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NEW YEAR IS ALWAYS

CEDRIC WEAVER

It has been said—falsely—that only the present moment exists, that the past is over and finished, the future is not yet in being.

The truth is that both past and future exist for ever. The past is a known thing—every deed, every word, every thought recorded on the endless scroll of Time. Each one of us can read some small part of that scroll, for it is in your memory and mine. It is all in memory somewhere, and all available—if we could but read.

The past is a static thing, its form forever shaped in the history of its times. It is negative, changeless—the firm and everlasting foundation upon which our lives are built.

The future also exists—a thing that is without form, a vital power which we can reach but never touch. It stretches before us always, in unknown and limitless detail, a positive factor in our lives that we cannot with impunity ignore.

What of the present, this Now that is said to be of such importance that in some philosophies we are advised to “forget the dead past, ignore the non-existent future”? The intention of that advice is good, but the terms are wrong—for it is the present that does not exist. It never has, it never will.

Of what moment in Time can you say, *this* is Now? It was in the future when you thought to speak—and was in the past before you finished speaking. This present,

this evanescent Now, is not a period in Time—it is merely a state of being, a condition that exists only in that ever-changing relationship between the past and the future. Yet it is in that relationship only that Life can express itself, deeds can be done, words can be spoken, power used. Life as we know it could not express itself except in that relationship between the negative and the positive poles of being—the past and the future. For Life is not a static thing, it is not a thing which can be pinned down and examined; it is an abstract which can manifest on the concrete plane of test-tubes and microscopes only as movement—an ever-changing relationship between negative and positive, being and non-being, the past and the future. If you could isolate one moment, one small section of that movement, and say of it *this* is Now, you would have a moment in which there is no life, for such a moment, remaining forever Now, could neither enter into the past nor possess a future. There can be no Life under those conditions, no movement that remains static yet still lives. There would remain only a lifeless representation of life, such as a photograph.

So what is this life we know, this ever-changing state of being, this timelessness that can only exist by the power of everlasting Time?

Life itself cannot be traced to a beginning, for it has none; only the forms it in-

spires have beginnings. And in its beginning every form must be created in the future before it can enter into the past; it is first created in thought, then formed in fact. And there must be a creator; in the beginning was God—and there was nothing else.

God is Life and had no beginning, but there was a beginning to the manifestation of Life, and the first chapter of Genesis relates the creation of the earth and of Man—both male and female, whose name was Adam.

The word translated as God in that first chapter is Elohim—a plural word. It represented, not the unmanifested God, but the creative powers of that God: "Let us create . . ." And this work of creation took place on the plane of the abstract—the future. For as an inventor shapes in his mind an image of his creation before he produces it in concrete form, so did the creative powers of God shape an image of themselves—" . . . every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; . . . and there was not a man to till the ground." Adam had been created in the abstract, but not yet formed in the concrete. The Plan was complete, and God rested.

Did this creative God, this Elohim of the first chapter, resume work after the day of rest? No. How could He resume work on something already finished? Abruptly the word changes, the Bible speaks no more of an abstract God, a Word, but of a specific God—the Lord God—who takes over after the seventh day and forms man of the dust of the ground.

Who can place a time-limit on creation? Could there be day before there was a sun—except in thought? Could there be a man before he had form? A *period* of Time before there was any motion, before there was any progress, before there was Past or Future? God—Time—is eternal, but "in the beginning" implies something before the beginning, so the Word, the creative powers, must have developed from the pure

abstract—and when the work of creation was finished a further stage developed from the Word, motion began, Adam and the world took material and separate forms, and every aspect of Creation became at once a moment in the Past.

The Adam of the first chapter, created in the image of God, contained all the potentialities of energy and life and intelligence—but he was not yet active, not yet divided into the negative and positive aspects that are required of all energies before their full powers can be released. For it is only in the interaction of positive and negative that the full capacity of any plane of existence can reach its full potential. No electric bulb will light except it be at the interception of the negative and positive electrodes; the atom releases its tremendous energy only at that point of interception where it is either separating or joining; a new expression of Divine Life can be produced only at and by the juncture of the two poles of male and female into which the Adam was divided. The actual creation took place, not in seven days as we know days, but within the powers of the seven creative Elohim, in that timeless and non-existent stage between the abstract and the concrete, the future and the past, non-being and being. It was all in the future and then it was all in the past, and we ourselves and all the world with us are forever fleeing into that past.

Yet our hopes and our plans are always in the future, and we can make that future what we will. Therein lies our power as men, and our menace to the world, for we are of God and we have free will and the ability to create that is ours by the genesis of our own creation. We can indeed make that future what we will, be it good or bad.

Our past is a static thing, a negative thing that we cannot change, that has *no* power of its own—while the future is a fluid and positive force that remains abstract until that moment that is called Truth.

The immortal Man has available both the future and the past. If we each lay our

plans in the future with no relation to experience, if we ignore our past, our plans will prove no better than vague dreams, useless in themselves and producing nothing; they must remain forever in the future, for they are given no other pole of energy, no past, with which they can unite. We can dream *of* the past and we can dream *in* the future—but there will be no result in action unless and until we learn to combine the two. And having learned to make the combination, if with our knowledge of the past we plan wisely in the future, our result will be good, the material expression of the joining together of our past experience and future plans will be of value.

If we plan selfishly, if we plan with greed or cruelty in our hearts, these things too will become in time a part of our unchanging past, and will inevitably effect our lives. They will be an integral part of our past and of ourselves and, no matter how well we plan in our future, when the two unite in action the result will be colored by both our wisdom and our folly. The past can never be removed from our lives, it can only be balanced by our choice in the future, and the truly wise tries at all times to so plan his future that he never adds more folly to his past.

If we build virtue into our past—if we weave a pattern of beauty into the tapestry we are hanging in the halls of memory—that virtue and that beauty will become a part of our eternal being, it will color our plans, and the positive force of those plans will join with the strength and value of our past, to express itself as a life of glowing inspiration on this plane of action.

So when is Now? It is only a name we give to a stage in our existence—to some recognisable section in the varying cycles of Life. Of such is New Year, which is not a thing in itself, but is a term we apply to that portion of Time—be it a second, an hour, a day—that occurs during the change from one cycle of experience to another. Even Time has no being save in our minds, for the time we speak of is our own arbitrary manner of spacing out the various periods in our past and our future; Time is never Now, and in the changing cycles of our lives the New Year for each one of us, really, is always just upon us. Only a cycle has ended, only an *aspect* of the Eternal has become the past, while Life—which is eternal and of which we are a part—is continually entering the future.

FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

To The 93rd Convention Of The Theosophical Society

N. SRI RAM, *President*

It may be stated without any doubt as to its truth that what the whole of mankind needs for its salvation from the sorry pass in which it is at present, not to speak of its age-old ills, is the deep truth to which we refer when we use the word "Theosophy". But then of what nature is this truth and how does it differ from knowledge of the ordinary sort? Theosophy literally translated is the Divine Wisdom, both the words "Divine" and "Wisdom" having an extraordinary meaning which cannot be wholly ex-

pressed in words, but is open to understanding by anyone who is in earnest to discover it and makes the appropriate effort. The General Council of the Society, in the Resolution passed at its session in 1950, and printed in every issue of *The Theosophist*, described both Universal Brotherhood and this Wisdom as undefined and unlimited. There are depths in the relationship that we term Brotherhood which we touch only in a condition of pure unselfish love and complete self-abnegation in action.

