

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 48, No. 2

TORONTO, MAY-JUNE, 1967

Price 35 Cents

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

MADAME BLAVATSKY'S CHILDHOOD

ELOUISE R. HARRISON, LL.B.

(From an address delivered by Miss Harrison on White Lotus Day, 1966, at Victoria Lodge, Victoria, B.C.)

There have been numerous stories and articles written about Madame Blavatsky in her mature years but rarely does one meet with reminiscences of her childhood days.

There is, however, really no lack of evidence of her juvenile period if research is made into some of the writings and books by contemporary friends and relatives who knew Helena Petrovna Blavatsky intimately. Such a source is *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky* by A. P. Sinnett. In it we find some most enlightening facets about her start in life.

A member of Madame Blavatsky's immediate family supplied Mr. Sinnett with background material as follows:

"The Von Hahn family is well known in Germany and Russia. The Counts Von Hahn belong to an old Mecklenburg stock. Madame Blavatsky's grandfather was a cousin of Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn, the famous authoress, with whose writings England is well acquainted. Settling in Russia, he died in its service a full general . . . Madame Blavatsky's father left the military service with the rank of colonel after the death of his first wife. He had been married *en premières nocés* to Mdlle. H. Fadeew, known in the literary world between 1830 and

1840 as an authoress—the first novel-writer that had ever appeared in Russia—under the *nom de plume* of Zenaida R. . . , and who, although dying before she was twenty-five, left some dozen novels of the romantic school, most of which have been translated into the German language. In 1846 Colonel Hahn married his second wife—a Baroness Von Lange, by whom he had a daughter referred to by Mme. Jelihowsky as 'little Lisa' . . . On her mother's side, Madame Blavatsky is the granddaughter of Princess Dolgorouky, with whose death the elder line of that family became extinct in Russia. Thus her maternal ancestors belong to the oldest families of the empire, since they are the direct descendants of the Prince or Grand Duke Rurik, the first ruler called to govern Russia. Several ladies of that family belonged to the Imperial house, becoming Czarinas by marriage. For a Princess Dolgorouky (Maria Nikitishna) had been married to the grandfather of Peter the Great, the Czar Michael Fedorovitch, the first reigning Romanof; another, the Princess Catherine Alexeévna, was on the eve of her marriage with Czar Peter the II, when he died suddenly before the ceremony."

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1960 Edition states that the Czar died of smallpox on the day of the wedding.

After this brief look at H.P.B.'s genealogy, let us proceed to examine the environment of Russia just prior to her birth. The year 1830 to 1832 saw strange phenomena take place all over Europe. The disease, cholera, first made its appearance on the continent. This dreadful plague decimated and took its toll of great numbers of the populace in nearly every town in Europe and left few people living. It was in the midst of this catastrophe on midnight July 30-31, 1831, that Madame Blavatsky entered the world, while down the hall from her room rows of coffins were assembled. Her relatives feared greatly for her life in such a ghastly atmosphere and therefore quickly arranged for an immediate baptism, which is ably described in the following quotation which comes again from her family records:

"The baby was born on the night between July 30 and 31st—weak and apparently no denizen of this world. A hurried baptism had to be restored to, therefore, lest the child died with the burden of original sin on her soul. The ceremony of baptism in 'orthodox' Russia is attended with all the paraphernalia of lighted tapers, and 'pairs' of godmothers and godfathers, every one of the spectators and actors being furnished with consecrated wax candles during the whole proceedings. Moreover, everyone has to stand during the baptismal rite, no one being allowed to sit in the Greek religion—as they do in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches—during the church and religious service. The room selected for the ceremony in the family mansion was large, but the crowd of devotees eager to witness it was still larger. Behind the priest officiating in the centre of the room, with his assistants, in their golden robes and long hair, stood the three pairs of sponsors and the whole household of vassals and serfs.

The child-aunt of the baby—only a few years older than her niece aged twenty-four hours—placed as 'proxy' for an absent relative, was in the first row immediately behind the venerable *proto-pope*. Feeling nervous and tired of standing still for nearly an hour, the child settled on the floor, unperceived by the elders, and became probably drowsy in the overcrowded room on that hot July day. The ceremony was nearing its close. The sponsors were just in the act of renouncing the Evil One and his deeds, a renunciation emphasized in the Greek Church by thrice spitting on the invisible enemy, when the little lady, toying with her lighted taper at the feet of the crowd, inadvertently set fire to the long flowing robes of the priest, no one remarking the accident until it was too late. The result was an immediate conflagration, during which several persons—chiefly the old priest—were severely burnt. That was another bad omen, according to the superstitious beliefs of orthodox Russia; and the innocent cause of it—the future Madame Blavatsky—was doomed from that day in the eyes of all the town to an eventful life, full of vicissitude and trouble.

"Perhaps on account of an unconscious apprehension to the same effect, the child became the pet of her grandparents and aunts and was greatly spoiled in her childhood, knowing from her infancy no other authority than that of her own whims and will. From her earliest years she was brought up in an atmosphere of legends and popular fancy. As far back as her remembrances go, she was possessed with a firm belief in the existence of an invisible world of supermundane and submundane spirits and beings inextricably blended with the life of each mortal. The *Domovoy* (house goblin) was no fiction for her, any more than for her nurses and Russian maids. This invisible landlord—attached to every house and building, who watches over

the sleeping household, keeps quiet, and works hard the whole year round for the family, cleaning the horses every night, brushing and plaiting their tails and manes, protecting the cows and cattle from the witch, with whom he is at eternal feud—had the affections of the child from the first. The *Domovoy* is to be dreaded only on March the 30th, the only day in the year when, owing to some mysterious reasons, he becomes mischievous and very nervous, when he teases the horses, thrashes the cows and disperses them in terror, and causes the whole household to be dropping and breaking everything, stumbling and falling that whole day—every prevention notwithstanding. The plates and glasses smashed, the inexplicable disappearance of hay and oats from the stables, and every family unpleasantness in general, are usually attributed to the fidgetiness and nervous excitement of the *Domovoy*. Alone, those born on the night between July 30th and 31st are exempt from his freaks. It is from the philosophy of her Russian nursery that Mdlle. Hahn learned the cause of her being called by the serfs the *Sedmitchka*, an untranslatable term, meaning one connected with number seven; in this particular case, referring to the child having been born on the *seventh* month of the year, on the night between the 30th and 31st of July—days so conspicuous in Russia in the annals of popular beliefs with regard to witches and their doings. Thus the mystery of a certain ceremony enacted in great secrecy for years during July the 30th, by the nurses and household, was divulged to her as soon as her consciousness could realize the importance of the initiation. She learned even in her childhood the reason why, on that day, she was carried about in her nurse's arms around the house, stables, and cow-pen, and made personally to sprinkle the four corners with water, the nurse repeating all the while some mystic sentences."

Madame Blavatsky's childhood has been carefully chronicled by her various relatives and friends in old manuscripts and books. One of her aunts penned these lines:

"From her earliest childhood she was unlike any other person. Very lively and highly gifted, full of humour, and of most remarkable daring; she struck everyone with astonishment by her self-willed and determined actions . . . Those who have known her from her childhood would—had they been born thirty years later—have also known that it was a fatal mistake to regard and treat her as they would any other child. Her restless and very nervous temperament, one that led her into the most un-heard of, ungirlish mischief; her unaccountable—especially in those days—attraction to, and at the same time fear of, the dead; her passionate love and curiosity for everything unknown and mysterious, weird and fantastical; and, foremost of all, her craving for independence and freedom of action—a craving that nothing and nobody could control; all this combined with an exuberance of imagination and a wonderful sensitiveness, ought to have warned her friends that she was an exceptional creature, to be dealt with and controlled by means as exceptional. . . . Left alone with no one near her to impede her liberty of action, no hand to chain her down or stop her natural impulses, and thus arouse to fury her inherent combativeness, she would spend hours and days quietly whispering, as people thought, to herself, and narrating, with no one near her, in some dark corner, marvellous tales of travels in bright stars and other worlds, which her governess described as 'profane gibberish'."

