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CHRISTMAS

I suppose that wherever the English tradition prevails Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, or portions of it, will be read on Christmas Day and the children, and older folk too, will fall under the magic spell of a simple story which, despite its over-sentimentality and its Victorian atmosphere, has somehow survived the long years since it was written. It has been said that Dickens caught the Christmas spirit, although the story contains nothing of Santa Claus and his reindeer or the Christmas tree under which gifts are piled. And nothing is said about a virgin born Child, a manger, or shepherds watching their flocks or a celestial choir announcing the birth.

The whole point of the story is the inner change which came over Ebenezer Scrooge whose life up to that time had depended upon outer assurances of security and power, mortgages, bonds, debentures, ledger balances. His partner Joseph Marley had died earth-bound by his dependence on such things; Scrooge through an inner transformation, through the awakening of his truly human qualities, is saved from a similar fate. Perhaps Dickens' story survives because that is what Christmas reminds us of, the message of the Christian Saviour and of all the Saviours of mankind in every land, that there must be individual regeneration, individual realization of man's higher and essential nature.

2000 years ago the people of Palestine were expecting the advent of a Saviour, a Divine Man who would re-establish David's kingdom, become a mighty leader of the

Jewish people and restore that nation to its former glory. But such a Saviour did not come; instead there came a teacher born from the common people—a carpenter's son who taught, not the formation of an outer kingdom of might, but the discovery of an inner kingdom of power. He and his teaching were rejected, except by a few. He had spoken of the power of Love, of inclusive and universal compassion, beyond all limits of national and patriotic aspirations, compassion, free-flowing to all without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. He counselled his followers to practice certain virtues, not because this would be pleasing to some outer God who would be angry if they were not observed, but because such virtues were practical necessities for any one who would find his way to the inner kingdom, the kingdom of the Divine Self within.

He taught:

Blessed are they that seek the Kingdom.
Blessed are they that are modest and gentle.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see the God.

Blessed are they who radiate peace, for they shall be called the Sons of God.

These were not intended to be admonitions of goodness or morality, but rather as steps on the path of learning a non-self-centred attitude, an attitude which would

result ultimately in a permanent mutation in consciousness. If they were practiced in daily living, the enforced denial daily of self-interest as the all compelling motive of life, would lead finally to the realization of the All-Self in all beings. By his life and by his words the Teacher in Palestine taught the old doctrine of the Divine Self within, the "Christ within the hope of glory". He who had been "made perfect through suffering" who had been over the path, spoke with the authority of one who knew the way by experience and could counsel others who were willing to try.

The Church, founded much later in his name, soon lost all knowledge of the mystical way which the teacher had taught; the mystical was supplanted by the merely supernatural. Christmas in the Church is a time of remembrance of the birth, some 2000 years ago, of a Jewish boy who had no human father. Stars moved from their accustomed courses to stand still over his birthplace, and angels sang in the sky above the city. This baby was destined to be the "Saviour" of mankind and belief in him, his supernatural birth and the supernatural events connected with his life, became essential for "salvation." Today more and more people, inside and outside the churches, simply refuse to believe such things, although at Christmas time a mood of sent-

imentality overwhelms the Christian world and lip service is paid to these myths.

2000 years ago men were expecting a superhuman Messiah who would restore peace and harmony in the world. Today no such hope moves thinking people who have come to realize that "There is hope for man only in man". Modern science, not religion, is doing much to awaken men's understanding of their own nature and the implications of science all lead away from the supernaturalism of religion into the superphysical of the mystical.

The ancient symbolism of Christmas, ancient long before Christianity was born, recalls to our memories the concept of the perfectibility of mankind through the birth from within of the "Christ in you the hope of glory". Each man for himself must find the inner Kingdom of the Self, and in finding it, begin to live nobly, unselfishly and lovingly among his brother human beings, each of whom is a potential God. At the cycle of the Christmas Season, hope springs anew that mankind may realize its true nature, put away from itself those things which do not become the Self and so create here on earth a paradise of joy, beauty, nobility and compassion for all beings on the many-stepped ladder of life.

—D.W.B.

ONENESS

"Lift thy head, O Lanoo; dost thou see one, or countless lights above thee, burning in the dark midnight sky?"

"I sense one Flame, O Gurudeva, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it."

"Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, doest thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men?"

"It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying, 'Thy Soul and My Soul.'" — Secret Doctrine, I, 120.

THEOSOPHY IN PRACTICE

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

(This article was first published in *The Theosophical Path*, Point Loma, California, in January, 1917. Now edited and revised by the writer for *The Canadian Theosophist*.)

An inquirer once asked what were the principal teachings of Theosophy which gave its students such boundless confidence in it; and the answer was what Shakespeare's beautiful Rosalind said to Orlando in reply to a very different question: "There were none principal; they were all like one another, as halfpence." It is impossible to say that one measure of a Beethoven symphony is more important than another; so is it impossible to say that any Theosophical doctrine is more essential than another. Each measure in the symphony is necessary for the whole, and each tenet of Theosophy is but one link in the great thought-chain which the disciple does not completely fashion until he has attained to self-knowledge.

But just as in Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony" there is one beautiful theme that forever suggests the whole, and reminds one always of moving lightly along a placid stream with the blue sky overhead, green trees on either shore, and Nature's feathered songsters singing to the accompaniment of the lapping wavelets, so there is one theme in the great Theosophic Symphony which is perpetually echoing in the disciple's mind as he moves along the stream of life. And this is the teaching of the duality of human nature.

For an adequate comprehension of this teaching, it is necessary to understand the Theosophical doctrine of the seven principles of man, which may be found clearly and simply explained on page 91 of *The Key to Theosophy*, by H. P. Blavatsky. Briefly, Theosophy teaches that man is made up of two natures, variously described as the higher and the lower, the god and

the beast, the immortal and the mortal, the angel and the demon, the incorruptible and the corruptible, the spiritual and the animal, etc. The higher nature is divided into three principles and the lower into four; and between this higher triad and the lower quaternary does our centre of consciousness forever hover—now aspiring towards the god-like qualities of the higher nature, and now yielding to the seductions of the animal soul. Thus the mind of man is at one time the mirror that reflects the "Image of God," and at another time the "playground of the senses," which delude, corrupt, and could eventually destroy that which makes us different from merely ratiocinating animals. Once gain a clear understanding of this teaching of the duality of human nature, and season your understanding with a knowledge of the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and all the contradictions in human nature seen in the history of great and small men of the past, and in the lives of your contemporaries, and best of all in your own life, will disappear.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, "The Book of Devotion," as translated by William Q. Judge, and dedicated by him "to those who truly love their fellowmen," we find that Chapter XVI treats of "Devotion through Discrimination between Godlike and Demoniactal Natures." And here we read:

Fearlessness, sincerity, assiduity in devotion, generosity, self-restraint, piety, and alms-giving, study, mortification, and rectitude; harmlessness, veracity, and freedom from anger, resignation, equanimity, and not speaking of the faults of others, universal compassion, modesty and mildness; patience, power, fortitude and purity, discretion, dignity, unvengefulness and freedom from conceit—these are the marks of him whose virtues are of a godlike character . . . Those . . . who are born with demoniactal dispositions are marked by hypocrisy, pride, anger, presumption, harshness of speech, and ignorance . . . There are two kinds of natures in beings in this world, that which is godlike, and the other which is demoniactal; the godlike hath been fully declared, hear now from me, . . . what the demoniactal is.

Those who are born with the demoniacal disposition . . . know not purity nor right behavior, they possess no truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it, saying it is not governed by law, declaring that it hath no Spirit; they say creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only. Maintaining this view, their souls being ruined, their minds contracted, with natures perverted, enemies of the world, they are born to destroy. They indulge insatiable desires, are full of hypocrisy, fast-fixed in false beliefs through their delusions. They indulge in unlimited reflections which end only in annihilation, convinced until death that the enjoyment of the objects of their desires is the supreme good. Fast-bound by the hundred chords of desire, prone to lust and anger, they seek by injustice and the accumulation of wealth for the gratification of their own lusts and appetites. "This today hath been acquired by me, and that object of my heart I shall obtain; this wealth I have, and that also shall be mine. This foe have I already slain, and others will I forthwith vanquish; I am the lord, I am powerful, and I am happy. I am rich and with precedence among men; where is there another like unto me? I shall make sacrifices, give alms, and enjoy." In this manner do those speak who are deluded. Confounded by all manner of desires, entangled in the net of delusion, firmly attached to the gratification of their desires, they descend into hell. Esteeming themselves very highly, self-willed, full of pride and ever in pursuit of riches, they perform worship with hypocrisy . . . only for outward show.

