

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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## WHAT IS THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY?

GEOFFREY FARTHING

In the past few decades, for one reason or another, the Society, in my view, has lost its identity. It has become buried in accretions. Before trying to see what it is, or what it is intended to be, let us see what most certainly it is not.

It is not a religious organization, using the word religious in the ordinary sense of the term. It does not identify itself with any particular religion, as such, nor any Prophet, Teacher, Saviour or God.

It is not a spiritualistic organization.

It is not a pacifist organization.

It is not a child-, animal-, plant-, or soil-welfare society.

It is not a society for the promotion of art in any form.

It is not a vegetarian, nor an anti-alcohol, anti-smoking or anti-drug society.

It is not a society with particular rituals, ceremonies, practices or methods for psychic or spiritual development, or for "magical" purposes.

It is not a healing, social welfare or "rescue" society.

It is not political in any sense and advocates no particular social or financial systems.

It is not anti- anything true, healthy, wholesome, sane or beautiful.

These might be termed the ten disclaimers of The Theosophical Society or its ten negative virtues.

There are well-established, efficient or-

ganizations run by experts and supported by devoted sympathizers and workers specializing in all these activities. Members of The Theosophical Society can, and no doubt will, according to their inclination, also support them.

The Theosophical Society should produce free, knowing men and women of sensibility and genuine spirituality, and it, as a society, should produce wise, understanding, active philanthropists, as lovers of mankind but it does not provide their opportunities for service. Life does that and the specialist organizations provide the means.

What then is The Theosophical Society? It is a philanthropic society in that it attempts to promote a love of mankind and it is religious in that it demonstrates a spiritual background to existence. It is, as I see it, a society of members who have undertaken to approve its three Objects. These have become somewhat hackneyed, but let us repeat them:

*First.* To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

*Second.* To encourage the study of comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.

*Third.* To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership, and this also means that the members are expected to act

accordingly.

Members are expected to discover the meanings and ramifications of brotherhood, and to practise it. In so doing, in their lives, they will realize its potency. They will come to know it as the only way of curing the worst of humanity's ills, strife, discord, war, poverty, exploitation, and so on.

Is this not in itself justification for the Society? But it adds more, much more.

The second Object requires us to study, to discover facts, to educate ourselves, to eradicate ignorance and so oust prejudice and superstitions of all kinds. It is on these last three that the worst of anti-brotherly feelings are based.

The third Object requires us to have regard to power, the universal operative agent in Nature and man, manifesting as diverse forces, energies, capabilities, faculties, modes of consciousness and ways and means of action in man and all the other kingdoms of Nature. All the dynamism, life expression and actions in the Universe stem from One Source and manifest One Law, know-

ledge of which is understanding, and action according to Understanding is Wisdom. This we are bidden by this Object to seek.

The Theosophical Society is then one of members pledged to brotherhood, the attainment of enlightenment and the seeking after Wisdom. In so far as members attain to any of these things, so will their behaviour privately, to their fellow men, to animals and Nature, be conditioned by sympathy, intelligence and compassion. But all their motivation will be from within, in *total freedom*. They will not be constrained by rules, regulations, taboos or any other man-made frustrations, limitations or restraints. They will be acting as responsible individuals, with a high, but proper, dignity, in their full estate as men.

This is what, to me The Theosophical Society stands for and with which, by its Objects, it identifies itself; shortly brotherhood, freedom and truth.

Could anyone want more?

—*The Theosophist*, November, 1969

## WHAT MORE COULD WE WANT?

GEOFFREY FARTHING

In this issue we reprint an article from *The Theosophist* stating a view as to what The Theosophical Society is and is not. It is obviously important that we should have a clear idea of what the Founders intended. We should surely base our idea on the declared objects of the Society and not on constructions put on them.

We are in a period of change and our Society is in a state of change. It is not a crisis. The process is too drawn out for that, but we as members are now creating or re-creating an image of the Society by which in the coming years it will be judged. It is certainly being judged now by the image created in the past.

We create this image more or less un-

consciously by our behaviour. This in its turn must reflect our own idea of, and attitude towards, the Society. If we feel it to be a great community of separate interests we would see nothing wrong with the setting up, by leaders of the Society, of the various organizations, actually or by implication bearing its name or being very closely associated with it, so that there was, and commonly still is, confusion not only in the public mind but in the mind of many members as to its originally intended function. The article elaborates on the three objects. Does not this elaboration indicate the depth of purpose in them? Should not a Society with those objects be commanding the respect of people of all religions, all degrees

of development and all nationalities? Why has it not done so? Largely, I think, because people have not seen members of our Society giving expression to those objects. They have done, and perhaps in some places still do, too many things in its name that have now become confused with Theosophy. Further amongst members not more brotherhood than anywhere else, often much less, has been seen. We have sometimes been accused of intellectual snobbery, but is the study of religion, philosophy and science, much in evidence now? Is any investigation into the unexplained laws of nature and powers latent in man going on anywhere at present?

Could it be said that the organizations commonly associated with The Theosophical Society were set up, perhaps misguidedly and as it has turned out certainly mistakenly, out of ignorance of or in substitution for the declared objects. To study religions, do we have to found them? To form a nucleus of brotherhood do we have to segregate ourselves into groups?

So far we have been thinking of our objects. What of Theosophy? Could any of these things have been done in its name? Here we are in difficulty. In a sense they could all probably be justified by argument and indeed to those who support them obviously are. But again much depends on our view of Theosophy. It is the ancient wisdom. It is a way of life. How does one acquire the wisdom? What way of life? As wisdom, can it be got from books or a teacher? As a way of life, can it be a set of rules?

In either case it can either be vague and indefinite or, possibly, too precise, but could Theosophy be thus known? If however we set up an organization with specific aims, and methods for training us, implying that it is Theosophical, then we can feel more secure. We now have something definite. Is it not possible that this is what happened?

We are led back again and again to what Theosophy is. Suppose we say it is

knowing the nature and processes of life. It is knowing the principles and laws of being. Knowing means actually *knowing*, not knowing about. Life means *life*, the tremendous reality of our existence. The processes, principles and laws of being are observable and deducible from nature (some Theosophical teaching helps in this!). The point being stressed is that all this is **REAL**. *Theosophy is real*. Life is living. Living is action, awareness, experience, effort, growth—all in real life.