When Madame Blavatsky was about eleven years of age, her mother died and the young girl was then brought up by her remarkable grandmother who lived at Saratow, where her husband was civil governor. In addition, she had many governesses, one being a very unusual lady named Madame

Peigneur. This lady had been a celebrated beauty in the days of the French Revolution but at the time she had charge of the young Madame Blavatsky she was a weird old Parisienne, bent over with the weight of many years. This old nurse regaled young Helena and her small sisters with thrilling stories of her exploits during the time of the French Revolution. What made her narratives so exciting was the fact that she had been chosen by the 'Phrygian red-caps' or the *citoyens rouges* of Paris, to take the part of the new Goddess of Liberty in a huge celebration. Decked out in the appropriate costume, Madame Peigneur rode in great triumph along the avenues of Paris, hailed by the mob of liberators as the incarnation of Freedom. All these stories fired young Helena with enthusiasm and it was then that she declared to all her friends and relatives that she was determined that she too, would be a "Goddess of Liberty" all her life.

Then in the writings of Madame Jelihowsky, Madame Blavatsky's sister, we discover further interesting sidelights in the youthful trends that went to mould the mind of the greatest reformer of this modern age. She makes the following observations:

"Intensely nervous and sensitive, speaking loud, and often walking in her sleep, she used to be found at nights in the most out-of-the way places, and to be carried back to her bed profoundly asleep. Thus she was missed from her room one night when she was hardly twelve, and, the alarm having been given, she was searched for and found pacing one of the long subterranean corridors, evidently in deep conversation with someone invisible for all but herself. She was the strangest girl one has ever seen, one with a distinct dual nature in her, that made one think that there were two beings in one and the same body; one mischievous, combative, and obstinate—everyway graceless; the other as mystical and metaphysically inclined as a seeress of Prevorst. No schoolboy was ever more

uncontrollable or full of the most unimaginable and daring pranks than she was. At the same time, when the paroxysm of mischief-making had run its course, no old scholar could be more assiduous in his study, and she could not be prevailed to give up her books, which she would devour night and day as long as the impulse lasted. The enormous library of her grandparents seemed then hardly large enough to satisfy her cravings."

As she grew older, Madame Blavatsky read more and more and listened to many of the tales of wonder and witchcraft. But, whereas the other sisters of hers quickly forgot these strange adventures, Helena never forgot them nor would she consider the stories as flights of the imagination. Of her many friends at this time of her life was a curious old man who was about one hundred years old. Madame Blavatsky's sister continues the record thus:

"The old man was a real magician, in the popular estimation; a sorcerer of a good, benevolent kind, who cured willingly all the patients who applied to him, but who also knew how to punish with disease those who had sinned. He was greatly versed in the knowledge of the occult properties of plants and flowers, and could read the future, it is said. . . . Bouyrak had an irresistible attraction for her (Helena), and she visited the strange old man whenever she could find the chance to do so. Once there, she would put questions and listen to the old man's replies and explanations as to how to understand the language of bees, birds and animals with a passionate earnestness . . . As to the centenarian 'wise-man' he used to say of her constantly to us: 'This little lady is quite different from all of you. There are great events lying in wait for her in the future. I feel sorry in thinking that I will not live to see my predictions of her verified; *but they will all come to pass!*' "

Such are some of the incidents in the life

of the great woman who was known to the world as Madame Blavatsky, and who did so much to change the ways of thinking of the world. I think that the most fitting summing up of her early days can be made by referring again to her sister's narrative with the following quote:

“For her, all nature seemed animated with a mysterious life of its own. She

heard the voice of every object and form, whether organic or inorganic; and claimed consciousness and being, not only for some mysterious powers visible and audible for herself alone in what was to everyone else empty space, but even for visible but inanimate things such as pebbles, mounds and pieces of decaying phosphorescent timber.”

CATAclySM, NOV. 4, 1966 AND . . . THOSE TO FOLLOW!

ROBERTO HACK

General Secretary

The Theosophical Society in Italy

Our reader friends have by now heard all about the truly apocalyptic cataclysm which fell upon various districts in Italy last November, and particularly, and so unexpectedly, upon our own city of Florence! It is therefore not necessary for me to stop and describe the enormous sufferings, both physical and moral, and the possibly irreparable damage caused to the precious and inestimable art treasures of this town!

In this sorrowful plight, the practically unanimous brotherly manifestations of affectionate solidarity coming from every part of the country, from the farthest north down to Sicily, have been truly touching; and it is indeed a joy to convey to all our brothers, sisters and friends, our warmest expressions of gratitude. From various foreign countries as well, we have received and are still receiving affectionate words of brotherly participation in our sorrow over so many human beings who have been so painfully hit by a bitter fate. To all of these we send our most grateful thanks.

* * *

While those in authority and people in general are searching for the possible

causes and perhaps the *material* responsibilities, which may eventually be discovered as the origin of this monstrous natural cataclysm, it seems to me that we who study and are searchers after the deeper truths of life should look beyond the mere superficial appearance of things and happenings which are taking place on this troubled planet of ours. Let it be clear that I am neither a scientist nor a clairvoyant, therefore the simple ideas which I am expressing now do not pretend to be authoritative, but are, if anything, the thoughts of the “man in the street”, and derive only from a strong desire to stimulate those people who are capable of using wisely both their mind and will-power, while searching more deeply into the *real* causes which, through their accumulation, finally produce, to the detriment of humanity, cataclysms and misfortunes like those we have recently witnessed. Nor do I think that we should let ourselves be restrained by the thought that ours will very probably, in fact almost certainly, be “voices crying in the wilderness”: the time may come when even these “voices” may be taken into consideration

and will gradually spur men on to think and act more wisely than they are doing now . . .

* * *

As long ago as 1933, in the May issue of our review *The Lotus*, there appeared an article of mine in which, after summarising the various phases of scientific research into the "transmutation of elements" and the "atomic disintegration" of matter, I wrote:

"Scientific progress is developing faster and faster; what is the future preparing for generations to come? Our most outstanding scientists are beginning to understand what enormous responsibilities are falling upon science itself; the ever-increasing knowledge of Nature's subtler powers is placing in the hands of humanity formidable powers, while it does not possess a corresponding spiritual and moral development.

"In his Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science last autumn (Sept. 1932) Sir Alfred Ewing, speaking of the progress made especially in the field of atomic physics through the successive discoveries of 'X-rays' (Rontgen, 1895); of 'radio-activity' (Becquerel, 1896); of 'electrons' (J. J. Thomson, 1897); of 'protons' (Rutherford, 1911); and recently of 'neutrons' (Chadwick, 1932); of the 'transmutation of elements' by artificial means, and finally of the possibility of discovering the secret to set free the terrific forces enclosed in the atom by means of disintegration; frankly recognised that: 'Man's inventive potential had overtaken and surpassed the degree of humanity's moral evolution for the wise use thereof . . .' 'We are—he went on—filled with perplexity, with delusion and almost with dismay. It is impossible not to ask ourselves: where will this incessant, continual and rapid mechanical progress end up, and what is, after all, its aim? and what will be its influence upon the human race? Man was not eth-

ically ready for such a wealth of powers. In his slow moral evolution he is still incapable of assuming the tremendous responsibilities which it implicates. Control over Nature has been placed in his hands before he was capable of controlling himself or of being his own master'.

"Furthermore, as it has been noted, we must not neglect the fact that further scientific advances may reveal to us in a not too distant future, the secret for setting free the enormous energy potentials imprisoned within the atom and, in the words of Sir Alfred Ewing: '. . . this would be equivalent to placing in the hands of a madman, of a common scoundrel, the possibilities for the dissolution of our universe!' . . .

"According to H. P. Blavatsky, occult philosophy only divulges a very limited number of its most important mysteries of life, allowing them to fall one by one, like precious pearls at long intervals and only when it is obliged to do so by the rising tide of evolution which is carrying mankind slowly, silently, but uninterruptedly towards the dawn of the Sixth human Race. They then become common property, and run the risk of being easily transformed into 'curses, far more often than blessings, in the hands of the selfish, of the Cain's of the human race.' . . .

