

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 42, No. 6

TORONTO, JAN. - FEB., 1962

Price 35 Cents

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this Magazine, unless made in an official document

PLOTINUS

BY ELOUISE R. HARRISON, LLB

In the year 205 A.D., there was born in upper Egypt a man called Plotinus, reputed to be of Greek background and culture. Not too much is known of his family or race, as he was very silent on these matters, and the only meagre evidence historians have are the brief remarks of his pupil, Porphyry, who wrote his biography in a work called the *Enneads*. Nevertheless, there are enough facts therein to provide a very good picture of the superb founder of the Neo-Platonic school.

Nothing is known of his childhood or very early youth. When Plotinus was in his early thirties, he studied philosophy at the famous school then in existence at Alexandria, but he soon became disgusted and disillusioned by the old re-hashing of improbable truths, and especially at the so-called professors of philosophy, who in most cases were hypocrites, trying to impress their pupils not so much by profound insight but rather by eloquent words having no intrinsic wisdom therein. None of the other teachers living then could satisfy him any better, as he could see through their shams.

However, when he was one day introduced to the mysterious Ammonius Saccas, he changed his opinions about the inadequacy of teachers of philosophy, at least with regard to this one.

Concerning Ammonius Saccas, it would be well to refer to *The Key to Theosophy* (first edition), page 3, wherein Madam

Blavatsky speaks of that philosopher thus:

"Ammonius Sacchas was the son of Christian parents, and, having been repelled by dogmatic spiritualistic Christianity from his childhood, became a Neo-Platonist, and like J. Boehme and other great seers and mystics, is said to have had divine wisdom revealed to him in dreams and visions. Hence his name Theodidaktos. He resolved to reconcile every system of religion, and by demonstrating their identical origin to establish one universal creed based on ethics. His life was so blameless and pure, his learning so profound and vast, that several church fathers were his secret disciples. Clement Alexandrinus speaks very highly of him. Plotinus, the 'St. John' of Ammonius, was also a man universally respected and esteemed, and of most profound learning and integrity."

Plotinus soon became a pupil of Ammonius, staying with him for eleven years. It is interesting to note, by the way, that the age of thirty seems to be a particularly special one with regard to spiritual awakening—Christ achieved his first union with the Over-Soul then, and so did many other spiritually advanced persons, including in more modern times, Florence Nightingale, whose latest biography containing her letters relates a most profound study in the arousing of the higher mind and mystical enlightenment. She was definitely under spiritual inspiration and a reference to her

made by K.H. supplies a definite hint as to where the inspiration came from.

After studying with Ammonius Sacchas for eleven years, Plotinus made an attempt to go to India with Gordian III's expedition, hoping that he might gain further insight from contact with Indian and Persian philosophy. According to historians, the untimely murder of Gordian in Mesopotamia in 244 prevented Plotinus from getting any further east. On the other hand, H.P.B. was of the opinion that Plotinus did meet some eastern sages, which is very likely the case.

Plotinus then went to Rome where he commenced to teach philosophy himself and continued at that work for the rest of his life. It was here that he gained his pupil Porphyry, and it is from the biography of this pupil that the reader discovers Plotinus to have been not only a great teacher and spiritual director, but also a man of great charm and of far-reaching and efficient practical kindness, something that cannot be said for other philosophers of that period, or of any period, for that matter.

Plotinus' influence on western thought has been very great, and it was due chiefly to him that Neo-Platonism made such a profound and far-reaching mark on the intellectual and even Christian world. His philosophy can claim the distinction of even being able to arouse and encourage a moral virility in the gross 20th century, a century noted for its rampant materialism and profound amorality.

A brief look at the philosophy of Plotinus shows that he was a thinker who combined morality with the acute powers of a trained critical mind. However, philosophy for him was not a study of abstract speculation, or a critical analysis of the meaning of words and concepts, but rather a definite way of life in which, by means of an almost superhuman intellectual and moral self-discipline and purification, the trainee in his school could ascend to the ultimate Source of all, and know wisdom as in a mirror held up before nature.

Plotinus was insistent that the one Great Cause from which the whole universe sprang, is beyond the reach of thought or language; all that he had discovered about this source beyond spirit and matter had only one object, namely, that of a signpost pointing the mind along the way to It, not attempting the impossible task of describing or defining It. This does not mean, however, that Plotinus subscribed to the pessimistic doctrine of negation or ultimate voidness of everything. Rather he took the view that as yet we have no language adequate to describe the magnitude, beauty and infinity of the great First Cause and that any attempt to define that which cannot be defined ended simply in absurdities. "They were in It, but It was not in them,"—because the First Cause was too all-inclusive. Even mathematics, the nearest formula for describing the Ultimate, according to Plato, could properly define only the Second creation. The mystery of numbers explains the mystery of all forms of matter because material elements differ only in the number of electrons they possess—an element of gold differing from lead only because of the aforesaid different number of electrons.

When Plotinus refused to define the First Cause, he meant that, Theosophically speaking, mankind has yet to develop the higher principles necessary to the contemplation of that which is beyond the expression of words as we know them now. His method of training and purification, however, helped to awaken the necessary higher principles, the higher principles being there all the time but only obscured as in most men today because of their obsession with the body, which in fact could only be compared to a temporary house. But even when the trainee reached that height of contemplation, he could not express it in words, because of their paucity, and also because his listener could not possibly comprehend what he was describing, unless he, too, had reached that stage, even if there were words adequate to describe it.

Intellect, according to Plotinus, was the highest part of man, the soul being intermediary between the worlds of sense and the intellect. Soul, he maintained, exists on two levels, a higher and a lower. This higher soul works in close unison with the intellect and forms and rules the material universe from above, being one with the Over-Soul. The lower soul, however, is the reasoning part of man, being on the level of discursive thought which does not grasp its object immediately but has to seek it by a process of reasoning. Below this, are the natural instincts, which only produce a dreamlike sterile contemplation, actually a hindrance to the operations of the higher mind. Below even the instincts is the world of gross matter—the physical, sensuous world of forms. Matter, to Plotinus, is evil only because of its negativity, or rather its relatively static condition. To him, the higher soul is perpetual motion and it is engaged in perpetually changing and reforming matter into higher, and yet higher forms. The more material a thing is, the less does it make progress into more advanced forms; an example being the moon which does not even contain vegetation and does not even have the life-producing belt so necessary to life, namely, the atmosphere. Man, however, being the measure of all things, can by strict discipline and perfect virtue, ascend to the level of universal soul and become that whole which most, as yet, are, only potentially.

On the other hand, we can completely isolate ourselves on the lower levels of life, enclosing ourselves up in the mediocre experiences, desires and concerns of the lower nature which we become completely attached to, and which keeps our attention fast fixed on sensuous things; thus ignorant of any higher kind of awareness save those of the senses.

Plotinus declared that we must turn away from the body, regarding it only as a house we have come to inhabit, but nothing more than that. He did not mean that we should neglect the body and the duties incumbent

upon those in a bodily state but rather that we should perform all necessary duties, as a duty only, remaining completely unattached to such and meanwhile putting the whole of our enthusiasm, interest, life and desires into the higher intellectual and spiritual life. If we practice this long enough, we finally reach the grand state of liberation. Nor is liberation the only result—we gain something more, in fact, we ascend and learn to live in a vaster and greater realm—we return to the One from which we had first emerged when creation began.

Many seek this path and as many try to get there without preparation and without morality. Plotinus insisted that we can get no success whatever if we take that path; he repeated again and again that the lower soul has a complete grip over every man unless and until he learns to alienate this lower soul from its stronghold over his nature by the only means, namely, rigorous moral and intellectual self-discipline. There is no short cut and there never will be.

When the pupil has achieved this union with the One, he is not destroyed or dissolved therein, as so many interpreters of Southern Buddhism try to assert. Unlike those disputants, who state that achieving Nirvana means annihilation, Plotinus was positive that we are simply no longer aware of ourselves as finite personalities; instead we are simply still intellect, though intellect 'out of itself', transcending its normal nature and activity. Porphyry tells his readers that Plotinus achieved this mystical union four times in his lifetime and that it was the goal of all his effort and the source of the continuing power of his teachings.

Much of his teachings were written down by the pupil Porphyry, and there is much therein of infinite value to the student of Theosophy, for, it must be remembered, the Neo-Platonists were some of the very first Theosophists. Especially today, do we need to revive his teachings.

It is interesting to note, also, that Plotinus vigorously disagreed with the Gnostics

(Continued on page 133)

THE EXPANSION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

BY HERMINE SABETAY, D. SC.

(The following article is a transcription of a talk given at the Regional Summer School of the Latin Countries held in Milano Marittima, Italy, August 29 - September 8, 1961).

Manifestation is divided into two quite distinct categories: on the one hand there is the so-called inanimate nature, the mineral kingdom; and on the other, the biological world of living beings.

The fundamental difference between these two aspects of creation is that of the ultimate units. In the mineral, these are atoms, or molecules, which appear in crystallized forms, and such is the normal state of matter considered as not living. Crystals are solids having geometric forms, the substance of which is disposed along certain directions called axes.

