

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 49, No. 2

TORONTO, MAY-JUNE, 1968

Price 35 Cents

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

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

August 11, 1831 - May 8, 1891

From the Preface to *Isis Unveiled*:

Our work, then, is a plea for the recognition of the Hermetic philosophy, the anciently universal Wisdom Religion, as the only possible key to the Absolute in science and theology. To show that we do not conceal at all from ourselves the gravity of our undertaking, we may say in advance that it would not be strange if the following classes should array themselves against us:

The Christians, who will see that we question the evidences of the genuineness of their faith.

The Scientists, who will find their pretensions placed in the same bundle with those of the Roman Catholic Church for infallibility, and, in certain particulars, the sages and philosophers of the ancient world classed higher than they.

Pseudo-Scientists will, of course, denounce us furiously.

Broad Churchmen and Freethinkers will find that we do not accept what they do, but demand the recognition of the whole truth.

Men of letters and various *authorities*, who hide their real belief in deference to popular prejudices.

The mercenaries and parasites of the Press, who prostitute its more than royal power, and dishonor a noble profession, will find it easy to mock at things too wonderful for them to understand; for to them

the price of a paragraph is more than the value of sincerity. From many will come honest criticism; from many—cant. But we look to the future.

The contest now going on between the party of public conscience and the party of reaction, has already developed a healthier tone of thought. It will hardly fail to result ultimately in the overthrow of error and the triumph of Truth. We repeat again—we are laboring for the brighter morrow.

And yet, when we consider the bitter opposition that we are called upon to face, who is better entitled than we upon entering the arena to write upon our shield the hail of the Roman gladiator to Caesar: MORITURUS TE SALUTAT!

New York, September, 1877

H. P. Blavatsky

* * *

The public career of H. P. Blavatsky may be said to have begun with the publication of *Isis Unveiled* in 1877. She continued the center of an ever-widening storm area until her death, May 8, 1891. Although it is too early by centuries for any but the most devoted of her students to see or foresee the world changes set in motion by her mighty wisdom and enormous energy, it is yet possible in the interval that has elapsed since the inauguration of the Theosophical Movement of the nineteenth century, to perceive

some momentous facts in relation to her and her work, and to make some deductions from them which, the facts being recognized, are unavoidable.

It is clear that she never had any doubts from first to last of the infallibility of the principles she proclaimed, the facts she presented, the applications she made. Never a doubt appears concerning her own mission, concerning the Masters, concerning the philosophy. In other words, she was consistent throughout in all she wrote and in all that she did. What she said and did in the later years of her life, were not what she said and did in the beginning of her public work, but they were an expansion, an unfolding. All that she ever wrote after *Isis* was as implicit in *Isis* as the oak is implicit in the acorn. She had often occasion to correct the understanding and interpretation by others, friends as foes, of her work. It is not of record that she ever recanted a statement made by her. She often varied her efforts, as a mother varies her steps to the needs of her child, and always for the same reason, the weakness or the puerility of the child, never from any weakness or puerility of her own.

It is clear that she never had any doubts as to how her mission, her work and her philosophy would be received by the world at large, nor any doubts or ignorance as to the pitfalls into which the students of the philosophy she brought would fall, for in both cases she over and over again pointed out before the event—always pointed out in advance of the event so far as we are aware—the trend of action and result. Her every writing will be found on study and reflection to contain a laying down of principles, a recital of facts, an application to a case in hand, a lesson drawn and an instruction given for the immediate future. She was as consistent and as orderly as nature in all that she did, and *she followed the same processes.*

It is clear she was under no delusion as to the reception she herself would meet,

but saw from the first what fate was in store for herself from the very nature of the Message she brought. She knew that the philosophy was unassailable because it was not of human discovery or invention, but was a statement of everlasting Law. She knew that the acceptance in full of this philosophy meant the subversion of every human creed, dogma, theory, speculation and fancy, with whatever name or sanction invested—the destruction of the ruling motive and the ruling ideas of the race. She knew that those who lived upon this motive and these ideas would fight to the last ditch of desperation. She knew, too, that since the students, however earnest and sincere, were of the race, each one of them would have to fight in himself to the death of this same motive and these same ideas. The race motive, the human motive, is *selfish*, the race idea is acquisition, possession, enjoyment, to whatever field of earth or heaven it may be turned. Is it any wonder that she should say that she did not conceal from herself the gravity of her undertaking, that she speaks of the bitter opposition she would be called upon to face, while yet profoundly repeating that she labored for the brighter morrow which “will hardly fail to result ultimately in the overthrow of error and the triumph of Truth”? She came, a willing martyr, to her work, her betrayal and her crucifixion, in order that Theosophy might have birth into the world of men once more, but came clear-seeing, lived clear-seeing and died clear-seeing—seeing what was and was to be.

In forty years there has not appeared to our knowledge one single effort in any quarter to overthrow the philosophy she promulgated, the facts she recited, the deductions she made. They have never been seriously assailed. Yet she wrote well-nigh incessantly during a period of sixteen years, on every conceivable subject, and for the most part with the scantiest of human means of reference or verification of what she wrote, and in a body almost constantly

racked by disease, in a mental atmosphere of suspicion, of surveillance or of the most malignant hostility.

During her whole public career every assault that should have been directed against her philosophy and her facts was levelled against her. Is not the reason clear? The philosophy was impregnable: she was not. She had a human body, a human nature. She could be attacked in her honor, her reputation, her honesty, her motives, what not. The method has ever been the same: the Message being indestructible, destroy the messenger; the evidence being unassailable, assail the character and credibility of the witness. This has been true of every Christ and of every heroic character in history, and true in degree of their most loyal and devoted followers.

By this method and by this method alone

can vested interests prolong their privilege and their existence. They live and thrive upon the ignorance and the credulity no less than upon the sins of the multitude. The Saviours and the Heroes of the race come in one service to all. The only privilege they can offer is the privilege to share their service and their martyrdom. This is not inviting either to those who dispense wisdom, honors or salvation for a price, or to those who would wish to acquire for a price. Yet always, at each incarnation, a few who are sick of possessions and a few who have none, hear and see.

And H. P. Blavatsky came, as the Predecessors came, as the Messengers only can come, to such as these.

—Extracts from the United Lodge of Theosophy magazine *Theosophy*, November, 1914. Compiled by Edmonton Lodge.

ATLANTIS IN THE NEWS

RENA CONKLIN

In his archeological survey, *Gods, Graves and Scholars*, C. W. Ceram tells us that since Plato's day approximately twenty-thousand volumes have been written upon the Atlantis theme. "There are countless works in this literature", he says, "which treat Atlantis as an integral part of the world picture."

Ceram's book was published in 1951. In the decade and a half since then, however, most scientists have shown indifference—more often even active hostility—to the Atlantean motif. As one writer phrased it, they seemed willing to heed almost *any* theory rather than accept "the horrid alternative of former continents".

But in recent months, the old half-forgotten story has suddenly made a dramatic come-back. Like a mushroom grown to maturity in one night, it has been everywhere in the news. On July 19, a Los

Angeles newspaper blazed forth with the headline: "*Famed Lost Atlantis—Believe Atlantis found under volcanic ash*". And the usually reliable and cautious U.S. *Newsweek*, on July 31, published four pages, including colored photographs, under the title: "Atlantis and the Searchers". If we remembered H.P.B.'s statement that ". . . soon its actual existence will have become a scientific fact", some of us may have felt a flicker of hope as we glanced hastily over the first headlines.

