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HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

August 11, 1831 - May 8, 1891

# WHITE LOTUS DAY

All over the world students of Theosophy gather together on May 8—*White Lotus Day*—in memory of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who died on that date in 1891.

The quiet inspiration of a *White Lotus Day* meeting is prompted by realization of the debt owed to H.P.B. for her sacrifice in bringing the message of Theosophy to the modern world. It is a debt that can only be paid by helping to relay the message.

The messenger is usually remembered with some brief remarks about her life and mission, some quotations from her works; sometimes there is a reading of verse from *The Light of Asia* or the *Bhagavad Gita*; perhaps even the playing of her favourite musical piece, *Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata*.

Following are extracts from three *White Lotus Day* meetings held last year. Significantly, they illustrate the common bond between students of whatever affiliation.—Eds.

## CHANGELESS IN ESSENCE

The record of H. P. Blavatsky's life, as well as the principles of Theosophy itself, fail to indicate any approved stopping-place of achievement; devotion to Theosophy, to the purposes of the Movement, is not conditioned, providential, nor of a certain duration only. In H.P.B. devotion was complete without being fanatical, constant without being automatic, resourceful as inspiration but *changeless in essence*.

H.P.B. shows us the purpose of Life—not merely an interest and motive in this present life and a belief and faith with regard to the next, but she draws together the threads of our life which run back into the past and forward into the future. Threads which we have been unable to trace, but which show us the pattern we have been weaving and the purpose of our work.

She teaches us Theosophy—not as a mere form of doctrine, not as a religion or a philosophy or a creed, not as a working hypothesis, but as a *living power in our lives*.

The keynote of her teachings, the keynote of her life, was—*Self-Sacrifice*. And thus though doctrinal Theosophy speaks of Karma and Reincarnation, devachan and

Nirvana; of rest for the weary storm-tossed pilgrim of life; of a final goal of bliss past all thought and conceiving; yet, to those who are able to receive it, it says that there is something higher and nobler still, and that is—the renunciation of the bliss of Nirvana and to remain unselfish till the endless end by remaining with humanity until all have been freed from the bondage of matter. There is no older doctrine than this of Divine Compassion, of Universal Brotherhood. It is the essence of all the teachings of all the Buddhas and Christs the world has ever known. It is above all doctrines, all creeds, all formulas; it is the essence of all religion.

We must measure the work of H.P.B. by itself. Allow it to stand or fall on its own merit. The works of H.P.B. show her to be the most profound and wonderful woman of this or any age. There is no record of any such teacher in the western world since our boasted "civilization" emerged from "barbarism".

If it be just to judge a tree by its fruit, a character by its service to humanity, and a personality by its self-forgetfulness, then will H. P. Blavatsky soon be recognized in her true character and placed among the benefactors of humanity.

Her mission remains to the Theosophical Movement. If its members have not apprehended her mission, then, indeed, have they studied in vain.

Let us push on the work of H.P.B. which was and is the work of the Theosophical Movement down the ages.

—United Lodge of Theosophists,  
Ottawa, Canada

☆ ☆ ☆

### ACTING ACCORDING TO HER EXAMPLE

*(Translated from the Dutch)*

We shall always agree with those workers in the Theosophical Movement who find it helpful and necessary to meet together in small or large groups every year on May 8 in remembrance of the life and work of H. P. Blavatsky, in the spirit as she herself wished and indicated. For, to commemorate great events and the lives of great men and women in history can be of real value if the urge to do so comes from *within* our innermost being. That is, to pay homage and express our gratitude to our great predecessors on the path to Truth and Light, and once more testify to our will to follow in their footsteps. That *inner* urge will always bring inspiration.

Even more do we agree with those workers in the Theosophical Movement who insist that the best way to remember H.P.B. does not depend on data but in acting according to her example every hour of the day and thus simply carrying on the work for which she stood. Such a “daily remembrance” or commemoration will help to restore, where necessary, the name Theosophy to its true meaning and remind us of its teachings which are so much needed in the world today.

This is a task for every student of the ancient esoteric philosophy. Many articles in papers and periodicals might be used to show thinkers and seekers after truth that actually the work of H.P.B. is being commemorated, in a sense, all over the world at present. In fact, the results of her labour

and sacrifice—acknowledged or not—have penetrated the fields of science, religion and philosophy and this is going on all the time; affirmation of what is written in *The Secret Doctrine* and other writings by H.P.B. frequently appear.

The true “commemorator” of White Lotus Day also knows, however, that besides her efforts on the outer plane there was work of an even more far-reaching nature: the bringing back of the soul-inspiring power of the esoteric doctrines from the ancient mystery schools.

It would be useful to re-read the fragment, “Theosophy for the Masses” in Chapter XII of *The Key to Theosophy*. Such a remembrance might be completed by re-reading before or on the day of May 8 Chapters XIII and XIV and especially the Conclusion of *The Key to Theosophy*, followed by the “Five Messages to American Theosophists”. These will go to show that true commemoration of White Lotus Day should put the emphasis on the kernel and essence of H.P.B.’s work and show how averse she was to sectarianism in any shape or form; how up-to-date these writings are and how their echo should be heard louder than ever in the world today.

—Jan Venema

*(Mr. Venema's group follows the Point Loma tradition — Eds.)*

☆ ☆ ☆

### REDEDICATION TO SERVICE

Many have speculated on the source of her knowledge and inspiration. What made her able to discourse illuminatingly and to write voluminous works on subjects which stagger the imagination by their vastness and depth? The years previous to the launching of the Theosophical Movement in 1875 contain the clue. At the bidding of Him she called Master, she travelled all over the world for 20 long years—when modern means of transportation were unknown.

These years were spent in searching for the bread of life, not for herself—but for hungry and starving humanity; in learning

at the feet of those great ones whose age-old philosophy she was to give out to a world that had forgotten it; and in preparing for the life of service she was to live. For that service the world slashed her mercilessly. She was misunderstood, misinterpreted, criticized and vilified; and this continues even to this day—showing that her message is very much alive at the present time. Such was her lot because her teachings were extraordinary; her ways were not the conventional ways of her day.

We, as students, are favoured in being able to study her writings and to consider the Message she recorded in them and so evaluate the worth of her labour of love. Her recorded Message is the mirror in which alone her strange and weird personality can be adequately understood. One of the Masters writing of her to H. S. Olcott, says:

“One of the most valuable effects of Upasika’s Mission is that it drives men to self study and destroys in them blind servility for persons.”

Truly, H.P.B. did not want “blind” followers, but discerning men and women, whose faith was founded upon spiritual knowledge which enabled them to develop the capacity to know and to understand and thereby to teach and serve. She came not to show us anything new, but to restate the Ancient Wisdom, to point the way to the

Masters and to teach us a new way of seeing nature and ourselves.

H.P.B.’s message of sacrifice helps one to work selflessly for all and not only for those one loves, and to remove from the heart the idea of separation which makes one feel “I am better than my brother man”.

The lofty metaphysics which she taught in *The Secret Doctrine* and in *Isis Unveiled* enable us to purify our minds and hearts and to see the One Self in all beings. Let us then pour out the blessing of loving sacrifice in every word spoken, in every thought sent out, in every emotion expressed. This is not possible unless a life of purity is lived in our everyday affairs. Through the study of H.P.B.’s philosophy we gain for ourselves a little of these waters of life which cleanse and purify; we are thus helped to kindle in the temple of our own hearts that light belonging to the world of the Masters whom H.P.B. represented.