In the realm of living beings, however, we see a much more complex order, that of the cell, which possesses a highly organized constitution. It is mainly composed of a viscous mass called protoplasm, a nucleus and a casing membrane. The nucleus has marvellous properties, because it is through its division that reproduction occurs. It encloses in its turn a corpuscle called nucleole, the biological function of which is still unknown. A thin membrane separates the nucleus from the rest of the protoplasm.

The purpose of the membrane enveloping the cell is not only to include, but also to isolate the contents; in this manner it assures the individuality of the whole. Such a protective shell exists for each living form: it is the capsule containing the seed, the egg-shell sheltering the chicken, the animal or human skin protecting the organs of the body.

The cell is the prototype of a universal pattern. According to occult cosmogony, the universe issued from a unique sphere,

called by *The Secret Doctrine*, "the Mundane Egg". Ancient tradition thus meets with modern cosmology, which assumes that the universe at its beginning was concentrated in one gigantic nucleus, whose explosion and expansion generated the galaxies. But the archetype represented by the cell is not limited to the physical plane alone. According to the teachings of Theosophy, things living or inanimate are surrounded by their subtle counterparts. We know also of the notion of group-souls, containing within a nourishing cover a certain number, great or small, of animals or plants. The number belonging to such a group diminishes in the course of evolution, until man disengages himself from the animal envelope, possessing henceforth an individual soul, with his psychic constitution surrounding him like an eggshell. Inside this subtle cell unfolds the interior life of man; with his sensations, emotions, thoughts and mind-forms he emits and reproduces ceaselessly, and which enclose him like the walls of a prison. Man voluntarily shuts himself inside his "cell", always entertaining the same moods, the same beliefs and opinions, and considering himself as separate from other living beings.

The function of the cell-wall, however, is not only to isolate a living form. The porous membrane, owing to the phenomenon of osmosis, lets in nourishing juices from the environment and also establishes contact with the outer world. The membrane is the only sense-organ of the cell. In an analogous manner, the animal or human skin is the seat of all sensations, because the five sense-organs are all modifications of the skin. If we transpose these properties of the cell-wall to the psychic realm, we find that it is necessary for mental health that the human being receives influences from outside, which are the food

of the soul; he must be in relationship with his fellowmen, who stimulate his emotions and thoughts. Besides, as it is a daily necessity to change the air in dwelling places, so one should open the windows of the mind to let new ideas in. And as the cell constructs its substance with the elements of food, so should we transform our knowledge and experience into wisdom.

But too often man refuses to open the windows of his soul and shuts himself up in his customary thoughts, prejudices, ready-made notions, and refuses all that would oblige him to revise the contents of his mind. It is therefore difficult for new progressive ideas to penetrate a fortress so jealously defended.

Let us come back again to the cell, the prototype of our being, with its astonishing qualities. We saw that it is shut in and protected by the membrane, which is also the means of communication with the exterior. A third function of the cell is that which could be called its social relationship; that is, its capacity to associate with like cells, to form organs. The cell in itself is already highly complex. Protoplasm is an entangled mixture of large organic molecules, which are compounded by smaller molecules, and these latter are built up by atoms linked together in diverse manners. It is well known that even atoms are not the ultimate components of matter and that their name (*atomos* - indivisible) is no longer justified since science has discovered that they are composed of a certain number of particles (and which have been recognized as merely being concentrations of energy so that matter resolves itself into radiations, charges and waves). Thus we have the compound unities of different levels: atoms, molecules, cells, organs; these latter in their turn are co-ordinated in the whole creature, be it a plant, an animal or man. (We must, however, notice that it is the entity which imposes co-ordination on its compounding elements and that the order establishes itself from above to below). Union and collaboration are necessary to

assure the existence of the whole.

Then again, this work of construction supposes a specialization of the cells, because those which enter, say, the stomach, have surely not the same aptitudes or functions as those of the brain (which in its infinite complexity is the greatest marvel of creation).

Harmonious co-operation of the different organs is necessary for the well-being of the whole organism; and it is not otherwise when individuals join a group. The compound entity is not only the quantitative sum of the constituent elements; at each level a new quality appears.

Thus evolution builds up living forms from the simplest to the most complex. The contrary tendency is shown in the case of group-souls, where the evolutionary force proceeds by fragmentation, leading to individual beings endowed with self-consciousness: and that is the birth of man. But is he really an independent individual from the beginning? He possesses, of course, a separate psychic envelope; but he is nevertheless dependent on a group, whose mental horizon encloses him like a shell. It is first the family, then the tribe, or caste, then the city and later the nation. Thus the ring goes on enlarging. With each progress a circle is broken through, man pushes back the limits of his field of action, while surrounding himself with a larger ring. Within these frontiers he accepts, he partakes of the opinions and tendencies of his fellows; he adopts the ideas of his group and adheres to its prejudices. One cannot say that such a being is really individualized, because his mind is adjusted to the community to which he feels himself to belong, to his human group-soul. He is intolerant, hostile to all ideas which are not his own. Each group, tribe, nation or political party, shelters itself behind an iron curtain—its cellular enveloping membrane—and looks at the others through the distorting spectacles of the group-mind. Similarly with religions, each of which while proclaiming itself to be the only one possessing truth,

condemns to hell all those who adore the Divine in another manner.

The three functions of the cell-wall mentioned before have led to reflections concerning human life. A fourth characteristic of the protective skin consists in surrounding and feeding nascent life, till the young being, like the chicken, breaks through the shell which had hidden it so far and rushes out into the world. The wall disappears, destroyed by the expansion of life. Here also we can notice an analogy referring to the life of groups or societies. Each human community has a certain quality to develop in conformity with its particular note, or 'dharma', contributing thus to all-round evolution of humanity. In our time there are nations which have brought their special quality to its fullest expression. The next step of evolution will consist of breaking national boundaries, in order to establish a great human family living on this planet. It is an imperative necessity of our time to realize brotherhood between individuals, nations and races through pacific collaboration with the motto "differently together". The technical powers, the rapid means of locomotion are so highly advanced that frontiers have lost their significance. If they are still maintained, it is because states still cling to institutions of a virtually completed epoch and lack a larger perspective. But progress is already strongly evident in unions based on common economic interests, and thanks to numerous international organizations. The pressure of evolution will finally surmount the obstacles which are still opposing and will dissolve the separative cell-walls.

The next step of evolution which transcends and shatters the "ring-pass-not", national or otherwise, must be felt, thought and understood by an ever-growing number of individuals, animated by the will to co-operate for the well-being of all men. Now the members of the Theosophical Society not only have the privilege of being the pioneers of a new epoch, they also possess the inestimable advantage of having

some knowledge of the total development of humanity. Theosophy teaches that the great Root Races, of which official science knows nothing, succeed one another on this earth. The slow ascension of these Races certainly brings about a physical development, but this is only the secondary phenomenon accompanying the expansion of consciousness, one aspect of which is stressed by each Race. There is an occult truth which says that evolutionary cycles reproduce themselves on various levels, and so it is possible to compare the unfolding of mankind to one individual life; and the correspondence is indeed striking.

The little child learns to know the world through sensation at first; a few years later, it expresses itself through activity, loving all movements, plays and sports. These two ages correspond to the first two Root Races, which represent the childhood of humanity. The young being grows up and there comes the epoch of puberty, the age when emotional life flourishes. In the course of the Third Race, called the Lemurian, took place the most important event of the separation of the sexes, inducing an intense manifestation of emotions and passions. Thus the Lemurian Race corresponds to the age of puberty in the evolution of mankind. Conjointly with the emotions develops the intellect, the dominant faculty of the adolescent, who is imbued with critical intellect, often destructive and revolutionary; such is the peak of analytical mind. The Fourth Root Race, the Atlantean, which represents adolescence of humanity, brought forth to the highest point the faculties of lower Manas, which resulted in the acquisition of extraordinary powers, but utilized these in the service of black magic, and that was the cause of the downfall of Atlantis.

The greater part of mankind today does not go beyond the age of emotions or inferior intelligence; they continue their span of life with the consciousness of an adolescent. But the most intelligent ones arrive at the state of maturity, characterized by

the large and synthetic views of scientific philosophy and generous humanitarian ideas. These are the true children of the Fifth Root Race, whose consciousness rises to the higher mind. And for some of them, the few, dawns the experience of intuition, resulting in the creation of brilliant masterpieces in the realm of science, philosophy or art. Such men prefigure the Sixth Race, whose reign will arrive in a still far-away future.