A closer look, however, shows that *this* so-called "Atlantis" has nothing to do with the great continent ". . . which covered the whole of the North and South Atlantic regions, as well as portions of the North and South Pacific", nor even with its last fragment ". . . about the size of Ireland" and opposite the northwest coast of Africa. Luckily for us, H.P.B. placed Poseidonis

with precision: “. . . from the Teneriffe Pic to Gibraltar (was) the ancient emplacement of the lost Atlantis”. (S.D. II, 727 or. ed.) We discover that present scientific enthusiasm centers, rather, on the small island of Thera in the Aegean Sea, 60 or 70 miles north of Crete. Here last May, an American-Greek team of experts uncovered a Minoan city buried under pumice and ash. Beneath a grape vineyard, south of the present village of Akrotiri, the astonished investigators found themselves looking down into beautifully preserved rooms “frozen in time” since about 1400 B.C. like a much more ancient Pompeii or Herculaneum.

Such a spectacular find is bound to interest almost everyone. But, as Theosophists, some of us may have sighed a little and thought that while all this might be wonderful, what had it to do with *our* Atlantis? Size, location and date all seemed wrong!

But if we pause to reconsider, may we find *plus* factors hidden in this new enterprise? For one thing, it is a great advance that now, at last, first-rate research-workers, including the distinguished archeologist, Spyridon Marinatos, are suggesting that Atlantis may have existed somewhere—no matter where. And in the second place, we might recall that many areas in the Mediterranean were once actual colonies of Atlantis. In the *Timaeus* Plato says “Now in this island of Atlantis there was a great and wonderful empire . . . (which) . . . subjected the parts of Libya within the columns of Heracles as far as Egypt, and of Europe as far as Tyrrhenia”. In “Leaflets from Esoteric History”—one of the several highly important “Replies to an English F.T.S.”—we note the following: “. . . in that mythical age, Greece, Crete, Sicily, Sardinia, and many other islands of the Mediterranean were simply the far-away possessions of Atlantis.”

In the *Critias*, Plato describes the bustling activity of the Atlantean metropolis: “The entire area was densely crowded with

habitations; and the canal and the largest of the harbors were full of vessels and merchants coming from all parts, who, from their numbers, kept up a multitudinous sound of human voices, and din of all sorts night and day.” Surely, some of these “merchants coming from all parts” must have been carrying on trade with their provinces within the Mediterranean confines.

Donnelly prophesied as follows in the last paragraph of his *Atlantis*: “Who shall say that one hundred years from now the great museums of the world may not be adorned with gems, statues, arms and implements from Atlantis, while the libraries . . . shall contain translations of its inscriptions . . . ?” The book was first printed in 1882 and 1982 is not far off. But even with all of today’s advanced techniques in oceanography, it seems improbable, even fantastic, to think of recovering such artifacts from the vast Atlantic. But if we shift our thought to the former colonies in the more easily explored Mediterranean, immediately Donnelly’s forecast takes on a more plausible ring. For all we know, such relics may, even now, be lying unidentified in some of the world’s museums.

But what can we do with the date? The “1400 B.C.” seems quite out of line with esoteric tradition. Twice in *The Mahatma Letters* the specific year is mentioned:

The great event—the triumph of our ‘Sons of the *Fire Mist*’, the inhabitants of ‘Shambullah’ (when yet an island in the central Asian Sea) . . . occurred just 11,446 (years) ago. (p. 155)

. . . 11,446 years ago, when its last island, that, translating its vernacular name, we may call with propriety *Poseidonis*—went down with a crash. (p. 151)

K.H.’s letter was written in 1882. If we subtract this figure from the 11,446, we obtain an exact time for the Atlantean disaster—9564 B.C. Plato, as an initiate, must have had accurate knowledge of this event. “The Egyptian priests of Sais told his ancestor Solon”, writes K.H., “that Atlantis . . . had perished 9,000 years before their

time. This was not a fancy date, since they had for milleniums preserved most carefully their records." Does this estimate synchronize with the year quoted in *The Mahatma Letters*? Let's see! According to Durant, Solon left Greece for his travels in Egypt during the year 572 B.C. (*Life of Greece*, p. 118) And it seems likely that the Greek legislator may have heard the dramatic tale of the drowned Atlantis shortly after his arrival in Egypt, or at most within a year or two. The "9,000" is obviously a round number. Ordinarily, in such cases, a leeway of fifty to a hundred years either way would be considered quite accurate enough. But the 572 B.C. does far better than that. If we add the 9000 to it, we see that this indeed "was not a fancy date" because it misses the 9564 B.C. by only eight years.

Fortunately, at least one present-day scientist stands firm on Solon's figure. He is Allan O. Kelly, co-author with Frank Dacheille from the department of Geochemistry at Pennsylvania State University, of the book entitled *Target Earth*. In a letter to the science editor of *The Saturday Review*, December 3, 1966, Mr. Kelly suggests that if we hold to the 9,000 and add to it the 2400 years since Plato's day, we come up with an especially important time-point—11,400 years before the present (B.P.) For this date is the carbon-14 reckoning, he says, which "keeps popping up all around the world" as the time of some calamitous change upon the earth's surface. This was the period when the Ice Ages came to a close, when many volcanic eruptions seem to have been triggered around the globe, when uncounted tons of boulders and gravels were deposited in odd places

and when tens of thousands of animals in Alaska and Siberia were frozen solid within a few days time. "If there was an island of Atlantis beyond the gates of Heracles", he thinks, "this is the date (11,400 B.P.) when it probably sank beneath the sea." That there was a later devastation close to 1400 B.C. he does not doubt; for these Aegean islands are situated on a branch of the African Rift and, acting as a safety valve, must have suffered violence off and on for millions of years.

At once we note that the "11,400 B.P." is *startlingly* close to the "11,446 years ago" given by K.H.

As one example of the evidence which "keeps popping up", might be cited the sampling of deep-sea sediment reported by Maurice Ewing and William L. Donn in *Science*, June 15, 1956. In 1953, using a sea-corer, some 2,000 specimens, many as long as sixty feet, were brought up from the Atlantic Ocean floor. About one foot below the surface, the cores showed an abrupt change in color—from the dull-grey of cold-water fauna to the pink of typical warm-water animal deposits. Back at the Lamont Laboratory, radio-carbon measurements indicated that a sudden warming had occurred throughout the length and breadth of the Atlantic approximately 11,000 years ago—plus or minus a few hundred years. The same famous date again! The samples showed no previous change, except for this one sharp break, back for 80,000 to 90,000 years or more.

At this point, we may well be reminded that while the heralded date became known to scientists only recently, it was familiar to Theosophical students as far back as the 1880's. It was referred to more than once in "Leaflets from Esoteric History" appearing in *The Theosophist*, October 1883. And in *The Secret Doctrine*, published in 1888, H.P.B. mentions the crucial period a number of times. Two of the several references which might be listed are the following:

It was just remarked that since, in the

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST
310 Dupont St., Toronto 4, Ont.

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Post Office Department, Ottawa, and
for payment of postage in cash.

Puranic accounts, the island is *still existing*, then those accounts must be older than the 11,000 years elapsed since Sancha dwipa, or the Poseidonis of Atlantis, disappeared. (II, 407)

Now Krishna . . . lived 5,000 years ago . . . (and) the last of it—Plato's 'Atlantis'—had perished 6000 years before. (II, 323)

It is possible that we take our precious *Secret Doctrine* heritage too easily for granted. After all, with no carbon, argon,

or other methods of dating, no sea-borers—in fact, with no modern scientific techniques whatever—it is remarkable that H.P.B. and the Mahatmas were able to pinpoint so accurately a then unknown milestone in prehistory.

We may have to conclude that esoteric data gives us reliable facts often long in advance of laggard science; but having granted so much, we may need to add that it is also true that "Modern science is our best ally."

LIVING — A MAJESTIC DESTINY

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

*The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.*

—Tennyson, "Ulysses"

"To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths of all the western stars until I die"—"poetic fantasy", some will say; but not the Theosophist. He declares this hunger to outsail the sunset and the baths of all the western stars, to be the symbolic utterance of spiritual man's inexhaustible yearning to grasp and hold his own Immortality. *That*, which fills the hidden heart of man, fore-ran the sunsets and star-risings of many worlds. *It* is the Theosophist's pledge to himself and to the Masters that he and his Reality are the unchangeable *facts* of what a blind multitude would call "poetic fiction". This is the urgent, pressing, inescapable significance of this Theosophical philosophy—Man and his Universe—Divine, Timeless, of Heroic Measure and Meaning

—a philosophy to be lived and *made evident* in daily living.