In studying the present condition of the world, after "discriminating between the godlike and demoniacal natures," one is made painfully conscious of the fact that there has not been manifest enough evidence of the godlike nature in this titanic struggle. Indeed, is there much evidence of the godlike nature anywhere? Not *much*—but heaven be praised, there is still *some!*

We are taught that the divine nature in man, if given half a chance to manifest as lord of the body and mind (and it is a question of personal choice in each individual), can redeem this old world of ours. Our Teachers have repeated over and over again that in the application of Theosophical principles to the daily life of humanity lies the solution of all the problems that confront us. And this assertion every earnest student of Theosophy is ready to echo, for the reason that he has found it so in his own life and in his own circle—however limited that circle may outwardly appear.

Having been a student of Katherine Tingley's from childhood, the writer feels perfectly confident in saying that, in the universal application of the teachings of Theosophy lies the only *permanent* cure for all disharmony and misery in the world—national or international, personal or general. Any system of compromise or force will never *permanently* stop bloodshed and strife. Any system which is not built on the sure foundation of spiritual knowledge and a reliance on the divine nature in man will at best be but a temporary palliative—it cannot permanently cure. It will be dealing with *effects* and not with *causes*.

The world is in chains in the truest sense. Tom Paine said:

What are the iron chains that *hands* have wrought?

The hardest chain to break is made of *thought*.

How shall we break these chains? Learn to think rightly. The sincere Theosophist is firmly convinced that if the teachings in *The Voice of the Silence* were practised by millions, there could be no threat of universal destruction, and the terrible incubus of nuclear warfare, of distrust and brutality, would be lifted. How do we know this? Because H.P.B. did not waste her precious life meddling with *effects* and *remedies*: she concerned herself with fundamental *causes*. She wrote: "The one terrible and only cause of the disturbance of harmony is selfishness." It is only the lower nature of man which is selfish. The higher nature is unselfish, compassionate, and just; for it is always conscious of being at one with the spiritual side, the higher nature, of every other being.

It should be remembered that the brain-mind of man, unless illuminated by the light of the Higher *Manas*, is according to Theosophy, just as much a part of the lower, personal self as are the purely animal functions, such as eating and sleeping, breathing and reproduction, living and dying. Hence the great error of our modern educational methods in placing intellectual achievements on a pedestal as the final goal.

"Even ignorance," we are taught in Theosophy, "is better than head-learning with no soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it." The selfish man never can hope to attain soul-wisdom, which really means self-knowledge; for "self-knowledge is of loving deeds the child." Neither can the selfish man ever hope to become the Lord of his own body; for his very selfishness is a part of that body, and "self-preservation is the first law of nature"—or of the lower aspect of nature, we should prefer to say.

It is always well to turn to original sources for information; and so to illustrate this point further, I will quote again from H. P. Blavatsky's writings:

Every human organ and each cell in the latter has a keyboard of its own, like that of a piano, only that it registers and emits sensations instead of sounds. Every key contains the potentiality of good or bad, of producing harmony or disharmony. This depends on the impulse given and the combinations produced; . . . If the impulse comes from the "Wisdom above," the Force applied being noetic or spiritual, the results will be actions worthy of the divine propeller; if from the "terrestrial, devilish wisdom" (psychic power), man's activities will be selfish, based solely on the exigencies of his physical, hence animal, nature. The above may sound to the average reader as pure nonsense; but every Theosophist must understand when told that . . . the cells of his body answer to both physical and spiritual impulses.

Verily that body, so desecrated by Materialism and man himself, is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all, the mysteries of nature in our solar universe. That body is an Aeolian harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other of catgut. When the breath from the divine Fiat brushes softly over the former, man becomes like unto his God—but the other set feels it not. It needs the breeze of a strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia, to set its animal chords vibrating. It is the function of the physical, lower mind to act upon the physical organs and their cells; but, it is the higher mind *alone* which can influence the atoms interacting in those cells, which interaction is alone capable of exciting the brain . . . to a mental representation of spiritual ideas far beyond any objects on this material plane. *Psychic and Noetic Action*, LUCIFER, Oct. and Nov., 1890.

This dual aspect of man will explain the shocking contradictions in the lives of some of the world's greatest geniuses; and we believe that the main distinction between

a mere genius and a true spiritual Teacher is that the mind of the latter responds *only* to the "breath of the divine Fiat," whereas the mere genius *sometimes* responds to the "strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia." Many men, alas! seem rarely to respond to anything else! We do not believe that it was the "breath of the divine Fiat . . . brushing softly over the strings of pure silver" of Poe's Aeolian harp, when he wrote *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, or *Annabel Lee*, or *The Raven*. Music there is, to be sure; but it is of the catgut variety. The divine breath is not to be found in charnel houses or "tombs by the sea." It is always present in the sunshine, on the mountain heights, or under Heaven's lightning, if you will; but it has naught to do with ravens and trained gorilla cut-throats. Most of Poe's word-pictures seem to be the echoes in a great intellect of the animal chords vibrating in anything but a wholesome manner. The same may be found in Dean Swift, as in that terrible *Modest Proposal* of his; and it is running all through Byron. Poor Byron! Is there a more pitiful spectacle in all literature? Cursed with a terrible heredity, revolting against cant, but without the self-control necessary to the true reformer, he plunged into excesses that were almost as disgusting as the hypocrisy which he abhorred. And yet the Divine did speak in him at times, as when he wrote:

What signifies self? . . . The mere selfish calculation ought never to be made on such occasions; and, at present, it shall not be computed by me . . . I should almost regret that my own affairs went well, when those of nations are in peril.

And then, what a self-revelation is here! what an acknowledgement of duality of human nature!—

Like the Chaldaean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
bright

As their own beams; and earth, and
earth-born jars,
And human frailties were forgotten
quite:

Could he have kept his spirit to that flight

He had been happy; but this clay will sink

Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link

That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

What if Byron had had a Teacher whom he could forever love and honor, and who, with the tenderness of a mother and the wisdom of a Seer could have saved him from breaking "the link that keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink." Does he not feel the need of such a Teacher, when he cries in bitterness, but at the same time with the courage of the hero:

And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,

My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late!

Yet I am changed; though still enough the same

In strength to bear what time can not abate,

And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

Byron's life is to me one of the greatest lessons in the duality of human nature I have ever studied. Untaught in his youth his heart to tame, the springs of his life were poisoned, till it was too late!

In this connection I am reminded of a warning given by H. P. Blavatsky to her students as to the delusions that often beset the path of those who seek spiritual knowledge half-heartedly. She wrote:

There are those whose reasoning powers have been so distorted by foreign influences that they imagine that animal passions can be so sublimated and elevated that their fury, force and fire can, so to speak, be turned inwards; that they can be stored and shut up in one's breast, until their energy is, not expanded, but turned toward higher and more holy purposes; namely, *until their collective and unexpended strength enables their possessor to enter the true Sanctuary of the Soul and stand therein in the presence of the Master—the HIGHER SELF!* For this purpose they will not struggle with their passions nor slay them. They will simply, by a strong effort of will put down the fierce flames and keep them at bay within their nat-

ures, allowing the fire to smoulder under a thin layer of ashes. They submit joyfully to the torture of the Spartan boy who allowed the fox to devour his entrails rather than part with it. Oh, poor, blind visionaries!

As well hope that a band of drunken chimney-sweeps, hot and greasy from their work, may be shut up in a Sanctuary hung with pure white linen, and that instead of soiling and turning it by their presence into a heap of dirty shreds, they will become masters in and of the sacred recess, and finally emerge from it as immaculate as that recess. —*Occultism versus the Occult Arts*, LUCIFER, May, 1888.