Each great Race is divided into seven sub-races, which recall or announce the greater cycles, past and future. We are in the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, and it is because of that coincidence of the fifth periods that the mind has had such an extraordinary growth in this century. This sub-race has reached its maturity; it has now to break through its limitations in order to give birth to a new humanity. The sixth sub-race will be a sketch of what the Sixth Root Race will be in another cycle. A new aspect of consciousness has to appear. When man has passed beyond his mental shell which still holds him imprisoned, new possibilities, unsuspected in our day, will manifest themselves. The sixth sub-race has already begun its career; it will attain its fullness only some centuries later. The mind, which has such a preponderant part in the fifth cycle, will be dethroned by intuition, the faculty of the Buddhic plane. In theosophical terms, it will be the sixth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, or "Buddhi of Manas", meaning that intuition, or the immediate knowledge of truth, will express itself through the mind, the world of Buddhi overflowing the consciousness with light, love and harmony.

This new expansion of the human horizon will bring about many changes. The fundamental note of relationship will be love, founded on the recognition of the unity of life, within the infinite variety of forms, and expressing itself through altruism and universal sympathy. Brotherhood will cease to be an 'ideal', because it will have become a living reality. It will result in

respect for all living creatures, especially animals, whose millennial martyrdom will at last cease. The inner peace of the individual will assure world-peace, supported by world-government. People will live to give, and not to take. Co-operation will replace competition, each nation collaborating with the others, bringing its unique contribution to universal harmony. The exoteric religions with their dogmas and rites will be replaced by individual aspiration to union with the Divine.

In scientific research, intuition, so much distrusted by our scientists (though all great discoveries are its fruits), will be recognized, admitted and practised as a means of knowledge. This epoch in which we live, is placed under the sign of quantity, characteristic of materialism; in the cycle to come, it will be quality holding the foreground of interest. Science which is so prominent in our century, will yield its place to esoteric philosophy (or Theosophy) which will be studied and practised by all men.

Let us come back once more to the image of the cell, which has guided us along this talk. The human mind has been compared to a single cell, the nucleus of which, a sphere of brilliant light and crystalline clarity, represents the higher Manas. It is surrounded by the protoplasm, a troubled and opaque substance, filled with cloudy shapes, figurative of the lower mind, encumbered with a thousand personal thoughts, desires, cares and regrets, and all its concerns ceaselessly renewed. Inside the luminous nucleus there is the nucleole, the infinitesimal portal through which the Ray of the Divine Self penetrates into the mind. The subtle membrane enclosing the nucleus corresponds to Antahkarana, the frontier-line which divides the mental body.

It is known that the delicate web enveloping the nucleus disappears at the moment of the greatest cellular activity; the division of the nucleus (or mitosis) is the first phase of reproduction. This physiological process can be compared to the consider-

able change within consciousness, which takes place when the two regions of Manas blend into one substance, Antahkarana dissolving to give birth to the new man, a man who has become perfect. This fusion of higher with lower mind is similar to a phenomenon of physics, the "critical state", where the separating surface between a liquid and a gas disappears, the properties of both phases having become identical.

The aim of Yoga is to clarify the lower mind, to free it from its customary contents, "to hinder the modifications of the thinking principle" as Patanjali says. When this result is reached, the "protoplasmic" mind becomes clear like a crystal; henceforward it is nothing but a perfect reflection of the higher mind. H.P.B. says in *The Secret Doctrine* that Antahkarana has to be destroyed; this takes place through the

unification of the two parts of Manas, so that the whole is illuminated by the light of Buddhi. The man who has reached that state of perfection, has ceased to live for himself; he has become a pure channel through which the divine forces are flowing into the world.

The author is indebted for some of the ideas expressed in the foregoing study, to the following articles and book:

E. L. Gardner, "A Mind to Embrace the Universe", *The Theosophist*, December, 1960.

L. H. Leslie-Smith, "Wider Yet and Wider Shall Thy Bounds Be Set", *The Theosophical Journal*, July-August, 1961.

J. E. Marcault and I. A. Hawliczek, *The Evolution of Man*, Theosophical Research Centre, London, 1937.

THEOSOPHY IN WEST AFRICA

BY K. BRAKATU ATEKO

Until a few years ago, the peoples of West Africa were little known to the average person of the outside world. Just so, we on this side, were oblivious of other peoples. Thus contact between one or two members of the Theosophical Society in West Africa with our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic has not only awakened unusual interest but created a pleasant surprise.

It was on November 17, 1935, that Blavatsky Lodge in Accra, Ghana, came into being. Soon after that, a few centres gathered around her in the provinces. One of these, Arundale Lodge was chartered in 1953,, followed by Besant and Raja Lodges in Sekondi/Takoradi and Kumasi, Ashanti, in 1955. However, prior to the formation of the branch of the Theosophical Society in West Africa, one or two members had affiliated with the English section.

The attainment of the nation's political majority in the then Gold Coast (now Ghana) on March 6, 1957, synchronized with the birth of the Federation of the Theosophical Society of West Africa, comprising unattached members of Nigeria, transferred from our parent Society, the English Section, to the West African Federation, and members of Cameroons, also attached to our West African Federation.

Besides the above mentioned lodges, there are centres at Koforidua, Nkawkaw, Dunkwa and Agona Swedru in Ghana; and in the northern region of Nigeria, at Kano, Kaduna, Jos, Lokoja and Zaria. The membership is a little over two hundred.

The difficulty of personal contact by the Organizing Secretary with the centres and with unattached members in Nigeria and the Cameroons, plus the cost of travel, are big handicaps. Great distances separate the

centres, ranging from two to three hundred miles from place to place. Membership is spread throughout the length and breadth of the two countries, Nigeria and the Cameroons. Only in six out of 30 towns and villages does the membership exceed three. Owing to this small membership, even at the centres in the northern region of Nigeria, no lodge has as yet been formed.

Another problem facing the Federation is the financing of the Headquarters building. A generous member has donated the Federation by Deed of Gift a piece of land for the purpose, and the other members have set themselves a target within two years by which time it is hoped that part of the cost, £G9,000 (a p p r o x i m a t e l y \$26,100) will be available to commence operations. The high cost is due to the enormous increase in recent years of the cost of building materials.

Theosophy has a promising future in West Africa. This is true because, in the first place, there is an unconscious deposit of the ancient wisdom, which is enshrined in our folklore, proverbs, the Talking Drums, and in our poetry, let alone geometrical designs, emblems and ideograms with aphorisms for the names.

More than 3,000 of such proverbs and maxims in the Akan (Ashanti/Twi) language are easily accessible. They were assembled by German (Basel) missionaries, Andreas Riis and J. Christaller, at a period when contact with the new European or Western ideas was restricted to the European forts and settlements dotted along the coast during the period of the slave trade, and when the nature and ways of life of the Western world had scarcely penetrated beyond a few miles of the settlements.

The rich ideas of wisdom stored in the proverbs and maxims are therefore indigenous, and they bear testimony of a foundation in the views and traditions of the people, making Theosophy a welcome and not a strange doctrine.

The Three Fundamental Principles of

Theosophy, the belief in God, in the immortality of man, and in the law of cause and effect, are reflected in both our traditional religious and social systems of belief. Let me illustrate:

I God A maxim says *Obi Nkyere abofra Nyame*, literally, No one teaches a child God. Over and above the tutelary, tribal and family gods and goddesses is the Supreme Being to whom no sacrifices are made. He is known by as many qualifications as there are tribes and dialects. It is crystal clear that the African conception of the High God is not of recent growth. Indeed Edwin Smith in the symposium, *African Ideas of God*, states: "In its various forms . . . this God name is spread over a very large area of Western Equatorial Africa, from the Cameroons to the northern border of Bechuanaland and from the Atlantic Coast to the middle of the Belgian Congo . . . tribes always had their own names for the Supreme Being such as Nyibanza, Nzakomba, etc. The name is used in at least 25 versions of Holy Scripture . . ." Concerning the claim that missionaries introduced the concept of a Supreme Being, Edwin Smith says "Some of the early writers refer to the name as we know it today . . . It occurs in the oldest dictionary of a Bantu language . . . as Nzamli Mpungu, 'Almighty God'."

The fact is that not only was the Akan name Nyame adopted in several forms in the African continent but the higher developed conception of God as *Nyankopon* was also spread among other Africans and taken up by them in their several dialects and languages. To the Akan, he is called Nyame or Nyankopon. Of Nyame, the Talking Drums pose the following question: *Koree daa* He went long ago

Koree akyirikyiri He went far away

Koree ana obi reba He went before anyone came

Hena ne payin? Who is the eldest?

—*Akan Doctrine of God*, by Dr. J. B. Danquah.

Let no reader suppose that this glorifi-

cation of God is borrowed plumes, for the Talking Drums and their words and music were antecedent to our contact with European civilization.

II *Karma* There are proverbs which illustrate this law: (1) When Mr. Lizard eats pepper, it is he who perspires and not Mrs. Lizard. (2) When Akosua commits evil, Akua is not punished. (3) It is not today that you have strained yourself and thrown a stone across the River Volta that you would feel the effect of pneumonia.