Schools of philosophy, religious discipline, methods of training, are all so much interest and activity within, maybe without (outside) but in any case only part of, the whole context of Life. Theosophy could not be so. Theosophy is unlimited, totally free, unsystematized, all embracing, wholly true. If we live according to our discoveries and to the maximum of our abilities, our progress in all directions is assured. What more *could* we want?

With this open minded attitude to Truth, with this degree of sincerity and acceptance of life, with such effortful living, how could we possibly create any wrong impressions about our Society or about Theosophy? Let us acknowledge that we, as members, have a great responsibility to both.

Let us have some more aspiring, whole-hearted theosophists in the Theosophical Society, and the future not only for the Society but for society at large will be bright.

—*The Theosophical Journal*,  
May-June, 1970

The Theosophical Society teaches no new religion, aims to destroy no old one, promulgates no creed of its own, follows no religious leader, and distinctly and emphatically *is not a sect* nor ever was one. It admits worthy people of any religion to membership on condition of mutual tolerance and mutual help to discover truth. The founders have never consented to be taken as religious leaders, they repudiate any such idea, and they have not taken and will not take disciples.

—H. P. Blavatsky

# LA CONOSCENZA

PROF. ENZO FORCELLINI

When we have to speak about a subject it would seem advisable to start, as mathematicians do, by giving a definition. But in this case we are immediately faced by a difficulty: it is not easy to define knowing, as we shall readily conclude if we make a few attempts. The first definition that would come to our mind is: a reproduction in oneself of the reality surrounding us, but we realize that in this way we are reducing all to a fact which is too mechanical altogether; for if this definition were true, a camera would be a more perfect knower than we are. Briefly, we become convinced that it is impossible to give a definition which, in a few words, can describe what we regard as the act of knowing: it is true that to know is to reproduce a thing in ourselves, but it is also something more alive; the knower takes a more active part, he is placed into a relationship with the surrounding world. It may be said that knowing consists of two phases: (1) reproducing in ourselves an image or a series of sensations, and (2) giving life to this image and projecting it outwards. The first phase, which we may call perception, is the one that can be studied by science; the second is precisely the one which cannot be made the object of any study or definition, as it does not belong to the form aspect, but to the knowing aspect.

As we are not immediately able to speak about knowing, it will be necessary to circumvent the obstacle; let us begin by going back to the object which is known: we shall see that all known objects can be classified under three main categories:

1. I can know a quantity of matter that surrounds me.
2. I can know a life which animates this matter: living beings, more or less intelligent.
3. I can know myself.

Corresponding to these three categories

we have an equal number of ways of knowing, three different types or modes of knowing:

1. Matter is known in the way mentioned at the beginning, based on precise perceptions; this is experimental knowledge, in which physical sensation predominates.

2. The intelligence of the beings around us cannot be directly perceived, but only deduced by a series of observations: seeing that an animal behaves in an intelligent manner, listening to what a man is talking about . . . after a series of perceptions, our mind, having found something similar to what it would do itself, concludes that it is faced by something which resembles it, one of its own like. In this type of knowing, perception, though it cannot be dispensed with, becomes less important, as it is followed by a complex operation of the mind.

3. In order to know himself, the knower does not require the intermediary of sensations or perceptions: knowing takes place directly, and is limited to the phase which cannot be described. In these three cases we can talk respectively of: perception, deduction, direct cognition.

We could add another way of knowing: knowing "by hearsay"; this forms the major part of acquired instruction by means of notions we have heard of or read about; however this can be brought under the second heading, namely mental knowledge.

From what has been said it is clear that there is no sense in speaking of "knowing" in a general sense; we have to add an adjective to specify which type of knowing we wish to speak of; and the three types mentioned could be called: material knowing, mental knowing, intimate knowing. Nowadays the second type is by far the most common: our schools, the papers, the people we know give us information which is translated into mental knowledge; all of us fill up our minds; but mind is the great

slayer of the real, and the knowledge of the present time is no exception to the rule, it is a way of knowing which gives us but little of the truth; it is necessary for us to try and know in a way which will make us penetrate better into the truth.

Even the study of Theosophy cannot be exempted from the above remarks. We sometimes hear people say: "For me, real Theosophy is Blavatsky Theosophy, the rest has no value"; while others will assert: "For me Krishnamurti's Theosophy is the real thing, the rest is not worth anything"; or: "For me true Theosophy can only be found by studying all the writers, not leaving out any" and so forth. Well, I say something else, which may perhaps sound strange: "For me, the only Theosophy of importance is that of Forcellini!" This may appear to be an immodest statement, but it is not; everyone ought to repeat it, substituting his own name; neither I nor anyone else can claim to have created a Theosophy superior to that of anyone else, but "for me" the only important one is the one I find in myself. In this, we might also find the answer to that question we are frequently asked, as often as not with a tinge of scepticism: "What is the use of knowing all these things?" "Even if you do know there is an astral plane and all the other planes, what is the good of that?"; "What does it matter to you that there may or may not be a law of Karma?". To these questions, as to all others of this sort, I can reply: "It doesn't matter! To know that there is an astral plane is of no use whatever to me, it would be just as well not to know about it, so long as I have not discovered the astral plane in myself; to know that the law of Karma exists

is one of the most useless things, unless I have found this law in myself. But when I succeed in discovering them within myself, that is, when I am able to know one of these things by direct experience and not by hearsay, my entire life is transformed, and then I understand the importance of this study, which has urged me to undertake such an important discovery." At this point, however, somebody might say: "Tell me then, how many people have discovered by direct experience the existence of the Anupadaka plane? and how many people have discovered that our evolution takes place on a scheme of seven chains? Must we conclude that we have not done our duty by the message given to us because we have not realized it all?". We ought not to be so strict with ourselves: the message was given to us with teachings that vary greatly in degrees of difficulty; I think they were distributed purposely with a wide range of difficulties. If we could realize in ourselves by direct experience *all* that Theosophy has taught us, it would mean that Theosophy itself has not reached the height of its scope, because its scope is precisely that of pressing us on to search constantly in ourselves for something and to go on searching always, without ever being able to say "I have finished".