Some people imagine that it is difficult to be a good Theosophist. They have a strange distorted notion that one must "give up" so much! The only things that I know of that a true Theosophist must give up, are those things which he is better off without. He must give up the "flesh-pots of Egypt," of course; but in giving them up he gets in return, without seeking it, what the whole world is looking for and rarely finds—health, peace and happiness. Theosophy requires nothing of any man except that he be what a man who is conscious of his divinity, of being something more than a thinking animal, *ought* to be. And any man who fails to be a Theosophist—even though he never heard of the name—pays the penalty for his transgression by that very transgression; for "as ye sow, so must ye also reap." William Q. Judge tells us:

The true road is plain and easy to find; it is so easy that very many would-be students miss it, because they cannot believe it to be so simple.

And H. P. Blavatsky says:

It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the meta-physical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness, and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer—is a Theosophist. —*Practical Occultism*, LUCIFER, April, 1888.

And yet Theosophists are comparatively few; for the reason that none save him who endeavors to square his life to the above definition can properly be called a Theosophist. The strength of the Theosophical Movement lies not in the number of its

adherents, but in their earnestness and sincerity; for our Teachers have ever insisted that we do not make the great mistake of the majority of mankind in regarding moral precepts and practice as the least important

element in their religion. Theosophy itself is synonymous with everlasting truth, and therefore imperishable; and "Theosophist is, who Theosophy does," said H. P. Blavatsky.

SOME EARLY CANADIAN LODGES

(Continued from page 68)

Toronto Lodge (Continued)

The transfer to Beaver Lodge of half the members of Toronto Lodge, including all its officers, was a severe blow, but the remaining members rallied and commenced work anew. The two Lodges maintained cordial relationships, and neither Lodge desired to become involved in any of the personal issues which gave rise to the bitter recriminations at the time of the secession of the Theosophical Society in America. Toronto Lodge, while disagreeing with Mr. Judge on the formation of the separate Society, held Mr. Judge himself in high esteem, and his books and his articles were used in Lodge study classes.

The Lodge had to find cheaper quarters, and it is interesting to note that in 1896, after a brief period of meeting in the homes of members, the Lodge leased new quarters with a seating capacity of 100 in the old Avenue Chambers, on Spadina Avenue at a rental of \$3.00 per month. Twenty-five chairs were purchased at a cost of \$7.50!

Then followed years of slow, but steady growth. There were visits from some of the prominent members, Countess Wachtmeister came in 1896, and spoke in Toronto, Woodstock and Guelph; Mrs. Besant in 1897 gave several lectures to large audiences, and also spoke in Hamilton, where Mr. F. E. Titus of Toronto Lodge had conducted some meetings; Mr. J. C. Chatterji, Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, Mr. Henry Hotchler, also came to Toronto, and these visitors helped to sustain and increase public interest in Theosophy.

It was a time also when there was an assembling of those members who contrib-

uted so much to the life of Toronto Lodge; to mention a few: Charles Lazenby, Roy Mitchell, Felix Belcher, A. J. Horwood, N. W. J. Haydon, Harry Tallman; and, as mentioned previously, Mr. Samuel Beckett and Mr. A. E. S. Smythe rejoined Toronto Lodge. The above mentioned members became well known for their lectures and class work, but in addition to these there were also many members who served the Lodge in other capacities, and whose long years of membership was indicative of the fact that Theosophy was a living power in their lives. Mrs. Annie D. Haydon joined Toronto Lodge on May 6, 1903, and while she later became inactive she subsequently applied for reinstatement following the death of her husband, Mr. N. W. J. Haydon. Mrs. Haydon, who is still a member is now the earliest joined living member of Toronto Lodge, although other members have a greater number of years in active membership.

Efforts were made to arouse interest in Theosophy in other cities and towns, Hamilton, Woodstock, Guelph, Brampton; an enquiry was received from Montreal respecting the formation of a Branch there, and books and literature were sent. The librarian of the Winnipeg Public Library requested a supply of theosophical books, and these too were forwarded. The Minutes indicate that Toronto Lodge was in frequent touch with other lodges in the American Section.

The Leadbeater scandal broke in 1906, and Toronto Lodge sent a strongly worded resolution to American Headquarters supporting the American Section "in taking

prompt steps to purge the Society of both teaching and teacher". Mr. Leadbeater had been held in high esteem by Colonel Olcott, and Mr. Leadbeater's admission of the truth of the charges against him may have hastened the death of the aged President-Founder, who passed away in 1907. Immediately after his death, Mrs. Besant declared that the Masters had visited Headquarters and "impressed" her to be the successor of Colonel Olcott. This raised another furore in the Society, and threatened another split in the ranks. Mr. G. R. S. Mead resigned and founded The Quest Society, which attracted many former T.S. members. However, Mrs. Besant was confirmed as President, and at once started a campaign to restore Mr. Leadbeater's membership. Again the ranks were split on this issue, but eventually Mrs. Besant had her way over the protests of many members, including Toronto Lodge. Mrs. Besant asked all who disagreed with her to leave the Society. Toronto Lodge sent a long letter in February 1909 to Mrs. Besant, setting out the position of the Lodge in the Leadbeater matter. The letter referred to Mrs. Besant's request that those who disagreed with her leave the Society; this, Toronto Lodge refused to do, preferring to remain in the Society and work to the best of its ability for the cause of Theosophy. Mrs. Besant sent a short, snappy reply, and refused to visit Toronto on her proposed tour of the Lodges in North America.

The formation of the Canadian Section was first mentioned in the above letter to Mrs. Besant "a goodly number of our members look forward to the time when we shall have a Canadian Section and be free to manage our own affairs without outside interference." The Toronto Lodge's determination to work for Theosophy and Theosophy only was again affirmed when Mrs. Besant started the Co-Masonry Movement. A resolution deeply deploring this action was suggested by two of the Masonic members, Mr. Beckett and Mr. Randall, but this was amended to provide that the Society should hold itself aloof from organic union with other bodies.

Toronto Lodge also found itself opposed to a proposed new Constitution for the American Section. Strong protests were made after a Convention in Chicago in 1910 and to a major request that the Lodge send in its suggestions for amendments, the following resolution was sent: "That this Committee recommend to the Branch that the only suggestion this Branch has to make in reference to the proposed new Constitution of the American Section of the Theosophical Society is that there should be only one article in the said Constitution, viz. that the present Secretary be appointed for life, and that absolute power for the government of the Section be placed in his hands." Copies of this were sent to other Lodges but the irony of it apparently escaped all but one.

In 1910 the increasing number of members made necessary the finding of larger quarters, and in June 1911 the Lodge moved to the Canadian Order of Foresters' Building, on College Street, near Yonge. There was a large meeting hall for the Sunday lectures and a room upstairs for a library and Lodge Room. This was the beginning of Toronto Lodge's most active years, in which many steps were taken to acquaint the public with Theosophy. Classes were held each week night, except Wednesday and Saturday, and Mr. Roy Mitchell prepared an attractively bound yearly calendar of the many activities. Classes included a Strangers' Class, an Intermediate Class, talks by Mr. Mitchell on mystical literature, a series on Christian mysticism by Mr. Smythe, in addition to the Sunday morning Secret Doctrine Class, and the regular Sunday evening lectures. A Travelling Library was started to serve enquirers anywhere in Canada.

In July 1911 the General Secretary of the American Section suggested to the Lodge that a Canadian Section be formed. The Lodge considered this to be a desirable step but felt that the time was not yet ripe. A copy of the correspondence was sent to other Canadian Lodges.

The formation of a Canadian Section was

brought forward again in September 1912 by Edmonton Lodge, whose Secretary, Mr. H. T. Bolt, suggested that a Canadian Convention be held in Winnipeg in the Summer of 1913 to discuss the matter. Toronto Lodge approved of the suggestion.

Two other Lodges were formed in Toronto around 1911-1912—West End Lodge and East End Lodge. These were separate Lodges but were actively supported by Toronto Lodge. East End Lodge was short lived, but the West End Lodge carried on for many years. Speakers from Toronto Lodge were going to Hamilton each Sunday, and eventually a Lodge was formed there in 1916.

