the thralldom of desire and passion. If it be understood that true Love implies self-sacrifice, not self-gratification, we shall avoid misunderstanding on that point. Modern psychism and so-called "occultism" are all too frequently based on the idea of *getting something for oneself*. Where that motive prevails, Love is absent. The old and oft-repeated fallacy that to help others we must first help ourselves, does not appeal to those who are already tired and weary of themselves and seek to escape from that narrow prison. It does not appeal to him who feels that other people *are* himself. Those who find the culture of their personality irksome will

(Continued on page 89)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

I regret to report the sudden death of Cecil Thomson, son of the late Lt. Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., on July 13 in London, England, where he had resided for a number of years. Cecil was not a member of the Society, but before going to England, he was a constant attendant at the Toronto Lodge meetings. He was a talented artist and his death came just as arrangements were being made for an exclusive showing of his paintings.

His sudden death came as a great shock to his three sisters, Mrs. Viola Gaille Campbell of Toronto, Mrs. Phoebe Stone of Montreal and Mrs. Gretel Roca of Porta Rica. Our deep sympathy is extended to them and to his widow.

* * *

Mrs. G. K. Minwalla, Presidential Agent of the Theosophical Society, Pakistan, has requested that attention be drawn in our magazine to the existence of a T. S. Islam Association whose purposes are to bring out literature on Islamic ethics, philosophy and mysticism and to present Theosophy to Muslims. Pakistan is a Muslim state and is the gateway to other contiguous Muslim states. All those who are interested in this are invited to join the Association; the annual fee of Rs. 6 (\$1.25) is reduced by 50% for those who are already members of the Theosophical Society. The Convener is Mr. M. H. Abdi, c/o The Theosophical Society, Bunder Road, Karachi, Pakistan.

* * *

I also acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the first two issues of *Theosophy in Pakistan*, a well prepared quarterly of 20 pages. The Presidential Agent, Mrs. Goll K. Minwalla, is Editor. These issues contain some original contributions as well as re-prints of articles by prominent theosophists, and also news of the activities of the Lodges in Pakistan.

* * *

Joint celebrations of the birthday of H. P. Blavatsky on August 11 and 12 were held in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Bombay, India. The Los Angeles and San Francisco meetings were attended by members of The Theosophical Society, (Adyar), The United Lodge of Theosophists, and by members of other Theosophical groups and by other students. Mr. Pierce Spinks, author of *Theosophists, Re-Unite!* and Editor of the publication bearing the same title, was the general Chairman. Commenting on these events, *Theosophy* in its August issue says in its lead article, "Brotherhood Among Theosophists", "As the years go by, bringing closer the beginnings of the last quarter of the twentieth century, the feelings which arise out of the splits and internal dissensions of the Theosophical Movement in the nineteenth century are dying down. The differences remain—differences in conception of the Theosophical philosophy, differences in view of the role and course of the Theosophical Movement, and differences in judgment as to how the spread of the philosophy and progress of the Movement are best accomplished—but the quality of partisanship, so difficult for all except the rarest of human beings to suppress when under pressure, is seldom renewed, these days . . . What deserves consideration is the simple fact that, with the paling of issues which were largely personal in origin, there has been opportunity for the more fundamental issues of the Movement to grow into prominence, and the fruit of this growth is manifestly good."

* * *

With reference to my note in the July-August issue respecting the importance of the work of the Adyar Library and the need for funds to aid in the construction of a new building to house the many books and manuscripts which had been collected over the years, I now report that the General Executive at its meeting on July 9 authorized a donation of 1,000 rupees for this fund.

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ally to members; and explained some of the apparent discrepancies to be found in *The Secret Doctrine*. An engineer, Mr. Endersby has done a lot of research on this subject, and hopes to publish a book on his findings shortly.

On Sunday morning, Mr. Endersby presided at *The Secret Doctrine* class, and in the evening gave an interesting public lecture entitled "The Wave: Crest and Trough". His visit, though short, was enjoyed by his correspondents in the Toronto area, and he received many new requests for copies of the *Notes*.

EDMONTON LODGE

The annual meeting of the Edmonton Lodge was held on Wednesday, May 31 and the following executive was elected for the year 1961-1962:

President, Mr. E. P. Wood; Vice President, Mr. B. J. Whitbread; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Winifred Tiplin; Librarian, Mrs. A. Sirett.

CORRECTION

Mr. G. H. Hall, the author of the article "Religion and Religions" which appeared in the Jan.-Feb., 1961 issue of the magazine, has drawn our attention to the omission of two words "no longer" in the last paragraph of his article. The first sentence of this paragraph (page 142) should have read as follows.