"However, as evolution advances, not even the invisible Guardians of Humanity, who lovingly watch over the fates of our races, are able to prevent the human intellect from obtaining in a perfectly normal and legitimate way, a deeper knowledge of the subtler powers of Nature. And this is taking place now at the hands of our principal scientists; and the prospect that further advances of science may reveal the secret which will release the fearful energy potential locked up within the atom and hitherto jealously guarded and watched over by Nature, *must urgently draw the attention* of all those who are able to realise in their full significance and value, not merely

from the philosophical, but from the practical point of view, what these discoveries imply, to *the essential and fundamental importance of a corresponding and sufficient moral development of mankind.*

“The greater the power, the greater the danger, if we lack the wisdom which will allow us to control and govern ourselves as well as the titanic forces of Nature. *The greatest and gravest problem at present* is therefore acknowledged by our most eminent scientists and thinkers of today, to be clearly and obviously *a problem of moral and spiritual character.* As long as it is possible that in civilised nations such as Germany there can occur violent and painful outbreaks of racial and religious hatred which surpass in their truly savage details the deeds of the darkest periods of mediaeval obscurantism, in which every human principle of brotherhood, solidarity and love is trodden underfoot (be it remembered that these words were written in 1933, about one year after the ferocious Nazi dictatorship had become established in Germany)—it is easy to see how supremely and vitally important it is that every effort be directed towards the development of a more sensitive, true and profound feeling of conscience among men; which will not be enclosed within the narrow confines of nationality, but will transcend and overcome the differences and divisions of race, nation, religion, caste and class of society; which will no longer—and vainly—seek for the solution of its harrowing problems in hatred, in fratricidal struggles, in individual and national egotism, but will on the contrary be able to fuse together interests apparently divergent in a common higher interest, replacing them with co-operation, solidarity and collaboration, in an atmosphere of mutual good faith, justice and loving, brotherly understanding.”

* * *

Unfortunately, the very right concern of the main scientists and thinkers of that period was not taken into account, and the outbreak of the second world war was drawing perilously near! In 1938 the German scientist, Otto Hahn, discovered the nuclear fission of uranium, and it thus became clear that it would now be possible to build a bomb, the effects of which would surpass all limits; this discovery filled German scientists with horror, for fear that their secret might fall into the hands of the Nazi political and military authorities. The year 1939, alas, saw the outbreak of World War II. Many German scientists who had escaped to the U.S.A., partly through fear that their colleagues who had remained in Germany might build an atom bomb, placing the world's destiny in the hands of Hitler, persuaded President Roosevelt to embark on the construction of the atom bomb, by insisting on the urgent need of forestalling the enemy; and Roosevelt then caused the vast workshops of Los Alamos to be built, to which the world's leading physicists, Enrico Fermi among them, were called.

The results obtained were revealed when, on August 8th, 1945, the world press brought out the news of the terrifying effects of the launching of *one only* “atom bomb” on the Japanese town of Hiroshima, by an American bomber; followed a few days later by another “atom bomb” which fell on the town of Nagasaki. According to the statement of a Japanese surgeon who was present in Hiroshima the day the bomb fell, about 33,000 people were killed instantaneously! The destructive effects of the bomb did not, however, stop at that, because even people who had been only slightly injured kept on dying, *owing to the radio-active effects* discharged by the bomb, and the above surgeon declared that at least another 50,000 had already died, while the number of the victims was mounting daily! In the opinion of London radiologists, this is caused mainly by “gamma” rays, which are produced by the disintegration of the uranium atom. Moreover, these *radio-active*

elements are spread into the atmosphere at the time of the explosion, and thereafter carried by the wind to other districts, sometimes very far from the place where the bomb fell; they may therefore fall upon land and water, making them extremely dangerous for those who unwittingly come in contact with them. Plant life itself reacts very strongly to the influence of radio-active elements present in the atmosphere and suffers irreparable damage.

Unfortunately, notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding the awareness of the deadly and unforeseeable effects on the whole economy and on the equilibrium of the entire cosmos, the armaments race has never stopped since that day. At the end of World War II, a new threat appeared on the horizon of mankind, due to the military rivalry between the U.S.S.R. and the United States, when the former succeeded in its turn in manufacturing an atom bomb; a threat which was only increased when the spectre of the hydrogen bomb appeared. It was then that some atomic scientists decided that the moment had really come to put a stop to this monstrous race towards death and general destruction. First among these was Einstein, who had dreamt that the discovery of the new energy might contribute towards the making of an improved, healthier and happier human race. The next one was Oppenheimer, his successor at the Institute of Higher Studies at Princeton, a man highly cultured in philosophy as well as in science. On September 24th, 1945, at Newcastle, the British Minister of Commerce, Sir Stafford Cripps, launched a passionate appeal for world collaboration, reminding men that: "We have reached the stage when two nations, capable of letting off atom bombs simultaneously, can be sure of mutual destruction"; while a year later, on September 19th, 1946, Winston Churchill, in a speech at the Zurich University, warned severely: "The atom bomb is still in the hands of a state which, we know, will never use it except in the defence of right and of freedom, but it is

quite possible that within a few years this terrible means of destruction may become common; in that case war would not only put an end to all that we call civilization, but it might even lead to the disintegration of the globe itself. Let us not allow this to happen! Let us cause the world to rise again!"

Notwithstanding all this, men cynically continued making nuclear experiments of all sorts, *taking no notice of the certain and increasing poisoning of the earth's atmosphere due to the strong and unavoidable increase of atmospheric radio-activity, with consequent contamination of the air, the earth, the waters, and the sea . . .* On April 12th, 1957, eighteen of the most celebrated atom scientists compiled at Göttingen (W. Germany) a Manifesto, warning humanity once again about the terrible risk it was running. Contesting the statements of Chancellor Adenauer about the relatively reassuring nature of nuclear weapons, the eighteen scientists—among whom were four Nobel prize winners: Otto Hahn, Heisenberg, Max von Laue and Max Born—confirmed that nuclear weapons have the same destructive effect as ordinary atom bombs, and are "so formidable that the entire Federal Republic could perish *because of the radio-activity discharged by the explosion of a bomb of this type . . .*"

In August 1961, Oppenheimer's *Atomic Energy, Problem of Today* was published in an Italian translation bearing the far more significant title of *The Open Mind*, in which he once more insisted on the deadly danger of increased atmospheric radio-activity produced by nuclear experiments. And almost simultaneously, the work of the English scientist, J. Fowler, *Fall Out*, in its turn, threw light on the problem posed by the influence which radio-active materials deriving from atomic explosions may have on the life and destiny of humanity; he showed "fall out" to be the most terrible threat that is hanging over mankind. In his preface to the book, Adlai E. Stevenson said that the only escape from

this danger lay in international agreements which will bind the atomic powers "to abolish nuclear experiments", and added: ". . . but agreements between governments do not possess a sufficiently binding capacity and cannot be reached unless they are prompted and upheld by the conscious will of the people . . ." In September 1962, the U.N. Scientific Committee published a second Report (the first one—on the effect of nuclear radiations, had appeared in 1958) which came to this peremptory conclusion: "The definite suspension of nuclear experiments would render an immense service to present and future generations of humanity". This conclusion was subscribed both by the twenty American collaborators and by the twelve Soviet scientists who had, together with experts of 13 other countries, taken part in the research.

I could bring forward other equally authoritative quotations, but prefer to conclude with the words of the well-known French biologist, Jean Rostand, who, speaking over the wireless on June 8, 1964, after having listed the various dangers which threatened the human race, made a particular point of the "external aggressions" to which mankind is subjected: *increase of radio-activity, atmospheric pollution, adulteration of food-stuffs, etc., etc.* In 150 years' time, he added, the "saturation point" and the resistance of the human species will have been reached, if man does not protect himself from "the perils he has himself created!"