In 1914 a suggestion was received that Toronto Lodge form a Branch of the Star of the East, but this was rejected as "The Toronto Theosophical Society was so fully occupied with the legitimate activities of the Society laid down at its Founding that it had no time for other things."

Increased interest in the theosophical lectures again made necessary the securing of larger quarters, and in September 1915 the Society leased the main auditorium in the Canadian Foresters' Building, together with two rooms upstairs.

The visits of Mr. Max Wardall and Mr. L. W. Rogers in 1916-17 resulted in many new members, and at the annual meeting in 1918 the membership had increased to 186. For Mr. Rogers' final lecture the Lodge leased Massey Hall, and the attendance at this meeting was 1,300.

The matter of the formation of a Canadian Section was under active consideration, and a letter respecting this was received from Vancouver Lodge in 1918. In January 1919 a Committee was formed for the drafting of the Constitution for the Canadian Section. A Charter for The Theosophical Society in Canada was issued on November 12, 1919 and the work of organizing the Section began. In October, 1920 the Society received notice from Foresters Hall that the auditorium would no longer be available on Sundays, and again the Lodge began to look for new quarters.

After considerable searching the property at 52 Isabella Street was purchased, and on March 30th, 1920 construction of an auditorium was commenced. During the interval the Lodge leased Victoria Theatre on Yonge Street for Sunday evening talks, and also leased a room above the theatre for its Library and Lodge Room. The new Hall was opened on July 10th, 1920 and there was an excellent attendance. The building was not completed but the library was in working order. The members assumed a heavy financial burden in constructing their new quarters, but accepted it cheerfully, and gradually reduced the mortgages. In 1934 Mr. Felix Belcher very generously paid off the balance of the mortgages, and from that time on the property has been free from encumbrance.

This concludes the early history of Toronto Lodge, a Lodge which throughout its past seventy-three years has been noted for its independent and democratic attitudes and for its staunch and continuing loyalty to Theosophy as presented by Madame Blavatsky, William Q. Judge and those other students who adhered to the original message. Its members now number about 170; its library has expanded to approximately 6,000 volumes and in addition the Lodge has a Travelling Library which sends books to enquirers anywhere in Canada. Many thousands of persons have used the Library and have attended the lectures and through the activities of the Lodge, Theosophy and some of its basic concepts are known throughout Toronto and the surrounding areas. Its platform has been open to representatives of the world religions and to speakers from various systems of thought.

The adherence of the Lodge has ever been to Theosophy pure and simple; this was the lodestone which guided the Lodge through the schisms and difficulties which beset the Movement from time to time, and, judging from present conditions, will continue to be the lodestone for the future of this first established Lodge of Theosophy in Canada.

—D.W.B.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE THEATRE

BY HERMINE SABETAY, D. Sc.

The word 'theatre' means not only a building especially adapted to scenic representations, but also the whole of dramatic art. It derives from a Greek verb which means 'to behold'; the corresponding Latin term is 'spectacle': a view 'to be looked at'. A 'drama' is literally a 'thing done' or 'performed'.

In antiquity, dramatic displays were an essential part of the Mysteries, where the great occult truths of the Universe were allegorically enacted. In Eleusis, the most famous sanctuary of Ancient Greece, the sacred drama showed the abduction of Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, by the God of the underworld, and her reappearance in the higher regions. Though the story was often interpreted as the annual cycle of vegetation, the intuitive onlooker was expected to understand that he beheld the destiny of the human soul, living alternately in the physical body and in the heavenly world. The nether world was meant to suggest incarnation, the earthly imprisonment.

Death and resurrection was the general theme of the rituals performed in the Mystery-temples. Dionysos, Osiris, Attis, Adonis were some of the divine heroes represented in various cults, as being killed and again restored to life through a process of regeneration.

Tragedy is said to have had its origin in the worship of Dionysos, where the dismemberment of the god, torn into pieces by the Titans, was bewailed in a ritual lamentation. This myth, very similar to the Egyptian legend of Osiris, is to be understood as an allegory depicting the fragmentation of the Absolute into manifold creation.

In the ancient drama, the actors wore masks and hieratic dresses. In Latin, a mask is called 'persona', a word which also designated, in a derived sense, 'person' and

'personality'. The actor can be considered, in this connection, as a symbol of the Self, taking on various masks or illusive faces for his different 'roles' or incarnations, the unreal coverings of the true individuality. Under the mask, the actor remains himself; the higher Ego is not affected by his transitory manifestations moving on the stage of the lower worlds. The real Man—Atma-Buddhi-Manas—lies concealed under the false personality.

In the Mystery-teachings the physical body was considered as the very tomb of the immortal entity. It is perhaps because of this philosophical idea, belonging especially to the Orphic tradition, that in the Mycenaean sepulchres the faces of kings were covered with golden masks. In Egypt it seems to have been the general practice to put a covering on the faces of the dead, and burial masks have been discovered in many other countries.

Masks were also in use in the mystery plays of the Mediaeval age, where they were employed to represent devils, demons, dragons. In these religious festivities the stage was sometimes divided into three levels, corresponding to the three worlds of heaven, earth and hell, and where the drama took its course simultaneously. The Passion Plays of the Middle Ages brought up the ancient tradition of Death and Resurrection contained in the gospel story of Jesus. An analogous 'legend' is still enacted in an initiatory rite of Freemasonry.

The relationship between the Higher Self and the lower personality symbolized by the actor retains its validity, though masks are no longer in use. Fundamentally the man remains himself and apart from the person he represents during the play. Again the various roles he embodies correspond to the exterior and ever-changing appear-

(Continued on Page 112)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Alvin Boyd Kuhn, Ph.D., one of the foremost scholars of this generation in the Theosophical Society, passed away in his sleep during the night of Sept. 13. He will be well remembered by thousands of persons who met him in his extensive lecturing tours for Theosophy in the United States and Canada. Dr. Kuhn was wholeheartedly devoted to his studies in Comparative Religion, particularly Christian origins, history and interpretation, and was the author of many books on these subjects of which *The Lost Light, Who is This King of Glory?* and *The Shadow of the Third Century* are perhaps the best known and brought him in touch with students in many lands. The keen enthusiasm with which he pursued his research work was not dimmed with age and he rejoiced whenever he discovered for himself and could pass on to others, some hidden fragment which could be fitted into the pattern he was creating. His first book, *Theosophy, A Modern Revival of Ancient Wisdom*, written as his thesis for his Ph.D. degree, and published in 1930, is a valuable work on the nature of Theosophy and on the history of the Movement. Shortly after its publication, Dr. Kuhn first visited Toronto Lodge and thereafter he returned each year, sometimes twice a year, for a series of lectures and talks to classes.

In *Theosophy* Dr. Kuhn wrote: "The Theosophical Society is therefore not composed of a band of believers in certain creedal lines, but a body of students and seekers. They are travellers on a quest, not dwellers in a creed." In saying "au revoir" to our friend we think of him as one who was himself "a traveller on a quest" who, while ever pressing forward on his course, would always pause to point out the way as he found it to his fellow companions of the path.

* * *

Word has just been received of the death on September 14th of Mr. Alfred A. Griffiths of St. Catharines, Ontario. Mr. Griffiths was a member of a Theosophical family which maintained the Theosophical tradition in the Niagara Peninsula for years.

For some time meetings were held in their home, the historical DeCew House near Fonthill.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to all members of his family.

* * *

The annual report to Adyar shows that the Society in Canada had at Sept. 30 of this year, 307 members, one more than last year. 21 new members joined the Society, 4 were demitted to the Canadian Society and there were 13 re-instatements. However, 29 members became inactive, 3 resigned and there were 4 deaths with 1 demit to another Section.

* * *

I have very much pleasure in welcoming four new members into the fellowship of the Society, namely, Miss Margaret Baxter, a member at large, and Miss Mary Hastings, Mr Leonel da Silva and Mr. Albrecht Kleiner, all of whom joined through the Toronto Lodge.

* * *

Theosophy in Action reports that an international Theosophical Group in Education has been started to link by correspondence F.T.S. who are teachers or are otherwise interested in education. As its value will depend on pooling experiences, members should be active participants in the Group. Will anyone interested please write to Mrs. B. Ensor, Flat 1, 12, The Paragon, Blackheath, London, S.E.3., England.