The great poets, artists, musicians, philosophers, are all pilgrims who, at least have encountered "the burning bush", and been touched by its radiance. Somewhere, deep in the hearts of them, is rooted this insatiable hunger for acceptance and revelation of their Reality, which, despite all scoffing and denials of blind materialism, is the supreme *fact* of their existence. At our own peril and loss do we dismiss the "poetic fantasies" of a Homer, a Milton, a Tennyson, a Michelangelo or a Beethoven. These men, all of them, in their more luminous moments, are Prophets, foretelling the spiritual destiny of you and of me and this race of men. The Voice Within them, finding

utterance, cries out to the Listener Within you and me. Society's supreme need today is a philosophy that makes clear the deathless Reality of the truths they utter. It is not the poets who are deluded, but the fools of time and materialism, that cherish their earthly blindness, and would drape the whole earth in the cerements of their own dismal darkness!

Here is the inevitable and perennial alternative confronting you and me: Whether to accept the seeming hopelessness of man's twilight of selfishness, thereby falling down, down, down into a triumphal darkness of the mortal personality; or to assert daringly and majestically, the innate splendor of the True Self. It is this daily and hourly choice each of us has to make between the Splendor of Truth (in a Spiritual Universe) and the beguiling "fantasy" of material illusion. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that we live in an age wherein illusion is, to all appearances, triumphant. It may help, however, to make note of the fact that an age, a period, a society, is but a momentary episode in the eternity of unfoldment. "This, too, will pass." Insofar as we cleave to our immortality of growth, we merely consult our own spiritual self-respect in living *above* illusion's trends and fashions. The constancy needed to do this comes solely from one's Self-knowledge as a spiritual pilgrim in eternity.

Such is the confusion, discoloration and deterioration of purely personal living, going on all about us, that the majestic gesture of spiritual kingship is *demande*d of him who has accepted Theosophy. He *cannot* live as a weed sprung up in yesterday's shower; he *must* walk, gloriously aware of aeons of past growth and present potential. Living, for the dedicated Theosophist, must be an Odyssey of age-long triumphs. "To sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars" is, for him, not merely a venture, but a destiny. In the silent, sun-kissed harbor of his inmost spiritual self, he rigs and equips his barque of Truth. Setting his compass to the farthest star of

enlightenment, he braves the tides and tempests of the waters of illusion. Cleaving a silver path across wine-dark seas, he *discovers*, for all mankind, the Hesperides of Wisdom, to the poets' tidings of which, mortal myopia remarks: "poetic fantasies"!

Should we not all dare to "wonder"—lavishly, heroically, joyously—*knowing* there is in us that flaming ruby of Truth, that is our birthstone? Knowing this, have we not the assurance that only by the kingly venture of Self-discovery we can consciously make that royal jewel our very own? It is a matter of choosing the course, of sighting the star, of "sitting well in order, smiting the sounding furrows". The principle peril is compromise, vacillation, uncertainty. He who knows his course, trusts his vessel, dares to make beginning and end identical, is entitled to his hours of laughter-laden triumph on this transcendent voyage of discovery.

Life is a majestic destiny. But, to maintain its majesty, the petty rewards and punishments of yesterday and tomorrow must be as the curling ripples on a sunlit sea, that sing their way past our speeding vessel and are lost in the measureless magnificence of opal waters. Aspiration, choice, motivation and vision—none of these in the life of a Theosophist can be small or petty. Attuned to the celestial splendor of the Immortal Self, these must have the reach and majesty appropriate to their origin. Surely, there is an amplitude of intriguing beauty, breath-taking grandeur, humbling majesty in the natural world about us, to inspire a degree of spiritual heroism! But these must command our meditations, our worship, if need be. Only so far as we consciously and actually perceive the universe we inhabit to be a "revelation" of THE ONE—THE ABSOLUTE—out of which the soul of us came forth, shall we discover *living* to be the uninterrupted "Cycle of Worship" that it must be. A living nobility is our most modest acknowledgement of this miracle—LIFE. Growth, in one of its aspects, is unfolding perception—aware-

ness of the unencompassed wonder of being consciously alive—down to the heart of our flaming ruby!

Yet it is utterly futile to expect to encounter, save on the rarest occasions, evidences of such awareness in the lives of those about us. Our responsibility is to so live that such awareness shall find the courage to assert itself in others. But the esotericism of purely Theosophic living speaks “another language”. He who would share life’s magnificence with his fellows must maintain a radiant awareness whose accent is inescapably intelligible. “To live to benefit mankind is the first step.” Majestic living invites communion from questing comrades. Such communion *begins* with *silence*.

The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:

The long day wanes: the slow moon
climbs: the deep

Moans round with many voices.

About us at every hour of the day and night, phenomenal nature voices her mysterious unfoldment. That unfoldment takes its rise in the heart of man, beating with the holy pulse of THE ONE. Ever so gradually, the stone on the shore, the fish in the sea, the flower on the hillside, the star in the heavens, sing more clearly their song of growth—that sacred, processional hymn of growing awareness, of consciousness mounting toward THE ONE. Never casually, accidentally or meaninglessly; ever the music of growth, out of matter, toward spirit—consciousness Liberated. Could anything be more mysteriously majestic than this? Then let us tread the path reverently, as one included in a sacred mystery; for, surely, that is what the Theosophic life is. The very presumption of man’s confrontation with the ultimate meaning of the eternal, unfolding in time, should cause speech to be measured and subdued. The nearer one approaches the Divine Mystery, the more meaningful silence becomes. One learns to *listen*—to the music of nature: the wordless wistfulness of an opening rose, the unspoken benediction of flower-fragrant night,

the mystical choiring of unseen waves on ancient beaches, the aloof admonition of far, proud, Aldebaran—each breathing a message no earthly speech may utter. Little by little, one acquires the wisdom to listen and learn—to start a “singing silence” in one’s own life that may, now and then, fall recognizably upon some listening ear.

Such “singing silence” is an expression of responsibility, one’s response to the meaningful dictation of Life—too wondrous and sublime an observance to be regarded casually or irresponsibly. To accept the doctrine of the Self’s immortality is to have closed forever life’s chapter headed “Enjoying Life”. If either purpose or consummation in life can be summed up as “Enjoyment”, the Theosophist has “missed the boat”! The mere acceptance of the doctrine of spiritual immortality spells *responsibility*—of choice and of performance. It is the choice of a majestic destiny, if merely because it transcends earth time. That majesty is heightened when to temporal transcendence is added spiritual illumination—seeing Deity beyond phenomena, universality beyond personality. “Awareness” may begin as an added faculty; it must end as *achieved* revelation—the penetration of the mystery, LIFE, which “living” had heretofore concealed.

With that Revelation the disciple has to discover a *modus vivendi*, attainable alone through joyous surrender to the Self. Once established, it reveals itself as an unanticipated release—liberation from the barbed wire fence and sinister policing of the lesser self and its demands. Freed of desire, one can fearlessly *think* his way through to majestic attainment, without compromise or subterfuge, a release that lends living superb dimensions of thought and accomplishment—a justification of man’s unsuspected potentialities. Let life be as harsh, demanding, perplexing, as it may, so it retain Spiritual Majesty!

Shall not our vow be:

To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
Of all the western stars, until we die?

SOWING A SEED

NELLIE DALZELL

Many years ago I kept a store. Some of my customers I got to know fairly well, and frequently noticed the truths of Theosophy I had learned finding expression in their lives.