I said that the mind is the slayer of the real, and therefore we have to seek for a direct knowledge, which transcends the mind; however I do not claim that when this has been done truth is already found and we are free to pass on to something else; when the mind has been overcome, there may possibly be other vehicles bringing in further causes of imperfection in knowledge, imperfections that have an anthropomorphising effect. Anthropomorphism is an inevitable error, which cannot be done away with until separate individuality has been totally eliminated. But if we cannot get rid of it, we can always reduce it, getting nearer to the truth by means of successive approximations. One way of reducing the personality is to overcome it by en-

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larging our point of view. Let me make an example: if I look at a landscape through field glasses I see a large number of details, many of them unpleasant: a filthy hovel a cesspool, a dung heap, the dead body of an animal, a mass of decaying weeds . . . but let us throw away the field glasses and admire the landscape as a whole: it is wonderful! The ugliness came from restricting ourselves to one detail, the beauty is the synthesis, the widening of our outlook. The same argument, in respect of the beautiful and the ugly, could be applied on other planes, in respect of good and evil: evil is what restricts, good is that which broadens; the same for the true and the false, and finally, at the supreme level, for the real and unreal: unreal are the details, real is the All.

But the examples I have given may lead to opinions which are too limited: it is not enough to go beyond, we have to transcend; what is the difference between these two expressions? I shall explain with another example: the surface of this sheet of paper is of a few square inches; in order to go beyond it we may think of a surface of a square yard, of two, of ten square yards, of a square mile . . . all this is going beyond; but if, without going so very far away, I think only of one cubic inch, I have much more; in the first case I had multiplied by a large number, of thousands, of millions, but still always a number; in the latter case, the cubic inch is infinitely greater than any surface. It has transcended all surfaces.

In order to free ourselves from the error of anthropomorphism, it is not enough to go beyond the limitations of our vehicles; we must endeavour to transcend them. The knowledge of today is mental, and is based, as we have seen, upon argumentation; in order to go beyond, one might, instead of *inferring*, seek another more expressive word; perhaps *imagining* would be better, but we still remain within limitations; possibly, at a certain point even the idea of *conoscere*, having knowledge itself loses its meaning, as it is too much bound up,

through habit, with the mind. Perhaps another more suitable one is to be preferred, namely *sapere* "to know". It is a fact that words can change their meaning, depending upon the plane on which they are pronounced and taken into account; and a word which on one plane has a very definite meaning, on the plane above it loses its meaning, becoming insignificant and worthless. But if this is the case, rather than attempting to find new words, which will in their turn lose their meanings, it is better simply to try and understand on the higher level, without attempting to lean on a handy word, which will no longer be effective tomorrow.

We speak too freely, and this also is the usual error of anthropomorphism: we speak of things so very much above us, so far removed from physical life, as if we were speaking of the physical world. But let us think, if we were to speak about a physical atom; how many of the attributes, belonging to physical bodies familiar to us, would no longer have a meaning? Could we speak of its colour, its temperature, its hardness? For an atom these things no longer exist; and we are here still upon the physical plane! How much more careful shall we not have to be when speaking of another plane! On the Buddhist plane, we are told, there are no opposites; what does that mean? And the plane of Atma is without differences; who feels equal to speaking about these things? A question we hear asked sometimes is: "For what purpose did God create the universe?" After what has been said, we can see that this question has no sense. To begin with, the word "purpose", when we go beyond the mental level, must lose its meaning. We might still speak of cause and effect, but afterwards even these words will lose their meaning: and then, if there is no cause and no effect, we cannot speak of a creator and of something which is created; we can say that both exist, and that is all . . . But even the expression "to exist", beyond a certain level must lose its meaning, and what then? Then, the universe

exists, below that level, and as to God, we cannot even say God exists. No other answer can be given to that foolish question. We may repeat the words from *The Light of Asia*. On that level, “. . . Who asks doth err, who answers errs.”

Briefly, knowing, questions, answers, and everything else has a meaning on its own particular plane, but if we want to experience life on its supreme plane, we have to

give up all these words and listen to the Voice of the Silence. Then we shall understand what becomes a universal *conoscenza*.

*The above is the address of Prof. Enzo Forcellini, President of the Turin Lodge, to the 54th Congress of the Italian Theosophical Society in May, 1968. For this translation we are indebted to Mrs. R. M. Vosse of South Africa. Eds.*

## BEAUTY'S ELOQUENCE

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

*“Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.”*  
—Voice of the Silence

A sonnet of Keats or Wordsworth offers the sensitive imagination a surfeit of poetic eloquence extolling the beauty of the daffodil, the violet, the lily or the rose. This poetic eloquence is a spontaneous expression of the visions and revelations the flowers awaken in the poet's mind and imagination; as such, they are an offering to the reader—Beauty at second hand. To many of us this second-hand chronicling of Nature's wizardry is, in some instances, more moving than the blooms themselves, a fact which seems to suggest our relative blindness (or deafness) and the poet's intense awareness of the beauty he extols. In poets of the stature of Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson and Shakespeare, one is almost persuaded that these flowers *speak* to them, enabling them to yield a verbatim report of the news received.

And why not? You and I and the poets doubtlessly discourse from time to time regarding these blooms, utilizing our senses, our imagination and powers of speech. Our physical and sensory grossness would seem to stand between ourselves and the intelligence these flowers would convey. Their mission is not to “report upon”, but to *reveal* Beauty. The eloquence of that

Beauty, inaudible to din-deafened ears, is not, necessarily, unexpressed. The Biblical phrase, “The Heavens are telling the glory of God”, may not be wholly unrelated to a bed of daffodils, here “telling the glory of God on earth”. Be it innate egotism, or innate indifference, we seem to have chosen to remain deaf, not merely to the eloquence of this Beauty, but to the divine gospel of THE ONE manifesting in a bed of daffodils.

Why the unwonted remoteness of Beauty's Eloquence, singing to our ears and eyes on every hand? Wherefore this insistence upon a dry, factual notification: “Please note! Beauty at work!” We have evidently allowed some bulky and impenetrable obstacle to establish itself between ourselves and Beauty's divine reality, that tempts us to spin words *about* a miracle we only vaguely perceive.