* * *

A copy of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett* is urgently required by one of our members. Would any reader who has one and is willing to sell it please write to me.

* * *

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A supply of books and pamphlets in the French language has been obtained in the hope that these will be of service to members, subscribers and enquirers in the Province of Quebec. There are twenty-eight different pamphlets, but of some of these only one or two copies are available for distribution. The books are: *La Clef de la Theosophie*, *L'Ocean de Theosophie*, *Echos de*

L'Orient, *Cinq Messages de H. P. Blavatsky*, *La Lumiere sur Le Sentir*, *Notes sur La Bhagavad Gita*, *Bhagavad Gita*. These are all paper-bound except the *Bhagavad Gita*.
D.W.B.

MORE ON THE GAYATRI

Mr. William Roos, whose *Notes on the Gayatri* appeared in our May-June, 1963 issue, has been continuing his studies of the Sanskrit commentaries on the Gayatri. He has compiled some additional "notes" and has generously offered to make mimeographed copies available to students at no charge.

The Editors will be pleased to forward to Mr. Roos the names of any readers who may be interested.

POPULAR BOOKLET IN SHORT SUPPLY

You Will Come Back, one of the books on Reincarnation mentioned in our last issue is almost out of print. At the time of going to press the Toronto Lodge Book Concern had a few copies remaining for sale, otherwise, as we are informed by Miss F. E. Gould, the author and publisher, the third edition is now exhausted.

If Christmas does not implant the spirit of divine love ever more deeply in all souls, it is celebrated in vain. And never will the festival of gladness generate its high cathartic power to spiritualize the race until, instead of the physical birth of one babe in the impossible Bethlehem story (taken as history), the anniversary at the solstice speaks volubly to every intelligent human of the birth within the area of his own consciousness of the soul of divine graciousness and compassion.

—Alvin Boyd Kuhn, *Yule and Noel*

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

Since the Rev. Hoeller asks a question of me in his letter in your July-August number, I presume his desire to close the discussion does not preclude an answer to it. He wants to know whether my listing in *Leaders in American Science* indicates authority in occult matters.

It was never claimed as such. It indicates standing in the field of my chief interest, the correlations between physical science and Theosophy, and also that the membership of the Movement is not exclusively composed of crackpots; something of which the public, and especially the scientific public, needs to be reminded now and then.

He has a point in that the journals to which he contributes probably would, as he claims, require some data on his past; but they as well as he are in error if they consider that such training itself includes "authority" in the occult. If there is any such thing as "authority" in that field, it derives from length of study and volume of practical experience and observation. Religious schools would teach nothing on it except in an erroneous and/or adverse manner. I have studied it for 51 years last February; I believe the Rev. Hoeller's interest in the subject is more like one tenth of that as to time.

Since in the same missive he claims that (a) I am a brilliant writer, and (b) a liar, perhaps I may be permitted a brief remark on these interesting allegations. I suggest that those Theosophists who have kept their files during the controversy refer back to his article which started this argument, in which he urged Theosophists, on pain of public ridicule, to drop their outmoded and puritanical opposition to Tantric teachings. Since this opposition derives solely from H.P.B. and the *Mahatma Letters*, was he merely urging us, not to abandon their "authority," but to emphasize it less?

I plan one of these days to issue an ex-

tensive analysis of the Tantra and the tactics of its advocates from my own press. I suggest that in the interim the Rev. Hoeller be somewhat more careful with his statements; and to the readers, that any of them might well do some checking up by securing—if they can and without being caught in public with it—a copy of the Tantra work best known in the Occident, the *Kama Sutra*. (unexpurgated.)

Victor Endersby

☆ ☆ ☆

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

I certainly agree with the movement set in motion to emphasize Reincarnation and Karma. Indeed, when the law of Reincarnation is admitted as a governing intellectual principle, all men will tread more carefully the path of life and proceed with greater caution to fulfill their family and group obligations.

One of the basic postulates enunciated for us by Christ was when he told us to "Love our neighbours as ourselves." In the last 2,000 years we have paid little attention to this statement. Fundamentally something has been wrong in the basic thinking process of our western world, and also in the east to a degree.

When we speak of the brotherhood of man and have the initial agreement of the fact that reincarnation is a life process with its cycles of involution and evolution, we shall enter the future with widened vision and far-seeing so that our knowledge will produce the wisdom of a great age and enlightenment.

H. P. Blavatsky has pointed out the necessity to state plainly and boldly the fact that "The ONE LIFE is closely related to the One Law which governs the World of Being—KARMA . . . It is the unerring LAW OF RETRIBUTION." Further, she says, "For the only decree of Karma—an eternal and immutable decree—is absolute Harmony in the world of Matter as it is in

the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward or punish ourselves, according as we work with, through and along with Nature, abiding by the laws on which that harmony depends, or—breaking them.”

Were the human race to clearly grasp the fundamentals and know the fact that Karma and Rebirth are the basis of the law of Love that Christ enunciated 2,000 years ago we would produce a world of truth, beauty and goodness. The state of superman would be realized by many and all would be conscious of greater horizons of endeavour. This indeed would be liberation.

Today we make the future and produce the environment of tomorrow. “The Manasic principle actuates all that occurs within the man’s aura, and he suffers or makes progress according to the application of that principle.” See to it, “that as a man thinketh so is he”, that we as a society promote true knowledge endowed with wisdom.

P. M. Poulin

☆ ☆ ☆

The Editors
The Canadian Theosophist

I should appreciate very much *The Canadian Theosophist* allowing me to call attention to a most extraordinary and valuable publication just issued by Mr. Victor Endersby, editor of *Theosophical Notes*.

It is a 45 page brochure entitled “*A Study of the Arcane School of Alice E. Bailey*”. In his preface, Mr. Endersby points out how closely the writings of Alice Bailey “resemble that of the Besant-Leadbeater ‘Neo-Theosophy’ which includes the Liberal Catholic Church and World-Teacher propaganda. Both the latter are more or less veiled attempts to divert the pure stream of Oriental Esoteric Philosophy, introduced to the West by H. P. Blavatsky, into a definitely Christian channel. ‘The Logos’ (as a He), ‘The Trinity’, ‘The Master Jesus’, etc.”

My own opinion, based upon many years given to an investigation of the “Arcane

School” and other spiritistic and psychic cults, is that Bailey, like Leadbeater before her, was the amanuensis of a dugpa—probably the same one. Bailey and Leadbeater were both mediums and, as such, subject to hallucinations, obsession, and all the perils common to that state.

Leadbeater’s work was the more pernicious because he had a Theosophical audience, while Bailey played chiefly to the lunatic fringe. Both, however, did incalculable harm to the Cause of Truth that Blavatsky and the Masters represented, and still do.

Every Theosophist, and student of Theosophy, owes it to himself to obtain and study this masterful analysis of a stupendous fraud that out-I-Ams the “I AM” itself. Write to Mr. Victor Endersby, P.O. Box 427, Napa, California, for a copy.

George Cardinal LeGros
Editor, *The Theosophical Reminder*

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 splendor 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

SOME COMMENTS ON "THEOSOPHICAL VALUES"

BY ELOUISE R. HARRISON, LLB.

In his excellent article on "Theosophical Values", *The Canadian Theosophist*, July-August, 1963, Dr. Wilks has the following to say about the theosophist and his relationship to Nature:

"Before him are always two alternatives, to be the 'Hammer or the Anvil' to mould nature, or to be moulded by her and take what comes. There is no third course. He can remain a child of Nature, or boldly daring come out from under the protection of her skirts, adventuring on his own to become Self-reliant and Self-responsible, and *mould Nature's energies as they flow through his being into an expression of his heart's desire.*" (Italics mine).

The last italicized words are directly contrary to what the Mahatmas themselves say about nature: they do not mould nature or her energies at all, but, instead, and I quote from page 22 of the *Mahatma Letters*, in this connection, they say: "But you must know and remember one thing: we but follow and *servilely copy nature* in her works."

It is quite clear, therefore, that the theosophist who goes out trying to mould or alter the laws and energies of nature in his being to suit himself is simply going contrary to what the Mahatmas are doing and would very soon find himself, by analogy, in the black lodge, whose members violate and mould all the laws and energies of nature in an attempt to gain powers for themselves and thereby make terrible karma for themselves.