One old gentleman I shall never forget. He was French, and very pleasant to talk to. His right leg was considerably shorter than the left, and on it he wore a child's boot. It was necessary for him to use a crutch, sometimes two.

One day he came in terribly upset. He had never grumbled about his condition before, but this day he was angry. "Tell me why, just why!" he said.

He haltingly told me his story.

"As a boy of nine I played lacrosse, hockey and other games. I rode horses and did farm chores like any other kid. Then, one morning I woke up and couldn't move for pain. I lay in bed for two years unable to feed or do anything for myself.

"Then I thought I was getting better but my right leg was dead, useless. I could never play with the other children again. For nearly sixty years I have been like this. I was a strict Roman Catholic and one day—I must have been about thirty—I asked the priest 'Why?' Do you know what he said? 'My son, whom God loveth he chastiseth.' I said 'To hell with that!' and I've never been to church since."

We talked of Karma, of cause and effect, and he said, "That sounds reasonable, but when did a boy of nine do anything to merit this?"—pointing to his withered leg.

Our conversation then turned to reincarnation. He walked towards the door. "Do you mean to tell me . . . you, a common-sense, practical person, believe in that—that superstitious nonsense?" He didn't wait for an answer.

Several times he came to the store again and always brought the subject up. He

asked many questions, but always went away muttering something like, "Barbarian superstition."

He did not come again, but one day some years later I saw my old friend. As I came out of the library the old gentleman was sitting on the low stone wall. It turned out he was waiting for a friend to come and take him home. He was no longer able to walk, even with the aid of crutches.

We talked for a while, but reincarnation was not mentioned. He could speak well, and did, of early Canadian history, of Col. Sam Steele and the Riel Rebellion. The day was sunny and hot. A game of bowls was in progress on the bowling green and the men were talking and laughing.

A woman came along with a baby carriage. She fixed the safety catch, pulled the little curtains over the hood to protect the sleeping baby and went into the library.

We spoke very quietly, but the men on the bowling green raised their voices and the woods clicked together. Suddenly, two little fat arms pulled the curtains aside and the baby sat up laughing at us. We laughed back, but her face changed as if she were going to cry. But she didn't. Over her face I saw another face forming, an old face, very wise, with slanting eyes and a long scanty beard. For a moment it looked at us and then it was the baby again as she lay back on her pillows laughing happily.

My friend said, "Did you see what I saw?"

"What did you see?"

"I saw an old Chinese gentleman, incredibly old, incredibly wise. Don't you or anyone else try to tell me that child hasn't been on this earth before, because I know she has. I *know!* Oh! of course—it was you who told me about it."

We went on to have a long talk on reincarnation and karma and it was surpris-

ing to find out how much knowledge he had accumulated on the subject.

Some of our hearers may, like the old gentleman, treat what we have to say as laughable superstition, but who knows when

a seed we sow may take root? It may lie dormant for a long time but sooner or later from deep within there will be a stirring of life nourished, perhaps, by memories long since forgotten.

CAN LIFE BE DESTROYED?

FRED AMOS

Here is a question to which Theosophists can give a viewpoint in keeping with their teachings on the matter of life and so-called death.

Death, according to our senses, is the lack of motion within the form over a certain period of time. The area of confusion over just what life is can be seen today in the pro and con arguments in the matter of abortion. Should we abort, or should we not abort? Is there life in the foetus? or is there not life? Catholic religionists say yes, non-religionists say no. Both are playing with a term they glibly use but never at any time attempt to define. As long as this is the case, no impartial conclusion can ever be arrived at.

Life is energy plus qualities. Eastern mystics use the term "One Life". That is to say, in a general sense there is as much "life" in a cockroach as there is in a Christ! This might seem horrid and blasphemous to the religionist but sound common sense to the scientifically oriented.

Does not science use the axiom of the indestructibility of matter and the conservation or transmutability of energy? There is absolutely no difference between life and energy except in that what we conceive as energy is "life" exercising itself on a conscious level.

Then since life cannot be destroyed, why concern ourselves whether we kill or be killed? The answer to this attitude is to be found in the logical reasoning that what we call life has a purpose, i.e., that it should pursue a certain cycle of activity, retire and re-manifest again and again—perfecting it-

self more and more at every appearance.

A proper concept of what is "matter" and what is "spirit" or "energy" (different terms for one and the same thing) is very necessary to obtain an overall perspective of what life is all about.

Science takes the viewpoint that "matter" is nothing more than congealed "energy". Occultism agrees with this definition but adds much more by holding that this "energy" or "spirit" has within itself (at its primal source) all the qualities that make one form of life so different from another. The scientific concept of qualities is somewhat Topsy-istic—"They just growed . . ."

Occultism believes that the process of congelation of energy, or spirit, is carried to a certain point of crystallization and like the prodigal son, seeks to uncrystallize itself and return to its primal source—pure Spirit.

Should then we destroy life—or in other words, engage in a process—for the sake of social expediency? The process, to which any decent-minded person would not subject their pet dog, shows clearly that humanity has arrived at the stage of degeneracy totally beyond and unknown even to the jungle dwellers.

Abortions, baby seal clubbing, napalm burning, and all the other horrors going on today under the name of "progress", may not be any business of the old-time Theosophist, but the forward-looking cannot help stepping out of line (if such be the case) and interpreting Theosophy in the light of that which is temporal.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Our sincere sympathy is sent to all members of Victoria Lodge on the death early in March of their well loved member, Mrs. Annie Akkerman, who was Treasurer of the Lodge. Her gracious and kindly presence will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

* * *

I regret to report the death on April 2 of a member of many years standing in Toronto Lodge, Mrs. Margaret P. Davis. Mrs. Davis had attended the meetings of West End Lodge as well as Toronto Lodge, but advancing years made her attendance impossible, although her deep interest in Theosophy continued to the end. Our condolences are sent to her sister, Mrs. S. Crist, and to other relatives.

* * *

Appeals have been received from two Lodges in Indonesia for Theosophical books to replenish their libraries. The library of Djakarta Lodge was destroyed during the previous regime in that country, and books in both the Dutch and English language will be gratefully welcomed. The Lodge in Sourabaya says that on account of foreign currency restrictions it is impossible to buy books abroad and that they have been deprived of books for a long time.

The Theosophical Society in Indonesia had a large membership before its activities were forbidden; apparently this ban has now been removed or relaxed and Theosophical groups and lodges are being re-established. Can any of our members help with books—new, used, or paperback? Addresses: The Librarian, Dj Pattimura 24, Kebajoran, Djakarta, Indonesia, or Lie Tjing Ik, Gembong Tjantian No. 68, Sourabaya, Java, Indonesia.

* * *

Vancouver Lodge attained its 70th birth-

day on April 20, and is arranging a suitable celebration on White Lotus Day to mark the event. Seventy years is a lengthy period in the life of a lodge, and the members will remember with gratitude the work and devotion of past and present members who contributed to its long sustained and useful activity.

* * *

Word has been received of another Theosophical Lodge which will mark its 75th anniversary in May of this year, Dunedin Lodge, New Zealand. The greetings of the Lodge is sent to all members in Canada. These are cordially reciprocated, and we sent congratulations—and welcome to the club!

* * *

The Quarterly Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Theosophical Society in Canada was held on April 7, with the following members present: Mrs. C. P. Lakin, Messrs. C. E. Bunting, T. G. Davy, C. Weaver, R. A. Webb, Treasurer, and the General Secretary. In opening the meeting, the General Secretary noted that this was the first time in many years that Mr. Kinman had not been amongst us.

The Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$4749.64, this large balance being due to the receipt of a legacy of \$4000.00 from the estate of the late Mrs. Annie Haydon. The receipts and disbursements showed no other item of unusual interest. The report also showed ten new members and thirteen new subscribers to the magazine since our last meeting. It was agreed that the Section would assume the travelling expenses from Detroit to Toronto and the return to Wheaton of Mr. N. Sri Ram and of his Secretary, Miss Nisewanger when the President visits Toronto in June.