"In my very humble opinion, the above quotations refer to that stage in human evolution where man has recognized and understands the difference between *Religion* and religions, between mere belief and a fact, and therefore *no longer* needs the restrictions imposed upon the masses who, otherwise, in their ignorance, would have been without any guidance from evil thinking and evil action."

We regret that this omission was not noted at the time.

The Adyar Library is also in need of funds to microfilm many priceless old manuscripts which are in its possession. The matter of contributing to this work will be discussed at the next Executive meeting.

* * *

Mr. Victor A. Endersby, editor of *Theosophical Notes*, paid an unexpected but most welcome visit to the Toronto Lodge over the August holiday weekend. On Saturday evening, August 5, he spoke inform-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist

Dear Sir:

I think Mr. Tyler's letter which appeared in the C.T. for July-August put forward a very interesting and important suggestion for the improvement and expanding circulation of the magazine.

In its present form it strikes one as being too remote from the problems of today with its constant menace of nuclear war and critical world situations to gain the attention of the average Canadian. "The dead embers of Theosophy in Canada" as Mr. Tyler pointed out, need to be rekindled into life if the teaching is to reach beyond its present somewhat restricted circle.

In the first weeks of the Korean war I remember writing to an American newscaster warning him of the Karmic repercussions certain to result in that area following the explosion of the A bombs only a few years previously. We know now what happened to American prestige when General MacArthur made his disastrous thrust to the Chinese border.

There are more crises looming ahead in Europe and in the African countries which could be intelligently handled in the C.T. to the general enlightenment of Canadian readers and rouse their interest in the teachings of Theosophy itself.

Each nation, as well as each man, is its own absolute lawgiver . . . its reward and its punishment.

Sincerely,

E. K. Middleton

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The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist

Dear Sir:

As one of the members of the Executive who will have the responsibility of voting on Mr. Kinman's proposal when it reaches the stage of being a resolution, may I trespass a little on your space to reply to Mr. Frederick E. Tyler.

It was with the utmost regret, and only under the inexorable pressure of finance that we first cut the size of *The Canadian Theosophist*, and later reduced it from a monthly to a bi-monthly.

Now that that pressure is, in a measure, relieved, I feel that it is our first duty to bring the magazine back to full flower once more, and in that conviction I shall vote.

The Canadian Theosophist always has been the vehicle and forum of those individuals who had something of significance even if, in Mr. Tyler's opinion, advanced, to contribute. Because a small minority find it distracting to be asked to think a little beyond the stage of milk and water theosophy is no reason for either reducing, or, as Mr. Tyler suggests, abolishing that forum. And a new monthly dedicated to Theosophy-without-tears, would, in my opinion, be a sheer waste of money. The various Lodge libraries are well supplied with the elementary material, and there is no need for duplication.

Finally, I would resist to the end any idea of reviewing modern news and public events in the light of Karma and Reincarnation, or any other theosophic light for that matter. Nothing of that kind could be done without immediately involving the Society in political and social controversy which would rip that Society to ribbons in short order. More than one political movement has, in the past, endeavoured to latch on to us, and every now and then new social theorists approach us with the idea that we should adopt or sponsor them. Those perils have been avoided up to now. I will always resist any idea of deliberately going out looking for trouble.

Yours sincerely and fraternally,

C. M. Hale

The powers and capabilities of the Divine in man are illimitable if man would only grasp them.

Theosophy, An Attitude Toward Life

BOOK REVIEWS

The Divine Plan, Geoffrey A. Barborka, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1961, \$6.50, 564 pages.

Without any doubt this is one of the most important Theosophical books to come out since 1888, for it contains within its 564 pages the potential to revivify even the most moribund lodge with the trenchant rationality of H.P.B. *The Divine Plan* is not, and was not designed to be, a substitute for *The Secret Doctrine*, but by separating the essentially philosophical elements of the latter from the polemical method which H.P.B. was forced to employ Mr. Barborka has created an invaluable outline of the original teachings of Theosophy.

In "an exposition of the doctrines of the esoteric philosophy analysing and explaining all the terms used" Mr. Barborka has revealed to us the grand logic of the philosophical system expounded in *The Secret Doctrine*. You will say that this is not news to any student worthy of the name. True. However, this book is unique in its clarity and its *modus operandi*. Mr. Barborka has made every single point in his exposition by direct quotation from the original edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, from *The Voice of the Silence*, from *Isis Unveiled*, from *Five Years of Theosophy*, from *The Theosophical Glossary*, from *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and from *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*. Mr. Barborka's triumph is that now for the first time the Theosophical Society is in possession of a concise, clear, scholarly, and fully documented outline of those fundamental propositions which it has been its mission to propagate, however modestly. To quote from the Preface:

It will very soon be apparent that in this work *The Secret Doctrine* is being considered by means of subjects—or rather by Doctrines. In this method the chapters are arranged in a sequence, which leads the mind from one doctrine to the next in an interrelated pattern.