An extension of the idea presented by K.H. would imply that were we able to comprehend completely all the laws of nature, particularly her spiritual ones (which has certainly not been achieved yet either by theosophists or modern science) with regard to our being and carry these laws

out explicitly (not *alter* them), we would be adepts.

But this can never be done by violating or changing or moulding nature's commandments.

In another letter, the Mahatma states that they are simply co-workers of nature: not, it is to be noted, alterers or moulders of nature or her energies. It is the black lodge which tampers with and perverts natural energies for their own selfish purposes and thus their adherents consequently become candidates for ages of spiritual suffering and final annihilation.

One can certainly agree with Dr. Wilks that a student should become self-reliant and self-responsible but to reach these states one must *follow* nature not attempt to divert or nullify her immutable principles.

Dr. Wilks then declares that the theosophist should strive for growth not happiness. Is this not a form of sublimated selfishness to be motivated for a desire for one's own spiritual growth? How about the cries of suffering in the world and H.P.B.'s strictures in the *Voice* that the candidate let each cry of pain of other's suffering remain in his heart until he has personally removed it from the sufferer's eye? And the remark that we progress best when we help another on the path?

And there is still plenty of suffering in the world despite the efforts of the service clubs mentioned by the learned doctor.

Which brings up the problem of evil: according to the *Mahatma Letters* there is no evil in nature: all is immutable law. Evil comes only from man—the one free agent in nature—when he *dissociates* himself from nature and starts misusing and misapplying natural powers and energies. "Humanity then alone is the true source of evil," continues K.H. And he reminds Sin-

nett that two-thirds of these evils are produced by sacerdotal religions, by priest-hoods, etc., because in their name more sins and evils are committed than anywhere else; the other one-third from man's bad living.

This brings boldly to view that the Mahatmas draw great distinctions between good and evil, quite unlike many modern theosophists who say that *all is one* and that there is *no good nor bad*. The latter must be heading for the black lodge.

In connection with the problem of evil, we should remember that H.P.B.'s statement in the *Secret Doctrine* was pretty conclusive: the laws of morals and mathematics were set for this Manvantara. Morality is therefore an absolute not a relative value. Those who sin in ignorance will have to pay for it just as much as those who sin with knowledge. Consequently any attempt to alter these natural moral laws for occult or religious purposes will be a violation of the teachings of theosophy and the doctrines of any pure religion.

Dr. Wilks then catalogues some spiritual values, the first being that "one word too often profaned", namely, love, to slightly misquote Shelley. Of this spiritual quality he declares: "It is seldom mentioned in occultism . . ." This statement is not correct as it is mentioned many times in the *Mahatma Letters*: in fact, one of the most striking remarks therein is the following: "*Love and Hatred* are the only immortal feelings, the only survivors from the wreck of *Ye-damma*, or the phenomenal world." And all students are familiar with H.P.B.'s remarks on the subject in the third volume of the *Secret Doctrine*.

The learned doctor further elaborates that love as compassion is exemplified in the story of Damon and Pythias: the love of two men for each other so that one offers himself to be killed in the place of his friend. Modern Freudian psychologists have seen a homosexual undertone to such devotion, particularly as the two men were Greeks, and Greece just before its deserv-

ed destruction began to luxuriate in that very worst of "crimes against nature." Compassion is not the term to be applied between two male persons: it can only be applied to many persons of either sex, such as the feelings Buddha or Christ had for the whole world of men and women, regardless of who or what they were.

Outside the spiritual love of the soul for the Atman, the next highest love is that between man and woman in the most spiritual of sympathies, according to H.P.B., *not* the love between man and man.

Near the end of his article, Dr. Wilks has this statement:

"It is found that your older brother friend, who is far more interested in your *Spiritual* welfare than you are yourself, is the first with ordinary helpfulness in times of stress . . ."

Who is this "older brother" who is more interested in a person's spiritual welfare than he is himself? It isn't 1975 yet. All the rest of us are students, are we not? Can anyone assume the role of elder brother to the other?

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE THEATRE

(Continued from Page 106)

ances which the permanent Self assumes in its successive incarnations.

The mask is replaced nowadays by an elaborate make-up and the physiognomic attitudes of the actor according to the character he presents on the stage.

A really good actor, living the drama and feeling the emotions so much that he forgets for the time being his own existence, can be paralleled with the Ego 'drowned' in his personality and identifying himself with this lower expression of his true life. Such is the condition of most men; it is poeticized in the myth of Narcissus.

The relationship between the spiritual entity and the incarnated being is fully illustrated in the following passage:

Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma, then, is the law of re-birth, or of the re-incarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours. The *inner*, or real man, who personates these characters, knows the whole time that he is Hamlet for the brief space of a few acts, which represent, however, on the plane of human illusion the whole life of Hamlet. And he knows that he was, the night before, King Lear, the transformation in his turn of the Othello of a still earlier preceding night; but the outer, visible character is supposed to be ignorant of the fact. In actual life that ignorance is, unfortunately, but too real. Nevertheless, the *permanent* individuality is fully aware of the fact, though, through the atrophy of the "spiritual" eye in the physical body, that knowledge is unable to impress itself on the consciousness of the false personality. —*The Secret Doctrine*, II 306 Orig. Ed., III, 307 Adyar Ed.

A similar idea is expressed by Gino Cerninara in her book, *The World Within*:

Life seems almost to be like a school for actors: the director of the school wishes each student to be so flexible and so complete, as to be able to play *all* roles equally well, and for this purpose makes everyone, willy-nilly, play widely different parts, no matter what his natural inclinations. Were you superb as Puck last night? Very well, then, tomorrow you must begin to learn the role of Shylock. Were you magnificent as a man last life? Very well, then, next life you must learn to be a woman.

The theatre itself with its ever varying shows is an image of the world or a symbol of manifestation. The fictitious scenes proceeding on the stage correspond to the illus-

ive apparitions of Maya. The author who imagined and wrote the drama, is the dramaturge, the creator, who projects visions of persons and situations on the screen of his mind. Mysterious as the creation of the work is, involving inspirations from a higher level, it demands a plan, a solid mental construction and a careful elaboration before it can be realized on the stage. The dramaturge can be paralleled, in this symbolism, with the Demiurge or the Great Architect of the Universe, who forms the world out of the archetypes conceived in the Divine Mind following the Great Plan. And as the design of the play arises from the unconscious, which is the superconscious Mind of the dramaturge, so it is with the creative process of the Cosmos:

The Universe was evolved out of its ideal plan, upheld through Eternity in the Unconsciousness of that which the Vedantins call Parabrahman. —*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 281 Orig. Ed., I, 324 Adyar Ed.

"As above, so below" say the Hermetists.

But this drama of manifestation is an illusion, a fleeting reflection of the One Reality, the Eternal immutable Principle:

The Universe, with everything in it, is called Maya, because all is temporary therein, from the ephemeral life of a fire-fly to that of the sun. Compared to the eternal immutability of the ONE, and the changelessness of that Principle, the Universe, with evanescent everchanging forms, must be necessarily, in the mind of a philosopher, no better than a will-o'-the-wisp. Yet, the Universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself. —*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 274 Orig. Ed., I, 317 Adyar Ed.

The cosmic theatre is boundless infinite space, wherein countless "evanescent everchanging forms" appear on the stage and pass away.

The author acknowledges Rene Guenon's *Aperçus Sur L'Initiation* as source for some of the ideas contained in this article.

ARE WE PREPARED FOR 1975?

BY F. PIERCE SPINKS

Think back eleven years. Have they passed quickly? Have you accomplished all that you planned? Now look forward eleven years. Before you realize it 1975 will be here. Are you now doing your part to insure the success of cherished expectations?