III *Reincarnation* The people of West Africa believe in this doctrine. The Yoruba and the Edo-speaking tribes, among whom I sojourned as a teacher half a century ago, have a strong belief in reincarnation. At that period the white man's influence had not affected the beliefs and the ways of life of the hinterlands of Nigeria. The Yorubas, for instance, name a boy Babatunde, meaning "Father has returned," and the girl, Yetunde (Iyantude) signifying "Mother has returned." In Ghana, the name *Ababio* "He has come again," carries the same meaning.

IV *Death* Our traditional philosophy of death was grander than that acquired in the wake of Christianity. Death was not looked upon as an enemy to be feared and propitiated. If one died, he was believed to have been born on the other side of the veil and vice versa in the case of birth in our world. He is spoken of as having "become God's."

V *Duality* in nature forms the bedrock of our African view of life. Life is seen as having a positive or operative side as well as a negative or receptive side. The negative side of life is not considered as evil but as the reverse side of the good. . . . The positive side of the production is the male, the negative, the female. They are complementary. They fulfill the total conception of what the Akan take to be the process of forming a person and his life. Further, when a child is born, it is said that it brings its *Nkrabea* with it. . . . The *Nkrabea* is the man's errand or message

from God. It was given in the act of saying goodbye (*nkra*) to come to the earth to be born. It is given when the child life in the womb is given or handed a soul (*okra*) by Nyame. In this connection there is an Akan proverb, *Onyame nkrabea nni kwatibea*, meaning "There is no means of avoiding what is one's errand or destiny from God."

The second reason for the future of Theosophy being hopeful in Africa lies in the fact that the old order of things is yielding place to the new. When the earliest missionaries came into this country, they, lacking the patience of the scientist in observing and examining the intrinsic values of our customs and religious institutions, lumped all together as "heathen superstition."

Today, the spirit of enquiry is abroad and our indigenous religious and social institutions are being looked into by post-graduate and research students of Western universities. The research so far made shows that we have a great spiritual heritage discovered by importations. The result of the earlier outlook was that the Westernized elements in Africa became suspicious, frightened and ashamed of the spiritual ideals which guided the moral conduct of our forefathers and which still influence the unsophisticated Elders. Today, with a new spirit of research for truth, a new light is thrown upon the heritage of the people.

To this resuscitation of the primitive Truth in West Africa we dedicate ourselves.

(Mr. Ateko is the Organizing Secretary of the Theosophical Society in West Africa, and, for the information of those who may wish to contribute to their headquarters building fund, drafts should be made in favour of The Theosophical Society in West Africa, P.O. Box 720, Accra, Ghana.)

The way gets clearer as we go on, but as we get clearer, we get less anxious as to the way ahead.

—William Q. Judge

KARMA

BY CECIL WILLIAMS

The Hindus, who have probably retained more fragments of the Secret Doctrine than any other people, portray Brahma, the One Existence, the Instrument of the Nothingness which is Allness, as the four-faced god. These four aspects of Brahma are Boundless Space, Ceaseless Motion, Limitless Duration and Infinite Number (matter).

The religions, sciences and philosophies of the ages emphasize one or more of these four aspects. The exoteric teachings direct attention to the macrocosm; the esoteric to the microcosm. The occultist is more concerned with the point than with boundless space; with the moment rather than the everlasting; with the unit rather than the innumerable; with the act rather than with infinite motion.

Space is the background before which matter moves through time. The Karma of the Universe can only be expressed in terms of everlasting duration.

No man can say "I am" for more than an instant. For the "I am" immediately becomes "I am more" or "I am less" necessarily because he is in the whirlpool of ceaseless motion whose cause is named Eternal Nidana.

Every man is unconsciously striving to reach the point where he can say "I am more", but before he can do this he must recognize "I am less". Only the humble can attain true knowledge, power or love. Before every new problem of life a man has to recognize his ignorance, weakness or selfishness; then only can he grapple with his problem.

"As below, so above" The Causeless Cause is the eternal "I am" and Brahma is the expression in terms of a universe of "I am less", "I am", "I am more". "I am less" is the half circle of manifestation; "I am more" the half circle of Pralaya. But the two opposites are always present, and in the smaller circles of manifestation they

are to be found. Karma is ceaseless motion, swinging everlastingly from side to side, and when the divine spark flashes down into the animal, the man starts his own long circle of Karma. At first his circles are small but the desire for sentient life—which is a reflection of the Divine Thought—propels him to swing in ever widening circles.

The close student of occultism, realizing that pain ever follows pleasure, that poverty dogs the steps of riches, that defeat follows triumph, infamy succeeds fame, in the ceaseless round of births and deaths seeks to find the way of escape. Not for himself alone—why should he be concerned about himself—but for humanity. If his studies have been so superficial that he thinks he can himself escape, he is only persuing a shadow, and every effort he makes will only fasten the chains of Karma more tightly to his limbs, or swing him into the depths of Black Magic. So if he is a wise student, he will care little for himself and everything for humanity.

Having reached that point where the vision of the world's woe—so futile and yet so necessary—causes his heart to ache, and the tears to start to his eye, he will ask "What shall I do", and the question born of a desire to give himself to the service of humanity will bring him to the threshold of the path.

There is no man, whether he count himself as one of the legion of the "lost ones" or as one of the army of the "saved" whether he is surfeited with pleasure, or racked with pain, but who is, in that experience, learning something which will take him one step towards liberation.

The God within knows that pleasure and pain are but one sensation and His only concern is that this obstinate, heedless, perverse creature which is His lower self should be molded into an exact replica of Him-

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY

AUTHORIZED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL BY THE POST OFFICE
DEPARTMENT, OTTAWA, AND FOR PAYMENT
OF POSTAGE IN CASH.

SUBSCRIPTION: TWO DOLLARS A YEAR



OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA
GENERAL SECRETARY

D. W. BARR

52 ISABELLA ST., TORONTO 5, ONT.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

CHARLES E. BUNTING, 75 Rosedale Ave.,
Hamilton, Ont.

CHARLES M. HALE, 26 Albion Ave., Scarboro, Ont.

MISS M. HINDSLEY, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.

GEORGE I. KINMAN, 262 Sheldrake Blvd.,

Toronto 12, Ont.

MRS C. P. LAKIN, S.S. No. 2, 102 Floresta Court,

Ancaster, Ont.

WASHINGTON E. WILKS, 925 Georgia St. W.,

Vancouver, B.C.

EMORY P. WOOD, 9360 — 86th St., Edmonton, Alta.

TREASURER: MR. RALPH A. WEBB

EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST
ALL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ARTICLES AND REPORTS
FOR PUBLICATION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE
EDITOR, 52 ISABELLA ST., TORONTO 5.

EDITOR: DUDLEY W. BARR.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: MR. & MRS. T. G. DAVY

LETTERS INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION SHOULD BE
RESTRICTED TO NOT MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED WORDS

PRINTED BY THE BEAMSVILLE EXPRESS,
BEAMSVILLE, ONT.

self. When he brings his animal self a shade more *en rapport* with Himself, a feeling of 'moreness' suffuses the lower self, and as a consequence a larger measure of life flows in, resulting in more happiness and a more contented mind.

The aim of the Higher Self is to make his vehicles of consciousness responsive immediately to his will, but the lower self, ignorant of that purpose, and knowing that a certain course has produced pleasure in the past would continue in that former course after his lesson has been learned.

So the Higher Self directs his lower self to that environment where he will learn the next lesson. The ignorant animal refuses to obey, so he has to be compelled, amid cries of pain, into the necessary form. Once the response is made, a feeling of 'moreness' again suffuses the animal self. Thus through the ages the swing of the pendulum goes on.

The value of Coué's formula "Day by day, in every way, I am becoming better and better" lies in the words "in every way". The tacit acquiescence to the prompting of the Higher Self, other things being equal, will bring the lower self *en rapport* with the God within. But this 'tuning in' with the Infinite can be only temporary. Again and again under varying conditions, the contact must be made. The student of occultism can do this with greater permanent benefit because of his knowledge and because of his fixed purpose.

If a man will but try to hear the voice of the God within he will save himself and others much suffering. His ready compliance with the will of his Higher Self saves him from generating evil Karma by his ignorance. Though he cannot escape reaping what he has sown, in the Divine Economy of the Universe he will reap at a particular point sufficient only of his Karma to learn his lesson.

But let no man hope to get *en rapport* with his Higher Self merely to escape personal suffering, or to lighten his burden of Karma. With this selfish motive his effort will inevitably fail. Let him seriously consider that his ignorance brings suffering to others—that every wrong action, feeling or thought directed to another brings its equal reaction to its originator is true, but unless the other knows the law, then when he consciously or unconsciously repays the evil done to him, he incurs in turn a debt, which though the first man may forgive, must be paid for by the other.