Mr. Barborka has achieved the seemingly impossible task of analysis and exposition while remembering the limitations of the common reader. As he points out:

In order to read *The Secret Doctrine* understandingly it is necessary to know: (1) the meaning of a term itself—in the case of Sanskrit, going to the root-meaning of the word is of great importance; (2) the manner in which the term is used in relation to the passage; (3) the meaning of the whole passage; (4) the relation of the passage to the doctrine as a whole; (5) whether the term or passage is used in a generalizing sense or specifically; (6) whether a symbolical meaning is being employed; (7) whether more than one interpretation is applicable.

By careful quotation from the source books mentioned above Mr. Barborka has succeeded admirably in his task of clarification. As well, Sanskrit terms are explained as they are used, in detail, and an effective key to pronunciation is found at the beginning of the volume. In addition, after each quotation from *The Secret Doctrine* is given the page and volume reference for not only the original edition but also for the *Third and Revised Edition*, published in two volumes in 1893, and the Adyar, 6 volume editions.

Indeed, if Mr. Barborka had written no more than his "enumeration" of the eight divine laws he would still deserve the gratitude of everyone who has ever tried to explain to a stranger what the Theosophical Society is all about! Following this brief definition in the "Introductory", The Law of Periodicity, The Law of Adjustment, The Law of Essential Unity, The Law of Self-Unfoldment, The Law of Motion, The Septenary Law, The Law of Compassion, The Law of Coming into Being are all explored in depth in the book proper.

Surely, the author's purpose to aid students and lecturers has been amply fulfilled! There is no longer the slightest shadow of an excuse for rambling or vagueness on

the Theosophical platform when everyone, no matter how pressed for time, has it within his power to be fully informed.

—LAURA GAUNT

☆ ☆ ☆

The Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations; by Ian Stevenson, M.D., published 1961 by M. C. Petro, 16 Kingswood Road, Tadworth, Surrey, England, 44 page booklet, price 35 cents.

This is the prize winning essay of the contest in honour of William James, conducted by the Society for Psychical Research, America. The author is a Canadian, who was graduated from McGill University and is now Chairman of the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, School of Medicine, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va. His interest in metempsychosis was first aroused through reading books in the vast library of his father, J. A. Stevenson.

In this booklet Dr. Stevenson discusses the theory of reincarnation and analyses and classifies many accounts of alleged memories of former lives. He is apparently quite favourable to the theory himself, but in his work he proceeds impersonally, discounts a number of stories in which details of a former life might have been acquired from sources other than memory; mentions, but does not accept, communications received from ostensible discarnate communicators, and arrives at the conclusions that after sifting a great mass of data, many details of which are given in the booklet, enough remains to justify a much more extensive and more sympathetic study of the hypothesis of reincarnation than it has heretofore received in the west.

This booklet is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on the subject of reincarnation and it is gratifying to learn of the likelihood of there being more information on this subject coming in the future from this capable and sympathetic writer.

Some of the cases of which detailed accounts are given in the booklet relate to memories in young children who recall incidents in former lives which were lived a few years previously, for example, the widely-publicized case of Shanti Devi, the young Indian girl who was born in Delhi in 1926 and recalled that in a previous life she was born in 1902, lived in Muttra, was married to Kedar Nath Chaubey, gave birth to a son and died ten days later. In his analysis of this case Dr. Stevenson points out that Shanti Devi made at least twenty-four statements of her memories which matched the verified facts, and that no evidence of incorrect statements was recorded. This case was widely hailed as "proof" of reincarnation.

But reincarnation cannot be "proved" by alleged memories, in fact, until the human race is much further developed and a far greater proportion of human beings have the capacity to perceive the whole string of pearls on the thread of continuing consciousness through all incarnations, Reincarnation will remain a hypothesis—a very likely hypothesis, of course, indeed the only one which satisfies the reason and the intuition, and which provides satisfactory answers to the many, many problems of human psychology, and of inequalities in character, capacity and environment.

To return to the case of Shanti Devi and other similar cases of very distinct and well-authenticated accounts of memories in young children. Shanti Devi in her past life was born in 1902 and in her present life was born in 1926. The year of her death is not given but presumably she died in childbirth sometime between 1916 and 1920. This means that she was out of incarnation for a short period only, some six to ten years. How does this fit in with the theory that hundreds of years elapse between incarnations, and that in the interval between lives, the discarnate entity lives for some time on the subtle planes nearest to earth and then for a much longer period—centuries in fact, on more subtle planes

before reincarnating? If the prolonged process, involving devachanic existence and the projecting of a new personality is to be termed "reincarnation" then some other word should be adopted to distinguish that lengthy process of "reincarnation" from those cases in which there only only a few years between incarnations, one of whose marked features is *the bringing forward of direct and positive memories of the former life*. Just what the mechanics are of such "rebirths" can only be surmized, but it would appear likely that the inter-incarnation period was not completed; that there was not a prolonged sojourn in devachan, but instead, an immediate rebirth of *the same personality* from the lower subtle planes and the same memory was carried forward.