Similarly, there is behind the word "Wisdom" an extraordinary depth and range of meaning that we begin to perceive only when we undertake the necessary voyage of discovery.

Wisdom is surely not knowledge, which can be used well or ill, wisely or unwisely. What we have in our Theosophical literature is partly knowledge with regard to what is external to the knower, namely, the universe, the whole process of Nature, the evolution of life and form, and partly knowledge with regard to man's constitution, objectively portrayed as in a picture or a map. All this has its value. But Theosophy is also truth pertaining to the knower, which in so far as it represents the way life unfolds and acts, has to be inwardly and subjectively realized. In this latter aspect it was called in the ancient days in India, *Atma Vidya*, or self-knowledge, the basis of Wisdom, ultimately leading to knowledge of a Reality that underlies the whole world of phenomena. It is in the light of the Wisdom to be found within oneself that all external knowledge falls into its proper perspective and also all life reveals its hidden beauty and truth.

All information, whether of a scientific or occult nature is but an imprint on the mind, and apart from any deep response to it, becomes a thing that necessarily loses the newness it possessed at first. It becomes increasingly stale as we become familiar with it. Then there is a demand for more information. But no amount of information, however exciting or even sensational, that does not enter into the vital activity of one's essential being, can make any important difference to his life. It is only life or consciousness, unconditioned by the form it uses, that can stay ever fresh and vital. As each one of us is an expression of that Life, there is the possibility in us of realizing the limitations it suffers and thus transcending them. This realization is through a knowledge of ourselves as we are. It is this knowledge, not formulated as textbook statements but as the action of knowing from

moment to moment, which brings about the realization of what one essentially is, also of what life can mean when freed from every form of conditioning. Thus to live becomes a process of self-discovery and approximation to the truth in ourselves. It is this process which brings the person to a condition in which there is an unchanging peace in the midst of every trouble, and at the same time by elimination of the clogs and hindrances till then suffered, unseals the fountain of life's hidden energies, the pure flow of which spells action that is joy and is effective in the truest sense.

Such an attempt we might call the realization of Theosophy as distinguished from a mere study of books. Living Theosophy is not just a matter of acting spasmodically according to the implications of a few doctrines we feel disposed to accept but is the translation of the Wisdom continuously into life. No purely intellectual understanding can go deep enough into the nature of oneself to produce any vital change. But the pursuit of Theosophy, when it engages the whole of one's being, can bring about a change of a far-reaching nature. According to my understanding, this is the kind of change that Krishnaji refers to. In reality it is not "we," as we conceive ourselves, that bring about this result or mutation as he calls it, but Nature, the universal life-energy or Mother which brings it about, when "we," the petty self, stand aside and do not obstruct her process.

Theosophy as a way of life, as truth in action, and not as a verbal storehouse, can be always as fresh as life itself. To live Theosophy in this manner is to live according to one's true nature, not that acquired nature, the ways of which one calls natural simply because they become a matter of habit with a momentum of their own. It is the finding of our own true nature that the whole world and all its peoples primarily need for the solution of all personal and social problems and perhaps seek, even without knowing it.

I have carefully read the Reports from the various Sections in different parts of the world. Judging by what they say, as well as my own impressions gained through correspondence and visits, the work of the Society as a whole is being carried on steadily, although the main burden, whether in Lodges or in Sections, falls on a devoted few who realize what we are called upon to do as a Society and its importance. This has been the case however from the earliest days, and cannot but be so in a Society which keeps its doors so widely open to all who wish to enter. The Society exists primarily to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity but the formation of such a nucleus is not a quick or easy process. As at present, it is in an inner core of the nucleus to be or being formed, consisting of its most devoted members, that its vitality is centred; and this vitality is manifested in varying degrees in different parts of the area to be covered. In almost every Lodge there are fluctuations which are also inevitable but should be treated as a test of the strength and earnestness of those who feel the responsibility for keeping up a steady outflow of the stream of thought and influence for which the Society is designed to be a channel.

The year that lies behind us has been one of "splendid achievement" in the U.S.A., says Miss Joy Mills, the National President of that Section. Last year I mentioned the generous help which the Section has received from the Foundation established by the late Mr. Herbert Kern, and the ways in which it has been possible to develop the work with its assistance. Miss

Mills reports that it has been possible to draw upon the Foundation's help for twenty separate programs along the same lines as then indicated, with the result that the work has extended considerably in all directions. The sales of the Theosophical Publishing House at Wheaton have more than doubled. The Quest Books program of publications has gone ahead, with fifteen further titles and greatly increased sales, due to the popularity of these paperback books and extensive advertising. The membership of the Section has increased to about 4350, more than one-third of the 600 and odd new members being comparatively young, under 35.

The highlight of the year for the English Section was the Congress of the European Federation, says Mr. L. H. Leslie-Smith, the General Secretary. The Congress was held at Swanwick in July under the chairmanship of Mr. John Coats, and was attended by 250 members representing 20 nationalities, 100 coming from countries overseas. The most notable feature of the Congress, mentioned by Mr. Leslie-Smith as well as others, was the feeling of unity that pervaded the Congress from the outset and seemed to be felt by all. Much valuable work was done during the year, we are told, over a program of exploration, suggested to Lodges and members, to find out what, to each, are the basic ideas, principles and doctrines of Theosophy; what particular aspects of Theosophical teaching they considered most useful for the year; and what kind of organization the Society may need in ten years' time. These themes might well be discussed in other Sections too. Even if no consensus is arrived at—any attempt to do so of set purpose might not even be desirable—the attempt on the part of the members to consider such questions individually and discuss them in Lodges cannot but be of great value.

The General Secretary for India, Mrs. Radha Burnier, reports that work has gone on along the usual lines.

Much of Dr. Annie Besant's work for

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India was aimed at the rehabilitation of India on a moral and spiritual basis, and she had great hopes for the revival of India's greatness, which she said would lie not in fight for conquest, for place or power, or in the political arena, but in "keeping alight the torch of Spirit amid the fogs and storms of increasing materialism". Mrs. Burnier recalls these words, so that Indian Theosophists at least may do all they can towards realizing the hope expressed by Dr. Besant.

There are Sections which have quite a small membership; others with a membership of over 1000; still others, with a membership of say over 300, but less than 1000. But one should not judge the value of the work in any of these Sections by mere number. In a movement of the sort that the Society represents, the quality evidenced in our work and thought is more important than numbers; and this quality is not to be judged by purely intellectual measures. For instance, in Burma, where the work has dwindled owing to many causes, there is, because of the religion and the temperament of its people, the possibility some day of a presentation of Theosophy different in its quality and spirit from that to be found anywhere else. It would be the same Wisdom, but exhibiting another color or shade of color. A similar remark might be made with regard to several other Sections, where the work has not yet begun to show the nature of the contribution that may be expected from its full development.

Viet Nam has about 750 members. It must be difficult even to keep a correct count in the midst of the turmoil there. Yet the work seems to be carried on with devotion and faith. Miss Liu-thi-Dau, the General Secretary, who has recently been travelling in the provinces to meet members and visit Lodges, says that everywhere the members of the Society are not only keeping up their Theosophical studies, but also participate in public welfare work, and that is appreciated by the authorities. She writes in conclusion: "We do not know what to-

morrow will be like . . . We continue our work trusting to the Light which certainly comes after darkness."