* * *

Unfortunately, not only had no attention been paid to the pressing appeals of the world's major scientists and thinkers, but the number of atomic powers has, during the last years, been increased by the addition of France and the China of Mao Tse Tung . . . Even though *perhaps* an atomic war may not break out yet, thanks to the fearful threat involved therein, it is an absurdity and a folly to have blind confidence in this "system of fear"! . . . However, the purpose of this article is definitely not to stress the monstrous danger of

"atomic war", which hangs over humanity like a sword of Damocles, but—as I said at the beginning—to search more deeply for what may eventually be the *real causes* of the frightful natural cataclysms, which for some time have been bringing disaster to different parts of this our Earth, and which appear to be getting constantly worse . . .

Even before 1962, when the U.N. experts had clearly drawn the attention of every power to the absolute necessity of "the definite suspension of nuclear experiments . . .", it has been perfectly well known that the inevitable increase of atmospheric radio-activity deriving from nuclear experiments constitutes a certain danger for every form of Life on this planet and that it is by no means impossible that it could end in the outright disintegration of the globe itself . . . Is it not therefore possible that *the deep and real cause* of today's apocalyptic cataclysms to which we are witnesses, may be precisely that? Man's immeasurable and foolish pride has led him to believe that he has succeeded in "*bending the powers of Nature to his will*; atomic energy, like all the forces of Nature, is neither good nor bad in and for itself; it knows neither friends nor enemies; it is a primordial force, mastery over which could mark the beginning of a new world . . . or its end! Channelled into peaceful and constructive lines, it could lead to many useful and beneficial ends for the benefit of mankind and could prove to be truly a new triumph of the human intellect; if, however, humanity persists in its own errors, if the nations will continue—despite the drastic warnings of Mother Nature—to base their mutual relations on mistrust, greed, envy and competition, on blind and perverted nationalisms and imperialisms, no matter under what ideals they may be cloaked, to deceive their own and other peoples, on blind and inhuman hatred; all this will inevitably and fatally burst out in new and more terrible cataclysms . . .

We can but hope that these painful ex-

periences will bring to maturity in human consciences a larger sense of understanding and of truly human spirit, so that the weight of a really intelligent and comprehensive public opinion, whose consciousness has been developed by sorrow, by suffering and

by the hard experiences of the last decades, full of cruel struggles, of wars, social upheavals and national cataclysms, of all sorts, may finally bring to bear upon the various governments the necessity of acting in a wiser and more human way.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA

Statement of the Receipts and Disbursements of year ending June 30th, 1966

Cash on Hand, and in Bank,
July 1st, 1965
(less outstanding cheques)

\$3,113.39

RECEIPTS

| | |
|---|------------|
| Lodge Dues and Fees | \$1,168.10 |
| Magazine Subscriptions | 239.50 |
| Magazine Donations | 54.10 |
| General Donations | 59.18 |
| Sales, Magazines, Pamphlets, etc. | 23.97 |
| Interest on Investments | 333.40 |
| Bank Interest on Deposits | 72.92 |
| Exchange on U.S. Funds | 19.94 |
| | 1,971.11 |

DISBURSEMENTS

| | |
|---|------------|
| Adyar, per capita | \$ 99.50 |
| Magazine Expenses | |
| Printing | \$ 977.00 |
| Postage | 67.93 |
| Magazine Envelopes | 91.53 |
| Misc.: Plates, Pictures | 50.30 |
| Express Charges | 18.65 |
| | 1,205.41 |
| General Expenses | |
| Postage | 39.20 |
| Stationery | 27.80 |
| Office Expense | 41.92 |
| Bank Charges (& S.D. Box) | 13.65 |
| Telephone & Telegraph | 8.85 |
| | 131.42 |
| Universities Project, Books and Mailing | 978.92 |
| Writings of H.P.B., Boris de Zirkoff | 607.66 |
| Binding Volumes, Canadian Theosophist | 319.00 |
| Books purchased (including to Indonesia) | 12.95 |
| D.W.B. Salzburg Convention | 686.00 |
| Other Transportation | 31.05 |
| | 2,635.58 |
| Cash on Hand | \$ 40.00 |
| Bank Balance, June 30, 1966 (less O/S Cheques) | 972.59 |
| | 1,012.59 |
| | \$5,084.50 |

\$5,084.50

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| New Members | 22 |
| Re-instated | 4 |
| Deaths | 8 |
| New Subscriptions | 18 |

DUDLEY W. BARR, General Secretary

RALPH A. WEBB, Treasurer

AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

As requested, I have examined the records and vouchers of the Theosophical Society in Canada, and, in my opinion, the attached statement presents a true and correct view of the Receipts and Expenditures of the Society, for the year ending June 30th, 1966.

DARA MIRZA

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Kartar Singh of Vancouver and a member of Toronto Lodge passed away on March 25 after a lengthy illness. He lived in Toronto from 1915 to 1929, joined the lodge here and quickly began to play an important and influential part in lodge affairs. In the difficult period following the purchase of 52 Isabella St. and the construction of the Theosophical hall he started a monthly guarantee donation plan to meet the heavy mortgage payments and other expenses. *The Toronto Theosophical News* was founded by Mr. Singh at his own expense and he was the editor for three years before he returned to Vancouver. There he founded and edited the *India and Canada* magazine and became a leading spirit in the East Indian community. He was always ready to help others and his sage counsel and advice were sought by many.

* * *

Through letters returned by the Post Office I learned of the death last Fall of Mr. John Beck, a member-at-large who lived in the Argentine. Mr. Beck joined the Society in 1943. He lived for some time in the Western States before moving to South America, but always retained his membership in the Canadian Society.

* * *

Mrs. Jean Hyland, a member of Toronto Lodge, passed away in March after a long illness. Mrs. Hyland was a well-known and active member of Toronto Lodge before she moved to Regina following the death of her husband and lived there with her daughter Mrs. Wm. Rees for several years.

* * *

I also regret to report the death on April 7 of Mr. James McVinnay, a member of Hamilton Lodge. Our condolences are sent to his daughter, Mrs. Grace Laurie.

* * *

According to a letter received recently from Mr. James S. Perkins, Vice-President of the Society, members are needed at Adyar who are willing to assist in the many duties at Headquarters. Will any members who are interested in this please get in touch with me.

* * *

Nominations made by the Lodges for the Executive Committee and the General Secretaryship did not include any new names so the present members are declared elected for another year. On behalf of the members of the Executive Committee and myself I wish to express our appreciation of this evidence of continued confidence in our efforts on behalf of the Society. But next year some other member should be elected as General Secretary. For several reasons it has become difficult for me to give as much attention to the work as the position requires, and while the members have kindly re-elected me each year for the past seven years, the time has come for a change.

* * *

The Executive Committee met on April 9 with five members present, Mrs. C. P. Lakin, Messrs. T. G. Davy, C. Weaver, R. A. Webb, and the General Secretary. Mr. Webb, Treasurer, reported a balance on hand of \$1427.58, of which \$400.00 had been earmarked for the Essay awards. Mr. Davy said that 42 entries had been received for the Essay competition, 24 from Canada, 8 from India, 6 from United States, 3 from England, and 1 from Africa. In addition to the three monetary prizes which will be awarded, 10 copies of Vol. 1 of *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* had been donated as consolation prizes. Dr. Emlyn Davies of the University of Toronto had kindly consented to act as one of the adjudicators. An application for a Charter for a new Lodge in Toronto, to be called Centennial Lodge, was approved unanimously; the Venerable Ananda Bodhi is the leader of this group. The General Secretary read a letter from Miss Katherine A. Beechey, Recording Sec-

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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



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Editors: Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Davy

Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

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RANNIE PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
Beamsville, Ont.

retary, confirming that the former requirement for two sponsors on applications for membership had been dropped from the official Rules some years ago, although some Sections still continue this requirement. The Executive decided that no change should be made at present in the Canadian

practice of having sponsors. Montreal Lodge submitted for approval certain amendments to its by-laws, which were approved subject to the suggestion that as the lodge by-laws now provide that applications for membership in the lodge be by invitation only, attention should be directed to the fact that would-be members of the Society might become members-at-large without invitation. The Executive was asked for its views on a proposal made by Miss Helen Zahara for preferential voting should there be more than two candidates for the office of President. The General Secretary was requested to advise Adyar that the preferential system of voting had been used in Canada since the Canadian Section was established, and that we were strongly in favour of this system. The General Secretary read extracts from letters received concerning the urgent need for additional monies to meet the operating expenses at Adyar which have increased greatly in the past few years; it was decided to donate \$100.00 towards this fund. A new book, *Reincarnation in World Thought* by Joseph Head and S. L. Cranston who were the compilers of the excellent *Reincarnation, An East-West Anthology* published in 1961, will be ready for distribution about the end of June. \$500.00 was set aside toward the cost of placing copies in university and other libraries. The next meeting of the Executive Committee was fixed for July 9 at 2.30 p.m.