The sacred writings offer this warning: “Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain, like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.” Have we, perchance, closed and sealed up a casement, still open in the lotus, to the morning sun? Should we not take to heart Wordsworth's timely warning: “The world is too much

with us, late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers"? Have we not allowed the turmoil of life to come between our hearts and Beauty's Eloquence—between our hearts and THE ONE? If this be the case, it means that day by day we allow ourselves to stray further and further from the guidance of that Spiritual Reality enthroned in the heart of the daffodil and the violet. In a spiritually infused universe Nature's heavenly agencies, through Beauty's Eloquence, preach the deathless wisdom of Self-Knowledge. But to catch the message, one must have mastered the magic of word-silence and thought-silence—most of all ego-silence.

Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest.

—*Voice of the Silence*

An indispensable aspect of esotericism is LISTENING—with ear and heart, to the uninterrupted eloquence of Nature's myriad voices; it is to sensitize oneself to that Druid awareness that declares: "I know the imagination of the oak tree." If so finely attuned a heart as this does not disdain to acknowledge "the imagination of the oak tree", have we need to question the eloquence of the daffodil?

No small part of the pursuit of Wisdom consists in shutting the door of consciousness upon the *noises* of earthly living, with their guttural undertone of unappeased Desire. The daffodil, the lily, the violet, *give*. Can we not emulate them, offering an unabashed vision and hearing to their eloquence? Shall we discredit the flowers in our garden with our egotistical preference of waste and confusion in the presence of so much Beauty? Consciously contributing to that Beauty, do not both you and I yearn to leave behind a memory of us worthy to be enshrined in Shelley's words?

He is a portion of the loveliness  
Which once he made more lovely: he  
doth bear  
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic  
stress

Sweeps through the dull dense world,  
compelling there,  
All new successions to the forms they  
wear;  
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks  
its flight  
To its own likeness, as each mass may  
bear;  
And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees and beasts and men into the  
Heaven's light.

Was it not reverent LISTENING that released unearthly voices to Wordsworth that evening on London Bridge?

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time as quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquility;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea:

Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

Dedicated silence and fearless LISTENING—these alone could invoke this revelation by Welsh poet, Kenneth Morris:

And the earth we shall know for our  
Mother

Not estranged any more by our sin  
And the sun we shall hail as a brother,  
And the stars in their courses, as kin;  
And the pebble, the grass-blade, the  
clod

Shall be quick with delight and with  
God,

And the song the Eternal is singing  
Shall sing up to our sense from the  
sod.

In the wholeness of a Spiritual Universe, Man and Nature are inseparable. Shall we mar this WHOLENESS with blind egotism, or from day to day make the Eloquence of Beauty our own?

Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your teacher.

—Wordsworth



# ANCIENT SCIENCE

## 2. Astronomy

K. A. NEARY

(Continued from page 38)

There is ample evidence to show that astronomy is a very old science. Also that it was universal even in antiquity. Knowledge of the movement of the heavenly bodies was revealed by some of the earliest writers in the historical period and it must be inferred that the subject had been developed and taught at an even earlier age.

Tradition has long held, however, that astronomical knowledge is traceable to an even remoter past. *The Secret Doctrine* quotes several early authorities on this point: "Diogenes Laertius carried back the astronomical calculations of the Egyptians to 48,863 years before Alexander the Great"; "Simplicius (VIth cent. A.D.) writes that he had always heard that the Egyptians had kept astronomical observations and records for a period of 630,000 years". (I, 650 Orig. Ed., I, 713 3rd Ed., II, 376 6-vol. Ed.) Whatever the facts, one thing is surely certain—that for the science of astronomy to have achieved such refinement as we know it had reached four thousand years ago, it must have been practised long before.

The universality of this science is also quite remarkable. India, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Britain, Central and South America, were all seats of learning in this field.

It must be remembered that ancient astronomy was practised, as far as we know, without the use of telescopes. Where mere observations are concerned this would not matter unduly as the naked eye is sufficient for all practical purposes. (Agricultural uses, for example.) "At the time when the Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas, are rising, begin your harvest, and plow again when they are setting," advised Hesiod in *Works and Days* (c. 800 B.C.) No doubt farmers in 8,000 if not 80,000 B.C., also timed their

operations by the stars in exactly this way, and they would have been familiar with all the principle constellations.

Lack of telescopes is one thing, but the astronomers of old would have been seriously hampered without the benefit of some complex methods of calculation for their predictions. (Eclipses were predicted regularly and accurately; knowledge of the precession of the equinoxes was but another of their accomplishments requiring advanced techniques of calculation.)

In the first place some mathematics would have been a prerequisite. It must be assumed that it was available—not an extravagant assumption by any means when it is remembered what standard of mathematics was taught in Ancient Greece. In addition, certain instruments would have been helpful, if not indispensable, to ensure the extreme accuracy necessary for observations used in the calculations.

What sort of instruments? In his remarkable book, *Stonehenge Decoded*, Prof. Gerald S. Hawkins makes a good case for the hypothesis that the famous stone circles at Stonehenge were actually the basis of an astronomical computer of almost incredible accuracy! (Stonehenge has long been considered as an astronomical site but hitherto its utility had been guessed at as being elementary.) More than this, in his efforts to "decode" Stonehenge, (using, of course, a modern electronic computer) Hawkins discovered, or *rediscovered* a 56-year eclipse cycle. This astronomical *fact*, if it was indeed known by the builders and users of Stonehenge 3,500 years ago—and unknown to modern astronomers until very recently as stated—is alone enough to demand that we review our thinking about the capabil-

(Continued on page 64)

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA - Election 1970

Members to be Elected - 7

$$\text{Quota} = \frac{182}{8} + 1 = 24$$

Total Votes 186  
 Spoiled Ballots  $\frac{4}{182}$   
 Votes to be Counted 182

Names of Candidates	1st Count		2nd Count		3rd Count		4th Count		5th Count	
	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer
Buchanan	44	-20	24		24		24		24	
Bunting	9	1	10		13	3	13		13	5
Carter	7	2	9		10	1	10		-10	-
Dadswell	43		43		24	-19	24		24	24
Gardiner	9	2	11	2	18	7	18		18	6
Oberlechner	7	1	8	1	8		8	2	10	-10
Seaton	24		24		24		24		24	24
Weaver	13	1	14	1	18	4	18		18	3
Webb	10		10		14	4	14	3	17	6
Wood	16	13	29	13	29		29	-5	24	24
Totals	182		182		182		182		182	182

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death, in Vancouver on June 27, of Mrs. Aleida Newman. A staunch member of Vancouver Lodge, she was a devoted student of Theosophy. A memorial service was conducted by Mrs. Hannah Buchanan, the Lodge President.