Re Century Fund (Adyar): this Fund was instituted to implement a program for the improvement of the Adyar Estate in time for the Centennial Celebration in 1975;

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.

The editors reserve the right to shorten any letter unless the writer states that it must be published in full or not at all.

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the old buildings and utilities of the Estate require constant maintenance, and some new buildings are needed; \$150.00 will be sent to this Fund.

Re. Judge Pamphlet: Mr. Boris de Zirkoff proposes to publish a 32-page pamphlet with a brief biographical sketch of the life of William Q. Judge and a brief account of his writings. This will be followed later

by an Anthology of all his writings in a hard cover edition containing about 300 pages. \$100.00 will be sent for a supply of the pamphlets. (If the Lodges will let me know how many copies of the pamphlet they would like to have, these will be sent promptly as soon as copies are received here.)

Re. Annual Election—The General Secretary reported that nominations had been received from five Lodges for the office of General Secretary and for members of the Executive Committee. The present General Secretary had previously announced his withdrawal and one nomination only was received for the office, Mr. T. G. Davy, Co-Editor of our magazine. Five of the present members of the Executive Committee were re-nominated, Mrs. C. P. Lakin, and Messrs. Bunting, Weaver, Wilks and Wood. There were five new nominations, Miss Mary E. Seaton of Centennial Lodge; Mr. F. B. Berry, Mr. L. A. Dadswell and Mr. G. Gardiner of Toronto Lodge; Mr. John Oberlechner of Kitchener Lodge. A letter respecting the nominations and election, together with the ballot papers, will be sent to all members. I would ask any member who has not received a ballot to notify me immediately. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on July 14.

* * *

As the magazine was going to press we learned with disappointment that Mr. N. Sri Ram would not after all visit Toronto in June. The President has not been well, and a curtailment of his activities is considered advisable.

* * *

I have much pleasure in welcoming into the fellowship of the Society, Mr. David Donyina of Montreal Lodge; Mr. Simon M. Postma of Edmonton Lodge, and Mr. Maurice Segal of Toronto Lodge.

—D.W.B.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

In his reply to Dr. Wilks (C.T. Jan.-Feb. 1968) Mr. Sri Ram states that, "the charges against C.W.L. . . . were far from being correct. He was *never* in trouble with the police." Here, for the record, is an abbreviated summary of the information I have on file.

1. The hearing and questioning of Mr. Leadbeater before the "Olcott Committee"—Wednesday, May 16, 1906. The charges, substantiated by written testimony from a number of individuals, were to the effect that Leadbeater had been in the habit of teaching, *with participation* to a number of boys, *some below the age of puberty*, a certain sexual perversion with the claim that this would obviate the necessity of their resorting to girls. He admitted the charges and offered to resign if the Committee disapproved of the practice. The Committee agreed unanimously *in camera* that the only remaining question was whether he should be allowed to resign or be expelled; some thought that only expulsion would sufficiently dissociate the Society and the philosophy itself from this teaching. He was then called in and informed of the acceptance of his resignation. He was then asked by Mr. G. R. S. Mead whether he planned to continue this teaching, and replied that because of the feeling against it, he would not. He never at that time or any other, expressed remorse or regret. He always defended the practice.

2. The letters on exhibit at meeting. I won't go into these here—too long. Also unpleasant.

3. Letter. Mr. Leadbeater to Mrs. Besant, June 30, Sept. 11, 1906, complaining that she acted as though he were still teaching in this manner, although he had deferred to her wishes.

4. Circular from Mr. Jinarajadasa, April 16, 1906. Discourses on sex problem; says prostitution not the answer. Leadbeater's

teaching not answer either, perhaps humanity some day will find a better. Defends Leadbeater against a somewhat nastier charge. This has been used to divert the issue and referred to as a "defence" of Leadbeater by evasion.

5. Mrs. Besant, writing from Simla, June 9, 1906, with permission to use publicly, excoriates Leadbeater's idea as one of the lowest forms of vice.

6. Mr. Leadbeater to Mrs. Besant, September 11, 1906. Says he never suggested that these ideas came from Mahatmas; were his own. Says marriage must be worse, since it involves action on another person. Defends his teaching.

7. Mrs. Besant to Corresponding Secretary, Esoteric Section, American Section, describing meeting. Says that the teacher of such ideas, if with good motives, must be insane. One advocate for resignation had said that "We all know he is not sane on this point".

8. Council of the Blavatsky Lodge moves in 1907 to reinstate Leadbeater. Mrs. Besant sends telegram approving reinstatement if Leadbeater passes two years of probation and reinstatement approved by large majority representative of whole Society.

9. Immediately following, Mrs. Besant switches. Addresses a letter to the members of the Society in which she attacks one of the letters of evidence; states this letter was a forgery.

10. Mrs. Chidester, Assistant Corresponding Sec., American Esoteric Section, refutes claim about this letter.

11. Before two years are up, Mrs. Besant approves readmission of Leadbeater. Inserts notice thereof in *The Theosophist*, January, 1909.

12. Mrs. Besant, *The Theosophist*, March, 1909, says members disapproving of reinstatement, under new rule (31) are at liberty to form new organization outside of Society but attached to Headquarters only, which must not seek to coerce the liberal majority.

13. Jiddu Narayaniah sues Mrs. Besant

to recover custody of his sons, J. Krishna-murti and J. Nityananda, because of new scandals. Says she had turned over the guardianship of the boys to Leadbeater despite original agreement that the custody should be her own exclusively. He objects to their having contact with Leadbeater. They had been put in Besant custody for chela training.

14. Justice Bakewell rules for Narayaniah after questioning Leadbeater. Says Leadbeater very dangerous associate for children. Because of messy manner of presenting evidence, making it too expensive a proceeding, he charges Narayaniah with the costs, April 18, 1913.

15. 1922. More scandals in Australia. T. H. Martyn, prominent member, brings charges against Leadbeater, presenting new testimony about both the 1906 and 1913 episodes. In 1906 one of the boys, desperate about pending police charges, had told him the story and asked him to prevent action, as his own testimony would have to be affirmative.

16. Precis furnished by Sydney police to Sydney Lodge executive, giving testimony of boys and of certain adult members, the latter on suspicious circumstances—naked boys in Leadbeater's bed, etc., also to effect that they themselves had the same habit. This refers to 1914-15.

17. Police report on "alterations in evidence" following third scandal in 1922, dated June 7, 1922, cites desire of adult witnesses to alter their evidence, and conflict in testimony between boy witnesses. This led to feeling on part of police that testimony was too unreliable to be depended on, and resulted in the following: (a) by head of Criminal Investigation Department—"good grounds for believing charges"; (b) by Inspector General of Police—"sufficient disclosed to justify being kept under observation"; (c) by Crown Solicitor—"not much doubt".

So Leadbeater was never in trouble with police?

Victor A. Endersby

FOUR LODGES OBSERVE WHITE LOTUS DAY TOGETHER

A special program commemorating White Lotus Day was held at the temporary headquarters of the Toronto Theosophical Society, 310 Dupont Street, on Sunday, May 5. It was attended by members of the four T.S. lodges in the Metropolitan Toronto area.

Mr. Dudley W. Barr, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Canada, was in the Chair. Mrs. B. Jackson and Mrs. I. Jackson, Presidents respectively of H.P.B. Lodge and York Lodge (both of the Canadian Federation), Mr. L. Dadswell, Acting President of Toronto Lodge and the Venerable Ananda Bodhi, President of the Centennial Lodge (both of the Canadian Section), each presented short addresses suitable to the occasion.

THE LAWSON TAIT MEMORIAL TRUST

The Lawson Tait Memorial Trust was established in Britain in 1961. It is a prize fund for the purpose of stimulating new developments in medical research without using living animals.