That is the great inspiration of her life. The mighty sacrifice of love which she gave out all her life speaks to us in every book she wrote. The message is there for those willing to read it. We, too, can try to do what H.P.B. did—sacrifice all that we have and all that we are on the altar of human service.

—Judith Myrtle, Vancouver Lodge, T.S.

## THE GREEKS AND THEIR GODS

*Being comments on W. K. C. Guthrie’s book of that name by*

ALVIN BOYD KUHN, PH.D.

*(Concluded from Vol. 51, Page 19)*

Guthrie quotes (p. 260) Simonides famous epitaph for the Lacedaemonian dead at Plataea: “Having died they are not dead.” Here is the “death” that does not kill or destroy existence. So of the divine fire of soul—it is a fire that burns but does not destroy, does not consume (vide the burning thorn-bush of Moses). Egypt says: “The

shades were wrapt in flames, but were not consumed.”

I found Guthrie’s treatment of the Orphics thrilling. I feel that in this system we have the real truth about the nature, history and destiny of the soul. Well does he say that the Orphic philosophers were “running counter to the spirit of their age by trying

to inculcate a book religion." (p. 313). Dull, stupid humanity *never* being able to rise to the apprehension of truly occult wisdom, those who can so rise are always and inevitably "counter" to the mediocre level of "popular belief."

This leads me to think that it is a great mistake to explain the principles of the high Greek religion (and certainly of Greek philosophy) as having arisen as developments out of popular superstitions. When have the masses ever instructed the learned! I am persuaded that all "popular" ideologies, especially in religion, are the warped and corrupted misinterpretations of what started from the top of intelligence as profound recondite truth. The "popular mind" always besmudges and caricatures, through literalization, all high concepts. That should never be forgotten.

Guthrie proposes the key Orphic belief was that, "At death all souls go to Hades." Well, if Hades be in any sense the place of the "torments of hell" (as in all "popular" religion) this denies the right of the righteous and saintly their reward, which is to go to their "heaven". I prefer my rendering of all underworlds, hells, Hades, sheols and Amentas, as being just this good earth; then, of course, all souls go to Hades, and they go there at their *soul's* "death", which is their *incarnation*. The soul "dies" (in both the Platonic and the Pauline, i.e., the Orphic sense) by and through incarnation, and that proves that the Hades underworld is this earth, since this is where they incarnate.

Then the item of souls choosing their conditions of life for each next incarnation. According to Theosophy (Hindu or Platonic), after their long rest in the upper

realms of aither between incarnations, souls are taken in hand by the "Lords of Karma" and while in that *higher dimension of consciousness*, they are shown a number of possibilities for their next embodiment. In the clear vision of realities they choose the one best for their next steps of progress in evolution. Then they *swoon* away (as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* describes it) from that dimension of consciousness and, beginning their descent, pass successively through the grades of the several planes of being and finally wake up in a cradle down here on earth. They have chosen their fate for this life, but, having entered the Vale or the Stream of *Lethe*, they have no (conscious) memory (but certainly subconscious) of their choice. Later they drink of the waters of the Lake of Memory (Plato's Doctrine of Reminiscence!). "My reason returned unto me" says Daniel.

I think Guthrie is right in surmising that Orphism was "the product of a few individual minds" (p. 325-6). How could the populace by "instinct" or some kind of "intuition" hit on such high concepts? Never. The great systems of ancient sapiency were worked out by the divinest men on earth, held in secret, expressed in symbolic language, but eventually everywhere traduced into literal nonsense by the populace.

Christianity arose out of the effort of the "rabble" to appropriate the teachings of the Mysteries, and what a mess they made of it! Of course, when the state had appropriated religious truth in the travestied forms of popular caricatures, Orphic religion would be found, in ignorance, to be "undermining rather than supporting the life of the state." Well does Guthrie say that the mass mind passively accepts what the priests think it is best that they should be told. Synesius, a Bishop of Smyrana wrote to Jerome, "It has been the policy of our leaders that they should impart to the believers in all cases not what would convey to them the truth of such profound matters, but what it is conceived to be best for them to be told." There is your Jesuitry, and how

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well does the Roman Catholic Church pursue that policy.

Wonderfully clear and illuminating is Guthrie's treatment of the Plato-Aristotle philosophy. On p. 346 at bottom:

"Immediately before incarnation it (the soul) has drunk the waters of Lethe (which perhaps in Plato's mind was no more than an allegorical expression of the actual effect of contamination by the clogging matter of the body), and forgotten all or most of its knowledge of that other world; but in perceiving through the senses, which are now its only instruments, the imperfect approximations here below, it is dimly reminded of the full and perfect knowledge which it once had."

How perfectly this drinking the waters of Lethe *before incarnation* falls in line with the "swooning" of the soul in the upper worlds, as predicted in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead!* Then Guthrie most discerningly guesses that Plato conceived this swooning out of higher dimension into more sluggish vibration to be itself part of the obscuration of divine consciousness entailed by the soul's descent through the three lower planes to the physical, and I feel he must be right, that this is exactly how Plato understood it. And how well it would explain Paul's "sin springing to life" as the soul obeys the "command" to incarnate!

I think, however, that a far more thoroughgoing critique of Plato's doctrine than that our acquisition of knowledge and understanding is just "recollection" is needed. You cannot "reminisce upon" or "recollect" or "remember" what you never *consciously* knew before. If the soul had at any time previously possessed consciously this "knowledge of divine things" we would have to ask why it would be sent by its Father down into the physical existence first to forget it all, and then to learn it all over again! If it *knew* all cosmic and divine truth in the empyrean, it "*knew*" it only subconsciously, or potentially, not actually.

It would tremendously illuminate our

understanding if we frankly concede that God sends souls (his children) down to earth as we send our children to school, to learn all afresh and *ab initio* the truth of being. The soul, bearing innate divine potential of knowledge has to migrate to earth to learn the rudiments and build up its ultimate knowledge. All religion has naively supposed that the soul can or will learn more of divine things by residence in heaven than by milling around in mental darkness here on earth. Logic shows that it must be just the reverse.

If soul could learn all its grand lessons in heaven, why does God push it out and down onto earth? I conceive the answer is that God has to send his children out to face the open manifestation of his truth at the place where he has made that manifestation. Uneducated, undeveloped, child-minds cannot read God's mind in the thought-world, for thoughts are not perceptible; God has to instruct the child-mind by configuring and dramatizing his archetypal ideas in concrete forms and set them before the eyes of his offspring. God made his divine thoughts visible in material forms. Gazing upon them, living amongst them, the child-soul learns their nature and ultimately their meaning. And since physical things in the world *are* God's divine ideas come to view in matter, I do not agree with Plato in rating them always "dim and imperfect copies" of their ideal originals. They are at least sufficiently clear and perfect to instruct men.

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Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T.S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood. After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart, "Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!"

—H. P. Blavatsky, in 1891.

# PRACTICAL IDEALISM

One of the pressing social needs of this age is a practical idealism which will be acceptable to the realist because of its practicability in material affairs, and will be attractive to the idealist because of its vision.