The Reports from both Australia and New Zealand make encouraging reading. Australia has now nearly 1300 members, and although it is a continent by itself with great distances separating the Lodges, which are mostly in the big cities, the work is so organized, the Section headquarters giving the necessary guidance and help in various forms, that all the Lodges are held together in a scheme which gives them the necessary unity. It is pleasing to read that there are not only Young Theosophists active in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, which are the biggest Lodges, but the younger members are being given responsible positions in these and other Lodges to a greater extent than before.

The General Secretary for New Zealand, Mr. Brian Dunningham, reports that the Section has almost doubled the number of its lecturers. It has taken as its keynote for 1969, "Theosophy, the Spiritual Science the World is Seeking". There is an increasing attendance of young people at meetings, including university students.

Turning to Latin America, Mr. Luis Spairani, the General Secretary for Argentina, reports that the National Council has been organizing courses in Theosophy in different places, and some Lodges have followed suit. He says: "We have not only (thus) opened new horizons to the members, but also attracted new members to the Society."

At Adyar we have had very little news from Chile for a number of years, but this year the General Secretary, Mr. Ricardo Michel, has sent a very detailed report, which indicates that there are now eight active Lodges, all holding meetings regularly for members, as well as the public.

The General Secretary for Colombia, Mr. Aureliano Zea Zea, in his report describes the way in which the work is organized there. It is being carried on with great enthusiasm. The lectures attract a numerous

public, and to make the presentation interesting, they have organized courses for speakers among the members. There are also courses to help members to present Theosophy in a frame-work of scientific knowledge. The Young Theosophists meet weekly and hold important discussions on Theosophy, the attendance averaging thirty persons. The periodical entitled *Seleccion Teosofica*, which consists of Theosophical material selected and translated by Senor Walter Ballesteros, is at present the most important means for the spread of Theosophy, we are told, not only in Colombia, but also in Uruguay, Venezuela and Spain.

The event of the year for all the Sections in Latin America was the holding of the second Inter-American Congress in Sao Paulo, Brazil. It was decided at this Congress to form a permanent Inter-American Federation in the hope of bringing the different Sections closer together and giving them from time to time such help and guidance as may be possible.

The German General Secretary, Mrs. Annaliese Stephan, mentions an interesting development in the work in that country, namely, a study circle for Theosophy in the University of Gottingen. There is also a regular series of study weekends at Inzmuhlen in the months of October and May, attracting 40 to 50 members coming from different places. Mrs. N. van der Schoot, General Secretary for the Netherlands reports the fact that there is increasing co-operation in that Section between the young and the old. The Lodge at Basle in Switzerland has been able to acquire new premises, thanks to a bequest recently received by the Swiss Section. Mr. Roberto Hack, General Secretary for Italy, mentions the fact that they have been translating the *Mahatma Letters* into Italian, and the first volume of the translation has just been published. The Adyar Verlag at Graz in Austria has published four books, three of them translations, with help from the Swiss Section. Iceland has now a membership of 644,

which is a very large percentage of the total population of that country.

From the Theosophical point of view, Africa divides itself into East Africa, South Africa and West Africa, West Africa being a Federation but an active one. In South Africa, the position is much the same as before. East Africa has about 1260 members spread over the States of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The work is being carried on with energy and enthusiasm, although there are uncertainties with regard to the future.

In all Sections, including others which I have not mentioned, activities go on much as usual.

The Adyar Library is now well established in its new premises, which were dedicated formally during the Convention last year. The work of the Library goes on steadily and satisfactorily. Sri V. Ramanatha Iyer is now the Librarian, taking the place of Mrs. Seetha Neelakantan who has gone to "Olcott," the American Section headquarters, for a period of work there.

It has become quite a customary observation that the world is passing through a transition which is proving difficult. The magnitude and nature of the present crisis could hardly be anticipated in the comparatively settled times during which the Society was launched. To cope with this crisis and emerge into an era that is settled and peaceful, yet permitting the freest development of all sections of humanity, there has to be a radical change not only in the outlook but also in the very temper and dispositions of people. Is this possible, is the important question to be answered by Theosophists. The answer has to be given not in so many words, but by the power of the Wisdom as manifested in themselves and the manifold effects it produces in the realms of both thought and action, in other words, one's life in all its aspects. It is Theosophy, the Eternal Wisdom—call it by whatever other name—as it changes our life, and not as an intellectual creed, that can answer the challenge.

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

That which is uncreate abides in thee, Disciple, as it abides in that Hall. If thou wouldst reach it and blend the two, thou must divest thyself of thy dark garments of illusion. Stifle the voice of flesh, allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine, and thus the twain may blend in one.

—Voice of the Silence

The Supreme Mystery, to which the Theosophist returns again and again, is that of his identity and its maintenance. To say that man is, in essence, an Immortal Soul, is a fairly straight-forward statement, unencumbered by implications of mystery. But when one examines the statement closely, taking in the staggering implications of "in essence" and "Immortal Soul", the mystery is indeed impressive. It is so, because what we mean by "in essence" here, is identity with an *unseen and undiscovered* universe. The statement, fully explained, means that the world of time and materiality, in which one aspect of our being operates, is by no means of a nature identical with that which we are "in essence".

What we are "in essence" is a reflection of an Absolute to which the material world is wholly "relative". In other words, it serves as a guise or medium through which a Self, vastly transcending time and materiality, is enabled to function. This means that, in the deepest heart of man, "living" in its ultimate meaning, must be an earthly manifestation of that Absolute—an entity infinitely remote from man's familiar, casually accepted mortality.

This being the case, man, "in essence", as an expression of the Absolute, is never detached from It. Yet, at all times during incarnation he is dependent upon this mortal medium, this temporal personality, for rational earthly behaviour. This dependence causes him to constantly forget that those temporary situations he is required to fill have only a relative meaning for his "essence" and its destined fulfilment. The ultimate *reality* of life on this earth is clearly

visible to "essential" vision, save at such times as "the medium" (personality) comes between him and It. It is in this regard that the Teacher counsels: "allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine."

We all see Truth "through a glass, darkly", because we persist in depending upon an instrument of compromise—the Lower Mind—to reveal to us the Absolute, which it is powerless to do. Nor is such dependence unavoidable; Buddhi-Manas, the Higher Mind, an instrument of man's "essence", is always available for *direct vision* of Truth. Theosophy reminds a man that he is never *compelled* to see "through a glass, darkly". He *chooses* to employ the unfocused lens of the earthly personality, and blames the inadequate result upon the undiscoverable nature of Absolute Truth—of which he himself is "in essence" a manifestation!

It becomes obvious that the root of our problem lies in the fact that we persist in operating on the wrong level of consciousness, whereon personal relativity comes between the Real Man and his native vision. It must be evident that all the reasoning in the world on a personal level, as the utmost exertion of personal vision, will prove powerless to clear up the view. The Absolute in man alone is capable of glimpsing Its native horizon—the Absolute.

But the attainment of such unclouded vision is by no means a matter of a merely local adjustment. It calls for a complete transformation in the life—an enlightened transfer of consciousness from the temporal, physical, desire level of this long-accepted "normal" personality, to the as yet largely

undiscovered Immortal Self—to the Seeing Eye of the Spirit. “Man, know thyself” might be translated, “Man SEE thyself”—as one with the Absolute.

To such vision, time is but a temporary convenience (or inconvenience) of incarnated existence. From a Self that is timeless comes vision beyond time. For the Immortal Self, Eternity is the season of Infinite Unfoldment in which each incarnation on earth becomes a class in Transcendence of mortal and temporal limitations—hardly a trivial mission!