A Canadian Branch of the Trust was set up in 1963. Among its activities have been to advertise the existence of the Trust to Canadian universities and to the public. The work of Canadian doctors is eligible to be considered for an award; however, it is hoped eventually to provide a specifically Canadian award.

For information, please write to The Secretary, Canadian Branch, The Lawson Tait Memorial Trust, P.O. Box 674, Postal Station 'F', Toronto 5, Ontario.

ANNUAL PICNIC

The joint Annual Picnic of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Lodges will be held at Niagara Falls on Saturday, June 8.

For Toronto members and friends, a bus will be provided, the fare for adults being \$3.25 and for children \$1.25. Tickets may be obtained at the Toronto Lodge Library or by calling Mr. Gardiner at 463-1225.

WHO PLAYED THAT TRICK ON H.P.B.?

THE PUZZLE OF "THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY"

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

Sometime in the Spring of 1892, the Theosophical Publishing Society in London issued a work entitled *The Theosophical Glossary* under the name of H. P. Blavatsky, bearing also the imprint of *The Path* Office in New York, and *The Theosophist* at Adyar, Madras, India.

In the February, 1892, issue of *The Path* (Vol. VI, p. 358) it is stated that this work will be on sale in six weeks; and in the April issue of the same year (Vol. VII, p. 28) it is briefly reviewed and described as being edited by G. R. S. Mead.

This was, of course, about a year after H.P.B.'s death in May, 1891.

However, the text of this work must have been almost ready long before that time, as *The Path* of December, 1890 (Vol. V, p. 25) under date of November 5, 1890—about a year and a half prior to the actual publication of this work, and months before H.P.B.'s passing—speaks of it as being completed and ready to go to the printer in a few days. It also says that it is to be issued "with the *Archaic Symbolism*," whatever this may have meant.

The work was also briefly reviewed by Col. Olcott in *The Theosophist*, Vol. XIII, April, 1892, pp. 444-45.

The Preface, signed by Mead, is dated January, 1892, ten months after H.P.B.'s passing.

This work contains 389 pages and embodies 2,767 distinct terms with their appropriate definitions, alphabetically arranged.

The Preface informs us that this work is "almost entirely posthumous" and that H.P.B. "only saw the first thirty pages in proof." This statement seems to make it easy to deduce that the work did not go to the printer "in a few days" after Novem-

ber 5, 1890, as surely H.P.B. would have seen a good deal more than 32 pages in proof, had the printer been setting up the MS. for the next six months, prior to her passing. From this it would follow that the MS. did not go to the printer until considerably later, possibly in early 1891. What took place during this period of time, and during the balance of 1891, as far as the MS. is concerned, we cannot determine, except in regard to one point, namely, that a certain number of terms with their definitions were excerpted from the MS. and inserted as a Special Glossary into the second edition of *The Key to Theosophy* published still during H.P.B.'s lifetime, at the end of 1890.

As far as Mead is concerned, he lets us know, in his Preface to this work, that H.P.B. desired to express her indebtedness "as far as the tabulation of facts is concerned," to four works, namely, the *Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary* of Eitel, the *Hindu Classical Dictionary* of Dowson, Wilson's *Vishnu-Purâna* and the *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia* of Kenneth R. H. MacKenzie. He also points out the definitions signed W.W.W. are by W. W. Westcott.

From such a statement it would appear that *The Theosophical Glossary* is a work mainly by H. P. Blavatsky, with a certain number of quotations from a fairly small number of works. This impression has become pretty well established in the Theosophical Movement, and several editions of this work have been published by various Theosophical Organizations.

The facts, however, differ considerably.

A careful analysis of the definitions and of the probable sources from which they were borrowed, has disclosed that out of the 2,767 definitions, a minimum of 2,212

have been taken from the works of a large number of scholars, either *verbatim* or with very minor alterations, and with no acknowledgement whatsoever; in a few cases a line or two has been added, giving an occult interpretation probably by H.P.B. herself; such instances are very few.

Among the works which were most freely used are the following:

- a) Those already mentioned above.
- b) Bonwick's *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*.
- c) George Smith's *Chaldean Account of Genesis*.
- d) *Five Years of Theosophy: Glossary of Terms*.
- e) Anson's *Asgard and the Gods*.
- f) Myer's *Qabbalah*.
- g) R. Spence Hardy's *Eastern Monachism*.
- h) Emil Schlagintweit's *Buddhism in Tibet*.

There are 124 terms signed by W. Wynn Westcott; 217 terms identical, or practically so, with the corresponding terms in the Glossary of the 2nd edition of *The Key to Theosophy*; about 25-30 terms from *The Secret Doctrine*; and about 70 terms from *Isis Unveiled*.

When it is considered that for the interpretation and elucidation of facts and terms pertaining to the Kabbalah and other ancient Hebrew matters, the help of W. Wynn Westcott was secured, it is hard to understand why Sanskrit terms were not submitted to competent scholars in India, several such being staunch Fellows of the T.S. at the time. This certainly would have avoided erroneous spellings and most curious errors in definitions.

It is to be regretted that such errors have been allowed to stand all through the years, giving rise to unfriendly criticism and scorn on the part of people versed in these subjects. It seems difficult to understand why, for instance, *Adhyâta-vidyâ*, meaning the "science or knowledge of Atman," would have been defined as "the esoteric lumin-

ary." Curiously enough, it is defined precisely that way by Eitel in his work, and so we are blessed with the errors of honest but inadequate scholars of a previous century. *Amitâbha* is a Sanskrit term meaning "boundless splendour" or "infinite glory"—if any real translation can ever be arrived at; therefore it is not a "Chinese perversion of the Sanskrit *Amrita Buddha*." *Aindriya* literally means "pertaining to the senses," and not "Indrâni, the wife of Indra." *Apâna* is one of the prânas, and hardly "a practice of Yoga." *Arasa Maram* is not Sanskrit but Tamil, as its final *m* indicates (in addition to its meaning); it is the common name for the Pipal tree.

Imagine "Bagavadam" (*Bhâgavata*) described as "a Tamil Scripture on Astronomy and other matters," while it is one of the most celebrated of the eighteen *Mahâpurânas* treating of Vishnu Krishna, the Creation, and the histories of various sovereigns. *Dhyân-Chohans*, if literally translated, means "Lords of Meditation," and not "Lords of Light." The term *Me-lha* refers to a Tibetan fire-god; it is neither Sanskrit, nor has it anything to do with Salamanders which are elementals. And when it comes to *Midgard* from the Scandinavian mythology, this term refers to the Earth, the home of men between heaven and hell; the Midgard snake was killed by Thor. It is Nidhogg, and not Midgard, that gnaws at the roots of Yggdrasil, the Ash Tree of Life.

The definitions of the Days and Nights of Brahmâ are entirely wrong. A Day of Brahmâ is equivalent in length to 1,000 Mahâyugas. This is a period of 4,320,000,000 years (Cf. *Bhagavad-Gitâ*, VIII, sloka 17). An Age of Brahmâ represents the period of life of Brahmâ, which is stated in the *Mahâbhârata* to be a period of 100 of Brahmâ's Years. This is equivalent to 311,040,000,000,000 years, which consists of fifteen figures.

A partial survey of the first four letters of the *Glossary* has revealed no less than 40 mistranslations out of about 300 terms, a very high percentage indeed.

The above instances should suffice for our purpose.

A closer examination of the text than that already completed will, no doubt, merely increase the list of errors, and it is doubtful whether it would be of any real value.

We are faced here with a perfectly honest but woefully inadequate attempt on the part of various early scholars to grasp the subtle meaning of Oriental and other ancient terms, and to render their phonetic or actual form in English letters. Since those days, scholarship in the field of Egyptology, Orientalism, Classical research, and the like has advanced very considerably, and the early definitions have become quite inadequate; they have been superseded by a vaster knowledge and far greater accuracy, even though, from the standpoint of occult study, even the scholarship of today is yet far behind and often quite materialistic.