Our condolences are sent to Mrs. Newman's sister and brothers.

\* \* \*

I hope as many Canadians as possible will attend the 1970 North American Theosophical Students' Conference to be held in Detroit Labour Day Weekend.

Please note that the Conference is for *students*. Regardless of your affiliation (or none) you will be welcome if you are a student of Theosophy. This year's theme, "H. P. Blavatsky and Today's Search for Meaning" should appeal to all. The guest appearance of Boris de Zirkoff (himself, by the way, a grand-nephew of Madame Blavatsky, but known for his tremendous literary effort in compiling the *Collected Writings*) will certainly add to the attraction of the Conference. Mr. de Zirkoff is also editor and publisher of *Theosophia*.

As in 1969 there will be opportunity for all delegates to participate. So . . . save up for a trip to Detroit and go prepared to make a personal contribution to the success of this fraternal gathering.

\* \* \*

You are reminded that the reincarnation-theme film, "How Many Lifetimes?" is available on free loan. It is eminently suitable for showing to groups among whom Theosophy is a strange or unknown word. Please write to the General Secretary for details.

\* \* \*

The results of the election are given in tabular form on another page. Counting took place on Monday evening, June 1, at 310 Dupont Street, Toronto. The scrutineers were: Mrs. K. Moffett, Centennial Lodge; Miss Frances Moon, Miss Irene McArthur and Mr. Dudley W. Barr, all of

Toronto Lodge. I was also present.

Mrs. Buchanan polled the largest number of first-place votes, followed by Mr. Dadswell and Miss Seaton. These three received the quota, or better, and were automatically elected. Redistribution of votes on the following counts then elected Mr. Wood, Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Webb and Mr. Weaver, in that order.

In the referendum 144 members voted in favour of the Constitution and/or By-laws of The Theosophical Society in Canada being amended to allow for an Election of the General Secretary and the General Executive every three years instead of annually as at present. Thirty voted against such an amendment while 12 ballots were unmarked. The Committee which has been studying the Constitution will no doubt take account of this expression of opinion when drafting its recommendations.

Again this year only a few more than half the paid-up members sent in their ballots. While conceding the point that Canadian T.S. elections are not earth shattering events, the principles involved in any democratic election are surely of a nature that all who value them will see that they are put into practice regardless of the issues involved.

I chatted recently with a member who has lived in a country where elections are not democratic. What I heard about the ramifications of this system made me value ours so much the more.

\* \* \*

At the time of going to press there was little to add by way of news as to where Toronto Lodge would be located in the Fall. The closing weeks of June saw much activity at 310 Dupont Street where the furnishings, etc., of Lodge, Section and Blavatsky Institute were packed and moved into storage.

Once again I would ask our correspondents to note the new address of The Theosophical Society in Canada, *The Canadian Theosophist* and the Blavatsky Institute: Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto 1, Ontario.  
—T.G.D.

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General Secretary  
TED G. DAVY

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

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

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

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

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NEW PUBLICATION

A new periodical *Journal of Indian Philosophy* has been announced by the D. Reidel Publishing Company, P.O. Box 17, Dordrecht, Holland. The subscription price per volume of 4 issues (about 400 pages) is \$25.20 U.S. plus postage.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

*The Editors, The Canadian Theosophist*

I have for many years enjoyed reading *The Canadian Theosophist* and have always followed with much interest the various views expressed therein. I suppose it is quite natural that opinions differ, especially in a society which claims the utmost freedom for its members. It is very easy to preach brotherhood but difficult to practice; particularly within the field of religion. One of the greatest obstacles in our search for truth is the conditioned mind. Our approach to new ideas is governed by what is already in the mind. This is a problem we all have to face and does not diminish with increasing age.

It would seem that we are encouraged to retain the ideas and beliefs built up previous to becoming Theosophists and if possible to see them in a new and better light. But is it not a fact that so many cling desperately to pet theories and beliefs, distorting the basic teachings to suit themselves. We can usually find plenty of conformation in the teachings to fit our own way of thinking, the conditioned mind will see to that.

I sometimes wonder why many of our members continue their membership for obviously their beliefs would be better served within the religion they uphold. We so often experience a deep sense of frustration in our study group work when someone persistently takes a restricted and predominantly biased view upon every subject taken.

As Theosophists we are, or should be, dedicated to the fundamental unity behind all religions and not just to the one we happen to favour most.

It is said that, one who strives to convert another to his own way of thinking is not himself so sure.

Truth does not conform to any set of ideas nor can there be a monopoly made of it by any group. Truth grows in us and with us if we but relax a little and let it.

A. W. Townsley

## MONTREAL LODGE

The Theosophical film "How Many Lifetimes" was shown at a public meeting on May 12 and was followed by some interesting discussion. The film is a wonderful achievement and the Lodge was glad to have the privilege of seeing it.

We closed for the summer on May 26 but will reopen again on September 15 at 8.30 p.m. This meeting will take the form of an "Open Discussion" and at the following meetings it is planned to study the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

The Vice-President brought an excellent Course back from the T.S. in England consisting of a Tape, Booklets and Notes on the study of *The Secret Doctrine* and it is hoped that this will be started as soon as we are able to purchase a tape recorder. Perhaps this coming Fall and Winter the Lodge may be able to have more than one meeting a week and even have two Courses going on at the same time.

The Lodge offers a welcome to out-of-town visitors. Our address is Suite 36, 1522 Sherbrooke Street West, and the telephone number is 932-9432.

Viola P. Law,  
Secretary.

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## TORONTO LODGE

At the Annual Meeting of the Toronto Lodge the following officers and directors were elected for the ensuing year:  
President ..... Mr. Fleetwood B. Berry  
1st Vice-President Mr. Gordon F. Gardiner  
2nd Vice-President Mr. Leslie A. Dadswell  
Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. Helen Barthelmes  
Recording Secretary .... Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe  
Treasurer ..... Mr. Ralph A. Webb  
Directors—Mrs. Gaile Campbell, Mrs. Rosamond Gardiner, Miss Frances Moon, Miss Irene McArthur, Mr. Stephen Peer, Mr. Wolfgang Schmitt, Mr. Laszlo F. Sima, Mr. Alan Sutcliffe, Mr. Clare Watson.