A semantist would doubtless write upon reading that statement and would ask, "what is meant by 'practical', 'idealism', 'realist', 'practicability', 'idealist', and 'vision'? Is a 'realist' one who is the opposite of an 'idealist'? Has a 'realist' no ideas? and is an idealist one who does not believe in the reality of anything except 'mind' and 'ideas'?"

The problem of what is actually meant by 'practical idealism' is an ancient one. In modern times an effort to clarify the meaning of a similar phrase was made by Allen Upward in his book *The New Word*. This book arose out of an endeavour to interpret a portion of Nobel's will, under which an annual prize was to be awarded for 'a work of idealistic tendency which would materially benefit mankind.' Upward was puzzled as to the exact meaning of these words and the further he pursued 'idealistic' and 'materially' the less absolute became their definitions, until in a synthesis, the two appeared opposite in polarity only.

Perhaps for our present purposes we might define 'practical idealism' as a system of thought which accepts the two polarities of form and spirit, and recognizing the place and function of each, seeks a middle way in which neither one is abased to the other; each is seen as having its own function, not separatively and alone, but in complementary action; spirit soaring ever higher toward the Unknown, form becoming ever more and more responsive to the impulses from the higher life.

This practical idealism rejects as partial and fragmentary all ideologies which seize upon one side only of man's composite nature or one phase only of his qualities, as for example, man, an animal; man, a body;

man, a mind; man, an economic unit, or a national or racial unit; man, a psyche; man, a pure spirit. It recognizes his complex manifested nature of body, soul and spirit; its ideal for the individual is a complete harmony of the powers and faculties latent in man, freed from all internal conflicts between body and mind, mind and desire, mind and soul. Its ideal for the race is a brotherhood of awakened, free and equal beings, capable of self direction and who in all individual and group relationships do not offend against the essential unity of the whole host of egos.

It is our belief that Theosophy offers a practical idealism—and perhaps the only truly practical idealism in the world. It deals adequately with man's 'lower' nature; it recognizes the innate beauty and wisdom which spring from his 'higher' nature; it offers a rational scheme of evolution which embraces the development of his form through lower orders to higher, while at the same time insisting that 'man' was never merely the form through which he functioned. In religion it is eclectic and draws from the highest and finest of all religions, but it is not based only upon fragments from all sources. The doctrines of reincarnation and karma supply a compellingly reasonable explanation of human inequalities and open pathways to unlimited achievements. The concept of the immaculate, inner Self, the silent watcher, ever at one with the All-Self, is the most noble and daring of all concepts.

Here is a framework within which the realist, the man who demands 'facts' can find a truly factual universe. Here are the heights to which the idealist, the visionary, the mystic may soar. Here is Beauty unsurpassed, here is the goodness of a noble ethic, and here is Truth. Here is all that to which man will respond, must respond for these things are of the soul's own very nature. —Xenos

# ANCIENT SCIENCE

K. A. NEARY

The popular image of prehistoric man as a club-wielding moron dies hard. Was he really so limited in his thinking powers? Is it only in recorded times that man has put his intellect to work? Views are changing. Recent discoveries indicate that our forebears possessed knowledge and skills which call for respect, even in the light of 20th century achievements.

What we know about man living before, say, 500 B.C., is slight and in the absence of written records necessarily depends on the findings of archaeology. Spectacular as these have been in the last hundred years they tell us little of ancient mathematics and engineering techniques which, before writing, were transmitted orally.

In this century we have lived—are living—through a technological explosion. We are in a world where the sum total of knowledge doubles every few years. It is possible to gauge how far we have come in twenty years, in two hundred years. But can we deduce that the scientific world of the 17th century A.D. was that much ahead of the scientific world of the 17th century B.C.?

Hardly. And this is where the cyclical nature of man's progress is readily seen. Incredible though it may seem, science and technology were largely dormant throughout most of the A.D. centuries. What little went on in chemistry, for example, went on "underground" in the form of alchemy; even the relatively simple art of road-making was forgotten after the Roman Empire fell—and overland transportation in Europe was actually worse in 1700 than in 700!

Clearly it is a mistake to think of the path of knowledge as a linear process. If the historic period is a reliable guide, science is more like a tide that ebbs and flows.

Among the "barbarians" were artists and artisans of no little sensitivity and competence. Of this there is no doubt from the fragmentary samples of their work we pos-

sess. A similar level of scientific and technological expertise might be suspected. This is supported with the revelation by computer analysis of some remarkable feats accomplished in bygone eras.

Yes, modern science is now being used to establish the nature and extent of ancient science. In the past few years much has come to light thanks to new methods of studying what remains of man's pre-literate achievements. It is unfortunate that so little is left to go on.

As well as a lack of written records we are frustrated by the scarcity of the type of artefacts that would exemplify early man's capabilities. For example, we know he was a surveyor of extraordinary accuracy—how elucidating it would be if we possessed samples of the instruments he used. Archaeology is helpful, but limited. As long as a tool was usable it was unlikely to be buried with its owner (as a decorative possession might be) and while archaeological discoveries are not dependent upon funerary relics solely we should not be optimistic of exciting "finds" in general site excavations.

We shall continue to accumulate artefacts, however, and new methods of analysis will help increase our understanding of prehistoric man.

In order to put him into better perspective (at least let's throw away that club!) it is necessary to take into account his known achievements. What did he know? What could he do?

As an engineer, he had mastered some fairly complex practical mathematics to enable him to design and erect impressive structures with astonishing accuracy. (Stonehenge is a good example, and will be examined more closely in a future article.) Concurrently he had also found out how to handle and transport exceptionally heavy weights. (The two-and-a-half ton building

*(Continued on page 38)*



# "GOD" AND THE UNIVERSAL MIND

GEORGE CARDINAL LEGROS

In that book of books—*The Mahatma Letters*—a few facts of Esoteric Science apparently deserve emphasis at the present time.

"We deny God both as philosophers and as Buddhists . . . we know there is in our system no such thing as God, either personal or impersonal. Parabrahm is not a God, but absolute immutable law . . . The idea of God is not an innate, but an acquired notion." (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 52)

Referring to infinite Space or eternal Substance as "matter", the Adept K.H. explains:

"We believe . . . in matter as visible nature, and matter in its invisibility as the invisible omnipresent, omnipotent Proteus with its unceasing motion which is its life, and which nature draws from herself since she is the great whole outside of which nothing can exist . . . The existence of matter then is a fact; the existence of motion is another fact, their self-existence and eternity or indestructibility is a third fact. And the idea of pure spirit as a Being or an Existence—give it whatever name you will—is a chimera, a gigantic absurdity." (*Ibid*, p. 56)

K.H. also points out that man has two distinct physical brains; the cerebrum with its two hemispheres at the frontal part of the head—the source of the voluntary nerves; and the cerebellum, situated at the back portion of the skull—the fountain of the involuntary nerves which are the agents of the unconscious or mechanical powers of the mind to act through (*Ibid*, p. 137)

This is one instance where the microcosm (Man) does not mirror the macrocosm (Kosmos) because the Infinite or Universal FORCE—miscalled by many the "Universal Mind"—exhibits but the functions of a "cerebellum", displaying no more than

the regular unconscious throbbings of the eternal and universal pulse of Nature throughout the myriads of worlds within and without our solar system.