Dr. Stevenson is continuing to gather material and data on this subject and has asked that persons who know of cases of memories of previous lives, either in their own experience or in the experience of others, write to him at the University of Virginia.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Divine Plan may be purchased from The Book Steward, Toronto Lodge, 52 Isabella Street.

MEMORIES OF PAST LIVES

Dr. Ian Stevenson, whose booklet on reincarnation and memories of past lives is reviewed in this issue, received considerable publicity for his views through an Associated Press release which was picked up by a number of newspapers in Canada and the United States. Much of the material in the news-story was taken from the booklet and also told of Dr. Stevenson's proposed seven week visit to India where he planned to investigate several cases of alleged memories of previous lives. "In India he will consult with Indian Parapsychologists and visit New Delhi, Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, and also Colombo, Ceylon. With the help of interpreters and local doctors he

will study these cases. Seven dozen such incidents have been reported in India in the last sixty years. He said, however, parents of these children often will not cooperate in investigations because of a superstition that a child who remembers his past life is fated to die young." Dr. Stevenson is quoted as saying "This aspect of parapsychology is not yet recognized by many as a branch of science. There is slender evidence, nothing like proof, but the evidence of survival that we do have, slight though it is, justifies much more investigation."

The A.P. story was evidently widely read as several of our members and subscribers have kindly sent in clippings from their local newspapers. Such publicity contributes to the growing interest in the theory of reincarnation in western lands and while some of this interest may be superficial and confined to the "who-was-I-in-my-past-life" class, nevertheless attention is drawn to the theory and may lead to a more serious study of the subject and its many implications.

Since the appearance of the A.P. release, another news-story from New Delhi, written by Rawle Knox for the London Observer Service, has been printed in the newspapers. This tells of the arrival of Dr. Stevenson in New Delhi and states that he is to tour India accompanied by Professor H. B. Bannerjee, Director of the Seth Sohail Memorial Para-Psychology Institute. The Institute already has under investigation at least one case of alleged memories, that of an eleven year old Indian girl who at the age of four began to sing in a language which her mother could not understand, but which was determined to be a mixture of Assamese and Bengali, tongues spoken a thousand miles from her birthplace.

The news-story quotes Hindu savants as saying that Dr. Stevenson's interest in this subject is another indication that the West is beginning to realize that the ancient lore of India is science, not myth.

THE MISSION OF THEOSOPHY

(Continued from page 82)

gladly seek a fuller self-realization in work for others. The mission of Theosophy is to help people to realize this nobler, more beautiful side of life.

The word "beauty" is another word that appeals to many natures as expressing that which they feel to be best in human nature. Artists, poets, and musicians try to realize beauty and to grasp and fix it. But beauty cannot be brought down from the heaven where she dwells and shut up in the airless cell of the personality. We must rise to her height and freedom. To realize beauty, we must live it, *be* it. We must make music in our lives. Harmonious tones of the voice, beautiful colors and forms on the canvas, or noble words of poetry, are but a faint foretaste of the beauty of a harmonious life. Theosophy is not purely intellectual; it can be approached from all sides; it makes its appeal to all natures. Let the artist find in it, as many have already done, the clue to his search for the realization of beauty; and thus another part of the mission of Theosophy will have been accomplished.

But one cannot close a paper on the mission of Theosophy without a word on Occultism—another much misused and misunderstood term. Truly the mission of Theosophy is to promote the cause of Occultism; but let it be remembered that this word, as defined by H. P. Blavatsky, means real Self-Knowledge—a pursuit, an attainment, so infinitely greater than any dabbling in psychism or ambition for personal powers. This knowledge is acquired by faithful service in the great humanitarian cause of Theosophy, and Theosophists are assured by their founder, H. P. Blavatsky, that great knowledge and attainment lie open to those who prove themselves worthy recipients of them. In this she but echoes the words of another Teacher, who assured his disciples that great knowledge and power should come to those who fol-

lowed in his Path. No great Teacher, founding a worldwide movement like the Theosophical Society, and sacrificing every personal interest thereto, could have any other purpose than to benefit humanity as a whole; which cannot be done by conferring special advantages on a few or founding a sect for the study of curious knowledge. Hence those who embrace this cause must entertain the same wide purposes and must be prepared to seek their happiness in a region larger and brighter than that of mere personality.