“That which is uncreate abides in thee, Disciple”. Once more, in these words, another phase of the mystery is introduced. It is clear to anyone that, in terms of the Infinite, all aspects of finite, earthly living are degrees of limitation. This human form we took on as a means of functioning here on earth, is a limitation. To “create”, in its most elementary meaning (to give “form” to) is to limit. Hence, “that which is uncreate” (the Spiritual Self), is the one Reality which incarnation is powerless to limit, *providing* man has the vision and the will to rise above those limitations that are at his command—his bodily senses—subjecting these media to a purpose beyond personal gratification.

Have there not been Orders of Illumination among souls who have reflected un-earthly vision on the Way, through their art? What of Milton, of Keats, of Dante? What of Schubert, Mozart and Beethoven? Is not the magic of each of these introducing a celestial heaven into life in our own day? To read and memorize the sonnets of Keats and Wordsworth is to re-invoke inspired vision in daily living. To hear a Mozart Divertimento or a Schubert Octet exquisitely performed by a group of dedicated artists, is to be reminded of the nearness of Heaven to our earth, to catch a ray of the sunlight of Eternity. Living need not be a drab, unilluminated exercise of calculated reason. Beauty calls on the imagination in art’s myriad fields.

“Direct Vision” is accessible to the Higher Mind alone. He who so dominates the physical body and earthly mind and senses that they obey the Self alone, ceases to see “through a glass, darkly”. Self-knowledge, putting to rout the dark angels of desire, removes all obstacles between man and Truth Absolute. Self-knowledge, transformed into Self-vision, makes the disciple one with all that is—one with the Absolute.

Despite the testimony of some who claim to have experienced it, such vision, in its utmost purity and clarity, is beyond the reach of the most potent of drugs. These may produce a dark simulacrum of Vision, but so remote is its actual nature from the pure, dispassionate beholding of one who through unrelenting self-purification has yielded himself up to Buddhi-Manas, that the two approaches are as far apart as death and life. Yet, sad to say, too many seekers today tend to pursue the more dramatic death-route in place of the strait Way of the Spirit—unexciting, unacclaimed, devoid of the highly-charged sense stimuli, or depressants of artificial means.

The Lower Mind, being of time and matter, may respond to reputed “remedies”, of time and matter; but even though such mind-stretching drugs stretch the mind to kingdom come, it remains the same earth-mind. Theosophy declares, on the other hand, that Buddhi-Manas, the spiritual flame of the Higher Triad (Atma-Buddhi-Manas) is completely beyond the reach of drugs of any kind, the least of which is but a means of separating man from his true Self.

The growth of Reality in man, like all growth, is seasonal, depending not merely upon the nourishment it receives, but also upon a gradual elimination of opposition by the ever-present, non-essential obstacles of the body and senses—that “dark garment of illusion”, to the care of which we all devote so much thought. Again and again we lose sight of the fact that such dedication raises obstacles between the higher Self and its vision of Truth.

H. P. Blavatsky in her writings makes

frequent reference to these enormous obstacles, as in her *Personal Memoirs*, where-in occurs the following:

"This power is latent in MAN, and not in solitary units of the human family only, though this mystery of *dual* life in every man, woman and child may remain unknown to them ninety-nine times out of a hundred. This ignorance is due to our Western modes of life . . .

"Between the eternal struggle for more gold, more honors, more power in the higher classes, and the 'struggle for existence', for bread and life, in the lower ones, there is no time or room for the manifestation of the 'inner man' in us.

"Thus from birth to death that EGO slumbers, paralysed by the external man, and asserts itself only occasionally in dreams, in casual visions, and strange 'coincidences'—unbidden and unheeded."

In this manner are the casements of the inner Tabernacle so closely shuttered that but an occasional, fugitive ray finds its way into man's daily life, as he gropes in semi-darkness for a light supposedly without, that burns inextinguishably in the heart of him. How long before, to a few, at least, "living" will mean awakening to that Splendor Within?

DIVINE WILLINGNESS

GEORGE CARDINAL LEGROS

"And that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men," says that wonderful little book, *Light on the Path*.

It means, as I understand it, to become "as nothing" in the sense of proud, vengeful, self-seeking Personality, and at the same time to become, or strive to become "everything" in the sense of the God Within.

This may be a great key to liberation—evoking the Divine Willingness to let go forever of personal life and its illusions, and rest at last "between the wings of That

which is not born, nor dies, but is the Aum throughout eternal ages."

Surely the true glory of man is that he represents the promise of a supreme triumph over his animal nature, a triumph which comes when he surrenders the self-conscious, thinking, "choosing" aspect of himself to the Ineffable.

This is not easy here in the west because we have had dangerous teachers. We have been assured of the all-importance of personal achievement, coaxed into competitive strife in the schoolrooms of childhood, taunted by parents and teachers alike to outdo our companions—to "stand at the head of the class."

This must go, must be left far behind if we are to experience the surrender of all that we are to the Higher Self.

How beautiful it is to say, in the stillness of the night, "Here am I, gods and universe; here is everything representative of me; everything that I know myself to be, offered back to you for whatever service you designate. I renounce personal, independent existence; I no longer desire anything for myself—not power, not knowledge, not peace. I want only to give myself back to you, completely, absolutely, unconditionally, and become a nameless, impersonal energy ceaselessly working in harmony with Eternal Purpose."

Perhaps the above "prayer to the universe," based upon the Divine Willingness, can help us to "give ourselves back" to the Infinite Vastness from which we came, and where all veils and limitations of Personality vanish forever.

The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although, in most men, obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth; and utters truth, or creates. In this action it is genius; not the privilege of here and there a favourite, but the sound estate of every man. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the deaths of four members of the Society.

Miss Muriel Stark, a member of Toronto Lodge for 30 years, died on November 6 in her 86th year.

Mr. C. J. LeNobel of Vancouver Lodge died on November 16. He was 96 years old. Mr. LeNobel joined the Society in Holland at the turn of the century; when he came to Canada in 1905 he joined the Vancouver Lodge. A leg amputation when he was 90 failed to dampen his spirit and only minimally reduced his physical activity.

A member of Toronto Lodge since 1925, Arthur B. Freer, died December 2. Although from the beginning he had never been active in Lodge affairs, his interest in Theosophy was maintained over his 43 years of membership.

A young member of Centennial Lodge (formerly also of Toronto Lodge), Jan Husak, died on December 19. His ashes were sent to his home in Czechoslovakia.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to the relatives and friends of these members.

* * *

At the time of the magazine going to press we learned of the death in Houston, Texas, on December 14, of Mrs. Hilda Wood. Widow of the late Professor Ernest Wood, whose work she assisted for so many years, she had spent a long lifetime in the Theosophical Movement. At one time her membership in the Society was through the Canadian Section, in which she was a member-at-large.

* * *

We were sorry to learn of the death in Australia, several months ago, of Captain Russell Lloyd Jones, who had been a subscriber to the magazine and a supporter of the T.S. in Canada for many years.

Captain Jones was dedicated to the propagation of Theosophical literature to lib-

raries. It was as a result of his generous donation three years ago that the Canadian Section began its project of placing the works of H. P. Blavatsky in Canadian university libraries. (Incidentally, this is a continuing project, and at the present time Volume III of the *Collected Writings* is being distributed.)

We understand from his Australian solicitors that the Canadian Section will benefit from a bequest in Capt. Jones' will.