Nowhere in the vastness of Immensity has even the insight of a Buddha been able to discover anything beyond this *awful, unconscious, involuntary Motion*. Therefore, a remarkable and illuminating conclusion becomes evident—the *human cerebrum has no counterpart in Nature*, and is the seat of the *only divine creative power in existence*, a potentiality which ultimately can make of every man a god. (The "cerebrum" activity which guides the evolution of worlds and universes is, of course, made possible by the Dhyan Chohans, who are, as *The Secret Doctrine* states, *ex-men*.)

"Intelligence as found in our Dhyan Chohans is a faculty that can appertain but to organized or animated being—however imponderable or rather *invisible* the materials of their organizations." (*Ibid*, p. 55)

K.H. points out that the possibility of a voluntary or *conscious attribute* in reference to "Universal Mind" must remain forever a mere hypothesis since the highest Planetary Spirits are as ignorant of it as they are. It will remain even in Nirvana no more than an "inferential possibility."

There is, then, in the frontierless reaches of Infinity only this mysterious and inconceivable FORCE "as limitless as thought, as potent as boundless Will, as subtle as the essence of Life." But this FORCE—unconscious, involuntary in its action, and eternal—is not "God" because the Initiate learns to subject it to his will.

"We recognize but one law in the Universe, the law of harmony of *perfect EQUILIBRIUM*." (*Ibid*, p. 141). Compassion or Love Eternal, as H.P.B. states in *The Voice of the Silence*, is this "Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony" which all feel or sense

as unspeakable joy and peace when the bonds of personality are loosened. "The Self of matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet."

Reading *The Mahatma Letters* makes one realize that Theosophists should be

more than bloodless bibliophiles, warm in their lullaby cradles of comfort and dreams. They should stand erect, breathing the airs of the mountain, laughing at their littleness, scorning their self-conceit. Then, and only then, will the Greater Life be known.

## THE SPEAKER IN THE SILENCE

NELLIE DALZELL

*"In the Silence Wisdom speaks, and they whose hearts  
are open understand her."*

—Talbot Mundy

Have you heard the Voice of the Silence? Have you *listened* for that Voice? It speaks, and you *may* hear it, but you must be ready.

Before you can hear, you must withdraw into the Inner Self, that Self which recognizes nothing material. Physical sights, sounds or senses make no impression whatever.

To reach the Silence, to hear the Voice, takes time and persistence. You cannot sit alone in a darkened room and expect to hear the Voice at once. Sit in your darkened room and direct your consciousness inward. Place your hands, palms upturned, on your knees. Think of nothing but those hands for a while. You will feel the blood pulsing in each hand. Now, turn your consciousness to your heart, to the solar plexus, through your whole body to your feet. Listen to the pulsation no longer but be still. A few minutes at first, then ten to fifteen.

Do not think, do not meditate. Be still and wait.

In the little book *The Voice of the Silence* we are constantly admonished to leave Self behind:

"The Self of matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both. In order to become the knower of ALL SELF thou hast first of SELF to be the knower. To reach the knowledge of that SELF, thou hast to give up *Self* to Non-Self, Being to Non-Being. Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest."

The whole book from start to finish, speaks of the abnegation of the physical Self, of all physical desires, in order to reach the Higher Self. Lower Manas *must* be stilled to reach Higher Manas. Yet this must not be accomplished selfishly. We who desire to attain Spiritual knowledge must still remember our obligation to those around us. We have children, perhaps. They must be fed, clothed, sheltered and educated. We have no right to sit in the Silence and neglect these claims.

Many verses in *The Voice of the Silence* are difficult. They seem inconsistent, contradictory, confusing. The Silence helps. You may think you are getting nowhere, yet you will find increased understanding. You may never *hear* the Voice, yet the result will be plain. It is quite possible, if you practise the Silence unselfishly, your only wish being to share spiritual knowledge with others, to help them along the way, you may experience something which is almost indescribable. A blinding light pervades your whole being, an ecstasy. Prof. Henri de Savoye described it as "bliss." He was astonished at the apparent time taken by this experience, yet, back to Earth, only a moment or so had elapsed.

Age may dim the memory. Physical conditions *may* seem to form a barrier, but the Silence *may* be attained, the Voice *may* be heard or sensed. You know you have, for a moment, reached upward to the higher place, where dwells the Higher Self, the Real Man.

Be patient, my friend. Be still, and listen.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death of Mrs. Helene Ireland on April 27 after several months in hospital. Mrs. Ireland had been a long-time member of Toronto Lodge.

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Because of the slowness of second-class mail, it will be late May before most members receive this issue of the magazine. For some, however, a reminder to vote in the Annual election might still be timely. Polls close May 31; if you have not already done so, please mail your ballot without delay!

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The Theosophical film, "How Many Lifetimes?" is available for free loan to responsible groups. Members who belong to other organizations might wish to make this fact known. A 16 mm. sound projector is required for showing the film.

For further information, please get in touch with the General Secretary.

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I hope as many readers as possible will be delegates to the 1970 North American Theosophical Students' Conference. It will be held Labour Day Weekend—Saturday, September 5 to Monday, September 7, at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel, Detroit, Michigan. Hotel reservation cards are now available from your Lodge Secretary or from the General Secretary.

The theme of this year's Conference is: "H. P. Blavatsky and Today's Search for Meaning".

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Few Canadians living in the remoter parts of our vast country ever get to hear much about Theosophy. It is a pleasure to record, then, that early this Spring members of the Edmonton Lodge motored to Spirit River, a small community in the Peace River District of Alberta, not far from the British Columbia border, for the purpose of presenting a day-long Theosophical program. Their visit was by invitation, and was preceded by a similar excursion last Summer.

Toronto Lodge will vacate 310 Dupont Street at the end of June. At the time of writing it is not known when the new premises on Isabella Street will be ready for occupancy, but it is hoped that an early Fall "opening" will be feasible.

The Canadian Section, which occupies office space in the Lodge quarters, will continue to operate through the Summer from my home. Correspondents are already used to the new post office box address and the dislocation should cause minimum inconvenience.

\* \* \*

Among recent visitors to Toronto was Mrs. Joyce Beavis, a member of the T.S. in England and currently on the faculty of the Krotona School of Theosophy. Mrs. Beavis' teaching subjects include art, music and poetry.

The work of the Krotona School of Theosophy has been mentioned from time to time in this magazine. The scope and quality of the curriculum and the calibre of the teaching staff suggest this is a worthwhile Theosophical project. After chatting with Mrs. Beavis I am even more impressed, and would urge those members who have the time, to consider attending the school for a term. Those who are interested should write to: The Krotona School of Theosophy, Route 2, Box 4-B, Ojai, California 93023, U.S.A. (Scholarships are available.)

\* \* \*

As part of the Society's Centenary celebrations in 1975 two special publications are being planned. The General Council has decided to invite Dr. Hugh Shearman to write a history of the Theosophical Movement; there will also be a book of articles edited by Mr. L. H. Leslie-Smith.

\* \* \*

I have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members into the fellowship of the Society:

*Centennial Lodge:* Miss Evelyn Breeze, Mr. Daniel Bouillon, Mr. Arnold B. Cowen, Mr. Malcolm Dean, Mrs. Norma Deutsch, Mr. Peter A. Deutsch, Mr. William B.

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Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto 1, Ont.