## VICTORIA LODGE

On May 27 we had a special meeting at which Mr. Dennis Critoph, a member of Hermes Lodge, Vancouver, gave a very interesting talk on "Zen in English Poetry".

We have also been using some of the Group Courses from England.

We will be meeting during the summer to plan our programme for the coming 1970-71 year and we hope it may be possible to include the Theosophical film "How Many Lifetimes".

Frank P. Boucher,  
Secretary

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## NIAGARA PICNIC

The Annual Picnic at Niagara Falls on June 13 provided an opportunity for members and friends to meet in beautiful surroundings on a lovely summer day. Almost thirty left Toronto by bus in the morning and joined members from Buffalo, Hamilton and other Ontario centres for a picnic lunch in view of the majestic Horseshoe and American Falls.

The afternoon was spent talking with fellow members or enjoying a walk through the parkland.

On the return trip the Toronto members made their usual stop at the Welland Canal to view the activity that is always taking place there when it is open to navigation.

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## INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

In the July-August 1969 issue of this magazine, full details were given of the Competition sponsored by the Theosophical Society in Switzerland, Meyer Foundation.

We have been asked by the sponsors to advise participants and persons interested in the international competition that the closing date for the submission of entries has been postponed at the request of several persons to June 30, 1971 (instead of December 31, 1970). —Eds.

# THE SECRET OF MAN'S VITALITY

CYRIL BENTON

The life-principle of man and all of earth's creation is concealed in the mystery of an inner world, invisible to the naked eye, known to all Eastern philosophers as the Vital-realm of Prana. Within this subtle realm lies the secret of man's vitality. This realm, sometimes referred to as the "Great Breath", contains the life-force to sustain all manifestation in the etheric and physical world. How much of this life-force can we absorb in one physical life before succumbing to the inevitable transition called death? The answer would seem to be based upon each man's individually earned or unearned merit; for each one of us is sustained by this inner life-force of Prana for a given amount of time. Some have earned the right to exist for one hundred years or more, some for only a short span of forty years or so—before they are overwhelmed with the ever fluctuating motion of this "Great-Breath".

In the language of universal physics, this Vital-realm of Prana is but another grade of finer matter. However, from its ceaseless motion, like a constant but silent moving ocean, it produces all the phenomena of the Etheric world about us, as the Etheric in turn produces all the phenomena of our physical world. Behind every physical atom of manifestation there stands this great trinity of graded matter: Etheric molecules, Vital-Pranic radiations, and the Manasic World from the realm of mind, Manasa; all in chording vibration but each sounding its note one octave apart, with one begetting the other through their different rates of vibration.

Western science is unable to concede these higher realms of matter; their vibrations cannot be registered on scientific instruments beyond the lower phases of the Etheric realm. Here we must part with our microscopes and telescopes and seek the proof from within ourselves. Each of us

must prove these conditions for himself, from within the self. How? There is only one way and that is the way of the holy mendicant upon the Path. Positive proof of these states and conditions can only be realized by those who have reached the states of Raja Yoga in their evolution. These represent the purest and furthest advanced members of our human race, the advanced guard of our humanity. And so we come to the realization that here is another realm, so subtle in action, yet far beyond in power and scope of its own birth child, the astro-etheric world.

What then is man's relation to this subtle realm of Vital-Prana? How does he partake of it? This ocean of Vital-Pranic substance envelopes whole worlds and universes. They float in it and have their being in the great-breath of this life-substance; for it permeates every nook and cranny of the Etheric and physical worlds. Yes, man and his little ship called Earth float in this vast pranic ocean of vital substance. Each person, and all living things on earth, has his allotment of it locked within their astral-forms. Our very bloodstream is freighted with it; thus the importance of the bloodstream, and that "blood is the life". As the explosive power locked within gasoline, when sparked, drives the automobile, so does the explosive power of this vital-substance fed to the bloodstream in man from the vehicle of his astral-body, give him the vitality to function and run his physical body with all its intricate parts. The secret of man's vitality, therefore lies in the amount and purity of this Vital-pranic substance contained in his bloodstream; and the length of time he can sustain such action, called life, is determined by the pressure the organs of the physical body can withstand. For the great-breath of Prana constantly overwhelms all and everything. A weak point in one's physical and astral armor and we get the spark

which explodes in death, in one form or another.

So man actually partakes of this Vital-realm through his physical bloodstream—the vehicle of it—we see, is his astral-body. This is one reason why no real student of occult science will ever shed his blood for another, for to do so is the unpardonable sin.

Blood then becomes the main source of man's vitality. It is his very life substance, for the "fiery-lives" that go to make up each cell, organ, or sinew of his physical body, feed off the bloodstream; and the Vital-pranic substance, contained therein, sustains each minute entity in man's physical body. Death, therefore, is actually the result of too much life—Prana overwhelming these "fiery-lives" within our physical bodies.

Sooner or later, we must all realize that "motion", "substance", and "consciousness" becomes the great trinity of life, and all things finite resolve themselves into them. When "motion" ceases, "substance" disappears, and "consciousness" retreats to inner planes of an infinite nature. This great trinity of life is reflected in time and space, wherein we witness the phenomenon of worlds and universes and all the life upon them, appearing and disappearing within the boundaries of the great cosmic law. Man himself and all his works are subject to these same governing laws; for the soul of man, and the overshadowing Spirit of him, are separate entities on different levels of evolution by virtue of their experience through and with "motion", "substance", and "consciousness". Think as deep as you like, there is none among us that can fathom beyond the causeless cause, this trinity, or these aspects of the Absolute.

Thought can and does modify the force of this Vital-pranic substance within the body of man. Disease, therefore, is the failure of an entity to control or synthesize properly this action of Prana within the astro-physical organism of the body. Too much inflow of this vital force, and the

"fiery lives" fail in their duty to the physical organs. Balance by thought control, Prana under complete control within the body, constitutes the final aspect in the secret of man's vitality. Too much Prana and death follows in its wake. Man shortens his physical life through ignorance of these laws governing the realms, and his action within them. Normally, man's life-span should be 400 years. As yet, few of us have been able to manipulate this Vital-breath of Prana to reach 100 years of physical life on earth. Those who have been fortunate enough to meet with members of our advanced guard, the Adepts or Masters of the Wisdom, can testify to their ageless condition. It is revealed, some of them at 100 years of life appear as youthful as a profane man of 30 to 40 years. These great men of the Brotherhood have learned the secret of nature, the control of the Vital-pranic breath within themselves, through the agency of Raja Yoga.