* * *

Seven new members joined the Society in Canada last month, five through Toronto Lodge and one each through Montreal and Canyon Lodges. The Toronto members are Mrs. N. Senathirajah, Mr. and Mrs. David Riffon, Miss Marianne Graham and Mr. Anthony Brigante. In Montreal, Mrs. Viola Law became a member there, and Mr. Avery H. Holmes is the new member of Canyon Lodge. I have much pleasure in welcoming these members into the fellowship of the Society. —D.W.B.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

I have read the article entitled, "And the T.S. Will be Free", by Dr. W. E. Wilks, which has appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist* (Jan.-Feb., 1967).

I hope you will permit me to say that there are statements in the article that do not correspond with the facts.

In the discussions at the Salzburg Congress on the "Presentation of Theosophy", we did not consider or discuss "the future disposal of C.W.L.'s books" or the question of re-writing them. There was a proposal of a *general* nature that the old books on Theosophical subjects should be re-written to suit the modern mind. It was also suggested that these books should be abridged.

Last year the Theosophical Publishing House in London produced an Abridgement of *The Secret Doctrine*, but this does not anywhere alter the actual language of H.P.B., but only omits large portions which many readers find difficult to go through. What I said at the meeting at Salzburg—and this view was supported by others—was that while that kind of "re-writing" may be possible, any attempt to use language *other than* what an author has used would alter the character of the book, and might prove unfair to him and misleading. It might take away much of the deep meaning, freshness, suggestiveness, and beauty that there might be in the author's thought, as expressed by him. It may be that some who were present at the meeting were thinking of all that was said particularly in relation to C.W.L.'s books, and that may account for the statement in the article.

N. Sri Ram, President
The Theosophical Society

* * *

Having seen the Jan.-Feb. 1967 and a few previous issues of *The Canadian Theosophist*, I wish to state that I immensely regret the recent publications about the

E.S.T. in your magazine which give an entirely wrong impression to anyone who is unacquainted with the subject.

It would be possible to refute more than two dozen statements in the articles "The Door is Open" by T.G.D. and "The T.S. Will Be Free" by Dr. W. E. Wilks, but over and above this my very foremost desire is that this controversy should be closed. Therefore I am only writing to express my strong disagreement, because much that has been published in your magazine is reminiscent of blind people writing about colours of which they know nothing. Nobody who has not been a member of the E.S.T. can know anything about its value to the student. In the interests of freedom in the T.S. I should like to register this protest.

Ilse von Tresckow

* * *

The title and some remarks in the March-April number leave me a bit puzzled.

I hardly think that the author is using the word "chance" in the sense usually understood by the public, which pertains to something which just happens without any particular cause concordant with its importance. If the happenings noted really occurred in this manner, it would mean that the whole existence of the Theosophical Movement is really a chance happening, and that some chance of equal causelessness could wipe it out. That would also be true of human life in general.

As a matter of fact, one of the events cited, the meeting of H.P.B. and Olcott, was stated by the Mahatmas themselves to have been arranged by them as part of a far-flung plan. We can consider that some of the other incidents were of the same order.

The discovery of radioactivity and hence of nuclear energy was a matter of pure "chance" in that sense, as seen from the outside, but H.P.B. predicted it nine years

ORPHEUS LODGE CORRESPONDENCE

The members of Orpheus Lodge have had further correspondence with President N. Sri Ram on the subject of the E.S. (See C.T. Mar.-Apr. 1967.) They have requested the following to be published as an open letter.

Dear Mr. Sri Ram:

Thanks for your reply to our letter and our request.

Your contribution to this controversy on the E.S. and its relation to the T.S. has made it apparent that the E.S. today is really a school of instruction for those students who desire assistance in fitting themselves to be of real value in the work of human enlightenment; and that it is not an occult school with a spiritual guide and teacher, nor any pledge of obedience as was the case in the past.

There seems to be no reason why the E.S. should continue as a semi-secret, separate organization within the body of the T.S. which has no control over it. Its objectionable features of superiority, semi-exclusiveness and prestige, which have given it subtle yet strong influence over the Society's membership, depend upon its remaining a separate, exclusive organization.

The sole purpose of the Orpheus Lodge in this matter is to get the facts of this E.S.-T.S. relationship, from all sides, into the open, in order that all of us—members both of the E.S. and the T.S.—can by our mutual effort solve this profoundly grave problem of E.S.-T.S. relationship, which damages all our work for Theosophy.

It is with this object alone in mind that we write this as an open letter to you, our President.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

W. E. Wilks,
for the Orpheus Lodge,
Canadian Section, T.S.

previously. Aside from arranged happenings, *anything* which happens has to be the result of past action and that action has to be commensurable with the importance of the happenings. No *meeting* is free from that rule. Things just *seem* to be "chance"; most usually their importance or unimportance is not evident at the time but develops later, as in all the cases mentioned. H.P.B. said that the encounter between herself, Judge, and Olcott, was the result of past ages in which common effort had been engaged in.

I think most of us, looking back over our past lives, can see that most of the meetings, and a large number of other things, which made them up, didn't in the least look at the time what they turned out to be later. The law is universal, like gravitation, which is an integral part of it. The fall of a grain of sand may not look important and it may not be important in itself, but if now and then a grain fell up instead of down, there would be nothing dependable in the physical universe. Same thing in the metaphysical, the mental and spiritual aspects of the universe.

I'm sure the writer knows all that; I just wonder whether he put it that way to stir up some thinking.

Victor Endersby

CORRECTION

In the article "Chance Happenings" (C.T. Mar.-Apr. 1967) it was mentioned that Mr. A. E. S. Smythe met Mr. William Q. Judge on the liner *Wisconsin* in 1889. Mr. Boris de Zirkoff has written to point out that the date should have read 1884 and that Mr. Smythe lived in the United States, probably in Chicago, before coming to Canada in 1889.

T.S. AND E.S. —

A CLOSE IDENTIFICATION

ROHIT MEHTA

(Continued from page 21)

The expulsion of Mr. and Mrs. Dorab from the E.S. raises very fundamental issues. Evidently two factors have been involved in this incident. One, the unlimited scope of the confidence-pledge especially when the O.H. speaks of confidence in terms of "the character, outlook and judgment." When this wide scope is given, confidence does not remain restricted to E.S. matters—it covers the whole personality of the O.H. Is this not asking for too much? The second factor involved in this incident is the holding of the two offices of the P.T.S. and the O.H. by the same person. When the confidence pledge of the E.S. is made to cover the whole personality of the O.H., and since the personality of the P.T.S. and the O.H. cannot be split into two when the two offices are held by the same person, we are faced with the most awkward situation where a criticism of the one is regarded as criticism of the other too. Mr. Dorab had criticized the President and his administration. Why has he to be penalized by the O.H.? If the two offices were held by two different persons, surely the O.H. would not have been called upon to take action against a person, an E.S. member, for criticizing the President. It is the holding of two offices by one person that has created this situation. I know of occasions during the presidency of Dr. G. S. Arundale when he was criticized for certain of his policies and in this criticism some E.S. members were involved. But Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, who was then the O.H. of the E.S. did not think it necessary to expel these members from the E.S. But now when an E.S. member expresses his absolute confidence in the O.H., he thereby is committed to such absolute confidence in the P.T.S. also. The confidence-pledge

asks an E.S. member to give up his freedom of thought and expression with regard to matters concerning the T.S.