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—T.G.D.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

\* \* \*  
*The Editors*

*The Canadian Theosophist*

I appreciated the letter of J. P. Carey, whom I knew in Vancouver nearly 30 years ago. I agree with him on most things except that in view of the present fragmentary condition of the Society I often wonder what is there left to unite?

If Philip drinks or Samuel prays it is their concern. We show little toleration as Theosophists when we ask them to cease to do either when coming to join us.

*(Editors' note: we don't!)*

The truth is the world is changing rapidly in the realm of contemporary thinking. The main contribution to this is communications. The human mind travels with the use of radio and television; time and distance have less impact on us. This advance in the linking of human consciousness renders past nationalism redundant.

It could be the Society will experience a quickening of its lifebeat and play an important part in the next half-century. One thing is certain: there will be no place for the things that kept us divided. The coming era will push them aside.

Frederick E. Tyler

CENTENNIAL LODGE

A Spring program of Thursday evening meetings has been arranged. Twice a month public meetings are held at the Odd Fellows' Hall, 229 College Street, Toronto; on alternate Thursdays members gather in private homes.

Astronomy is the subject of several meetings in this period. A late-evening visit on May 9 to the Dunlap Observatory, Richmond Hill, is included in the arrangements.

Service is an aspect of the Lodge work and to this end the members are undertaking a cooperative project with a Tibetan school in India.

## MONTREAL LODGE

Montreal Lodge has completed the "Introductory Course in Theosophy", which has proved most helpful to new members, giving them a basic idea of the teachings of Theosophy. This Course is available from The Theosophical Society in England and can be recommended to any Lodge.

At the Tuesday meetings we have had some very interesting discussion periods and attendance has been good.

We are looking forward to seeing the first Theosophical film "How Many Lifetimes" and have arranged to rent a hall for a public showing on May 12. We hope sufficient interest may be aroused to prompt further enquiries.

The Lodge closes at the end of May and we would like to wish all fellow members across the country a refreshing and beneficial summer. We hope to re-open in the Fall charged with new life and hope for the furtherance of the work.

Viola P. Law

Secretary, Montreal Lodge T.S.

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## TORONTO LODGE

Toronto Lodge held a St. Patrick's Day Dinner on March 18 when over 80 members and their friends sat down together at 310 Dupont St.

The gathering provided an opportunity for those members who live outside of Toronto, or who are seldom able to attend the Lodge meetings, to renew old friendships while partaking of a pleasant meal.

The daffodils decorating the tables gave a welcome hint of Spring which had not then arrived in Toronto. (Nor was to for many weeks!)

The dinner was followed by the Members' Quarterly Business Meeting at which the proposed layout of the new premises on Isabella Street was described and discussed.

## VICTORIA LODGE

It has been decided to hold Lodge meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month (instead of Mondays). This will enable the members to meet in a smaller and more comfortable hall. The larger hall will continue to be used for public meetings.

Our meetings have been well attended and the younger people are very keen on the discussions.

Frank P. Boucher

Secretary, Victoria Lodge T.S.

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## ANNUAL PICNIC

The joint Annual Picnic of the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Lodges will be held at Niagara Falls, Ontario, on Saturday, June 13.

For Toronto members and friends, a bus will be provided, the fare for adults being \$3.50 and for children \$1.25. Without transportation 50c. Ice cream, tea, coffee and milk will be provided. Tickets may be obtained from the Toronto Lodge Library or call Mr. Alan Sutcliffe at 762-6748.

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## "HOW MANY LIFETIMES?"

The Theosophical film, "How Many Lifetimes?" had its first Canadian screening at a public meeting of the Toronto Theosophical Society in April.

Movies have been around for a long time but never before has there been an attempt to present Theosophy through this medium. Considering the subject, one would think it to be an enormously difficult task; yet "How Many Lifetimes?" proves the versatility of the medium as well as the adaptability of expression of the basic propositions of the Ancient Wisdom.

After introducing H. P. Blavatsky and her books, the fundamental concepts of Theosophy are presented. The spoken word is used, supported by suggestive visual images and an unobtrusive musical background.

As might be guessed, nature scenes are used extensively to give point to the grand truths put forward in the narrative—their effectiveness being enhanced by the brilliant colour photography. But as beautiful and awe-inspiring as are the galaxies and waterfalls, the trees and the animals, it is *people* that give the film its power and appeal. The film puts across the reality of universal brotherhood and does so with well-chosen and carefully edited shots of hundreds of people. The old, the young; men and women; citizens of many lands—seen briefly but unforgettably, emphasize the principle of non-separateness and lend support to the general theme of reincarnation which runs through the nearly half-hour showing.

“How Many Lifetimes?” is a “first”, and so there is nothing with which to compare it. It seems to me, though, that it has succeeded admirably in putting across Theosophical ideas in a way that is meaningful and acceptable to the general public. The originators and producers deserve our thanks for their courage in tackling the problem and for their ingenuity in solving it. —T.G.D.

## THEOSOPHICAL SUMMER CAMPS

A full summer of activity has been announced by Pumpkin Hollow Farm, the Theosophical Summer Camp at Craryville, New York. Following is a condensed program.

July 3-5 Annual Meeting, Northeast Federation. Theme: “Man’s Unique Role in Nature”.

July 8-12 Children’s Week. (6 to 9 years old).

July 13-18 Children’s Week. (10 to 13 years old).

(Theme for both weeks: “No Man is an Island”.)

July 23-30 Spiritual Healing. Oscar Estabany, Dora Kunz, Otelia Bengtsson.

July 25-26 Exploratory Workshop in Techniques of Spiritual Healing, conducted by Dora Kunz.

August 1-9 Kern Workshop/Seminar. Theme: “Man, the Measure of All Things.” Special participants: Joy Mills, National President, T.S. in America; Seetha Neelakanthan.

August 15-16 A Workshop in Yoga. John Loder.

August 22-23 A Seminar in Theosophy and Sensitivity, led by Shirley and Bill Nicholson.

August 23-30 Young Theosophists Encampment.

August 29-30 Astrological Weekend. Theme: “Can a Knowledge of Astrology Help us to Understand our Emotional Problems?”

For further details write: Mrs. Marie Gouffe, Pumpkin Hollow Farm, R.R. No. 1, Box 135, Craryville, New York 12521, U.S.A. (Phone: 518-325-3583).

Far Horizons and Camp Indralaya are two other Theosophical Summer Camps. For information on these please write: (1) Bim Lecklider, Hostess; Box WW, Kings Canyon National Park, CA 93633, U.S.A. (2) Orcas Island Foundation, 6553 - 44th Avenue, N.E. Seattle, WA 98115, U.S.A.

## ANCIENT SCIENCE

*(Continued from page 32)*

blocks used in the Egyptian pyramids were puny in comparison with the megaliths of Stonehenge and elsewhere.)

As an astronomer, even without the use of telescopes he knew a great deal about the universe and the cycles of the stars. As a mathematician, in addition to the practical geometry necessary for construction purposes he was able to utilize astronomical facts to design accurate calendars. He was a miner, a metallurgist and a navigator.

Who taught him? And why was some of his knowledge lost for millenia? These questions probably cannot be answered, but a study of his works should be revealing.