There is a strange law in occultism which H.P.B. pointed out. As soon as anyone takes the pledge of a "probationer" certain

occult effects ensue. One of these is the throwing outward of the virtues, faults, habits, qualities or subdued desires of the aspirant, and thus he will have to fight a hundred times harder to kill out his vices. For if this aspiration be deep and not shallow, he has by his pledge deliberately willed to put himself into direct contact with the God within, and He will respond. If his lower self is ready to take the short cut he is projected into the physical, emotional and mental conditions which will shorten the journey of the soul by centuries. Disaster will follow unless the warning given by H.P.B. is heeded. This great step should never be taken lightly.

crunchy lettuce, that it is crisp and crunchy because one is eating it alive. Many races and nations flourish on strictly vegetable diets. And many also starve handsomely while surrounded by available foods which, for tribal taboos, or religious scruples, are forbidden.

With regard to the other point, the heliocentric theory of the solar system was known centuries before the Four Evangelists were born or thought of, but it was a secret temple teaching among the Egyptians and Greeks, never communicated except at a temple initiation, and that under severe pains and penalties for those who communicated the Mysteries to the uninitiated. Neither Matthew, Mark, Luke nor John were Brethren of that Lodge.

Yours very truly,

C. M. Hale

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist*

Dear Sir:

The basic theme of my lecture in the Toronto Lodge, and the article based upon it, was the nature of the body of the Resurrection. The question of vegetarianism only got pulled into it by the side door, so to speak.

However, since it is there, just a few more words on that subject. My original statement stands. There is no direct evidence in the text of the Four Gospels that the Master of Nazareth was vegetarian, only a philosophical rationalization that he probably should have been. And that, apparently, is dependent on the theory that he practiced a deception on his disciples and followers by synthesising some kind of ersatz fish to perform the several fish-miracles that are recorded.

It is a possibly brutal fact of nature, from which there is no escape, that life is only sustained by taking life. At what stage on the ascending arc of life one decides to refrain from that sacrifice is a matter for the individual conscience, with which others should not quarrel. But one should always remember, when enjoying a crisp and

THE ANNUAL ELECTION

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made during March and should be received at Headquarters by April 1.

Will the officers of each Lodge kindly have this matter brought before their Lodge and then have the nominations sent promptly to the General Secretary at 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5. According to the constitution, nominations must be made through a Lodge and the consent of the persons nominated should be obtained.

—D. W. Barr, General Secretary

PLOTINUS

(Continued from page 123)

of his time, for the reason that the Gnostics declared the goodness and nobility of the physical universe to be the best possible work and interest of the soul; whereas Plotinus maintained that the physical universe was the playground of the strongest soul-stupefying illusions. In order to re-gain our rightful place in the universe, we must no longer remain drugged by the pleasant dreams of physical existence.

BOOK REVIEWS

Tibet is My Country: The Autobiography of Thubten Norbu, brother of the Dalai Lama, as told to Heinrich Harrer, London; Rupert Hart-Davis, 1960, \$5.75, 264 pages.

This is a simple tale dealing with neither politics nor religion, and yet the questions it poses strike to the heart of our contemporary thinking on these subjects.

The author paints a lucid picture of 14th century pastoral tranquillity which, by grace of Tibet's inaccessibility, survived into the twentieth century, only to be destroyed by the Chinese. Those peaceful and friendly people were submitted to torture and destruction. One wonders about the *why* of it. Is all priestcraft, no matter how beneficent, to be wiped out? For it did make the people entirely dependent on those who protected them, and when the "protectors" were forced to flee, the people were confused, bewildered and at the mercy of wolves among men.

But is the life in Tibet, peaceful and "ideal" as it was in one sense, the end and aim of our striving? The people there were as much in the "kindergarten" of life as others even here in this so-called modern, progressive and "superior" race. Must we not learn to become *Soul-Beings* in our own right with strength, courage, compassion, patience, honour and justice and Soul-Wisdom to guide us?

The war between light and darkness is eternal, but those going through the dark cycle must work themselves out of it. The Great Ones, who see and understand, look on without condemnation, and help where they can and may.

To be able to look on and to give aid to those who suffer from the destroyers, and to do this without hatred, anger or even resentment—Oh, what a task! The verse in *The Voice of the Silence* which speaks of the Guardian-wall erected by the tortures and blood of the Helpers of Humanity, has always been a heart-trembling thing for me. Yet, we have to be ready for even that. In our deepest heart we are

ready, yes, but to face it as we stand—who is ready or able?

Yet, among those simple people of Tibet there were those who never hesitated to accept the worst in order to protect their fellow-men.

Think of that scene before the Summer Palace of the Dalai Lama where the people gathered in dense numbers to hinder the enemy from coming to the house, thereby giving the Dalai Lama a chance to escape. Think of the loyalty, the devotion, the love and respect they had for him to make them capable of that sacrifice. The thought then comes, what of the Dalai Lama, to accept such a sacrifice? Dead he could do nothing to help his people, but alive he could, and in honour to the man, he *is* doing something to justify the acceptance of that sacrifice.

Henmar Wildema



IMPORTANT NEW BOOK ON REINCARNATION

The race mind could be influenced by the new reincarnation anthology, published in New York in December, if it is given the wide distribution it deserves. The title is *Reincarnation — An East-West Anthology*, and the subtitle reads *Including Quotations from the World's Religions and from over 400 Western Thinkers*.

This remarkable work proves that belief in reincarnation or some transformation after death is, or has been, held in all parts of the world, and from the most primitive times.

Part I deals with Reincarnation In The World's Religions. It is an illuminating and fully documented presentation of reincarnation as found in the scriptures and writings of Christianity (Protestant and Roman Catholic), Judaism, Gnosticism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism including Zen. Also, there are sections on primitive and tribal religions; on ancient Egypt; the Essenes of Dead Sea Scrolls fame, Masonry and Theosophy. Nine pages are devoted to the latter, with quot-

ations of considerable length from the writings of the Founders of the Theosophical Society and others. The letter to Sean O'Faolain, written in 1935 by George Russell (AE), the well-known Irish poet, painter and editor, in defence of Madame Blavatsky, is worth the price of the book.

The little-known story of how reincarnation was lost to Christianity is succinctly told. For students of the history of the Christian Faith, the inclusion in the volume of The Anathemas against Origen, supposedly adopted by the Fifth Ecumenical Council, A.D. 553, is of special interest. Origen—that third century Prince of Christian learning—is quoted on the subject of pre-existence, as are St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and other early church fathers. The editors make these significant observations: It appears that there has never been a papal encyclical against reincarnation and “it seems clear . . . that Catholic scholars are beginning to disclaim that the Roman Church took any part in the anathemas against Origen, suggesting that during the many centuries when the Church believed it had condemned Origen, *it was mistaken*. However, one disastrous result of the mistake still persists, namely, the exclusion from the Christian creed of the teaching of the pre-existence of the soul, and by implication, reincarnation . . . In the light of references to reincarnation in the Bible, and of statements by the early church fathers, and now of the position of Catholic scholars in disclaiming the crusade against Origen, it is not remarkable that a growing number of the Christian clergy and religious writers are speaking favourably of the new interest in reincarnation, and are even hoping that this ‘lost chord of Christianity’ may once more vibrate in harmony with Christ’s teaching of hope and responsibility.” (*Anthology*, pp. 41-2).

Part II classifies Western Thinkers On Reincarnation according to nationality—Greek, Roman, Italian, Spanish, British, Irish, German, Dutch, Belgian, French, Swiss, Scandinavian, Hungarian, Polish,

Russian and American. The development of the rebirth doctrine is traced in occidental literature and philosophy from ancient Greece to modern times. Amongst others equally startling is Thoreau’s statement: “I lived in Judea eighteen centuries ago . . . And Hawthorne, too, I remember as one with whom I sauntered in old heroic times . . . As far back as I can remember I have unconsciously referred to the experiences of a previous state of existence.”

There are numerous excerpts from foreign authors of renown which are translated into English for the first time.

In Part III — Scientists And Psychologists On Reincarnation — we find Thomas Edison, during his last illness, saying to reporters who inquired if he believed in survival after death: “The only survival I can conceive is to start a new earth cycle again.” As most Theosophists know, Edison was one of the early members of the Theosophical Society in America.

Others quoted in this section are Paracelsus, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, Johann E. Bode, Sir Humphrey Davy, Sir David Brewster, Thomas H. Huxley, Sir Edward B. Tylor, Camille Flammarion, Sir Oliver Lodge, Louis Figuier, Julian Huxley, Raynor C. Johnson, William James, J. B. Rhine, and a dozen others.

Part IV brings together the statements of Scientists And Psychologists On Immortality And “Soul”, even though rebirth itself is not directly mentioned. As the Editors say, “Once admit that a permanent ego may exist, sooner or later some theory of rebirth must be formulated. After death the ego must live somewhere, and in view of the known order of nature, must have some vehicle through which to manifest its powers and communicate with others. The soul’s immortality demands embodiment here or elsewhere, and to be embodied means reincarnation.”

Besides a long list of “Acknowledgements”, which constitutes a useful bibliography, the book contains an excellent index. Another special item is a reprint from

Yale Review, Spring 1945, of Prof. J. Paul Williams' article "Belief in a Future Life."