* * *

The Executive Committee of The Theosophical Society in Canada met on Sunday, December 29, with the following members present: Miss M. E. Seaton, Messrs. D. W. Barr, L. Dadswell, G. Gardiner, C. Weaver and E. Wood. The Treasurer, Mr. R. A. Webb, was also present and the General Secretary was in the Chair.

It was agreed that the Canadian Section should join the newly formed Inter-American Theosophical Federation. Approval was given to the purchase of 500 copies of a pamphlet on H. P. Blavatsky published by the T.S. in America; these would be distributed to the Lodges on a per capita basis at no charge. The report of the Auditor for the years 1967 and 1968 was received and confirmed.

The members learned that unless second class mailing privileges can be retained the cost of mailing the magazine will be drastically increased under the new postal regulations. Application is being made for a second class mailing registration number.

As part of the proposed expansion program, reported in the last issue, Mr. Weaver presented a draft letter which was to be sent to members of the Toronto Lodge Travelling Library and members-at-large.

* * *

John Coats, well-known Theosophical lecturer, is to tour Canada in May. He will visit both Federation and Section Lodges as he passes through the major centres from Vancouver to Montreal.

Immediate Past-Chairman of the Europ-

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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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ean Federation, Mr. Coats was one of the main organizers of the 1966 World Congress. He has done considerable work on behalf of Young Theosophists and there are few Sections he has not visited.

Mr. Coats is now on an extended tour of South, Central and North America.

Mr. Emory Wood, President of Edmonton Lodge and longtime member of the Canadian Executive, was in Toronto over the Christmas holiday season. It was a family visit, but he found lots of time to renew acquaintances in the Society in these parts. On Sunday, December 29 Mr. Wood attended the Toronto Lodge Secret Doctrine Class in the morning, the Canadian Executive Committee meeting in the afternoon, and was Honorary Chairman for the Lodge's evening discussion.

* * *

A member of the Toronto Lodge, Fritz Stallmach, has started a Theosophical Study Group in Freeport, Bahamas, where he now resides. Wednesday evening meetings are held and a small library is maintained.

The *Freeport News* reported on the Group's activities in an article which mentioned karma and reincarnation. "The emphasis is on complete freedom of individual search and belief," Mr. Stallmach was quoted as saying in describing the Theosophical Society.

* * *

I was interested to learn that members of Vancouver Lodge have purchased a fine chair for the use of the Lodge President. A brass plate on it reads, "Presented by the members of Vancouver Lodge in loving memory of Marshall D. Buchanan who was Secretary-Treasurer from 1928 till 1968."

* * *

The weekly *Manas* is frequently endorsed by well-known Toronto newspaper columnist Richard Needham. Recently recommending a year's subscription as "one of the best Christmas presents you can give any thinking person of any age," Mr. Needham added, "... if the human race has any future, it will come through the kind of people who read and write for this kind of publication."

Manas is published from Box 32112, Los Angeles, California, 90032, U.S.A.

I have much pleasure in welcoming Constance L. Linton and Leslie A. Linton into the fellowship of the Society. Mr. and Mrs. Linton joined through Canyon Lodge.

—T.G.D.

THE ANNUAL ELECTION

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

Will the officers of each Lodge kindly have this matter brought before their Lodge and then have the nominations sent promptly to the General Secretary at 310 Dupont St., Toronto 4. According to the constitution, nominations must be made through a Lodge and the consent of the persons nominated should be obtained.

T. G. Davy, General Secretary

LAWSON TAIT MEMORIAL TRUST FIRST AWARD TO CANADIAN SCIENTIST

Professor Harry V. Warren, University of British Columbia, has been offered the first Canadian award by the Lawson Tait Memorial Trust.

Valued at \$2,400.00, the award was in respect to the Canadian scientist's ten years of research into zinc deficiencies which result in dwarfism. Professor Warren has collected considerable evidence to suggest that trace elements are a positive factor in cases such as cancer of the stomach, multiple sclerosis, diabetes and some kinds of heart trouble.

The Lawson Tait Memorial Trust was established for the purpose of interesting doctors in research which does not involve the use of living animals. Further information can be obtained from The Secretary (Canadian Branch), 14 Bishop Street, Toronto 5, Ontario.

THE DEFENSE OF H.P.B. AND THEOSOPHY

When Sirhan in prison, charged with the murder of Senator Kennedy, requested two Theosophical books, viz. *The Secret Doctrine* and a book Talks on *At the feet of the Master* by C. W. Leadbeater, it supplied the pretext for the enemies of Theosophy to commence an attack upon H.P.B. and Theosophy.

They described H.P.B. as the most evil of women, who had founded a Theosophical Church whose inner purpose was to bring about world revolution by the assassination of important prominent personages. They claimed that she had written a book *The Manual for Revolution* which advocated assassination as a method.

Theosophy was described as "Malignant Metaphysics" and the Theosophical Movement as a body whose "inner wheel" was dedicated to world revolution and world control, and is called the "Killer Kult."

This foul abuse was broadcast over country-wide radio and T.V. Networks, through newspapers, through the weekly called *Time*, by lecturers and circulars, and by a book containing diabolical abuse, the foulest to be found anywhere.

These virulent false statements and defamation of H.P.B., the Light Bringer, and against Theosophy the Light she brought from her Teachers, the Mahatmas; and of the Theosophical Movement which sponsors this Light before the world, has given rise to two suggested methods of counter attack.

We in the Orpheus Lodge have always believed that any spiritual attainment, or insight, must be brought down into human living to be confirmed there; lacking this it remains a high ideal, a good intention. We hold that spiritual growth can only be attained by taking a stand back of the things we value most. It is useless to take a stand upon a hill top, or in a desert, where none oppose; it must be taken amongst our opponents, those fellow-pilgrims, who oppose us.

In order for a stand to be of value it must be issued against opposition. On the other hand the stand to be taken must be immovable for retreat will negate its effect. This is what we understand by "a brave declaration of principles."

H.P.B.'s whole Theosophical life as shown in her *Collected Works*, was a matter of taking a stand behind the things she taught, and believed in, and against cant and hypocrisy. She vigorously fought bigotry and superstition, and exposed the cocksure, false complacency of the Modern Science of her time.

It is because of these stands which she took that she was hated at that time and is hated today.

All down history there have been men and women who have taken a stand by what they believed to be the truth and suffered as a consequence. Whatever we have of freedom today is due to these Martyrs.

When the *New York Sun*, at the time probably the most widely known and influential of U.S. newspapers, published Elliot Coué's attack upon H.P.B. and the Theosophical Movement, she immediately instituted action for libel through her co-worker and lawyer, Mr. W. Q. Judge.

She wrote . . . "while for the protection of a dead friend and the security in the future of Theosophists, I hale into the Courts of the land those who, having no sense of what is right or just, see fit to publish broadcast wicked and unfounded slanders, . . . this insult to him and to me I am bound by all the dictates of my duty to repel and am also obliged to protect the honour of all Theosophists who guide their lives by the teachings of Theosophy. Hence my appeal to the law and to a jury of my fellow Americans."

The other method, put forward by Mr. Boris de Zirkoff, a prominent and well known Theosophist in the United States, is as follows:

"Regretfully, I must decline taking part in anything like that. I am deeply

convinced that any legal actions, court proceedings, litigations and brain-mind arguments are utterly foreign to the essence and fiber of our spiritual work. It simply does not belong in the 'climate' of the genuine Theosophical Movement, no matter what may be the temptation or presumed reason to engage in this sort of thing. To descend down into the arena of legal contentions and worldly squabbles is tantamount to resigning the dignity of our spiritual attitudes, and losing our perspective.