*(To be continued)*

# COMPASSION

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

*"Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer?  
Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"*

*—Voice of the Silence*

He who sets out on a journey cherishes the prime objective, of reaching his destination, with a minimum loss of time. What he sees and experiences between the time of departure and arrival is purely incidental; unless it be of a calamitous nature, beyond his power to remedy, he does not allow it to delay or prevent that arrival. His destination, while en route, is the governing motive for his journey. If he is flying from New York to London, he does not spend much time looking up arrival times at Constantinople, nor does he wonder whom he will meet in Rome. His destination, London, governs the direction and length of his flight.

If one's passage through life be likened to a flight from one definite point of departure to a definite arrival point, then it is clear that for an expeditious arrival at any point of development in life, a man must know where he is taking off from and where he expects to set down.

But such well-defined knowledge seems to be rather rare in the case of a majority of life's travellers. They are far from enjoying a basic understanding of the world in which they find themselves, be it from a personal, material, philosophical or religious point of view; wherefore, both as regards their destination and the reason for reaching it, most of them are unjustifiably vague.

Moreover, save in a few isolated instances, life's travellers tend to behave as though they were travelling alone, on a schedule of their own devising, to a destination independent of any fellow-traveller, even though their reservation and flight plan are identical and originate in the same office as that of their fellow passengers. The total effect of this delusion is to render the flight

and its destination more or less purposeless —to say the least, disorganized.

The shining glory of Theosophy as a philosophy is that it dares to demand of man a truly comprehensive appreciation of the Journey of Life, both as to its destination and the limitless time periods involved in reaching that destination. It fearlessly declares man, in his essential nature, to be an immortal, spiritual entity. It further declares the destination of that journey to transcend in time and distance all earthly computations. One life on earth it compares to one leg of the flight, for the completion of which many incarnations are needed. It states emphatically: 1. To reach his destination a man must clearly understand the purpose of the flight and adhere strictly to that purpose. 2. All mankind are due to make this flight and fulfill its purpose. 3. The mental and physical approach to it is completely distinct from that he is familiar with on the ground. 4. To the spiritually oriented individual alone can this flight be rewardingly undertaken, since its actual scope and nature transcend the competence of earthly reason.

The prevalence of strife, disappointment and heartache in our world is adequately accounted for by a widespread unwillingness to accept Brotherhood as a law of life. This refusal to acknowledge One Humanity with One Destiny is an insane attempt to substitute futile earth-bound wanderings, as separate entities, for the homogeneously Divine Flight Plan that alone can transport a homogeneous humanity to its common, inescapable landing field. The Landing Field, being characterized by harmonious spiritual fulfilment, it is scarcely rational to assume that its attainment should involve

such agony and heartaches as most of humanity experiences. Must not such suffering constitute a reminder that something in our approach to life is radically wrong? It must be, to have the power to beget the suffering that fills our world today.

He who, perceiving this and turning to Theosophy as bearing some resemblance, at least, to a practical Flight Plan, thinks, first of all of what bearing this choice may have upon this Brotherhood, of which he is an inseparable part. Rejecting any unique spiritual lustre for himself, he will recognize that complete acceptance of Humanity's Wholeness demands, first of all, a burning awareness of the misery of millions of his fellows. COMPASSION for their plight must be the controlling impetus of any selfless living dedicated to all mankind. He who obeys such an urge is likely to become keenly aware that *total* compassion for total humanity is the only effective motivation of the Flight Plan (not "his" Flight Plan, merely). Beyond this, in a pattern of psychic awareness *shared by all*, he will be-think him of the divine infusion (however minute) his own utterly selfless imagining can project into world thought.

What every dedicated Theosophist is seeking to do, ultimately, is to change the

key of world thought from a somber B-flat minor, of egotism, self-centeredness, and personal acquisitiveness, to a radiant A-major of selfless universality—of Resurrection of the entombed Deity in man, out of the dark sepulchre of self. Thought in that key sees Compassion as a pathway of light, up which the enlightened Pilgrim may "rise again, and sit upon the right hand of the Father (Atman)" that he may pour forth Compassion on the quick and the dead. Nothing less than this is worthy of the Spirit's Flight Plan. Because it *is* Spirit—universal and immortal—the path of this Divine Reality through the heavens must be of unearthly magnificence. No man but, in his deepest Self, *lives for all*. To do this is the one objective that can restore to the Spirit's Flight Plan its wonted majesty. That majesty *must* be restored, if twentieth century society is not to brand itself "Time's Abortion"!

First, the Divine Flight Plan must be discovered by all mankind. From its sublimity, that mankind must be welded into Oneness with Deity, Whose blinding splendor alone can reveal the unearthly proportions of the Life Quest—rediscovery of the Immortal Self of Man—Deity manifesting in boundless COMPASSION!

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## A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE

Master, why is punctuality important?

Friend, I will ask you another question: What do you mean by practical Theosophy?

Master, practical Theosophy means putting the truths of Theosophy into practice in daily life.

How does this show in our life, O Friend?

Master, in kindness to all, in a brotherly attitude to all.

Is that all it means, Friend? That should be our fundamental attitude, of course, but it must be based on knowledge, or it is merely sentimental and does more harm than good. Does not practical Theosophy

mean the putting into practice of the *knowledge* we learn?

Yes, Master, I see; but where does punctuality come in? What is its basis in knowledge?

Friend, have you forgotten the Second Fundamental Proposition which tells us of the law of cycles? Does it not tell us that this is a fundamental law which operates at every point in space and at every moment of time? If this is true, then this law must act without fail in our own lives. It is Karma, in fact—action-reaction-action. There is, therefore, a right time and a right



place for every act. The *Gita* tells us that even the giving of gifts should be at the *right* time, to the *right* person, and with the *right* attitude. Shakespeare has told us that "there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." We colloquially speak of "missing the bus." *Ecclesiastes* says: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

Is it not also said, "A stitch in time saves nine"? The awful words, "too late," can prove catastrophic. Does it not strike you, therefore, that there is more to "time" than at first appears?

Yes, Master, I see this in the big things of life, of course, for we know that if we are too late we miss a train that we have planned to catch, but why must we practise punctuality all the time? Are the little things in life so important as to have a right time and place?

O Friend, what do you mean by a "little" thing? Even one little drop of poison can bring death. Is the observance of punctuality in commencing and ending a meeting a small thing or a big thing? We are called upon not only to disseminate the Fundamental Principles of Theosophy but also to *exemplify* them in practice. As the ceaseless operation of the law of cycles is a fundamental principle of the Ancient Wisdom, we, too, must follow that law in our own lives.

Ask yourself, what causes unpunctuality? A man goes regularly late to his office; he gets up late, he is late with his letters, for his meals, in going to bed. He is late for appointments, etc. Unpunctuality has become a habit with him. What is a habit? "Sow a habit, reap a character," we are told. So habit builds character. Why and how? It is because when we think, feel, or act, we are using elementals, those impressionable entities that we make our own and impress with our own stamp. They fly to us at our wish and, if impressed with the stamp of unpunctuality, they make it almost impossible for us to be punctual!

Think along this line and ask yourself another question: What does the habit of unpunctuality ultimately lead to?

Master, I suppose it must lead to the habit of procrastination.

You are right, my Friend. And procrastination leads, in time, to apathy, which ends ultimately in destruction. So we had better, here and now, begin to follow Nature's eternal Law.