To publish the *Theosophical Glossary* as it now stands simply means to perpetuate willingly and deliberately hundreds of errors; it also means to ascribe them, at least partially so, to H.P.B., imagining that the definitions are hers, as no source of reference is given; while in reality, when adequate explanation and analysis of the text is made, nothing could be more erroneous than to imagine that H.P.B. was herself responsible for the majority of the definitions in the book. It is therefore entirely unjust and unfair to her to do so.

To correct the hundreds of wrong definitions would be a task of uncertain value, because, no matter how well done, it would still contain errors, some, perhaps, unsuspected by the Editor. To substitute for the definitions of early scholars those of present and better ones, would be a drastic alteration of the entire work. To eliminate all definitions which are by other people besides H.P.B. and, maybe, W. Wynn Westcott, would be possible but probably unwise, as hundreds of terms used by students today would receive no definition at all. To correct as much as can be corrected,

to insert all the missing references and quotation marks, and then to fill in editorially missing definitions, to make the work more adequate and complete—would mean practically re-writing it. Its size would then be increased very considerably.

There remains the possibility of excerpting from it everything that is obviously H.P.B.'s, which is quite easy to do, because of her style and because of the reference to occult matters which none of the other scholars knew anything about. It might be feasible to add such material from H.P.B.'s pen to the Glossary in *The Key to Theosophy*, with complete explanation of the reasons for so doing, and of the background of this entire subject.

When the nature of the material in *The Theosophical Glossary* is considered without bias or preconceived ideas, and the facts outlined above are kept clearly in mind, it is difficult to believe that the publication of this work in 1892 was done in good faith. Its continued publication today is a disservice to the Cause, and most certainly an utterly unwarranted reflection upon the memory of H.P.B., whose name is made to appear in bold letters upon the title page of a work full of misinformation, and with the production of which she had very little to do. It is high time that these facts be stated without ambiguity for the information of serious students.

—*Theosophia*—Winter, 1967-68.

We have to take the whole human race into the fold of our kith and kin, behaving to all men as we have behaved, in the past, only to members of our own minority group: our family, our nation, our church . . .

The differences of physique that distinguish one race from another have no intrinsic importance. They do not carry with them any correspondingly spiritual differences; and it is the spiritual, not the physical, side of human nature that is humanity's distinguishing mark.

—Arnold Toynbee

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. Would you be so kind as to explain a question arising from the study of the After-Death States as dealt with in *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Divine Plan*, Chapter X, with particular reference to a passage quoted in the latter work on page 385, where H. P. Blavatsky says: "In order to live in the world to come a conscious life, one has to believe first of all in that life during the terrestrial existence." (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 165). [Comment 1] This seems to lead to the supposition that a rank materialist, denying any life outside the body, would not go through the experiences of Kama-loka and Devachan. [Comment 2] These subtle worlds—or rather states of consciousness—we are taught, involve the consequences of the causes generated during earth-life, and should therefore be *consciously* experienced by everyone. [Comment 3] The clue to this question lies perhaps in the word "full" in the text of *The Divine Plan*, p. 385: ". . . in order to have full consciousness during the after-death states one must attain that knowledge as well as that ability during the life lived on earth." [Comment 4]

Would you please explain the difference of the conditions post-mortem for a student of Theosophy and for a disbeliever? [Comment 5] The members of our study-group who have put the question will be very glad to have your answer.

Answer. Responses will be given by specific reference to the phrases—referred to by numbered Comments (the "Comments" are intended to apply to the preceding rather than the subsequent sentences).

Comment 1: It should be borne in mind

that the quotation from *The Key to Theosophy* has reference to a highly specialized state—representing the acme of attainment—which would result in a specific Devachanic state, whereas the descriptions usually given in connection with Devachan are generalized. For instance:

Devachan is often compared to the happiest day in a series of many thousands of other "days" in the life of a person. The intensity of its happiness makes the man entirely forget all others, his past becoming obliterated. This is what we call the Devachanic state, the reward of the personality. (*The Secret Doctrine*, V, 490-1)

Comment 2. Here again a specified state is referred to: that of a "rank materialist." For that matter it should be remembered likewise that Devachan is strictly speaking an individualized state of consciousness:

there are great varieties in the Devachan states, and . . . as many varieties of bliss, as on earth there are shades of perception and of capability to appreciate such reward. It is an ideated paradise, in each case of the Ego's own making. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 102)

However, in regard to Kama-loka there is this difference: the state of consciousness of an individual experiencing the state of Kama-loka differs from that experienced by the devachani. Therefore, from the standpoint of the teachings of Theosophy in connection with these two states of consciousness, it would not be correct to make the statement "that a rank materialist, denying any life outside the body, would not go through the experiences of Kama-loka and

Devachan” without qualifying comments. To illustrate the point: a rank materialist who may have been a drunkard during his life on earth will certainly *go through* the experiences of desiring drink in Kama-loka and not be able to satisfy his desires. This, of course, is a “specialized kama-lokic experience,” but the point is this: Kama-loka is literally the desire-world “the land of intense desires” (*Ibid* p. 109). On the other hand, a materialist who did not have strong attachments to drink or to other desireful tendencies or attractions would not experience intense desires in the Kama-loka, but would be in a condition similar to that of a person who is in a dull stupor. The significant factor is this: the after-death experiences of both the states of Kama-loka and Devachan depend upon the life that has been lived on earth.

As for the experiences of Devachan: it should be remembered that one who enters the state of Devachan “brings along with him but the Karma of his good deeds, words and thoughts” (*ibid* p. 101). Surely, even a materialist has his moments of good deeds, words and thoughts. It is these that will “bear fruit” or be experienced in the state of Devachan:

Every effect must be proportionate to the cause. And, as man’s terms of incarnate existence bear but a small proportion to his periods of inter-natal existence in the manvantaric cycle, so the good thoughts, words, and deeds of any one of these “lives” on a globe are causative of effects, the working out of which requires far more time than the evolution of the causes occupied. (*ibid* p. 106)

However, a rank materialist who has had no kind thoughts or feelings will not have such an experience. With regard to the materialist who denies immortality in general and the survival of his own individuality, H. P. Blavatsky writes: “he is right, without knowing it. One who has no inner perception of, and faith in, the immortality of his soul, in that man the soul can never become Buddhi-tajjasi, but will remain

simply Manas, and for Manas alone there is no immortality possible.” (*Key*, pp. 164-5) Buddhi-tajjasi signifies Manas conjoined with Buddhi: it is this aspect of man’s sevenfold constitution “which absorbs the Manasic recollections of all our preceding lives.” (*Key*, 163) This is so “because both immortality and consciousness after death become, for the terrestrial personality of man, simply conditioned attributes, as they depend entirely on conditions and beliefs created by the human soul itself during the life of its body. Karma acts incessantly: we reap in *our after-life* only the fruit of that which we have ourselves sown in this.” (*Key*, 160)

Comment 3. This is very well phrased. We may indeed refer to the “subtile worlds” as the globes on the Ascending Arc—Globes E, F and G—which may well be equated to superior states of consciousness, when viewed from the standpoint of our consciousness on Globe D of the Earth-chain. However, the clue to understanding this aspect of the subject was provided by the questioner in Comment No. 4 (which follows).

Comment 4. Yes, indeed, in order to attain the FULL consciousness of experiencing the after-death states, an individual “must attain that knowledge as well as that ability during the life lived on earth.” This is truly a challenging proposition, yet it is a highly desirable one. A beginning towards its accomplishment may be made by striving to elevate one’s thought-life by consistently raising it above the plane of desires and holding it at that superior level.