The members of The Theosophical Society who are not in the E.S. are obviously not concerned with the expulsion of an E.S. member by the O.H. of the E.S. But they are deeply concerned when such expulsion has repercussions on the larger policies of the T.S. As has been stated above, many of our active workers of the T.S. are E.S. members, at least in India. If these active workers are prevented from exercising freedom of thought and expression with regard to T.S. matters, then the position of the T.S. is seriously compromised. An expulsion of an E.S. member for freely giving out his views on T.S. matters would naturally make other E.S. members wary about speaking out freely regarding T.S. matters. And since our active workers of the T.S. are largely in the E.S., the holding of two offices by one person and the introduction of the confidence-pledge indicate an end of free thought and expression in the T.S. There will be freedom to agree with the P.T.S. but no freedom to disagree—certainly no freedom to disagree when vital issues are involved. There is no escape from this unpleasant situation so long as the two offices are held by one person. It may be said that these two offices were held in the past by Dr. Besant and Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. The only difference, however, is that in those days the over-riding confidence-pledge was not in force.

Mr. N. Sri Ram says in his article which has appeared in the November-December 1966 issue of *The Canadian Theosophist* that with reference to the E.S. he considers himself "a student of the Wisdom, and not a spiritual guide." But a question arises,

does not the confidence-pledge go contrary to the above position? And does not the expulsion of an E.S. member on the issue of confidence completely go against the statement that the O.H. considers himself only a student among students? The confidence-pledge and the action taken on the issue of confidence unmistakably prove that the O.H. constitutes a spiritual authority in the E.S. It is interesting to note that hardly any expulsion takes place in the E.S. for non-fulfilment of the requirements of study and meditation—but on the question of confidence in the O.H. immediate action is taken. Does this not show that confidence in the spiritual authority of the O.H. is most fundamental to E.S. discipline? Once again it becomes necessary for the T.S. members to consider this because of the close identification between the T.S. and the E.S. and this identification is rendered all the more close by the same person occupying both the offices.

It may be said by some as to why I make these observations about the E.S. only after leaving the E.S. I may state here that when Mr. Dorab was expelled from the E.S. I was still in the E.S. And I wrote to Mr. Sri Ram all that I have mentioned in this article. In fact I had protracted correspondence with him on the question of Mr. Dorab's expulsion and the implications of that expulsion. I had pointed out to him that by this expulsion the position of the T.S. was greatly compromised. I had mentioned to him that so long as the two offices are held by the same person the issue of freedom in the T.S. could not be regarded as safe. What I am writing in this article is thus only enlarging upon the theme which I have already discussed with Mr. Sri Ram and that, too, when I was still in the E.S.

Let me state that I have the greatest regard and respect for Mr. N. Sri Ram. He and I have worked very closely in the T.S. for over 25 years. Let me also state that I am not suggesting that the E.S. should be closed down. Let the E.S. continue in the present form or in a modified form if

its members so desire. It is quite natural for bodies like the E.S. to come into existence for study and experimentation. The question which I wish to pinpoint in this article is the identification between the T.S. and the E.S., and the question of greater identification caused by the two offices held by the same person. The issue before us is not whether the E.S. should continue or not—the issue is whether the T.S. should be completely freed from all identification with the E.S. and whether a healthy tradition should not be established whereby the P.T.S. keeps himself completely free from being the head of an organization like the E.S.

Many of the senior E.S. and T.S. members will bear me out when I say that the E.S. is regarded as the “selection of the selection.” It has been said that the T.S. is only the first selection by the future Manu of the Sixth Root Race supposed to appear after 600 years, and, that the E.S. is the second selection in which those not selected are weeded out to remain merely in the T.S.! This has been seriously stated and explained to E.S. members. From the E.S. members this statement percolates into the membership of the T.S. A member of the T.S. who hears this comes naturally to the conclusion that the T.S. and the E.S. are very closely identified. There are many such statements which have been widely broadcast by those holding responsible positions in the E.S. and the T.S. In the face of all this, to declare that the two are independent of each other is to close ones eyes to facts. The E.S. does not become independent of the T.S. just because it is no longer called the Esoteric Section but only the Esoteric School. The identification has become so deep and so pronounced that a mere change of nomenclature does not serve the purpose.

The E.S. is indeed a personal school of the O.H. Let it function as such if its members so desire. Many in the E.S. and the T.S. do not know that in 1945, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, who was then the O.H. of

the E.S., established a registered body called the E.S.T. From 1945 onwards this registered body is the Governing Body of the E.S. for the whole world. My wife and I were members of this body from its very inception and continued as such up to 1963. This Governing Body meets once every year to transact some formal business. It has nothing more to do except to transact formal business because the O.H., who is the President of this body, has very wide powers. One of the powers vested in him is to nominate his successor for the Outer Headship of the E.S. There is, however, an interesting clause in the constitution of the E.S.T. which says that in the event of the Outer Head failing to nominate his successor, the members of the E.S. Governing Body will nominate, which means elect, an Outer Head of the Esoteric School. When the element of election is introduced then one can visualize the possibility of more than one person contesting for the Outer Headship of the E.S. A person who gets the larger number of votes of the members of the E.S. Governing Body would be declared nominated as Outer Head. And the members of the E.S. will be asked to express confidence in the O.H. elected by a section of the E.S. Governing Body. The O.H. so elected may expel a member from the E.S. for disagreeing with him in regard to some matters of judgment concerning the E.S. If the O.H. so elected happens also to be the P.T.S. then the person chosen by a small group of the E.S. Governing Body will set the whole tone of the T.S. and will demand a complete vote of confidence in him from the active workers of the T.S. due to the fact that they belong to the E.S.

It has been said that the E.S. is the school of the Inner Head. How does the election of the Outer Head harmonize with the statement that the E.S. is the school of the Inner Head? Even if the O.H. fails to nominate his successor would not the Inner Head indicate who should be the Outer Head of his school? How does the election of the Outer Head come into the picture?

And yet the E.S.T. provides for it in its constitution. This has such far-reaching implications that we need not go into them. However, one thing clearly emerges out of this clause that the E.S. is the personal school of the Outer Head. Nobody who is not its member can have a right to question the existence or the continuance of such a personal school. Nor is one not belonging to it authorized to discuss as to how the personal school of the O.H. is composed or what pledges are demanded from its members. It is for the O.H. to decide as to how he will organize his own school. All that the members of the Theosophical Society should be concerned about is—that such a personal school of the O.H. should not cause any identification of the T.S. with it, for, any identification with such a school would result in the curtailment of the freedom of thought and action for which the T.S. fundamentally stands. The T.S. should be completely dissociated from such a school—such dissociation may be physical, if necessary, but it certainly must be ideological. A complete ideological dissociation is indeed called for. For the implementation of this dissociation, everything that needs to be done should be done. It may mean the acceptance of an unwritten convention that the President of the T.S. will not be the Head of the E.S. It may also mean that the E.S. will not enjoy any tangible or intangible privileges, not excluding the privilege of holding its meetings in T.S. premises. It is imperative that the T.S. premises should remain unidentified with all secret organizations involving pledges and personal loyalties. It needs to be remembered that even a subtle identification with such organizations compromises the position of the T.S. In 1950 the General Council of The Theosophical Society passed a resolution which lays down its fundamental policy. The resolution says *inter alia* that:

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for

each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.

It is the duty of each and every member of the T.S. to see that the above resolution is implemented in letter and spirit. The present identification between the T.S. and the E.S. seriously violates the above resolution

of the General Council of The Theosophical Society. The Theosophical Society must remain free of identification with the E.S. whether such identification is tangible and overt or it is intangible and subtle. Such identification prevents the T.S. from maintaining its own distinctive and unique character. This is an issue of fundamental importance and therefore no one who is really interested in the future of the T.S. should remain indifferent to it.

SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION

CONDUCTED BY GEOFFREY A. BARBORKA

Readers of The Canadian Theosophist are invited to participate in this feature by sending their questions c/o The Editors to be forwarded to Mr. Barborka.

Question. "Universe" and "Kosmos" seem to be used synonymously in *The Secret Doctrine* in reference to an area much greater than our solar system. Do these terms refer to our island universe, or galaxy, or to the "sum total" of all galaxies?

Answer. Speaking generally (without particularization), in *The Secret Doctrine* Kosmos (with a k) usually signifies the Universe; and cosmos (with a c) applies to our solar system.

With regard to astronomical usages. In a 1966 edition of an Encyclopedic Dictionary the definition for "island universe" is given as "the galaxy." Under "galaxy" the astronomical definition reads: any very large system of stars, nebulae, or other celestial bodies; also called island universe. Under "Milky Way": a luminous band visible across the night sky, composed of distant stars and nebulae not separately distinguishable to the naked eye. And a secondary meaning: also called galaxy. The meaning for "universe" is given as: the aggregate

of all existing things; the whole creation embracing all celestial bodies and all of space; but, then, "the cosmos" is added. And a secondary meaning: "in a restricted sense, the earth." A third meaning: "human beings, mankind." Obviously, the latter two meanings are not astronomical.

Referring now to *The Secret Doctrine*: "Universe" is used in two different ways: (1) as an equivalent to the "manifested Universe"; (2) as the Boundless Universe. When the adjective is used there is no doubt as to the intended meaning. It would seem as though the "manifested Universe" would be applicable to an "island universe." The use of term (2) is memorable because of being employed in the statement of the second fundamental proposition. In reading the sentence a pause should not be made after "universe," but after *in toto*—signifying "in its entirety"; thus used as an equivalent of *The Secret Doctrine's* definition of "SPACE."

"The Eternity of the Universe *in toto*

as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,' called 'the manifesting stars,' and the 'sparks of Eternity.'" (S.D. I, 16; I, 82 6-vol. ed.; I, 44 3rd ed.)

Attention is also directed to this passage:

"'Our Universe' is only one of an infinite number of Universes, all of them 'Sons of Necessity,' because links in the great Cosmic chain of Universes, each one standing in the relation of an effect as regards its predecessor; and being a cause as regards its successor.'" (S.D. I, 43; I, 115 6 vol. ed.; I 74, 3rd ed.)

Question. In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* collected by Mr. Barker appear extracts from *Lucifer*, 1893, about the question that Mars and Mercury and our earth do not belong to the same planetary chain, the former to the moon-chain, the latter to the earth chain (a) This I find too in Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, whereas modern science does not confirm that. (b) I would be pleased to know the truth about it or at least what is your opinion or conviction. Has the apparent retrogradation of these planets anything to do with it (c), and what is in error or wrong?

Thanking you beforehand I am looking forward to your answer, assuming it will appear in one of the coming numbers of *The Canadian Theosophist*. — C. van R., Holland.

Answer. Since the questioner has requested that an answer should appear in *The Canadian Theosophist*, it would be pusillanimous not to comply, even though the subject may be described as being somewhat similar to the sword of Damocles—hanging over the head of the person who tackles this controversial subject, because of what is evoked when it is discussed. So, with trepidation this problem is submitted to the editors of *The Canadian Theosophist*, not because it is thought that they would be hesitant in reviving and reviewing the theme, but because of the fact that in order to present the matter fully it would require

consideration of the Doctrine of the Spheres as well as its subsidiary teachings—especially the significance of the seven Sacred Planets—which may be classified under these headings: The Doctrine of the Globes; the Doctrine of Lokas and Talas; the Doctrine of the Seven Sacred Planets; the Doctrine of the Universal Solar System; the Doctrine of the Relationship of the System; the Doctrine of Cyclic Journeys; the Doctrine of the Relationship of the Monads to the System. All these doctrines *must be understood*. Obviously there is not sufficient space provided in this journal to cover these subjects adequately, therefore only four salient points will be considered here. The first one to be presented, before considering the question, is to call attention to two fundamental postulates concerning the Doctrine of the Spheres or Globes (these two words are used synonymously) which are stated in *The Secret Doctrine*:

"1. Everything in the metaphysical as in the physical Universe is septenary. Hence every sidereal body, every planet, whether visible or invisible, is credited with six companion globes. The evolution of life proceeds on these seven globes or bodies from the 1st to the 7th in Seven Rounds or Seven Cycles." (I, 158-9; I, 213 6 vol. ed.; I, 182 3rd ed.)

Following the lead given in this citation, all the planets in our solar system are credited with six companion globes: Mercury, the visible planet closest to the Sun, has six companion globes forming the Mercury Chain; Venus with its six companions forms the Venus Chain; Mars and its six fellow globes form the Mars Chain; Jupiter plus its six spheres constitute the Jupiter Chain; and Saturn along with its six globes make up the Saturn Chain.

The second postulate deals with the rebirth of planetary worlds and the teaching that the seven globes of the Moon Chain are to be regarded as the parents of the present Earth Chain. Further, that the six companion globes of the Moon Chain, likewise the six companion globes of the Earth

Chain are situated on Cosmic Planes 4, 5 and 6, whereas our Earth (Globe D) as well as the planets Mars and Mercury are situated on the 7th Cosmic Plane. How, then, could two globes situated on a Cosmic Plane superior to the 7th Cosmic Plane give birth to two planets (Mars and Mercury) which are situated on the 7th Cosmic Plane?

The questioner refers to Mr. Barker's presentation of the subject. One would have thought that he presented the matter so ably in his write-up in the book cited that further words should not be required. For instance, he wrote:

"It is indeed amazing that Theosophists have continued to permit the promulgation of the idea that Mars and Mercury belonged to the same planetary chain as The Earth, for the facts are evident that they do not." (p. xix, 2nd ed., *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.)

After re-reading Mr. Barker's four-page summation of the controversy in his Appendix (pp. 489-93) one wonders why anyone should seek further elucidation or evidence upon the subject. So the question arises: Can any further evidence not presented by him be supplied? The response is, Yes; three additional points (numbered here 2, 3, 4) may be adduced. Before these are presented, attention should be given to the mistaken statements made in the question—marked (a) and (c). In regard to (a):

(a) The use of the words *former* and *latter* are confusing and misleading, for the reason that the seven globes which comprise the Moon Chain are not concerned with or related to the sevenfold Mars Chain nor to the sevenfold Mercury Chain. As already stated in the second postulate of *The Secret Doctrine* (given above): Each one of the seven globes of the Moon Chain gives birth to one of the seven globes of the present Earth Chain. With regard to Mars and Mercury: the visible planet Mars represents the equivalent of Globe D of

the Mars Chain. The visible planet Mercury represents the equivalent of Globe D of the Mercury Chain.

In reference to (c): neither Mars, Mercury, the Earth, the Moon have retrograde motions; hence this statement is inadmissible.

In regard to (b): In *The Ocean of Theosophy*, the pertinent passage is as follows:

"The Earth Chain of seven globes as thus defined is the direct reincarnation of a former chain of seven globes, and that former family of seven was the moon chain, the moon itself being the visible representative of the fourth globe of the old chain . . . Venus, Mars, Mercury and other visible planets are all fourth-plane globes of distinct planetary masses and for that reason are visible to us, their companion six centres of energy and consciousness being invisible." (pp. 24-5).

This is the same idea that is presented in *The Secret Doctrine* and it is not necessary to elucidate further here. With regard to modern science: scientific analyses and garnering of factual evidence only deal with data applicable to the Seventh Cosmic Plane and therefore can neither affirm nor deny anything pertaining to the superior cosmic planes. The six companion globes are situated on superior Cosmic Planes and therefore cannot be subjected to scientific analyses.