There is also another aspect to this question. Since eternal harmony is the basis of all things, that is, everything fits in properly with every other thing—the right thing at the right time to the right person—since this is the law of the universe, if we do not fit in we disturb the harmony, and this affects not only ourselves but others as well. Supposing we are unpunctual for our meal. It will affect not only the overcooked meal, not only the others sharing that meal and the one who prepares it, but add to this the factor of digestion. Are we not taught that even the stomach works under the law of "cyclic impression and return"? There is natural rhythm in all things. If we disturb this, the lives of our stomach get upset, apathetic, cease to function, etc. Our emotions also get upset, and upset emotions further adversely affect the digestion. Digestion is not just something that has to do with the body. Nothing is simple in the wonderful complex machine of the body or of the Universe. By virtue of the complexity it is essential that things be allowed to work under their own law of being.

Yes, Master, I begin to see.

Friend, there is still another thing to be remembered. What do you think of an unpunctual person—that is, if it is someone other than yourself?

Master, I cannot trust him; he upsets my plans; I never know where I stand with him.

Then, O Friend, do not others feel the same way about you when you yourself are unpunctual? So now, how shall the habit of punctuality be created? First, we are taught to get the right *mental* attitude. Actions

follow the mind and feelings, so it is no use merely saying verbally, "I will be punctual." You have to sit down and again work this thing through with your mind and your feelings. We must dismiss the attitude: "Oh, it doesn't matter if I am a few minutes late." It *does* matter, for the reasons given above. If we do not get rid of this attitude, we shall find ourselves on more and more occasions making excuses for being late. Once we make up our *mind* to be punctual, we can begin to create the habit. We shall not succeed at once, for the elementals we have trained for unpunctuality hinder us. But we have to go on and on and on until we have trained other elementals which are

punctual. It is arduous at first, but we must not give in.

Are we not taught to "help Nature and work on with her," and if we do so, are we not told that Nature in turn will help us? Look also at the Ten Items from *Isis Unveiled*. Nature becomes our "material ally, pupil and servant."

This means that punctuality will become a habit and, strange as it may seem, when this happens it becomes *impossible for us to be unpunctual!* We have become, in this respect at least, an ally and master of the Law of Cycles.

*The Theosophical Movement,*  
January 1969

## 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.* I wonder if you can explain the problem which confronts me in regard to the monad: does it retain its individuality when entering Nirvana? The reason for the query is this: we read that when Nirvana is attained "the dewdrop slips into the shining sea." Does this not imply that the individual drop, which apparently is likened to the monad, would not be able to retain its individuality, because the drop has become "merged with the ocean"?

*Answer.* In order to understand the idea from the standpoint of *The Secret Doctrine*, one should be conversant with the terms used in the passage which deals with the subject of the Monad entering into Paranirvana:

"At the threshold of Paranirvana it reassumes its primeval Essence and becomes the Absolute once more." (S.D. I, 135; I, 193 6-vol. ed.; I, 160 3rd ed.)

Entrance into Paranirvana is made equivalent to the Day of "Be-With-Us," which takes place at the conclusion of a solar period of activity (a Solar Kalpa). In the sentence quoted, "it reassumes" has reference to the Monadic Essence. A distinction should be made between the Monad (Atma-Buddhi) and the Monadic Essence (Atman). The "Absolute" is equivalent to Parabrahman—signifying the boundless reaches of Infinitude. Furthermore, one should also understand the teachings in regard to the re-emergence of the monad on earth following the devachanic interlude. A series of three questions and answers will assist in elucidating the teachings on the subject.

*First Question.* In regard to the concept which is presented in *The Secret Doctrine* regarding the emergence of the Monad following the Great Day of Be-With-Us: is

there a difference between this emergence and the emergence which takes place when reincarnation occurs on earth?

*Answer.* Although a similarity may be indicated, there is also a difference. The similarity has reference to the fact that *upadhis*, or "vestures" must be assumed when the monad emerges, whether it be following the Great Day or following the after-death interval. The *upadhis* would be different. However, a great difference is especially to be noted in connection with the *states* into which the monad has entered: these are not comparable. In the case of the monad which has entered Paranirvana, the *upadhis* of Atman (namely Buddhi and Manas) are not described as functioning. In connection with the after-death states a distinction must be made between the status of the *components* of the monad, which are usually referred to as the "three-in-one"—Atma-Buddhi-Higher Manas—instead of the usual definition given to the monad during an embodiment on earth, which is represented as a duad, Atma-Buddhi. Thus while the monad (Atma-Buddhi) is undergoing its Outer Rounds, Higher Manas is experiencing the Devachan. When reincarnation occurs on earth the "three-in-one," or the immortal triad, becomes linked with the quaternary—which may be equated to the personality—when physical birth takes place.

The difference between the state of consciousness in the devachanic state and the nirvanic state is described in the Second Question, which follows the explanation of the Great Day of Be-with-us.

"The 'Great Day of Be-with-us,' then, is an expression the only merit of which lies in its literal translation . . . It is an expression . . . as hazy for the profane as that of the Egyptians who called the same the 'Day of Come-to-us,' which is identical with the former, though the verb 'be' in this sense, might be still better replaced with either of the two words 'Remain' or 'Rest-with-us,' as it refers to that long period of Rest which is called

Paranirvana. As in the exoteric interpretation of the Egyptian rites the soul of every defunct person—from the Hierophant down to the sacred bull Apis—became an Osiris, was Osirified, though the Secret Doctrine had always taught, that the real Osirification was the lot of every Monad only after 3000 cycles of Existences; so in the present case. The 'Monad,' born of the nature and the very Essence of the 'Seven' (its highest principle becoming immediately enshrined in the Seventh Cosmic Element), has to perform its septenary gyration throughout the Cycle of Being and forms, from the highest to the lowest; and then again from man to God." (S.D. I, 134-5; I, 159-60 3rd ed.; I, 192 6-vol. ed.)

*Second Question.* What is the difference between the status of the monad on entering Paranirvana and the monad in the after-death state?

*Answer.* At the time that the monad enters Paranirvana—which occurs at the end of the solar manvantara—it is virtually a triad: Atma-Buddhi-Higher Manas. However, as Manas is unable to function on the planes which are superior to that one of the planes which is designated as the Mental Plane, the monad does not have cognizance of individual existence: it is at-one with universal consciousness. Here we may apply the simile of the ocean. The individual drops of water do not have the knowledge of their separateness, because they partake of the totality of the ocean. Hence the significance of the phrase: the dewdrop slips into the shining sea. Thus, the status of the monad in Paranirvana may be equated to entering a state of universal consciousness. However, in the after-death state—the state of Devachan—the aspect which functions in that condition may be described as an individualized state of consciousness. Higher Manas, or the Reincarnating Ego is enwrapped in a state of bliss.

*Third Question.* One of the difficulties in understanding the idea of entering into Paranirvana is this: Is there a loss of the

monad's individuality? For it is stated that on entering Paranirvana the monad "re-assumes its primeval Essence and becomes the Absolute once more."

*Answer.* The phrase "reassumes its primeval Essence" signifies that the monad no longer functions by means of its upadhis (vestures), because, as already mentioned, it is no longer in the planes of manifestation. But it should be borne in mind that even the planes of manifestation are still linked with Parabrahman, for the Sanskrit mantra affirms: "Aham asmi Parabrahma", signifying "I am Parabrahman."