It would seem that every human concept of immortality and/or reincarnation is represented in this noble Anthology. It should be invaluable to clergymen, professional writers, speakers, students of the Ancient Wisdom, and everyone else who questions the one-life theory of orthodox churchianity.

Considering "What do we do with this important new book?" one recalls what William Q. Judge says in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, "It is the Master's work to preserve the true philosophy but the help of the companions is needed to rediscover and promulgate it . . . and the companions all over the world are engaged in bringing it forth for wider currency and propagation."

This Anthology is an incomparable book for wide currency and propagation. It can be given with pride as to content and format.

Reincarnation — An East - West Anthology, Compiled and Edited by Joseph Head and S. L. Cranston; 342 pp., Cloth \$6.50, published by Julian Press, Inc., 80 East 11th St., New York 3, N.Y. —F.E.G.

☆ ☆ ☆

Mind and Memory Training, by Ernest E. Wood, published by The Theosophical Publishing House London Ltd., 188 pages, paperback edition, price 7/6.

This book can be read with profit by anyone as it deals with the attainment of a well organized mind—a mind that has its information carefully tabulated and immediately accessible at all times.

Mr. Wood first explores the nature of the mind and the thought processes, and then gives exercises and methods by which the mind can be trained. Famous memory systems are considered and there are chapters on the nature of concentration, meditation and the best methods of reading.

The mind is compared to a magic box, with one box containing another and the second box, a third and so on. These boxes, of course, are ideas. An apt analogy is the comparison of the mind to a person

walking, putting one foot down after another, just as the mind rests for a moment on one idea before going on to another and another. The well trained mind goes in a reasonably straight line, keeping to the association of ideas related to one main subject. The untrained mind slithers and slides from one thought to another and never explores any idea thoroughly.

The author gives exercises to train the mind to stay on one subject. These involve using the "Four Roads of Thought" to explore ideas and to keep the mind from wandering. The first road is *Class*, the relationship of objects to the class to which they belong and also to other objects in the same class; second is *Parts*, the different parts of the object; third is *Quality*—whether the object is hot, cold, white, round, etc.; and fourth is *Proximity*—this is the road on which the association of ideas of the individual mind comes into play. No two persons have the same experiences and therefore, no two thought associations will be similar.

Mind and Memory Training includes lectures and papers given previously on this subject and was first published in 1936. Although it has passed through many editions, this is the first time that this very readable book has been issued in paperback.

However much one might question the artificiality of some of the methods given for remembering things, or some of the rather far-fetched thought associations, there is no doubt that the axiom of proceeding from the known to the unknown and the "nailing down" of ideas by making mental pictures of them, follow the best psychological and educational philosophy of today. It is interesting to speculate on what wondrous results might be obtained if even half the time that children waste in school cutting and pasting, etc. were used instead to teach them how to think, using Mr. Wood's methods. The so-called professional educators might be astonished.

—L.B.

IS THEOSOPHY A DEFINITE PHILOSOPHY?

It is the policy of the Adyar Theosophical Society to insist that Theosophy has no definite teaching or doctrines. This is what the leading Officials of the Society maintain and expect the members to accept. Dr. Bendit for example, in the March 1961 *Science Group Journal*, London, specifically stated that "Theosophy . . . is a thing which can never be defined and one can never say 'this is Theosophy, this is not'" and later in the same letter he refers to ". . . what we so often . . . and wrongly . . . refer to as 'the teachings of Theosophy'." In a later letter in the S.G.J. July 1961, he writes "What I wrote moreover, I wrote as *General Secretary* (italics his), and to defend the line of the Society in this matter . . ." emphasizing that he was laying down and defending the policy of the T.S. regarding the non-existence of any definite teaching called Theosophy.

Mr. Sri Ram, our President, confirms this policy by stating in his opening remarks to the 38th South Indian Conference at Adyar, quoted in *The Canadian Theosophist*, July-August, 1961, "Our understanding of Theosophy constantly changes as we grow and mature. In fact I would say that the longer one is in the Theosophical Movement the more difficult it is to say what Theosophy is because, first of all, it is so subtle; secondly, it is profound; and thirdly it is all embracing and comprehensive".

There is nothing new in this Adyar T.S. attitude toward Theosophy. For years past, or rather for decades, one has heard it said that,—Theosophy is what each one thinks it is, or, you cannot say this, or that, is Theosophy. However, to us at least, it is new to have representative Officials of the Society come forward and lay it upon the line that there is no such thing as a definite philosophy called Theosophy.

Both in the Letters of the Mahatmas and throughout *The Secret Doctrine* it is claimed that a redeclaration of some of the Ancient Wisdom,—the Esoteric Philosophy, held in the guardianship of the Brothers, is being given out supported by innumerable quotations from ancient sources. *Mahatma Letters* page 417, "For the present we offer our knowledge—some portions of it at least—to be either accepted or rejected on its own merits independently—entirely so—from the source from which it emanates". This philosophy contains clear and definite doctrines and teachings which make a comprehensive whole such as the world has not had in historic times. It contains all man needs to know to orientate himself in the Universe, with knowledge with which to carry out his function, the purpose of humanity on this planet. *M.L.'s* page 23—"The truths and mysteries of occultism constitute, indeed, a body of the highest spiritual importance, at once profound and practical for the world at large. Yet, it is not as a mere addition to the tangled mass of theory or speculation in the world of science that they are being given to you, but for their practical bearing on the interests of mankind". This philosophy the Founders denominated by the ancient name Theosophy. Unless this statement is repudiated, how can it be maintained that Theosophy has no definite doctrines or teachings?

This is what the Mahatmas wrote, *M.L.'s* page 51, "We have offered to exhume the primeval strata of man's being, his basic nature, and lay bare the wonderful complications of his inner Self—something never to be achieved by physiology or even psychology in its ultimate expression—and demonstrate its scientifically".

The Adyar claim that Theosophy has no definite doctrines has become supremely important because of the new dispensation

in the T.S., a complete reversal of policy, as a result of which the members are everywhere now urged to study *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Mahatma Letters*. For 60 years the members of the Adyar T.S. have been led to study and proselytise Neo-Theosophy, the philosophical system of A.B. and C.W.L., which is largely based upon their claimed clairvoyant researches, in place of Theosophy.

Neo-Theosophy was doubtless invented to put forward a simplified variant of Theosophy for popular consumption, but this attempt got out of hand. The whole effort of the Society was turned toward increasing membership. Theosophy, the austere, soul-satisfying philosophy of the early days, was watered down and materialized to make easy reading. It was distorted to pander to popular prejudice. It was denatured so that its impersonal spiritual values were forsaken for emotional imitations. Thus Neo-Theosophy was established in the Adyar T.S. and upon this teaching alone has the mass of the membership been nurtured this half century. The whole Society was given over to Neo-Theosophy, apart from reactionary members, who as individuals, lodges, and one National Section, resisted this supplanting of Theosophy by the newly concocted Neo-Theosophy of A.B. and C.W.L. In England, France, Ireland, Australia, Austria, Germany, and Canada, (and Dr. Stokes, almost alone in the United States) members fought to expose and oppose this degradation of Theosophy. Some of these members left the Society, finding their views refused expression, others—the majority—stayed in, the better to fight the evil which had overtaken the Adyar T.S., with the ultimate aim of reclaiming the Society for Theosophy—the Esoteric Philosophy of the Brothers.

H.P.B.'s books were back-shelved and members refused access to them on the excuse of their being too difficult for them. Her books, her name, practically disappeared from T.S. lodges and publications. Never were her books advertised, whilst large

space was reserved for Neo-Theosophical books of A.B. and C.W.L. Rarely was her name mentioned. For long periods *The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis*, *The Key to Theosophy*, were not procurable from the Adyar Theosophical Publishing House. At the same time the mass of the membership, many of them malcontents from Methodist Churches who were told that "Theosophy will give you back your religion" formed the huge body of willing, blind followers, hanging upon the pronouncements of their Beloved Leaders, and quite innocent of any knowledge of Theosophy itself.

When *The Mahatma Letters* was published in 1923, the most valuable of all books in the opinion of most of its students, and unquestionably epoch making in its impact upon the Theosophical Movement, the difference between Theosophy and Neo-Theosophy was highlighted, but this book, upon the advice of Adyar, has not been studied by the obedient members until now, thirty-eight years later. No one can read the clearly enunciated teaching of the Adepts given to the two Englishmen in India, to spear-head their philosophy in the West, without becoming immediately conscious of the conflict in teaching, in values, and in attitude to life, which exists between these teachings and Neo-Theosophy.

It is very important that a clear distinction be made and maintained between Theosophy, the Esoteric Philosophy of the Brothers, made available through the works of their Agent, H.P.B., and their own *Mahatma Letters*, on the one hand; and all subsequent teachings which offer to explain, enlarge, or carry forward these doctrines from the Source, on the other hand. Whether it be the Neo-Theosophy of A.B. and C.W.L., the psychic pronouncements of Alice Baily, the works of William Kingsland, or those of Dr. de Purucker, the interpretation of *The Secret Doctrine* by Katherine Hilliard, or that of Mr. G. Borka, all these and many more should be known and realized as commentaries all

more or less coloured by the preconceptions, if not by the psychic conceptions, of the author, upon the original teachings of the Adepts. The student should, at all times, know whether he is studying Theosophy, or some commentary upon, or variant of Theosophy.