Referring now to the three important points which Mr. Barker's Appendix did not consider:

2. When evidence may be brought forward showing that ancient teachings other than the Book of Dzyan also taught the doctrine that the Earth was but one of seven globes, all seven of which are constituents of a system under the regency of a Watcher, this would indicate that H. P. Blavatsky's presentation of the doctrine of the seven globes comprising the Earth Chain was part and parcel of ancient teachings which would be available to those who were initiated in temple sanctuaries. This teach-

ing regarding the seven globes of the system to which the Earth belongs is clearly given in the Mazdean scripture known as the *Vendidad*. Seven Karshvars are enumerated as comprising a cosmos or system. Karshvar is the equivalent Mazdean term for "globe" or "sphere." In the book each Karshvar has a specific name, as follows: Arzahe, Fradadhafshu, Vourubaresti, Qaniratha, Vouruzaresti, Vidadhafshu, Savahe. These names correspond to *The Secret Doctrine's* enumeration of Globes A, B, C, D, E, F, G; Qaniratha signifies Globe D (our Earth). The names of the seven Karshvars are not the names of the planets of the solar system, which have their own specific names. Then, too, each Karshvar has a regent having his own specific name—showing accurate knowledge concerning the hierarchical structure of the Earth Chain.

3. The next point. One of the esoteric meanings concerning the Seven Sacred Planets treats on the subject of their regency. That is to say, each one of the Regents of the Seven Sacred Planets acts in the capacity of a Rector or Watcher in the building and development of one of the seven globes of the Earth Planetary Chain. The Rector or Watcher of the planet Mercury acts in the capacity of the Regent for Globe E of the Earth Chain. The Regent of the planet Mars acts in the capacity of the Rector or Watcher over Globe F of the Earth Chain. How could Mr. Sinnett's theory that the planet Mercury and the planet Mars represent *two globes* of the Earth Chain fit in with this teaching concerning the Seven Sacred Planets?

4. The next point. In *The Secret Doctrine* Mercury is described as being in its Seventh Round, whereas our Earth (Globe D) is only in its Fourth Round; Mars is in its Third Round. As length of Round-cycles are computed in millions of years, how could one of the globes of the Earth Chain (supposedly Mercury) outstrip the round development of its companion globe by three Rounds? Or in the case of the planet Mars (supposedly another of the

Earth globes) lag so far behind the development of its companion Globe D? This is a preposterous concept!

5. There is yet another factor to be considered: that of the satellites. Our Earth (Globe D) has its satellite, the Moon (which is described as Globe D of the Moon Chain). Why is there no satellite for Mercury? If Mercury belonged to the Earth Chain (as one of the Earth chain of globes) it should have a satellite! As for Mars: it has two satellites. The larger of its two moons takes two days to rise and set—whereas the Earth's satellite rises and sets in one day. The smaller satellite accompanying Mars demonstrates a very remarkable feature: it travels so fast around its companion sphere that it rises and sets two times to one of Mars' days—a unique phenomenon!

Other factors in connection with Mars and Mercury are considered in *The Divine Plan*, to which readers are referred. Lack of space prevents consideration of the subject matter treated therein.

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

BOOK REVIEW

On The Watch Tower. Selected Editorial Notes from *The Theosophist*, 1953-1966, by N. Sri Ram. Published 1966 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, India. Clothbound viii + 585 pp. Price Rupees 11-70.

It was a good idea to make an anthology of Mr. N. Sri Ram's "On the Watch Tower" Notes from *The Theosophist*. That they are worthy of preservation in a more accessible form than the bound volumes of the magazine is unlikely to be questioned by his regular readers. A more important reason for this publication, however, is that the juxtaposition of these writings tell us more than any single one of his books about the person who has filled the highest office of the Theosophical Society for 14 years and who was recently elected for a third seven-year term.

Mr. N. Sri Ram's editorial background is implicit on every page. He is a leader writer *par excellence*, with a rare gift of felicitous expression. He deftly interweaves facts with opinions, and while no one is likely to agree with all that he says, what he says invariably commands respect. His style carries with it an aura of authority, yet he does not appear authoritarian.

Mr. Sri Ram's wide range of reading is what might be expected of a lifelong student of Theosophy, and his multiple interests are evident in the contents of this book. Apart from the topics more directly related to Theosophy, *On The Watch Tower* contains opinions on such diversified subjects as education, medical research, art, peace, war, the United Nations and, of course, the author's homeland, India.

Considering the quality of these writings it seems a pity that they are not used to spark dialogue in the pages of *The Theosophist*. Mr. Sri Ram's editorials are of the standard found in the leading newspapers and opinion-moulding magazines; such publications would see it a duty to provide space for their readers' comments.

On The Watch Tower is a most interesting book, and deserves space in lodge libraries throughout the Theosophical Society.
—T.G.D.

POINT LOMA REMEMBERED

An exhibition of the Harris Theosophical Collection was on public display during March and April at the San Diego library of the University of California. The collection was presented to the library a few years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Iverson L. Harris, a name well known to many readers of this magazine.

Mr. Harris, who was for many years private secretary to Mrs. Katharine Tingley, founder of the Point Loma Theosophical Society, kept the archives of that famous community and both he and his wife gathered together books and publications from all over the world to form the University collection.

As a centre of education, Point Loma was without equal and the output of its schools and the Theosophical University Press did much to enhance the name of Theosophy in a period when its image had become clouded. The cultural activities of the centre included drama and music; Point Loma boasted an opera house, and the first Greek style theatre in the United States.

It is gratifying to know that the Harris Collection has found an ideal permanent home in the University of California. It will bear witness to the glories of an outstanding Theosophical experiment.

KROTONA SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY

Mrs. Margot Blaisdell Banks, who will be remembered by some of the older members of Toronto Lodge, has written to tell us of the opening on March 11 of the new Krotona School of Theosophy. Generous

support was received from the Kern Foundation and there were many registrations for the first class in Theosophical Teachings conducted by Dr. Alfred Taylor, Director of the School.

Plans are already underway for a Summer Session of five weeks, extending from July 24 through August 26. For the Fall and Winter Sessions, Geoffrey Hodson will return to Krotona as guest teacher.

Registrations for these sessions are being accepted now. For information about accommodation and other details enquiries should be directed to the Krotona School of Theosophy, Route 2, Box 4-B, Ojai, California 93023, U.S.A.

ANNUAL PICNIC

The joint annual picnic of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Lodges will be held at Niagara Falls on Saturday, June 10.

For Toronto members and friends, buses will leave 52 Isabella Street at 9.30 a.m., the fare for adults being \$3.25 and for children \$1.25. Tickets may be obtained at the Toronto Lodge library or from Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner. Phone 463-1225. Hamilton and Buffalo members will be making their own arrangements for the journey to the Falls.

Make a date to meet your fellow Theosophists and also enjoy the beauties of Niagara.

M A N

Man it is taught is a Symbol of Life, Infinite, Eternal, and Free.

Microcosm of the Macrocosm he is said to be.

The unchanging awareness of Being, which he shares with all mankind,
Makes him One at the Spiritual level, with THAT which gave him a Mind.

This awareness of being when allied with the manifold aspects of Life,
Gives rise from the bonding of I AM, to the symbol of Life I AM I.

Life being infinite and eternal, yet all that IS, being One,
All aspects of it pre-existed, and all will continue to be.

But man through awareness of being in these manifold aspects of Life
Can raise the level of living, create love where was formerly strife,
Give purpose to natures blind forces, which comprise the 'World of Man'.
And raise them to spiritual levels for the truth that exists in them.

To find knowledge and understanding, where now fear and ignorance reign,
These blind forces must be faced and dealt with, not turned from in fear of pain.
Know, we have weapons to fight with, they are powers we already have won,
Which reside in ourselves to be called on, whenever there's work to be done.
And the conflict we now encounter, is not just to conquer strife,
But to urge us to learn from our thoughts and acts, the Laws that govern our life.
As the conditions of life that confront us now were moulded by us in the past,
Those of the future are for us to make, by the light we now can cast.

—A. Tyro

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