"It is obvious to any serious student of the Esoteric Philosophy that attacks against both H.P.B. and the Movement are engineered by what may be called, in very general terms, the forces of the Opposition, which are at all times desirous to counteract any spiritual progress that may be achieved. And the simplest way to do it is to deflect the energies of active workers in the Cause of Truth into subsidiary channels in which their time and strength may be successfully wasted and frittered away on worldly pursuits.

"Personally, I will have to refuse being drawn down onto this level of activity.

"The best defense of H.P.B. if she needs it, is to spread her teachings, the knowledge about the existence of her works, the facts and ideals of the Movement, and to let the sordid past and the confused present be overwhelmed by the Wave of the Future which, I verily feel, is already upon us."

Miss Joy Mills, the President of the American Section, T.S., who also received a copy of Mr. de Zirkoff's letter to us, agrees with it fully. Nevertheless she has discussed this matter thoroughly with a representative from *Time* magazine at great length, and has also placed advertisements in important papers stating what H.P.B. and Theosophy do stand for.

And so we have these two different ways

of opposing this diabolical attack on H.P.B. and Theosophy.

It is for every Theosophist the world over to make his decision as to which is the better method to follow.

In any case Theosophists everywhere should be alerted regarding this attack—which may be only the first of many such attacks to destroy the Theosophical Movement before 1975—so that they can all

stand together, as one man, in the face of the Enemy.

Those Theosophists who believe that punitive measures should be taken against our Enemy might wish to contact the undersigned.

W. E. Wilks,
for the Orpheus Lodge, T.S.
in Canada

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. In reference to the Sun, what is meant by the term “the living fire of Orcus?”

Answer. In this question it is strange that the Sun should be linked in thought with Orcus. Had the questioner known the meaning of Orcus the query would not have been made in this manner; because the Sun is the giver of life and vitality to the planets (in the Esoteric philosophy), whereas Orcus is associated with death, for it is one of the names used in mythology in connection with the Underworld. Moreover, there is no reference to the Sun on the page where “the living fire of Orcus” is mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*. The term is used in connection with the elements, in this manner:

“The elements now known, have arrived at their state of permanency in this 4th Round and 5th Race. They have a short period of rest before they are propelled once more on their upward spiritual evolution; when the ‘living fire of Orcus’ will dissociate the most irresolvable and scatter them into the primordial ONE—again.” (S.D. I, 543; II, 267 6 vol. ed.; I, 593 3rd ed.)

Explaining the citation. There are two possible renderings for “the elements now known”: (1) the elements of chemistry—now listed about 100; (2) the Tattvas, enumerated as fire, air, water, earth. The reference made to the 4th Round and the 5th Race would seem to indicate that the elements of the second category are meant. Further, the evolutionary development of these elements is considered in the next sentence. “The short period of rest” has reference to the resting period which will take place with the conclusion of the seventh root-race’s evolutionary development on this globe. Following this rest the elements will be “propelled once more on their upward spiritual evolution” as they proceed on the globes of the ascending arc. The next portion of the sentence refers to a future era, to the close of the manvantara, when pralaya will commence. Then at this point H.P.B. dramatizes what will occur by using a mythological term to express the manner in which the dissociation of the elements will take place, namely by means of the “living fire” which in mythology is portrayed as burning in the Underworld. This fire from Orcus is potent enough to

dissociate the elements when Pralaya sets in, although the rocky crust remains as a sphere.

Question. Is it possible to be aware on several planes at the moment of death? If so, under what circumstances?

Answer. Since "the moment of death" is specified, the answer is directed to that specific event alone. Inasmuch as what takes place at the moment of death is stated to be involuntary it would not be possible to be aware "on several planes" at the moment of death, implying by the word "aware" that one is able to direct one's consciousness on more than one plane. Here is a citation regarding the moment of death from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

"The experience of dying men—by drowning and other accidents—brought back to life, has corroborated our doctrine in almost every case. Such thoughts are *involuntary* and we have no more control over them than we would over the eye's retina to prevent it perceiving that colour which affects it most. At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity." (p. 170)

The proper manner of regarding the situation posed in the question is to consider it in connection with states of consciousness rather than planes because, after all, the physical body is stationed upon the seventh cosmic plane (regarded as the lowest plane) and cannot leave that plane. When the moment of death occurs, the consciousness of the individual is no longer functioning in the Jagrat state of consciousness—the ordinary every-day "waking state"; this has been transcended. For that matter so has the svapna—the dreaming state of consciousness. It is functioning in the Sushupti; therefore it is able to have

the panoramic vision which was described in the quotation.

Question. Please explain the "Eighth One" who was rejected.

Answer. This has reference to one of the Stanzas of Dzayan (Stanza IV first series). It should be borne in mind that all the Stanzas are rendered in symbolical language and should not be taken literally—with particular reference to the word "rejected." The whole sloka, from which this sentence has been selected, is unquestionably a difficult one to understand and because of its length the answer will be confined to the closing portion of the sloka (sloka 5), which states: "then come the 'Sons,' the seven fighters, the one, the eighth left out, and his breath which is the light-maker (Bhaskara)."

The Sanskrit word Bhaskara literally means light-maker, because the verbal root *bhas* means to light: it is also a name of the Sun. Consequently the eighth one left out has reference to the Sun; the seven fighters signify the seven planets—because the planets must fight (i.e. rotate) in order to catch the breath (light) of the Sun. In *The Secret Doctrine* an allegory is quoted in regard to this portion of the sloka, which concludes with the words that the eighth one was rejected. Instead of citing the allegory, here is the interpretation: it means that the Sun was placed far away from the planets, so that the planets would not be drawn into the Sun. In "Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge" H.P.B. explains this portion of the allegory:

"The sun is older than any of its planets . . . its 'rejection' means that when bodies or planets began to form, helped by its rays, magnetic radiance or heat, and especially by its magnetic attraction, it had to be stopped, otherwise it would have swallowed all the younger bodies like as Saturn is fabled to have treated his progeny. This does not mean that all the planets are thrown out from the sun, as modern Science teaches, but simply that under the Rays of the sun

they acquire their growth. Aditi is the ever-equilibrizing mother-nature on the purely spiritual and subjective plane. She is the Sakti, the female power or potency, of the fecundating spirit: and it is for her to regulate the behaviour of the sons born in her bosom." (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. X, pp. 401-2)

Question. Is the Imperishable Sacred Land in the approximate area of Tibet?

Answer. Some "sacred lands" are referred to in *The Secret Doctrine*; one in Tibet, another situated within the desert of Gobi. Then there is the Imperishable Sacred Land, described in this manner:

"The reasons for this name are explained as follows: This 'Sacred Land'—of which more later on—is stated never to have shared the fate of the other continents; because it is the only one whose destiny it is to last from the beginning to the end of the Manvantara throughout each Round. It is the cradle of the first man and the dwelling of the last divine mortal, chosen as a Sishta for the future seed of humanity. *Of this mysterious and sacred land very little can be said*, except, perhaps, according to a poetical expression in one of the Commentaries, that the 'pole-star has its watchful eye upon it, from the dawn to the close of the twilight of 'a day' of the Great Breath.'" (S.D. II, 6; III, 19-20 6 vol. ed.; II, 6 3rd ed.)

Referring to the two italicized phrases—added here for ease of reference: (1) this was not supplied—evidently because of the contents of the second phrase?

Question. Could the "Great Breath" be defined as having the same relationship to manifestation as the nucleus to the atom?