KARMA

My name? My name is Nemesis:
My shadow you will not erase;
You may be sure of only this,—
That I will meet thee face to face

Upon an unexpected day.
Perhaps I walk behind thee now:
The rosy cheeks may turn to gray,—
Is that cold sweat upon thy brow?

You cannot guess the where or while,
Nor yet the when I shall appear;
But some in sudden joy will smile,
And many more will cringe in fear.

I may arise in righteous wrath
At some quite-unlooked-for place;
At a sharp turning in the path,
Someone may feel my grim embrace.

And when I have made up the bill,
There's no one able to deny;
And though I give much credit,—still—
My interest rates are rather high.

I'll meet with thee the day I've set;
There's no exception to the rule,
To collect arrears of debt,
And mark it off as "paid in full."

The day of reckoning must come,
Although for many years deferred;
No matter what the fearful sum,
I am the creditor preferred.

—LAURA BALDWIN

GANDHI'S REDISCOVERY OF CHRISTIANITY

BY ESME WYNNE-TYSON

Reviewing two books of selections from Gandhi's speeches and writings in *Gandhi Marg* (April 1960), the reviewer who signed himself B. N. wrote: "How then does Gandhi differ from the orthodox Christian? He could not subscribe to the view that Christ was the only begotten Son of God. Jesus, according to him, was one like Krishna or the Buddha. Secondly, he believed that not men only but all created things have souls. And then he was opposed to proselytization in the cloak of humanitarian work. Barring these, he was a Christian in the deepest sense of the word." This he undoubtedly was, owing to the fact that he had acquired the "Mind of Christ" much more surely than the "orthodox Christian", whose belief that Jesus was the *only* son of God is an invention of the theologians and directly contradicts Jesus' own teaching implied in the words spoken to his hearers: "I go to your Father and my Father", and the emphatic declaration of John: "Now are we the sons of God."

But Gandhi had another grave objection to what Tolstoy called Churchianity—that confused amalgamation of paganism and Judaism that the theologians have made of the original creed of Christ—and that was what he rightly called the "immoral doctrine" of vicarious atonement, which was certainly never taught by Jesus but was interpolated by Jewish writers who were used to the idea of a scapegoat, with the disastrous consequences to which the state of "Christendom" at the present time bears witness. There is no basis whatever for moral responsibility in the belief that one's sins can be forgiven through the suffering of someone else and such an idea implies injustice in the Godhead we are supposed to worship. Gandhi clearly per-

ceived the serious danger of such a teaching.

In my recent researches for a book in which I trace the philosophy of compassion, or the Gandhian way, through the ages since the days of Nimrod, I not only came to realize that Gandhi had rediscovered and retaught the original creed of Christ, but I also came across a particularly clear example of one of the Western sources of his illumination, relating to his objection to the doctrine of vicarious atonement. Replying to the Christian who propounded it (*My Experiments with Truth* p. 104) he said: "If this be the Christianity acknowledged by all Christians, I cannot accept it. I do not seek redemption from the consequences of my sin. I seek redemption from sin itself, or rather from the very thought of sin. Until I have attained that end, I shall be content to be restless." On page 114-115 of the same book, we read: "I communicated with Christian friends in England. One of them introduced me to Edward Maitland, with whom I opened correspondence. He sent me *The Perfect Way*, a book he had written in collaboration with Anna Kingsford. The book was a repudiation of the current Christian belief. He also sent me another book, *The New Interpretation of the Bible*. I liked both. They seemed to support Hinduism . . . My correspondence with Edward Maitland was fairly prolonged."

As my own researches have made quite clear, *The Perfect Way* was, to a very great extent, a rediscovery of the original creed of Christ, and therefore of that perennial philosophy, that fundamental truth, which lies at the heart of all the major world-faiths, and was known to every true seer of East and West. In this book, Anna Kingsford writes of vicarious atonement: "That

from which man requires to be redeemed is not the penalty of sin, but the liability to sin . . . and no angel or third person, but only the man himself, co-operating with the God within him, can accomplish this. Man is himself the laboratory wherein God, as Spirit, works to save him, by recreating him in God's image. But, as always happens under a control exclusively sacerdotal, religion has been presented as a way of escape, not from sin, but from punishment."

As we see, Gandhi's objection was obviously a paraphrase of Dr. Kingsford's words, and we can gather from this how deeply he was influenced by this truly remarkable restatement of the original Christian faith. He admitted to having learnt much from the Theosophists, but theosophy has many branches, and it seems certain that the main influence came from this important work by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, both of whom were humanitarian and vegetarian.