Now, when the members for the first time for half a century, are being turned to the study of Theosophy itself, everything should be fine? Not so easily is great advantage won for enlightenment. They are also being urged to study Neo-Theosophy first, the result being that Theosophy and Neo-Theosophy will become inextricably mixed in the minds of the members, a result greatly to be deplored. Consequently we strongly oppose this policy at Adyar which declares that Theosophy has no definite teaching and that no one can say Theosophy teaches this, and not that. Both Theosophy and Neo-Theosophy are definite philosophies, but different as the sun from the moon from one another, and this should be clearly recognized by always using different names for each of them.

Why is it supremely important to keep the philosophy called Theosophy, in its un-mixed purity as a living vital teaching available for those who can use it for the benefit of humanity? Every spiritual philosophy of the past, we are told, emanated from the Brotherhood, which has in its custodianship all such knowledge; and every attempt to enlighten mankind spiritually has sooner or later suffered the same fate. Relinquished amongst the commonality of men, it suffers distortion to conform with popular prejudice. Seized upon by the priests in all ages, *Mahatma Letters*, page 58, "Ignorance created Gods and cunning took advantage of opportunity. Look at India and look at Christendom and Islam, at Judaism and Fetichism. It is priestly imposture that rendered these Gods so terrible to man; it is religion that makes of him the selfish bigot, the fanatic that hates all mankind out of his own sect without rendering him any better or moral for it. It is

belief in God and Gods that makes two-thirds of humanity the slaves of a handful of those who deceive them under the false pretense of saving them, etc."

Theosophy, or any spiritual teaching, is not a comfortable thing to live with. It demands courage and determination and unswerving dedication to truth. It demands effort and sacrifices from the ease and comfort and pleasure loving part of man, and above all it requires that the 'Giant Weed', the obsession and love of self, must sooner or later be attacked and eventually destroyed. Effort therefore must constantly be maintained by all those who perceive the need to offset the conscious and unconscious means ever active to drag the philosophy down to the personal level to become one more religion to confuse mankind and to stand in the way of his spiritual progress.

Further, apart from the natural human weaknesses we all are heir to, there are those sinister powers which both the Mahatmas and H.P.B. declare are always on the lookout where the aspiration for the enlightenment of mankind exists, in order to oppose and distort its operation, and deflect it from its purpose. They usually succeed in doing this, as they evidently did in the Adyar Theosophical Society to a large degree, by subtly influencing the minds of those most prominent in the Society who were taking the lead. It is usually the individuals who believe they are utterly sincere in their desire to work for others, who never dream of questioning their own secret motives, who prove most vulnerable, and helplessly become simply tools in the hands of these Powers, whose function it is to oppose Spiritual light.

Now there is no way of avoiding this attempt by the Forces of Darkness to oppose the Powers of Light. According to H.P.B. it is the law inherent in the very nature of things. Theosophy tells us that every projection of Spiritual energy into human life automatically invokes an effort of an opposite kind by the Forces of Dark-

ness to oppose it. This conflict between these two great influences takes place in the lives of men and women. The forces of Light awaken and stimulate the individual's more human qualities, his intelligence and will and his finer, more selfless aspirations. The Forces of Darkness play upon and call into activity the qualities of his blind separative nature through his hidden spiritual ambition, love of power and human adulation, his vanity and all the many forms of self-love. This condition, where these two great sets of forces play upon the individual's life and bid for his self-conscious allegiance, set up a state of strain, of tension in his life over a period of time, as a result of which he must make a conscious choice. If he chooses to follow his intelligent aspiration and ally himself with the Powers of Light, all will be well with Theosophy and with his own spiritual life. If he chooses to follow his selfish lesser nature and ally himself with the Forces of the Shadow, this decision of his will prove disastrous to himself and to Theosophy. There is no way by which this conflict may be avoided in a Spiritual movement. Someone must be able to accept it if Spiritual light is to be kept available in human life, for the only way such Light can be kept in human life is in the lives of men and women. To date, in the T.S., there undoubtedly has been an unbroken line of students who were sufficiently sincere and positive in their aspiration as to accept this conflict in their own lives and to endure it and to not give way wholly under it to their lesser nature. In many instances these students were quite unaware of the importance of this experience to Theosophy. But every student who, when the pressure came upon his personal life in the midst of the seeming very ordinary daily experiences of human living, refused to give way to the selfish promptings of his lesser nature and took his stand by what he believed to be right and true, by this very decision of his, by the spirit of the action, contributed in no small measure to

the continued existence of Theosophy in human life. In this connection we would like to quote from a letter by Mrs. Besant, dated June 9th, 1906, quoted in *The Canadian Theosophist*, July 1943.

"On the path of Occultism there are dangers that do not threaten the dwellers on the plains, and one of these is the awful power of glamour, used by the Brothers of the Shadow, to delude the climber. Only the uttermost purity and truth give them no platform from which to work, and in which of us are to be found perfect purity and truth? Not in myself. I know, though I strive after them, but have not yet reached them . . . If they interfered too soon, They would rob us of our lesson, keep us purblind, and dwarf our growth. In the long run Their patience means our greatness, and They can afford to wait for strong men. What is the failure of one life? Judge has fallen on this perilous path of Occultism; Leadbeater has fallen on it; very likely I too shall fall, but we shall all come back and work again. If the day of my fall shall come, I ask those who love me, not to shrink from condemning my fault, not to attenuate it, or say that black is white; but rather let them lighten my heavy karma, as I am trying to lighten that of my friend and brother, by saying that black is black, by proclaiming the unshaken purity of the ideal, and by declaring that the fall of an individual leaves unshattered their trust in the Masters of Purity and Compassion. On that rock we rest."

There is room in such a dedicated body as the T.S. when it possesses a core of men and women, a nucleus of Brotherhood, dedicated to true Theosophy, to Truth, for a simplified teaching for the enquirer, and for those not ready as yet to take the philosophy really seriously, although it should always be kept in mind, as H.P.B. wrote to Mr. Sinnett March 17th, 1886. "If the Founders of the Society and the Founders or Presidents of the Branches had ever kept

in view the fact that it is not so much the quantity we are in need of, but the quality, to make the Society a success, half of the disasters would have been avoided." However when the simplification of the teaching takes the form of introducing a personal God—the nightmare the Brothers hoped by the T.S. to destroy, *Mahatma Letters*, page 53. "Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake, and to walk in life relying on himself instead of leaning on a theological crutch, that for countless ages was the direct cause of nearly all human misery."

And the incorporation of Spiritualists ideas regarding after death conditions, is another thing which demanded that Theosophy be instituted to offset this tendency toward necromancy. *M.L.*'s page 35, "And lastly it will appear that the present tidal wave of phenomena, with its varied effects upon human thought and feeling, made the revival of Theosophical enquiry an indispensable necessity". When kindness and amiability take precedence over courage and truth as theosophical values, when priests and Bishops enter and take high office in the T.S., not as individual students, to which there would be no objection, but preferentially as priests and Bishops, then the simplification and popularization of Theosophy has reached the rock bottom of degradation. Such popularization of a noble philosophy must be forever opposed.

In conclusion, in the light of the above we hold that it is impossible to maintain that the philosophy made available as Theosophy toward the end of the 19th century, is not a definite philosophy of which it can be said that it does teach this and not that. And further that it should always be clearly distinguished from all later variants or extensions, or evolutions, or from any and all commentaries upon it, so that students shall know at all times when they are studying the original philosophy of the Brothers, or when it is some production which is in some sense a commentary upon it.

It is not enough, however, to blindly accept and believe Theosophy, or any part of it, just because it is the philosophy of the Brothers. Maha-Chohan's letter, "The doctrine we promulgate . . . enforcing its theories—unimpeachable facts to those who know . . ." Theosophy was given to us, nothing more than theories to us, (although "absolute truth to those who know") theories which we have to examine, explore, and test out in every way open to us. A mite of certainty of our own is more valuable than a whole philosophy which is still a matter of speculation, or blind belief.

Commentaries can be very valuable when giving us the results of other minds straining to understand and realize the theosophical teachings which transcend the purely rational mind. But none of this is possible unless the original philosophy itself is kept separate and inviolable for those can make use of it for themselves and for humanity.

The T.S. has been called the vehicle of Theosophy. It was created to sponsor Theosophy before the world. It was into the hands of the Society that the invaluable modern revelation of the Arcane Wisdom was given. Surely it is the sacred duty of the Adyar Theosophical Society to guard and keep this knowledge as a living thing in its original purity available for the generations to come.