Answer. The correct term to use for the specified relationship is the "Divine Breath", not the "Great Breath." For the following reason: The Divine Breath represents a "manifested aspect" of the Great Breath.

"When the 'Great Breath' is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is re-

garded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity—the One Existence—which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos." (S.D. I, 43; I, 115 6 vol. ed.; I, 74 3rd ed.)

The Great Breath represents a "pre-manifestation stage," because the definition is given:

"By 'that which is and yet is not' is meant the Great Breath itself, which we can only speak of as absolute existence, but cannot picture to our imagination as any form of existence that we can distinguish from Non-existence." (*Ibid.*)

Question. "Fohat turns with his two hands in contrary directions the seed and the curds." (I, 673; II, 398 6 vol. ed.; I, 736 3rd ed.) What, specifically, is meant by seeds and curds?

Answer: "Seeds" signify World-germs; "curds" represent cosmic matter in a highly attenuated condition. Regarding Fohat and his activities, a Commentary is quoted from the Book of Dzyan:

"The Central Sun causes Fohat to collect primordial dust in the form of balls, to impel them to move in converging lines and finally to approach each other and aggregate. Being scattered in Space, without order or system, the world-germs come into frequent collision until their final aggregation, after which they become wanderers (Comets)." (S.D. I, 201; I, 250, 6 vol. ed.; I, 222 3rd ed.)

"The Seed appears and disappears continuously.' Here 'Seed' stands for 'the World-germ,' viewed by Science as material particles in a highly attenuated condition, but in Occult physics as 'Spiritual particles,' i.e., supersensuous matter existing in a state of primeval differentiation. In theogony, every Seed is an ethereal organism from which evolves later on a celestial being, a God." (*Ibid.*)

"Fohat sets in motion the primordial World-germs, or the aggregation of Cosmic atoms and matter, some one way, some another, in the opposite direction . . . the 'curds,' or Cosmic matter; . . .

particles in a highly attenuated condition, and nebulae." (S.D. I, 673; II, 397 6 vol. ed.; I, 736 3rd ed.)

Curds are further explained:

"The curds are the first differentiation, and probably also refer to that cosmic matter which is supposed to be the origin of the 'Milky Way'—the matter we know . . . This matter, radical and cool, becomes, at the first reawakening of cosmic motion, scattered through Space; appearing when seen from the Earth in clusters and lumps, like curds in thin milk. These are the seeds of the future worlds, the 'Star-stuff.'" (S.D. I, 69; I, 136-7 6 vol. ed.; I, 98 3rd ed.)

Question. "Fohat is the key in Occultism which opens and unriddles the multi-form symbols and respective allegories in the so-called mythology of every nation." (S.D. I, 673; II, 398 6 vol. ed.; I, 736, 3rd ed.) Please explain.

Answer. What H.P.B. intends to convey in this passage is this: the stories told about gods and goddesses represent the action and reaction of cosmic forces, which in turn are the activities of Fohat. Notice this statement, which also gives a definition of Fohat, applicable to the present question as well as the previous one.

"Fohat: a term used to represent the active (male) potency of the Sakti (female reproductive power) in nature. The essence of cosmic electricity. An occult Tibetan term for Daiviprakriti, primordial light; and in the universe of manifestation the ever-present electrical energy and ceaseless destructive and formative power. Esoterically, it is the same, Fohat being the universal propelling Vital Force, at once the propeller and the resultant." (*Theos. Gloss.* 120-1)

Referring specifically to mythologies:

"Fohat, shown in his true character, proves how deeply versed were all those prehistoric nations in every science of nature, now called physical and chemical branches of natural philosophy. In

India, Fohat is the scientific aspect of both Vishnu and Indra, the latter older and more important in the *Rig-Veda* than his sectarian successor; while in Egypt Fohat was known as Tum issued of Nut, or Osiris in his character of a primordial god, creator of heaven and of beings." (S.D. I, 673; II, 398 6 vol. ed.; I, 736 3rd ed.)

BOOK REVIEWS

The Pinnacle of Indian Thought, being a new, independent translation of the *Viveka Chudamani* (Crest Jewel of Discrimination) with commentaries by Ernest Wood. A Quest Book, published 1967 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A., paper, 161 pp. Price \$1.25.

This is a posthumous work which Professor Wood allegedly finished four days before his death on September 17, 1965. However, it became clear to this reviewer that the finishing of the translation was not according to Professor Wood's original plan. The skipping of a block of 94 verses at the very end of the book can only be explained if the author already felt that his days were numbered and, therefore was forced to reduce drastically the amount of translation still pending. In the final chapter he omitted, on pages 157/159, to number the verses following verse 428. Furthermore, of the 3½ verses, with which his translation abruptly ends, he did not supply his own translation, but took the translation made by Mohini M. Chatterji, without acknowledging his source. This is a sign that Professor Wood was no more in full control of the situation, as otherwise he would not have left that part without a note as to its source, or rather he would have translated these few verses himself, since he was obviously strongly bent upon producing "a new, independent translation."

In the *Introductory Note* Mr. Geoffrey A. Barborka reports that he was given by the publishers the task to systematize the

spelling of the Sanskrit words, and that "this has accordingly be done." Unfortunately, the system selected by Mr. Barborka is no system at all. His statement "that there are several methods of anglicizing Sanskrit words" (he means transliterating, of course) is not true anymore. For several decades all scholars in this field have been using a single system of transliteration, as for example Professor Franklin Edgerton in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* of 1953, E. Denison Ross in his edition of Csoma de Koros *Sanskrit - Tibetan - English Vocabulary* of 1910, Louis de La Vallée Poussin in his translation of the *Vijnaptimatratasiddhi* of 1929, Professor M. B. Emeneau in his *Sanskrit Sandhi and Exercises* of 1952, Daisetz T. Suzuki in his translation of the *Lankavatara Sutra* of 1932, the Gaekwad's Oriental Series since 1916, Radhakrishnan and Moore in their *Source Book in Indian Philosophy* of 1957, etc., etc. But whereas the present system requires four diacritical marks, Mr. Barborka's system uses only two, and as a consequence makes no distinction between lingual and dental consonants, nor between the vowel r and the semi-vowel r. On the other hand, his system uses both the v̄ and the w for one and the same character, e.g., v̄'s in *vasana*, *avidya*, *viveka*, but w's in *tattwa*, *swayam* and *twam*, showing a lack of consistency. Furthermore, the use of the awkward old-fashioned representation of the surd and surd aspirated palatal mutes by ch and chh respectively, instead of by c and ch, is certainly not justifiable.

Mr. Barborka's statement that Professor Wood's numbering of the verses "is not the same as that used by other translators," makes one wonder how many translations he has consulted? It so happens that Professor Wood's numbering is identical with that of Swami Madhavananda of the Advaita Ashrama, and also with that of Charles Johnston's translation!