Our prime objective, as everyone knows, is an honest brotherhood of all races and creeds—a venture not beyond the capability of success. But today's existence of several societies bearing the name theosophical, largely fenced off from each other by decades of misunderstandings and outworn tradition,—this is a mockery of brotherhood, the brotherhood they all profess. No Theosophist denies that Brotherhood is the basis of his society's platform, but does he face the logical corollary deductions that stem from this simple declaration? Are we furthering our objective when we remain aloof from each other, uncommunicative, when we view each other's activities with suspicion verging on antipathy? *In our minds* we may give service to working towards brotherhood. But *in our hearts* we fail, because when it comes to other theosophical societies we hedge, we dodge, or we ignore the issue. And because of this we are open to the charge of moral cowardice. We prefer the dismal twilight zone of Status Quo because its tricky light permits us to hide from thoughts that are too strong for us, to refrain from answering questions too challenging, and to substitute straw men for real facts so that we may knock them down and fool ourselves with false activity. And finally we dismiss the whole aggravating problem with the sweeping statement that our differences are basic because they concern interpretation of teaching and therefore any co-operative acts toward a final unity would be hypocritical.

But hearken to H.P.B.'s own words in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 19): "The members of the T.S. at large are free to

profess whatever religion or philosophy they like, or none if they so prefer, provided they are in sympathy with, and ready to carry out one or more of the Three Objects of the Association."

Cannot we accept H.P.B.'s words as what the Founders of the T.S. and the Great Inspirers supporting them wanted in 1875—and still want in 1964? Can we not heed Blavatsky's dying plea to hold together as the fingers of one hand? Can we not use heart *and* mind to find ways and means to better conditions in our great Theosophical Movement so that unity will become not a thing to talk about but a natural and desired necessity toward which all our efforts tend?

We are woefully behind the times. Separativeness, compartmentalism, is moribund. The world as a whole, particularly the religious world, is seeking every more and more aggressive and sensible means of co-operation as between former antagonists. Though it is only fair to say that there has been some improvement in our own inter-theosophical relations recently—a hopeful presage of things to come—this improvement has not been sufficiently virile nor does it include all parts of the Movement. *All* Theosophists have received help from H.P.B., first emissary of the Lodge, and are consequently her debtor and theirs that sent her. Therefore *all* groups are compelled to seek the unity which they demanded of us. Non-theosophists are making extraordinary strides in the new spirit of ecumenism now sweeping away old fustian dogmas—barriers to a general rapprochement. Can we do less? we who are to be the spearhead of spiritual progress, a thing assured by our excellent sponsorship?

The details of these giant strides appear often in the daily papers. They show where biting differences in belief are being surmounted by a radiance of the spirit put into action. It is a new era, where rugged individualism gives way to co-operative understanding. Shall it be said that theosophists, who should be among the first in spiritual leadership, prefer to sleep, to harbor and

nurse the ill-will of past generations, to see the mote in our brother's eye, while refusing to live the spirit *and even the letter* of their own professed Objects?

What can we do that is practical to prove our loyalty, our understanding, and our devotion to our Cause? What, if you wish so to express it, can we personally sacrifice, that that Cause may prosper?

I propose, as a simple and practical beginning, that all theosophical groups the world over support a Department of Inter-theosophical Relations. This should take the form of at least two or three convocations a year, say on White Lotus Day, H.P.B.'s Birthday, and on the Founding Day of the Society, which occasions fall on May 8th, August 11th, and November 17th. This step alone will help to break down barriers, awaken wider appreciation, and start the spiritual circulation moving again through our veins.

But above all *we need a change of heart and mind*. We need complete and daring honesty to face all issues, and then valiantly to act and carry out noble thought with wise action. Then, I feel sure, the night of our misunderstandings will fade, and the sunrise of a new day dawn.

"THEOSOPHISTS: REUNITE!" is not a slogan designed to whip up a synthetic enthusiasm. It is a central theosophical fact of life which must be obeyed at the peril of our very existence. Without this unity we are a sham, a mockery of our professions. There are too many fine people among us to permit us to decline the challenge and face decimation. Therefore, we continue to make this call, and we feel certain the idea and the ideal will triumph. But as of now, today, we seek to speed up the consummation. Time is valuable; if lost, it tends to add to human ignorance and misery.

As the swift-passing years close in upon 1975 the time therefore is *now* for all brothers in the Movement, particularly those who have turned their backs upon one another, to seek friendship across historic bar-

riers, to allow the new spirit of ecumenism to reach across the gulfs of intolerance, self-admiration and self-justification, and embrace and win all hearts and minds. The walls erected long ago to separate and protect ourselves from each other's intervention seem now, more than ever, to give the lie to what we all stand for. We must raze those walls, step forward, and speak in all sincerity to each other as brothers and sisters in fact as in name. For "every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself *shall not stand.*" (*Matthew*, 12, 25).

REGARDING REUNIFICATION OF THEOSOPHISTS AND THE NEW ERA FORETOLD FOR THE LAST QUARTER OF THIS CENTURY

BY IVERSON L. HARRIS

Every earnest student of Theosophy is naturally vitally interested in the maintenance of fraternal relations among members of his own organization and the adherents of Theosophical groups with different backgrounds and traditions. Co-operation, whenever and wherever mutually advantageous, is, of course, of real value to the Movement as a whole.

But when it comes to a proposed formalized amalgamation, everyone must admit that a genuine esoteric movement is not amenable to the same desiderata that prevail in the merger of business organizations like railroads, banks and oil companies! It is not a question of who has the largest membership or can muster a majority of the proxies!

To illustrate: On October 23, 1887, H. P. B. herself wrote from London in her own handwriting: "H. P. B. would give 7 dozens of Bridges, 77 dozens of Noyses and the whole esoteric brood in the U.S.A. for one W. Q. J., *who is part of herself since several aeons.*" Bearing in mind this and similar declarations made by H. P. B. concerning William Q. Judge, I for one resent

the republication by F. Pierce Spinks in 1958, of charges made more than three score years ago, against William Q. Judge, which charges were the cause of the split in the T. S. in 1895. One can hardly expect those students of Theosophy and members of groups who have never questioned Mr. Judge's *bona fides* nor forgotten his superb work for the cause of Theosophy in this country, readily to amalgamate with the society which at that time published a report, never officially withdrawn, accusing W. Q. J. of committing frauds.

Let it be said in justice to the incumbent international President of the Adyar T. S., Sri Ram, and the newly re-elected President of the Theosophical Society in America, Dr. Henry A. Smith, that their efforts to reinstate William Q. Judge to his original, rightful place as one of the worthy Founders of the Society, have done more to forward inter-organizational fraternity and co-operation than the persistent clamors for reunification, however well-intentioned and sincere. The official attitude of The Theosophical Society in Canada towards William Q. Judge and towards inter-organizational fraternity has, to the best of my knowledge, never been other than genuinely theosophical and broad-minded.

Most needed in the Theosophical world today and for the New Era due in the last quarter of this century, besides earnest students and dedicated workers, is someone with the *insignia majestatis*, qualified to teach and possessed of spiritual and intellectual charisma. Those of us who had the privilege of learning from G. de Purucker and serving under his inspired leadership know that he was so qualified. For, as the illustrious Welsh poet and historian, Kenneth Morris, wrote in his Introduction to G. de P.'s *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, "While some are busy proving that no Teacher can come, one has appeared among us who Teaches." "Ye shall know them by their fruits", Jesus is alleged to have said in the Gospels.

May the last quarter of the 20th Century

give us again someone who has what H.P.B. called "that moral courage which fires the heart of the true adept with the sacred flame of propagandism"* — someone who can truthfully proclaim as H.P.B. herself did: "There are not showers enough in Great Britain to quench the ardour with which I stand by my convictions."**

**The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. I, Page 48.

***Ibid*, Page 212.

BOOK REVIEWS

Science and the Real, by E. Lester Smith, D.Sc., F.R.S., being the Blavatsky Lecture delivered at the Besant Hall, London, on June 1st, 1963. Published by The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England. 23 pp. Three shillings and sixpence.

This address given by a theosophist who is also a scientist of high distinction—a Fellow of the Royal Society, the highest scientific honor in England—will be of great value to the many who are interested in the relation of Theosophy to science. It consists of the frank appraisal of the several avenues of scientific research in the light of Theosophy. It deals in turn with Physics, Biology, Medicine, Psychical Research, the Genetic Code, and the origin of life. It explains the nature and rules and consequently the limitations of Science.