Our physical bodies, in one way, compare to that of a storage battery: When we are asleep, we are recharged with Vital-force of this Pranic realm; for we are absorbing this life-energy, and not resisting it, as we constantly do when in our waking moments. As we get older, our power to resist the quiet unceasing motion of this Vital-realm, becomes less and less; and finally, we are overwhelmed by it—drowned, as it were, in this great ocean of life-substance.

Within the four realms of graded matter that make up our world, man appears and disappears in each one of them in cyclic continuity. Into this Vital-realm of Prana, meaning breath, or Jiva, meaning life (Prana-Jiva), man returns encased in a body made up of the same substance as the realm itself; in a body much finer in texture than that which he inhabited in the Etheric-realm or the physical. These latter states owe their very existence to this Vital-realm of Prana, for one begot the other, as Manasa the realm of mind-substance begot them all. When we have completed our schooling and conquered all the manifesta-

tions of the Physical and Etheric worlds, we shall enter once more this Vital-realm for another complete manifestation in it. Under the occult laws of evolution, this future state is known as the coming 6th Round of activity.

Man taps the Vital-realm for the very substance of his life, and carries it with him in all his creative endeavors in the Etheric and Physical realms. Without it he could not exist, for he is part and parcel of it, and the very essence of it is in his innermost being. It makes up the "silver chord" of his life on earth in the physical. In fact, all manifestations on earth have the trinity of these three essences embodied within them, from rocks to humans. Thus, all physical objects have this chording vibration of the lower three realms of matter. In their descent, it was not necessary that they all partake of the Manasic mind-force, but it was necessary for all manifested life on earth to have a chording vibration of atoms from the Physical, the Etheric and the Vital-pranic realms.

Under the Law of Compensation, each soul upon earth has its earned allotment of this Vital-realm substance encased within the astral of the physical body. Our earned ability to master and control this through the power of mind-force governs the life-span of each one of us. Here lies the secret of man's vitality, known as Prana or Jiva—the great breath of life—a gift from HIM, from whom all blessings flow.

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### ANCIENT SCIENCE

*(Continued from page 57)*

ities of ancient man. No wonder the world famous astronomer Prof. Fred Hoyle said that some features of Stonehenge seem to indicate that "a veritable Newton or Einstein must have been at work."

Again, Prof. Alexander Thom has shown that another stone circle in Perthshire, Scotland, indicates that in roughly the same period one of the moon's complex motions, an

oscillation repeating every 173.3 days was known. This was not rediscovered until the sixteenth century when a Dutch astronomer, Tycho Brahe, began precise telescopic observations.

More could be added. The remarkable geometric engravings in the Nazca Valley of Peru have been shown to have astronomical significance. The calendars of Mexico and Peru are proof the ancient science was skilfully practised in those areas.

As well as the "instruments" some system of record preservation would have been needed by the prehistoric astronomers. It is quite possible that we shall never know how they recorded their observations, which is a great pity. Perhaps they relied solely on memory (the uses of which are largely left dormant in our times). Or perhaps they did commit their key observations and calculations to writing but used materials that have not been preserved. Or, as a wild conjecture, perhaps they used calculators like Stonehenge. For if a system such as Hawkins has described can be used to predict future astronomical events, it might by reversal also reveal the state of the heavens in past times, which is a pretty smart way to store information.

*(To be continued)*

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### THE HODGSON REPORT

The 1885 Society for Psychical Research investigation into alleged "phenomena" at the Theosophical Society's headquarters in Adyar started a chain of reactions that are still significant to Theosophists. The Report of the S.P.R. investigator, Richard Hodgson, was discreditable both to him and to the Society that commissioned him; it caused much suffering to Madame Blavatsky and its use by irresponsible biographers down through the years has resulted in continued damage to her reputation and to the good name of the Theosophical Movement.

The situation is somewhat brighter today, however—much more so than at any time in the history of Hodgson's infamous



## BOOK REVIEWS

report. A major breakthrough came in 1963 with the publication of *Obituary: The Hodgson Report on Madame Blavatsky 1885-1960*. An impressive assembly of facts by Adlai E. Waterman, this slim volume is a devastating exposure of the falsehoods and inaccuracies contained in Hodgson's S.P.R. Report, and provides a permanent refutation to the document that has been injurious and distasteful to many innocent people. A more recent book, *The Hall of Magic Mirrors*, adds more evidence as to the unreliability of the report on the 1885 investigations. (This book, by Victor Endersby, was reviewed in the Jan.-Feb. 1970 issue of this magazine.)

The "Sirhan Affair" in 1968 gave rise to a most important document bearing on this case. *Time* magazine stated that Madame Blavatsky had been accused in 1885 by the Society for Psychical Research of "... fraud, forgery and spying ...". A reply by the Hon. Secretary of that Society advised the Editors of *Time* that "Comments on Madame Blavatsky were contained in a report by Richard Hodgson . . . and any accusations therein contained are the responsibility of the author and not of this organization."

So far, so good. The authority and prestige of the name of a learned Society has been removed from the Report and certainly weakened its impact. That the Society for Psychical Research now has a much more enlightened attitude regarding the "Hodgson Report" is evident in the fact that its *Journal* for December, 1969, allows no less than nine pages to print Mr. Waterman's detailed reply to some statements made in a review of his book, *Obituary* . . . in an earlier issue. His long letter is well worth reading and students possessing the book will no doubt wish to have a copy of the letter also. (For further information, please write to the General Secretary.) This rebuttal is the first defence of H. P. Blavatsky to appear in the pages of the S.P.R. *Journal* since 1885. —T.G.D.

*Theosophy Under Fire, A Miniature Key To Theosophy*, by Iverson L. Harris. Published by the author at 4877 Gresham St., San Diego, California, U.S.A. Paper bound, 88 pp. Price \$3.00 U.S.