With regard to the question as to the monad's loss of individuality: H. P. Blavatsky has written upon this very subject:

"I maintain as an occultist, on the authority of the Secret Doctrine, that though merged entirely into Parabrahm, man's spirit while not individual *per se*, yet preserves its distinct individuality in Paranirvana, owing to the accumulation in it of the aggregates, or *skandhas* that have survived after each death, from the highest faculties of the *Manas*. The most spiritual—i.e., the highest and divinest aspirations of every personality follow *Buddhi* and the Seventh Principle (Atman) into Devachan (*Swarga*) after the death of each personality along the line of rebirths, and become part and parcel of the *Monad*. The personality fades out, disappearing before the occurrence of the evolution of the new personality (re-birth) out of Devachan: but the individuality of the spirit-soul is preserved to the end of the great cycle (*Maha-Manvantara*) when each Ego enters Paranirvana, or is merged in Parabrahm. To our talpatic, or mole-like, comprehension the human spirit is then lost in the One Spirit, as the drop of water thrown into the sea can no longer be traced out and recovered. But *de facto* it is not so in the world of immaterial thought. This latter stands in relation to the human dynamic thought, as, say, the visual power through the strongest conceivable

microscope would to the sight of a half-blind man: and yet even this is a most insufficient simile—the difference is 'inexpressible in terms of foot-pounds.' That such Parabrahmic and Paranirvanic 'spirits,' or units, have and must preserve their divine (not human) individualities, is shown in the fact that, however long the 'night of Brahma' or even the Universal Pralaya (not the local Pralaya affecting some one group of worlds) yet, when it ends, the same individual Divine Monad resumes its majestic path of evolution, though on a higher, hundredfold perfected and more pure chain of earths than before, and brings with it all the essence of compound spiritualities from its previous countless rebirths." (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VII, 51-2)

*Question.* There is one point which still is not clear. What is meant by "the planes of manifestation"?

*Answer.* In *The Secret Doctrine* the planes of manifestation cover the four planes in which the seven globes of the Earth-Chain function. They are numbered, in descending scale, the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh cosmic planes. Our earth (termed Globe D) is situated on the seventh cosmic plane. Regarding the first three cosmic planes, they are referred to as:

"The *Arupa* or 'formless,' there where form ceases to exist, on the objective plane . . . the three higher planes being inaccessible to human intellect as developed at present." (*S.D.* I, 200; I, 249 6-vol. ed.; I, 221 3rd ed.)

There is a passage which refers to the great scope of the plane of mentality, and also mentions the emergence of the monad from Paranirvana:

"The Monad emerges from its state of spiritual and intellectual unconsciousness; and, skipping the first two planes—too near the Absolute to permit of any correlation with anything on a lower plane—it gets direct into the plane of Mentality. But there is no plane in

the whole universe with a wider margin, or a wider field of action in its almost endless gradations of perceptive and apperceptive qualities, than this plane, which has in its turn an appropriate smaller plane for every 'form,' from the 'mineral' monad up to the time when that monad blossoms forth by evolution into the Divine Monad." (S.D. I, 175; I, 228 6-vol. ed.; I, 198 3rd ed.)

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## BOOK REVIEW

*From Pioneer To Poet, or The Twelve Great Gates*—an expansion of the signs of the Zodiac analysed by Isabelle M. Pagan. Fifth printing in reset and improved format. Published 1969 by The Theosophical Publishing House Ltd., London. 318 pp. Price 45 shillings.

This is a book that I recommend to all serious students of astrology. It contains a wealth of detail in its characterizations of the various signs, to an extent I have never seen matched elsewhere; for instance, in the chapter on Aquarius, the reader will find much to explain those phenomena of youth that often seem so strange and even disturbing.

Isabelle Pagan is a freak amongst astrological writers—she openly expresses her acceptance of re-incarnation. To me, astrology and re-incarnation are parts of the same package, neither fully explainable without the other—but it is refreshing indeed to find a book on astrology that takes this partnership for granted, for some writers strongly deny the relationship, and most of the others don't mention it at all.

The book is not intended as a full treatise on astrology, being mainly a delineation of the twelve houses of the Zodiac, and of the effects thereon of the various planets. So there is no mention of the popular use—or misuse—of astrology as a means of forecasting the future, but I get the distinct impression that Miss Pagan opposes such use. I assess this impression as a point in her favor. But I do hold some reservations

concerning her quite strongly Christian approach to the subject: not that there is any attempt to make astrology a branch of the church, but I wish that some day a writer of Miss Pagan's calibre would point out that the principles of astrology existed before either man or his religions came into being, and that if there is any connection, it is the influence of astrology on religion into which we should look for our understanding, not the questionable influence of religion on astrology.

Miss Pagan is unorthodox in her use of certain 'planets.' Pluto is fairly acceptable, but Vulcan? And she is almost unique in her use of the planet Earth. However, she does explain her use of these planets, and names the ones normally used in their place. Her introduction of this method of substitution leads me to believe that Miss Pagan wants her readers to think for themselves, rather than merely parrot what they read—and this thought is strengthened by the presence of some very interesting tables of analogy and comparison, some of which she admits are theoretical to some extent. So, for information and inspiration, an excellent book. —C.W.

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## IMPORTANT NEW EDITIONS

*Everyone's Guide to Theosophy*, a simple explanation of the Theosophical teachings for the new student, by Harry Benjamin. Second edition published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House London Ltd. ix + 148 pp. Price 18 shillings.

Harry Benjamin had a remarkable gift for writing simply and clearly. (His health and food books were enormously popular best sellers.) This, together with his grasp of Theosophy, made his *Guide* both reliable and readable.

The first edition of this little book has been out of print for some time, and it is good to know that it is once again available. No doubt a new generation of students will have cause to be grateful for its simplicity and clarity as they plunge into the best of all possible studies.

*The Philosophy of Compassion, The Return of the Goddess*, by Esmé Wynne Tyson. Paperback edition published 1970 by Centaur Press Limited, Fontwell, Sussex, England. ix + 282 pp. Price 20 shillings.

The reappearance of *The Philosophy of Compassion* is timely with the emergence

of "feminism" and the current concern of the role of women in modern society. Mrs. Wynne Tyson's book is a serious and scholarly study of the compassionate element in religion, in particular that which in past millenia was anthropomorphized in the form of the goddess.

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## WISDOM

Wisdom is to Knowledge as the Soul is to the body. It is indefinable, immeasurable.

As a house is built of bricks, or a beautiful temple of stone, so Wisdom is built from the stones of Knowledge.

The stones and the bricks are by themselves little more than rubble. It is the edifice we build with them that can become a thing of beauty or of ugliness.

Knowledge of itself, is likewise formless, but by use can be built into a fabric of Wisdom which can be a joy to the builder and to all mankind.

The architect creates his edifice of stones. So does the Soul of man create Wisdom from the stones of Knowledge. The variations in the design of each are infinite, but each must be trained to use his own materials.

The years of childhood and youth are the years of gathering together our stores of Knowledge and of observing how those who have gone before have used their gifts to develop Wisdom.

In the years of maturity, man has the opportunity to create and mould his edifice of Wisdom from the knowledge gleaned on his journey through life. This is his opportunity to enrich the world, and his own soul, with the value and beauty of his own creation.

—CHARLES L. HUNT



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