It gives what is probably the shortest and most understandable description of the new work on the genetic code which it is possible for the layman to read, and makes the point that this mechanism, even in detail, is universal throughout all living things, things as far apart as plant and Man, showing thereby the basic Unity of all life's processes, beneath the great diversity of forms.

After explaining how the elements of the genetic code can be altered by cosmic rays, and also by man's deliberate use of radiation or chemical mutagens, he makes the startling statement, "As yet we cannot do this (change genes) in an exactly predetermined fashion, but soon we shall learn, this indeed is a frightening new power that man

has wrested from the Guardians—something even more sinister in its possibilities than atomic energy." Apart from the danger of some tyrannical power using or controlling Eugenics to produce a Master Race, as doubtless the Nazis would have done had they been successful, this new power may be of great value when used to straighten out a mutilated and distorted race of men full of congenital anomalies, following upon an atomic war; should such a disaster ever come upon humanity.

In a more optimistic vein he declares that "In a few decades we may look forward to biologists proclaiming the Unity of Life as a Scientific fact. At present they certainly do not concede the Universal Life Principle in which we believe, able to function in or out of physical vehicles". If this hopeful prediction comes to pass, it will mean an end to Scientific Materialism, at present the only possible outlook for Science as it is at present constituted; for then the Soul of Man can no longer escape recognition as a developed centre of the One Life.

Speaking of the Nature and Method of Science he points out that Science is not concerned with Ultimate Reality, "It restricts itself to problems it is competent to solve",—"Science will only deal with theories that are capable of disproof" he quotes. Empirical evidence must always finally decide whether a theory is acceptable or not.

Dealing with psychical research he offers his opinion that "Probably the majority of Scientists still cannot bring themselves to believe anything so unpalatable" as the existence of the psi factor in man, despite Dr. Rhine's researches, carried forward now toward evidence of precognition. Dr. Lester Smith does not touch upon Psychic phenomena with such well attested phenomena as Materialization and dematerialization which must be today, even more than half a century ago, impossible of credence to men who have since delved deeply into Matter and its alter-Ego, Energy.

Whilst discussing the origin of life and the theory of Spontaneous Generation and

the difficulties met with on all sides, he omits all mention of the hypothesis of the Secret Doctrine concerning the hierarchy of Builders who take such a large part in Nature's work of incessantly building bodies of all kinds.

Finally in conclusion he says, referring to much that has been put forward as Theosophy, "It may all be true; it just no longer seems vitally important. But the imperishable principles remain to inspire us, and these are the gems we have to offer. I believe it is more important for us to propound these truths and to live by them, than to work for the growth of the Theosophical Society as an organization. I trust I do not take H. P. Blavatsky's name in vain if I claim her blessing for these views." A statement with which we fully concur.

This little booklet, this lecture, may be heartily recommended to anyone interested in seeing how a Scientist of great distinction, who is also a Theosophist, looks at Science. This is something difficult to meet with, and it is put forward with a simple sincerity and clarity of thought which makes for easy reading and understanding.

W.E.W.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Faith of Other Men, by Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Published 1962 by CBC Publications, Toronto. 60 pp. \$1.75 (hard cover), \$1.00 (soft cover). This book will be published separately in the United States by the New American Library.

This is the text of seven radio talks presented over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation network last year. The series was intended, of course, for the general listener rather than the student, and the religious influence upon cultures was emphasized. In other words, the adherent of a belief was here considered of more interest than his doctrine.

The author is Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University. His method was to take a single feature of a religion—for example, the phrase *tat tvam asi* in his talk on the Hindus, and the *yin-*

yang symbol of the Chinese—and build around it an outline of the faith.

Bigotry is happily absent, and one is impressed by the sympathy and tolerance evident in Professor Smith's approach to other religions. Incomprehensibly, however, he has attempted to discuss Hindus and Buddhists without a single reference to the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, an omission which reduces the value of the chapters concerned, if not the whole series.

These talks are indicative of a growing interest in comparative religion. A significant number of books—especially paperbacks—have been published in recent years and there are now even well-attended university evening classes on the subject. These are encouraging signs from our viewpoint, and it is to be hoped that some students, not content with a superficial knowledge, will go on to investigate the Theosophical approach to religions.

T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

Theosophical Psychology. Four articles by H. P. Blavatsky. Published 1963 by The Theosophy Company. 47 pp. \$0.35 U.S.

This is a supplementary issue of *Theosophy* magazine, and is part of "the policy of the publishers to maintain in current print the original periodical literature of the Theosophical Movement—articles by H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge which appeared in the *Theosophist*, *Lucifer*, and the *Path*."

Such a policy has certainly proved its worth over the years, and the new format, a convenient sized booklet, facilitates a collection of related articles entirely separate from the magazine itself.

Among the articles are "Psychology, The Science of the Soul" and "Psychic and Noetic Action". They are as lucid and thought-provoking today as when they were written eighty years ago, a quality which can be applied to the writings of few if any of Madame Blavatsky's contemporaries.

The publishers are to be commended for their venture, and for providing a wealth of Theosophical literature at a very modest price.

T.G.D.

DISCUSSION ON REINCARNATION

Reincarnation—An East-West Anthology was discussed on "Faith and the Forum", a halfhour radio program originating in Ottawa. The panel consisted of Rev. Michael G. Peers, Anglican, the Moderator; Rev. Patrick Playfair, Anglican; Rev. John McDowall, United Church, and Mr. Leo Stock, Roman Catholic, Professor of English, University of Ottawa. All panel members had read the book.

The profound consensus was that "Reincarnation is quite incompatible with the Christian doctrine of the redemption of man being saved by Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins." And the panel was right—for Reincarnation has nothing in common with the perverted, pernicious, soul-destroying doctrine of Vicarious Atonement, an invention of orthodox Christianity, which is quite incompatible with the teachings of Jesus.

But Reincarnation is in accord with the basic truth of original Christianity that men must be saved by their own individual efforts, not by the sacrifice of any outside saviour. Until the perfective work is accomplished the inner Christ, the "Christ-in-us" is crucified daily. This is well understood by the mystics of the Christian faith. Cardinal Mercier of the Roman faith had no difficulty in accepting Reincarnation, and neither had Dean Inge of the Church of England.

The Moderator of the panel accused the compilers of the Anthology of "not using the Scriptures with a sense of integrity" referring to one quotation from the 90th Psalm as the basis for his charge, "Thou turnest man to destruction (or to 'dust' as the Revised Version has it) and sayest, 'Return, ye children of men . . .'" "Return," the reverend gentleman explained, "in the *Biblical* sense, simply means 'repent'!" But it must be assumed that the ancient Psalmist knew the Hebrew words for 'repent' and for 'return' and the record of his words says 'return' (or reincarnate) and not 'repent'.

D.W.B.

THE THEOSOPICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York in 1875. It has three objects:

1. *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*
2. *To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*
3. *To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.*

The Society affords a meeting place for students who have three aims in common, *first*, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood; *second*, the search for Truth, and *third*, a desire to associate and work with other men and women having similar aims and ideals. The acceptance of the First Object is required for all those who desire to become members; whether or not a member engages actively in the work contemplated in the Second and Third Objects is left to his or her discretion.

The nature and purpose of the Society preclude it from having creeds or dogmas, and freedom of thought and expression among its members is encouraged. An official statement on this point; “. . . there is no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which a member is not free to accept or reject.” The statement calls upon the members “to maintain, defend and act upon this fundamental principle . . . and fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.”

Theosophy or ‘Divine Wisdom’ is that body of ancient truths relating to the spiritual nature of man and the universe which has found expression down through the ages in religions, philosophies, sciences, the arts, mysticism, occultism and other systems of thought. Theosophy is not the exclusive possession of any one organization. In the modern Theosophical Movement, these ancient truths have been re-stated and an extensive literature on the subject has come into being. The teachings are not put forward for blind belief; they are to be accepted only if the truth that is in them finds an echo in the heart. Each student should by ‘self-induced and self-devised’ methods establish his own Theosophy, his own philosophy of life. The Movement encourages all students of Theosophy to become self-reliant, independent in thought, mature in mind and emotions and, above all other things, to work for the welfare of mankind to the end that humanity as a whole may become aware of its diviner powers and capabilities.

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