Jesus Christ himself, of course, never for one moment suggested that a man's sins could be forgiven by the death of another. On the contrary, he explicitly stated to Nicodemus (*John*, 3:3-5) that the individual could only be "saved", or admitted into the state of Reality that he called "the Kingdom of God", by means of self-purification, or regeneration, by being reborn of water (total purification) and of the Spirit (divine knowledge). And for a considerable time the early Christians believed that Jesus himself was born of the holy Spirit, not as his human birth but at the moment of his own total purification, symbolised by the baptism described in *Mark* 1:10, where it is said that he saw "the Spirit descending like a dove upon him", and so realized his son-of-Godhood, i.e. his at-one-ment with the Good, the True, the Beautiful and the Pure. It is obvious that the writer of the Gospel of Mark—the first Gospel to be written—believed in this version of Jesus' birth into Christhood; for he made no mention whatever of the Nativity story that was later purloined by the

writers of the gospels of Matthew and Luke from the former Mystery Religions (all of which had their mother-child figures symbolising the sun-god being born of divine Wisdom), and added to the original creed of Christ, wherein such a concept had no place. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find evidence of any great wisdom in Mary the mother of Jesus; indeed, on two occasions (*Mark*, 3:31-35 and *John*, 2:4) we find her son rebuking her for a lack of this quality. Even Paul, whose idea of Jesus was, in some particulars, perilously like that of the older sun-gods, never attempted to credit him with a virgin birth. The concept of a God having intercourse with a woman, though always a popular one with the pagans, was wholly alien to Jewish thought and was resisted by the Jews to the hilt when presented to them by their Roman oppressors whose great Augustus Caesar was said to have been "fathered" by the King of heaven. On the contrary, Paul deliberately traced Jesus' genealogy through Joseph who was of the House of David (*Romans* 1:3).

There is no doubt that the monotheistic Jesus shared Gandhi's view of the oneness of life or unity of being. He said of himself: "I and my Father are one", and reminded his followers that all were sons of God, and therefore in the same relation to the common parent as he was himself. Jesus knew nothing of the "tangled trinities" that were later introduced into a Church that had become altogether too "Catholic" and hoped to please its pagan converts by including this age-old idea with which the ancient world had been familiar since the Founding of the Chaldean Mysteries. Like Gandhi, and indeed like the pagan initiates into the Greater Mysteries, Jesus in accordance with the first chapter of *Genesis*, believed that all things were derived from the *one* Spirit.

For the first three hundred years of the Christian era, the Church was not only pacifist, but taught the wrongfulness of any form of violence. As the great Alexandrian

theologian, Origen, put it in the *Contra Celsum*: "Christians have been taught not to defend themselves against their enemies", and "We no longer take up sword against nations, nor do we learn war any more, having become children of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our leader". Elsewhere in this famous work he states that the lawgiver of the Christians had forbidden entirely the taking of human life "for he did not consider it compatible with his inspired legislation to allow the taking of human life in any form at all".

It is interesting to note that while members of the Christian Church obeyed the spiritual law of *ahimsa* they were able to heal by purely spiritual means, the practice so strongly advocated by Gandhi. Of those early healers Origen wrote: "Upon those who need healing they use no other invocation than that of the supreme God and of the name of Jesus together with the history about him. By these we also have seen many delivered from serious ailments, and from mental distraction and madness, and countless other diseases which neither men nor demons have cured."

Celibacy (*brahmacharya*), not marriage, was the ideal among these saintly people who really endeavoured to follow the example and teachings of their Master. As Origen puts it, "Some of them through a desire for a higher chasity and for a purer worship of God do not even indulge in the sexual pleasures that are allowed by the law".

We see, therefore, that original Christianity, as taught and practised by the Early Church, was much more like the Gandhian way of life than what is thought of today as the Christian religion. The finding of the Dead Sea scrolls has done much to explain this mystery, for these sacred books of the holy men of Judaism, many of them compiled ages before Jesus was born, have been found to contain teachings that Christians have heretofore been led to believe originated with the Founder of their Faith. This strongly suggests that Jesus must, at

some time, have been an Essene, for only members of the Order had access to what were, in fact, the "Mystery" teachings of the Jewish religion, the penalty for revealing which to outsiders, was, as in the case of all Mystery Religions of the West, death.

As I have suggested in my latest (as yet unplaced) book, *The Return of the Goddess*, this may have been the chief reason for Jesus' crucifixion. He may well have been adopted by the Essenes as a child, a practice which, as Pliny points out, was necessary to ensure the continuance of the Order owing to its celibate policy. Jesus' questioning of the doctors in the Temple, at the age of twelve, may conceivably have been overheard by a member of the sect who would have recognized the unusual spiritual development of the child. But the compassionate nature of the adult Jesus could not have confined itself to an enclosed sect. Having learnt the Truth so essential for the salvation of mankind, he would have wished to make it available to all men.