Comment 5. Of course, students of Theosophy vary as to their qualifications. Naturally, the more a student attains the ability of experiencing higher states of consciousness during life on earth and has built these states or experiences into the fabric of his being—or the “web of life” which he creates from day to day—the more will such experiences be re-lived in the state of Devachan; especially so if he *believes* that he will re-experience such

higher states of consciousness in the post-mortem sojourn.

Thus far the significance of the state of Devachan has been stressed; but the study-group's attention should be directed to the status and cycle of the monad in the after-death states. This was referred to by the Mahatma in the following passage: "no monad gets ever reincarnated before its appointed cycle." (M.L. 176) In *The Secret Doctrine* this aspect was presented by means of the doctrines taught by the Egyptians and the Gnostics in connection with the cyclic journeys of the monad. Also reference was made to the Chaldaean account, in the chapter mentioned in the question. It was this aspect which was pointed to in the quotation from *The Key to Theosophy*. This is the knowledge which has been made available to students of Theosophy and which may be experienced in the after-death states—if dwelt upon during earth-life.

As for the disbeliever or materialist, H. P. Blavatsky wrote in a positive manner as to his after-death state:

according to the after life a man has believed in and expected, such is the life he will have. He who expected no life to come will have an absolute blank, amounting to annihilation, in the interval between the two rebirths. This is just the carrying out of the programme we spoke of, a programme created by the materialists themselves. But there are various kinds of materialists (*Key*, p. 170).

As to the "programme" referred to, it should be borne in mind that each individual creates his own programme, and it is described in this manner:

death is sleep. After death, before the spiritual eyes of the soul, begins a performance according to a programme learnt and very often unconsciously composed by ourselves: the practical carrying out of *correct* beliefs or of illusions which have been created by ourselves. The Methodist will be Methodist, the

Mussulman a Mussulman, at least for some time—in a perfect fool's paradise of each man's creation and making. These are the *post-mortem* fruits of the tree of life. Naturally, our belief or unbelief in the fact of conscious immortality is unable to influence the unconditioned reality of the fact itself, once that it exists; but the belief or unbelief in that immortality as the property of independent or separate entities, cannot fail to give colour to that fact in its application to each of these entities. (*Key*, p. 165)

BOOK REVIEWS

A Believing Humanism: My Testament 1902-1965, by Martin Buber. Published 1968 by Simon and Schuster (Mussun Book Company). 252 pp. Price \$7.50.

Martin Buber made a unique contribution to modern thought. Many have found in his philosophy a particular relevance to the problems arising out of our unstable and confused way of twentieth century living.

His books have consequently enjoyed—deservedly—a readership far in excess of most contemporary philosophers. Indeed, through his writings has developed a following that is not quite a cult. The "I and Thou" concept has definitely left its mark.

A Believing Humanism is an unusual anthology. It is a collection of a number of diverse—some of them most unlikely—sources through which Buber's light shines with multi-faceted brilliance. Here is the slow moving grace of an earlier age—there, timely informality; here, a stern rabbinical quality—there, happy abandon. But throughout, his love for mankind shows in every line.

Poems, articles, radio talks, lecture notes, introductions to other writers' books; and addresses accepting honorary degrees and awards are among this strange collection. Yet individually they each contain something of Buber and something of his phil-

osophy. Collectively, they reveal a consistent, brilliant mind.

Buber himself selected these writings. They are a fitting testament to his humanism. —T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians, by Iamblichus. Translated from the Greek by Thomas Taylor. Third Edition. Published 1968 by Stuart and Watkins, London. xxvi + 365 pp. Price 63 shillings.

It is a sobering thought that a book such as Thomas Taylor's translation of Iamblichus' *On the Mysteries*, so invaluable to students of the occult, should only now be in its third edition—147 years after its original publication. Worse: the second edition appeared in 1895; had the Theosophical Movement achieved its promise a dozen editions might well have sold out since then.

But if there is today only a handful of readers interested in this work we should be doubly grateful to the publishers for their risk. They have produced a nice volume, a very clear photographic reproduction, presumably from the second edition. Unfortunately, the page references for Taylor's notes at the end of the book are incorrect; however, an errata sheet can easily reduce the inconvenience—although a student should have no difficulty making his own corrections as he goes along.

Iamblichus was a pupil of Porphyry, the great Neo-Platonic philosopher. In *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Blavatsky described him as the founder of Neo-Platonic theurgy. What he has to say concerning the Mysteries, therefore, vague as he necessarily must be in places, might be considered authentic and reliable. Certainly, his statements bear a ring of authority, and do not appear at variance with the few available comparable sources at our disposal.

On the Mysteries is by no means an easy work to tackle. Quotations from it are to be found in Madame Blavatsky's writings, and her comments should help in its study.

Add to these the clues to be derived from the sparse and scattered extant information about the Mysteries; with this preparation Iamblichus' book should provide rewarding results. It is not for everyone—but indispensable for some.

Taylor's footnotes and endnotes are invaluable. As usual his prose is majestic, and perfectly suits the subject matter.

By way of interest—the frontispiece shows a portrait of the great Platonist Thomas Taylor; it is from a canvas in the British National Portrait Gallery, a copy by Evans after Lawrence. The Sir Thomas Lawrence original is in Canada's National Gallery in Ottawa. —T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

Concentration, An Approach to Meditation, by Ernest Wood. A Quest paperback reprint. Published 1967 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. xi + 154 pp. Price 95c.

This well-known little book of the late Professor Wood's has been through so many editions that it must rank as a "best-seller" of its kind.

As one of the Quest books it will attract the attention of a new generation of enquirers. It is to be hoped that through it they will be led to a deeper study of man's higher principles. —T.G.D.

THEOSOPHICAL BOOKS FOR NON-ENGLISH READERS

The formation of the Non-English Publications Loan Fund has been announced. It is intended to use the Fund to publish and distribute Theosophical literature in languages in which it is not presently available.

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LINES TO A DREAMER

O change all this thinking, imagining, hoping to be:
Change dreaming to action and work; there's a God in your will.
Self-mastery and courage and confidence make a man free,
And doing is stronger than dreaming for good or for ill.

Then make a beginning; don't lie like an infant and weep.
Begin with the dearest and crush some delight-giving sin
Right out of your life, with a purpose of death before sleep;
A passion controlled is an index of power within.

Some hard self-denial; let no one suspect it at all.
With ruthless self-torture continue, nor half an inch yield,
Step fearless and bravely; hold on and believe—you won't fall;
Companions you've none but the best on this grim battlefield.

Stagnation means death. If you cannot advance you retreat;
Steel purpose maintain; let it be the first aim of your life;
Beware of those mushroom resolves as impulsive as fleet,
And remember, the nobler the end the more deadly the strife.

For the hope that another may save you is coward and vain,
And the ladder, by which you must climb to yon far starry height,
Is of cast-iron rungs from the furnace of suffering and pain.
Then forward; and courage! from darkness to truth's golden light.

—Algernon Blackwood, 1891

In his later years Algernon Blackwood was a prolific writer of novels, short stories and children's stories. In 1891, however, when he was living in Toronto (he was a charter member of the Toronto Theosophical Society) his writing career was only at its beginning.

Blackwood did not stay long in Canada, but for part of the time he spent in Toronto he was employed as secretary to the famous Dr. Withrow, editor of the *Methodist Magazine and Review*. His earliest published work—essays on his travels in Europe—appeared in that journal. That he was also experimenting with other literary forms at that time is shown by the 1891 date appended to the poem, "Lines to a Dreamer",

which he included in his autobiography.

In his prime Algernon Blackwood was a master story-teller. Unlike the work of so many of his contemporaries, his tales have dated little; even those set in the Edwardian era can still be read with enjoyment. Last year Penguin Books published a collection of his short stories; as recently as March of this year, a British TV network showed an adaptation of his "sinister and famous tale", *The Listener*.

Although no collection of his poems has been published, several are scattered throughout his other work, most frequently in the beautiful stories he wrote for children. —T.G.D.

THE THEOSOPHICAL 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 of 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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