In this work, which Shankara directs to

those who are already quite advanced on the path to liberation, he describes the stages leading to the condition of a *jivanmukta*, i.e., of one who is *liberated while living on earth*. In other words, he wrote this for his advanced disciples and, therefore, the text is not fit to be "popularized." And yet this is what Professor Wood tried to do with his translation and his commentaries. For this purpose he introduced a large number of expressions wholly his own, which tend to make rather a caricature of the text. So we find him translating *akasa* as "sky-matter" (p. 18) and he uses "skyness" instead of *etheric* (p. 19). The highly technical and important word *vasana* he translates variously as: habitual tendencies (p. 19), impressions (p. 21), desire-habit (p. 103), divine scent (p. 103), horrible stink (p. 103), outer smell (p. 103), perfume (p. 103), desire (p. 130), and bad habits (of mind) (p. 139). In verse 313 he translates *samsara* by "circuit of material bondage (or reincarnation)" and in the next verse by "circuit of material living." In verse 136 he calls it "running about," and in verse 145 "embodied existence," while in verse 171 it becomes "round of events," in verse 184 "series of incarnations," and finally in verse 272 "worldly life." For the three qualities (*gunas*) our author has also a variety of expressions: sluggishness, restlessness, well-adjusted orderliness (p. 27), inertia, energy and order (p. 28), while on p. 31 he uses "law" instead of "order," for the term *sattva*, and elsewhere "harmony" (p. 27), "harmonious judgment" (p. 56) and harmoniousness (p. 106). Again for *rajas* he uses "eagerness" on p. 55, and "restless desire" on p. 56.

Quite unfortunate is the translation of the word *ananda* by "joy," which Professor Wood justifies as follows: ". . . joy or, as some have translated it, bliss—which however is too subjective a word for my taste, as it seems to give the impression of something rather retiring and exclusive of

the fullness of life . . ." (p. 79). In other words, he rejects the *serenity* which accompanies the bliss of the Spiritual Ego, and replaces it by a "joy" of the fullness of life. The reader should compare this attitude with that of *The Voice of the Silence*: "If thy soul smiles while bathing in the Sunlight of thy Life; if thy soul sings within her chrysalis of flesh and matter . . . know, O Disciple, thy Soul is of the earth." (Fragment I).

The above must suffice to show that this reviewer is not quite pleased with his friend's translation. There are other types of errors in the English text, but most of these would require lengthy discussions for which there is no place in a review. But I may still point out the following obvious errors:

On p. 34, verse 129, the word "life" should be "like" (Sanskrit *iva*).

On p. 106, verse 278, after the first sentence should come "(then) rajas (perishes) by sattva" [*rajah sattvat*] which Professor Wood forgot to translate.

On p. 124, verse 300, after the word "unstained" must be inserted "like the moon" [*candravadvimalah*]. Furthermore, the word "ego" should rather be *egoism* [*ahamkara*].

On p. 55, verse 17, the word *sattwa* should be replaced by *rajas*.

Some of Professor Wood's comments could be called "cute" and entertaining, but in general they do not contribute to a clearer understanding of Shankara's text. In some instances this reviewer cannot go along with these comments, especially when he brings a God into Shankara's philosophy! For example, on page 44 he states:

"It is in this admission of God that Shankara's doctrine is different from that of Buddha . . ."

This is a statement difficult to account for, especially from one who lived for more than 30 years in India. It supports the conclusion that this posthumous work of Professor Ernest Wood is unreliable both as a translation and as an exposition of Shankara's teachings.

—W.B.R.

The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition by G. R. S. Mead. A Quest Reprint, published 1967 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. Paper, 109 pp. Price \$1.45.

This stimulating book is a reprint of a work that first appeared in 1919. As such, it is one of the last major contributions by Mr. Mead, the late—and great—theosophical scholar. In his "outline," Mr. Mead brings forth various views of a number of eminent ancient philosophers and Christian thinkers on "the doctrine of the subtle body." In substance, this means to look upon man's physical body as "the exteriorization of an invisible subtle embodiment of the life of the mind" (Proem, p. 1).

The subject-matter of this little book is principally devoted to three major types of subtle bodies: the Spirit-Body, the Radiant Body, and the Resurrection-Body. Members of the later Platonic school upheld views on the Spirit-Body, in particular, Plotinus and his commentator Porphyry. The last member of Plato's Academy, Damascius, whom the Christian emperor Justinian drove out in 529 A.D., also wrote of a "radiant body" or *augoeidés*: "In heaven, indeed, our radiant [portion] is full filled with heavenly radiance [*auge*]—a glory that streams throughout its depths, and lends it a divine strength" (p. 59). The Resurrection-Body view appears to have become popular with the Latin Father Tertullian, in the third century, as indicated in his treatise *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*. With Origen, however, the Resurrection-Body was conceived to be spiritual or divine in nature (a view close to that of the early Gnostics, notes Mead).

This work is a handy item for those desiring a compact introductory survey on our subtle vehicles. A still more comprehensive survey of subtle matter conceptions has been recently provided by the Dutch theosophical scholar, Dr. Johannes J. Poortman in his work *Ochema (The Subtle Body)*, as evidenced in English Synopses appended to the text.

—Richard Sattelberg

Life's Deeper Aspects, by N. Sri Ram. Published 1968 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. 152 pp. Price 4 rupees.

Mr. Sri Ram has a rare genius for speaking sentences that read well. Conversely, his published lectures have an "audible" quality.

Life's Deeper Aspects is a collection of addresses "given at various places over a period of years." Although covering a wide range of subject matter, and difficult to classify, it might fairly be said that these eight talks all deal, in one way or another, with the expansion of consciousness.

Those who enjoy hearing our International President speak should also appreciate this little volume. —T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

Diamonds in the Family, by Eunice Buckley. Published 1968 by The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England. 256 pp. Price 27 shillings and sixpence.

A diamond necklace passing by inheritance through several generations of a European family provides both continuity and theme for this novel.

The jewels supposedly retain a malevolent psychic potency which influences the successive owners. Some valid occult conceptions are involved, but not illuminated by this particular literary approach. —T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Secular Abyss, by Gerald S. Graham and John Alexander. A Quest paperback reprint. Published 1968 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. 320 pp. Price \$1.95.

This book is sub-titled, "An Interpretation of History and the Human Situation". It has the virtues of originality, clearness, and logical structure. As such, it will probably be found intellectually stimulating by most students.

The Secular Abyss is not without its drawbacks and limitations, however. A reader used to questioning unsupported

statements and conclusions will be frustrated by a text that overflows with them. (A useful frustration however—good mental exercise!) From a Theosophical point of view the work is disappointing in that, although based on wide studies, it shows no sign of familiarity with Theosophical ideas. As a result the abyss is darker than it need be. —T.G.D.

TORONTO LODGE

Forthcoming events include observance of the 78th anniversary of the Toronto Theosophical Society. This will be celebrated by a supper for Lodge Members on February 25.

The International Vice-President of The Theosophical Society, Mr. James S. Perkins and Mrs. Perkins are to visit Toronto from March 29 to March 31.

Tuesday evening members' meetings will continue to form part of the Lodge program during the winter months. The Secret Doctrine Class meets regularly on Sunday morning and public lectures or discussions are held on Sunday evenings.

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, yet remain silent for lack of speech.

This 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

HERE

Here where the garden ends
A narrow path twists in the gloom
Of over-arching boughs.
And we on its mossy way saunter and ponder
On Life and its ultimate doom or its ultimate bliss
And we wonder.

Here where the soft sh-splash
Of the water-fall's drop to the pool
We brood on the rose-petal boats
That, flipped by a finger of wind,
Have moved from the tree to the stream.
We saunter and ponder and dream
Did they move there by chance or design?
We seek as we wander.

Here where the small frogs dive
In a miniature whirl of spray,
We linger and speak of the day
When frogs and the rose-leaves and wind
With the water-fall's leap to the pool,
With the stars and the earth and the sky
Will know they are ONE and we too
Who ponder on Life and its way.
And we wander again—and we wonder.

—Dorothy M. Emerson

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