The Essenes were undoubtedly the followers of the mystic way of Judaism; and if this was indeed Jesus' reaction to the secrecy of this otherwise excellent sect, he would have been accounted a heretic and his open teaching of its esoteric doctrines would have enraged the orthodox, especially the Pharisees who, as we see in the cases of Josephus and Philo, had an immense admiration for the Essenes. And certainly they were holy men after Gandhi's heart, practising his three disciplines of *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya* and *satyagraha*. They were vegetarian and pacifist, refusing not only to fight but to have anything to do with the making of weapons of war. They rejected the Jewish custom, so like that of the pagans and Hindus, of animal sacrifice, and we know from the episode of the cleansing of the Temple how keenly Jesus felt on this subject. Their therapeutae practised spiritual healing, and they earned their living at manual work, while the description of the life lived in their community is startl-

ingly like that lived in Gandhi's *Asram*. In fact Gandhi, who as a result of his integrated search for spiritual truth, had discovered the mystic way of all the great faiths, arrived thereby inevitably at the core of the Christian gospel.

But a philosophy which taught that salvation could only be obtained by the self-perfectioning of the individual in obedience to divine law, and that sin would only be forgiven when, and as, it was forsaken, was of no use to a power-loving Church that wished to establish absolute dominion over its congregations, and therefore had to persuade them that there could be no salvation outside the Church which alone had the power to forgive sins. Therefore, and especially after the fourth century when Constantine's plan of ruling his empire with the help of an authoritarian, State-serving church had been agreed to by the Bishops, the Essenic and essentially Christian elements of the Gospel had to be played down and doctrines substituted which, while they gave more and more authority to the increasingly *Catholic* Church, were a complete departure from the teachings and spirit of Jesus Christ. That well-known churchman and writer of the eighteenth century, Bishop Warburton, Chaplain in Ordinary of the King, most ingeniously gave the game away in his famous book, *The Divine Legation of Moses*, where, after describing the necessary alliance of Church and State in the government of the people, and saying "the great preliminary and fundamental article of alliance is this, that the Church shall apply its utmost influence in the service of the State; and that the State shall support and protect the Church", he referred disparagingly to "religious societies whose religious doctrines are so little serviceable to civil government, that they can prosper only on the ruin and destruction of it. Such are those which teach the holiness of celibacy and asceticism, the sinfulness of defensive war, of capital punishments, and even of civil magistracy itself".

But as we know, these were precisely the teachings of the Essenes and of Jesus, the celibate exemplar, who said that those worthy of the Kingdom, or salvation, neither marry nor are given in marriage; who lived and taught the way of non-violence, and who said "Judge not", thereby advocating what in the present era is described as the Gandhian way of life.

We have seen, in this century, how this way is resisted, ignored, decried and hushed up, as a study of religious history shows that it has been throughout the ages, since it conflicts with the aims of the power addicts who have always ruled the world. Yet it remains the one way of salvation from the miseries and sufferings of physical life, and humanity owes Gandhi an immense debt for reviving and restating this unpopular but truly realistic means of spiritual evolution.

—From *Gandhi Marg*, April 1961

THE SOLE OBJECT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

BY H. S. PATEL

"The Chiefs want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity', a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds; . . . new institutions of a genuine, practical Brotherhood of Humanity where all will become co-workers of nature, will work for the good of mankind with and through the higher planetary spirits . . . Ideas rule the world; and as men's minds will receive new ideas, laying aside the old and effete, the world will advance; creeds and evil powers will crumble before their onward march crushed by the irresistible force . . . New ideas have to be planted on clean places, for these ideas touch upon the most momentous subjects; . . . ideas larger, grander, more comprehensive, recognizing the universal reign of Immutable Law, unchanging and unchangeable, in regard to which there is only

an Eternal Now, while to uninitiated mortals, time is past or future as related to their finite existence on this material speck of dirt . . .”

The above words from an extract from a letter written as early as 1880 by a great Master of Wisdom known as “Master K.H.”, to his correspondent Mr. A. P. Sinnett, a reputable journalist, then living in India. All such letters, so received have been published, for the first time in 1923, in a volume entitled *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.

The extract gives a good deal of food for thought and enquiry. It clearly sets forth the real intention and aim of those who are the true founders of the Theosophical Society. Much more revealing is the fact which the Masters have stated in the very beginning of the extract. It is: the Chiefs of Master K.H. want a *real* Universal Fraternity started . . . where all will become co-workers of nature. This shows, beyond any doubt, that the Highest and Greatest of the whole White Brotherhood,—the real Inner Government of the World,—had only one aim in view, one great plan and no other plan as far as the Theosophical Society is concerned.

It is true that there are three objects of the Theosophical Society placed before every incoming member for his consideration and acceptance. But in some mysterious way the three must form only one object. As the earnest student and seeker probes deeply with his insight into the second and third objects, he comes to discover that they are merely aids, means, guides to the true understanding of the first object, which is therefore, the only object, as we learn from the above extract.