Finally, it should be clearly understood that we oppose this "line of the Society" which insists that Theosophy has no definite teaching, first because the Theosophical Movement was the means of making available a re-declaration of some of the principles and knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom, not by collecting scraps of this Wisdom to be found in Ancient Sources, but by a fresh out-pouring from the "Source" as plainly stated. Second to avoid and offset the mixing of the Esoteric philosophy of the Brothers, Theosophy as the Founders named it, with other and different and conflicting teachings also put forward as Theosophy.

W. E. Wilks, Orpheus Lodge

RENASCENCE

When the Night is gone, and the Deva Dawn
 Is spreading her plumes of gold,
 And the Morning Star on her throne afar
 Sings out to the Gods of old;

When the world is bright with Compassion's Light,
 And the fires of Mara give
 But a dying spark in the fading dark,
 Then — only the Truth will live;

And a Song will rise in the happy skies
 When the joy-enchanted Spring
 Returns to birth on a brighter earth,
 And the God in man is King.

George Cardinal LeGros

INDEX

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST, VOL. 42

Anti-gravity	43	Expansion of Human Consciousness,	
Ateko, K. Brakatu	128	The	124
Baldwin, Laura	89	Fall of Nonconformism, The	23
Barr, D. W.	26, 71, 73, 87, 95	Gandhi's Rediscovery of Christianity	90
Body of the Resurrection, The	49, 110, 133	Garden, Some Symbols in a	54
Buddhists, Did Visit Early		Gaunt, Laura	87, 97
British Columbia?	34	Goddess, The Revenge of the	39
Christianity, Gandhi's Rediscovery of	90	God or Gods?	115
Convention, American	37	Goold, Miss F. Eurith	107, 134
Convention Experiments	118	Goosens, Mrs. E.	12
		Griffith, Mollie	54, 101
Davy, Ted	14, 38, 45		
de Zirkoff, Boris	57	Hale, C. M.	27, 49, 85, 133
Dharma	13	Hall, G. H.	23, 47, 84
		Hamilton Lodge Library	36
Edge, H. T.	79	Harris, Iverson L.	7, 30
Edmonton Lodge	84	Harrison, Miss Elouise ..	34, 63, 111, 121
Election, General	35, 61, 62, 133	Hoeller, Stephan A.	67, 111
Endersby, Victor	84, 112		
Executive Meeting	35	Karma	131

Lakin, Mrs. C. P.	37	Divine Plan, The	86
Legros, George Cardinal	142	Mind and Memory Training	136
<i>Light on the Path</i> , Some		Mushroom, The Sacred	38
Meditations On	104	Oedipus and Akhnaton	14
Love	47	Reincarnation, An East-West	
		Anthology	134
Machell, Montague A.	47	Tibet Is My Country	134
Marquis, H.	109		
Middleton, E. K.	85	Sabetay, Dr. Hermine	124
Montreal Lodge	12	St. Paul and Women	73, 111
Mysteries of Sleep and Death, The ...	7, 30	Saviours and Redeemers	71
		Sceptical Approach to Theosophy, The	45
Nonconformism, The Fall of	23	Should the Priestess Return	15, 37
Notes and Comments	59, 107	Sleep and Death, The Mysteries of ...	7, 30
		Small, W. Emmett	115
Obituaries:		Symbols in a Garden, Some	54
Barthlemes, Edward Godfrey	11		
Daykin, Mrs. Gertrude	35	Temple of Understanding	12
Harrop, A. P.	59	Theosophic Man, The	97
Richardson, Mrs. Alice	11	Theosophical Movement, Clergymen	
Roebuck, Miss Mary	11	in the	67, 77, 111
Thomson, Cecil	83	Theosophical Society, The Sole Object of	93
Watt, Alexander	11	Theosophists, Future	12
Watt, Mrs.	35	<i>Theosophists, Reunite!</i>	108
<i>Ocean of Theosophy, The</i>	107	Theosophy	64
		Theosophy and Old Age	101
Past Lives, Memories of	88	Theosophy and Religion	77
Patel, H. S.	93	Theosophy in West Africa	128
Plotinus	121	Theosophy, Is It A Definite	
Poems:		Philosophy?	137
Divine Affirmative, The	47	Theosophy, Practical	13
Karma	89	Theosophy, The Mission of	79
Renesance	142	Theosophy, The Sceptical Approach to	45
Psychic Showmanship	57	Tyler, Frederick E.	63, 112
Practical Theosophy	13		
Presidential Address	1	Voice of the Silence, The	27
Pyramids of the Mayas. Are They the			
Same as Those of Egyptians?	117	Unity	95
Ram, N. Sri	1	Weaver, Cedric	110
Redeemers, Saviours and	71	White Lie, The	23
Reincarnation	112	White Lotus Day, Seventy Years Later	25
Religion, Theosophy and	77	Wildema, Henmar	134
Resurrection, The Body of the ...	49, 110	Wilks, W. E.	77, 137
Reviews:		Williams, Cecil	104, 131
Blavatsky, H. P., Collected Writings,		Women, St. Paul and	73, 111
Vol. VIII	14	Wood, Ernest	64
Evidence of Survival from Claimed		Wynne-Tyson, Esme	15, 39, 90, 111
Memories of Former Incarnations ..	87		

ORIGINAL AND UP-TO-DATE

THEOSOPHY

We lend freely by mail all the comprehensive literature of the Movement. Catalogue on request. Also to lend, or for sale at 20c each post free, our eight H. P. B. Pamphlets, including early articles from LUCIFER and Letters from the Initiates.

THE H. P. B. LIBRARY
1385 TATLOW AVE., NORGate PARK
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.

BLAVATSKY INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

52 ISABELLA ST., TORONTO 5, ONTARIO

ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS
by H. P. Blavatsky

THE EVIDENCE OF IMMORTALITY
by Dr. Jerome A. Anderson

MODERN THEOSOPHY
by Claude Falls Wright.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA
A Conflation by Albert E. S. Smythe.
These four books are cloth bound, price \$1. each.

THE EXILE OF THE SOUL
by Roy Mitchell, a key to the understanding of occult psychology.

THROUGH TEMPLE DOORS
Studies in Occult Masonry
by Roy Mitchell, an occult interpretation of Masonic symbolism.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION
by Roy Mitchell, a re-examination of Theosophical ideas, and their practical application in the work.

THEOSOPHIC STUDY
by Roy Mitchell, a book of practical guidance in methods of study.

The above four books are attractively bound; paper bound \$1.00, cloth, \$1.50, each.

COURSE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING
by Roy Mitchell. Especially written for Theosophical students. \$3.00.

THEOSOPHY, AN ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE
by Dudley W. Barr. 50c.

THE WISDOM OF CONFUCIUS
by Iverson L. Harris. 25c.

CANADIAN LODGES

CALGARY LODGE:

Address enquiries to Mr. Stanley S. Elliott, No. 3, 1735 College Lane, Calgary, Alta.

EDMONTON LODGE:

President, Mr. E. P. Wood; Sec.-Treas., Mr. B. J. Whitbread, 10953 88th Ave.; Lodge Room, 110 McDougal Court, 10062 100th St., Edmonton

HAMILTON LODGE:

President, Mrs. Clare Lakin; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. M. Saul, 32 Undermount St., Hamilton.

PHOENIX LODGE HAMILTON:

President, Mrs. Kathleen Marks; Secretary, Earle T. Bradfield. Lodge address, 49 East 7th St., Hamilton.

KITCHENER LODGE:

President, John Oberlerchener, 19 First Ave., Kitchener, Ont.

MONTREAL LODGE:

President, Mr. Fred T. A. Griffiths, 136 Clan-deboye Ave., Westmount, P.Q.; Secretary, Mrs. Frank Goossens.

OTTAWA LODGE:

Address enquiries to Mrs. J. C. R. Hanley, 1818 Haig Drive, Ottawa, Ont.

ST. THOMAS LODGE

President, Benj. T. Garside; Secretary, Mrs. Hazel B. Garside, 81 Hincks St., St. Thomas Ont.

TORONTO LODGE:

President, Mr. G. I. Kinman, 262 Sheldrake Blvd., Toronto 12 (phone HU 3-5346). Corresponding Secretary, Miss Jane Angus. Lodge Rms., 52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.

VANCOUVER LODGE:

President, Mrs. Buchanan; Secretary, M. D. Buchanan, 4690 W. 8th Avenue. The Lodge rooms are at 151½ Hastings St. West.

ORPHEUS LODGE, VANCOUVER:

President, E. F. Wilks; Secretary L. C. Hanson; Room 708, Lumbermen's Bldg., 509 Richards St., Vancouver 3, B.C.

CANYON LODGE, NORTH VANCOUVER:

President, Mr. Charles R. Carter; Secretary, Mr. J. B. Jefferson, 245 St. James St. W., N. Vancouver, B.C.

VICTORIA LODGE:

Apply to Mrs. J. Housez, 4030 Locarno Lane, Gordon Head, Victoria B.C.

WINNIPEG LODGE:

Secretary, Mr. Henry Gadd, Suite 9B Maple Leafs Apts., 915 Corydon Ave., Winnipeg 9, Man.