The objective is an ideal and ideal has very little significance and value, if it cannot become actual, real, practical in life. Universal Brotherhood as an idea, will surely be welcome to all sane, thinking men and women of the world today; but how many can honestly say that they practice it? Brotherhood being universally practiced

by men in their daily life is an illusion. Perhaps, some new race of men living upon some new continent may live Brotherhood; for us, the present generation, it is a far-off event of a future world. We are, it seems, in a dilemma: is this ideal real or unreal? If unreal, why do we not boldly and openly reject it? If we profess that it is real, then why do we not live it? The world which is composed of individuals in the mass, seems to be a world torn and shattered by the devastating effects of a war that is everlastingly going on, on the mental horizon. Most of us live a life full of conflicts and contradictions which bring upon us and others untold sufferings and miseries in our lives. Individuals suffer, and therefore, mankind in the collective suffers.

Today men’s minds are tense, torn, corrupt, pernicious; where can we see that purity of heart and purity of mind? Is it to be seen between individuals, between neighbours, between husband and wife, between class and class, race and race, nation and nation? The daily existence of man is mechanical, monotonous, tiresome; his emotional nature is a battleground of the forces of greed, ambition, jealousy, hatred, leaving no place for the nobler feelings of affection, kindness, love. His mental nature is ego-centric; all his thoughts turn round and round the “I” whose well-being is his primary concern. Under the groaning burden of these forces, the moral and spiritual nature of man seems to be completely crushed.

Eighty five years ago a way was suggested to get out of this mire of worldly miseries. It was certainly a Herculean task that was entrusted to the care of those two dauntless agents, Madame H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, to propagate the ideal of a real, practical Brotherhood of Humanity. These two stood firm and faithful to the last to this task, and disregarded all discomforts, injustices, insults, slanders and carping calumnies and carried far and wide the torchlight of this great truth of Brother-

hood. Since then all the great leaders of the Theosophical Society have followed in their footsteps and have been working untiringly for the realization of this one great Truth of Life. The members of this great august body have an unique privilege and opportunity to come closer to these great Master minds and their CHIEFS and be aided by the ennobling influence that flows invisibly and almost imperceptibly from them. There is Perfume of Life that comes from that quarter which can be felt by those whose sense of smell is so sensitive.

But as members of the Theosophical Society, have we really, seriously, looked into ourselves to see, to discover where we stand today? Times are changing so fast and we cannot go slow. Either we move with the times and take the advantage of the force of its currents or we shall be carried away,—none knows where—perhaps to the bottom. We are surrounded by the pressure of the modern society which is wholly competitive and acquisitive. We are engulfed by the criss-cross operations of the mind which is held, bound, tethered, by centuries of traditions and creeds; we are almost submerged by dogmas and beliefs, by rites and rituals, by mind-projected gods who do not answer our prayers. Shall we not look in to find to what level we have reached upward or downward? If we become totally aware of all these workings of the mind, of all these false fetters of traditions, and creeds, and dogmas and rituals, so that the mind lays before our inner gaze the full story of its struggles, its failures and successes! We shall then, perhaps, realize that what we call reason and intellect, and which has thrown its glamour over our insight, will not take us anywhere near the goal of our ideal of Brotherhood, and without the right comprehension—true perception—of Life and its mysteries, our vision of the goal will always remain blurred. The ideal of Brotherhood seems to be outside the field of mind's investigations, the mind as it is now with us. So it seems, the vision of this Truth can only become possible when

the mind's activities have stopped completely, when all its thought-processes have come to an end when all the movements of the mind have ceased completely, then there will come into being that State of Stillness, a silence which is creating, which is astonishing, which like a flash will give us that vision of the Reality which is the only thing that can impart to us the true comprehension of what Brotherhood is, and why it has been made the sole objective for the Theosophical Society, since its foundation. Such a mind with that marvellous strength of the Vision will become so fresh, so vital, so innocent and pure, and uncontaminated, that with its creative release, it will make the individual a pure beneficent force of the Nature.

From *Beacon*, Official organ of the Theosophical Society in East Africa, April 1961.

UNITY

“In order to form and make up a unity, in particular a creative unity, the individual components must needs be of different nature; they should even be in a sense, contrasts. Man and woman become one, a physically and spiritually creative unity, by virtue of their dissimilarity. A book and an eye are a unity, a fastening; but with two books you can do nothing. A right-hand glove with its contrast the left-hand glove makes up a whole—a pair of gloves; but two right-hand gloves you throw away. A number of perfectly similar objects do not make up a whole—a couple of cigarettes may just as well be three or nine. A quartet is a unity because it is made up of dissimilar instruments. An orchestra is a unity, and may be perfect as such, but twenty double basses striking up in the same tune are chaos.”

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