This interesting book consists of a verbatim report of questions put to Mr. Harris and his replies thereto under examination and cross-examination in connection with a court action arising out of the will of a Mrs. Ann Porter under which provision was made for an annual donation to the Theosophical Society of Point Loma, from a Trust Fund established under the will. The action was brought by parties dissatisfied with the terms of the will; the Theosophical Society of Point Loma was not a party to the litigation, but as a beneficiary was subject to examination. Mr. Harris, who was chairman of the Society's Cabinet, was authorized to speak on the Society's behalf.

Many questions were asked of Mr. Harris concerning the founding, history and objects of the Theosophical Society, the relationship between the Point Loma Society and the Adyar Society, the organizational functioning of the Society, doctrines promulgated by Theosophy, etc., etc. Mr. Harris's replies, in some cases necessarily lengthy, were given in clear simple language intended to fully answer all queries.

The portions of Mr. Harris's testimony relating to differences of attitude between the Point Loma and the Adyar Societies concerning basic teachings, will be of special interest to students. For example, the Point Loma group consistently avoided encouragement of psychic practices of any kind and repudiated all responsibility for certain teachings which emanated from C. W. Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant.

In addition to appreciating this record for its usefulness as a text book of Basic Theosophy, students will welcome it for its historical value concerning that important branch of the Theosophical Movement—the Theosophical Society of Point Loma.

—D.W.B.

*A Rebirth for Christianity*, by Alvin Boyd Kuhn, Ph.D. Published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. xi + 218 pp. Price \$5.50.

For the last thirty or more years of his life Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn lectured all over the North American continent. His literary output in that time included several books and hundreds of shorter works, and both his written and spoken word attracted a large number of students from within and without the Theosophical Society. He inspired some, taught many, antagonized a few. *A Rebirth for Christianity*, a posthumously published work, will probably do likewise—but with a minimum of antagonism. Hopefully it will attract a new generation to consider his contributions to the study of comparative religion.

More than any of his other literary efforts this book calls to mind the author's unique platform style and, occasionally, his infectious excitement as he expounded his theories. It is short by his standards, but the argument is complete and well stated. When he died it was only in manuscript form but the published work suggests that Dr. Kuhn has been well served by his editors.

Kuhn's special interest was Christianity in the light of the ancient Egyptian and Greek religions. In *The Lost Light* and *Who Is This King of Glory?* his biblical scholarship was used to debunk the literal interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments; he tried to point out some of the allegories contained therein and explained why they were none the less valuable for being allegories. *Shadow of the Third Century* mourned the passing of true Christianity but *A Rebirth for Christianity* looks optimistically to its restoration by a more enlightened age.

"If Christianity will now recognize that the time has come to join with the other great living religious traditions, and direct its vision to the reawakening of the divine spirit, the Christos in man, it may vindicate its right to call its message the true religion of humanity."

This book examines the beginnings of Christianity with particular emphasis on its debt to the Egyptian mysteries and the influence of the Greek in the early years of the era. Recent discoveries such as the Dead Sea Scrolls are given due attention in assessing the nature of the soil from which sprang a religion that dominated the west for the better part of two millenia.

An illuminating chapter, "Jesus and the Christos", is in itself a brilliant study of the man/spirit relationship of the central character of the gospels. As suggested in the quotation, if there is indeed to be a rebirth for Christianity this "mystery" will need to be clearly understood by all who profess to be Christians.

Dr. Kuhn's scholarship covered a wide area, especially considering the depths to which he pursued his studies. While his interpretations can in no way be construed as discoveries, there is an originality in all his work that is refreshing. He had a gift for synthesis, and this is displayed brilliantly in *A Rebirth for Christianity*.

—T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

*H. P. Blavatsky the light-bringer*, by Geoffrey A. Barboraka. (The Blavatsky Lecture 1970.) Published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House Ltd., London, England. Paper, 68 pp. Price five shillings.

Of all the books written about H. P. Blavatsky this one must surely rate among the best. Somehow she emerges from these pages in a clear and fascinating perspective which prompts new conjecture about her life and work. And yet—as might be expected—she remains as enigmatic as ever. In fact, if anything the mystery deepens.

Mr. Barboraka is to be commended for sticking closely to his chosen theme, which is to examine H. P. Blavatsky in the role of "light-bringer". His singleness of purpose pays off. It results in an interest-packed book, difficult to put down and leaving the reader wanting more.

As is his practice, the author uses quota-

tions extensively to support his narrative. Taken from many sources they are well chosen to illustrate the different aspects of the "light-bringer". They include what the Masters said about her; what she said about herself; and the impressions of some of those who came into contact with her between 1875 and 1891.

H.P.B.'s relationship with her Master and his fellow Adepts is discussed, and indeed this is of paramount importance when considering her role in the modern Theosophical Movement. Some of her more amazing experiences and adventures are mentioned not, as is so often the case, in the interests of sensationalism, but to show that she enjoyed the "protective guardianship" of those whom she served.

Of particular value is the section devoted to an examination of the seven kinds of process involved in the writings of Madame Blavatsky. These include writing by directive clairvoyance, by psychometry and by means of precipitation. Her artistic skills are not overlooked and Mr. Barborka examines each of her characteristics and special abilities.

For other than Theosophical students who might read this book, a useful glossary of terms used is included. There is also a brief bibliography of H. P. Blavatsky's works.

The 1970 Blavatsky Lecture is an important literary event for the whole Theosophical Movement. The T.P.H. in London is to be congratulated for producing such an attractive printed version so promptly.

—T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

*The Mystery Teachings and Christianity*, by Gerald Tranter. A Quest Book, published 1969 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. Paper, 208 pp. Price \$1.75.

This book is frankly aimed at "the man in the street". It is generally assumed that all "the man" wants is a simple, interesting exposition of a subject—but this can seldom

be achieved without losing meaningful content.

Certainly, *The Mystery Teachings and Christianity* succeeds in that it is written in clear and simple language and consequently is easily read. As might be expected, though, as foundation material for further study it is not too helpful.

Not that this work is without merit over and above its readability. The author's use of comparative scriptures is admirable; his treatment of allegories thought-provoking. What is disappointing, however, is that he does not live up to his title. Those who seek knowledge of the mystery teachings and their influence on Christianity had better look elsewhere.

—T.G.D.

☆ ☆ ☆

*The Sayings of the Ancient One*, Wisdom from Ancient Africa, by P. G. Bowen. A Quest Miniature, abridged edition. Published 1969 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 41 pp. Price \$1.00.

*The Sayings of the Ancient One*, which embodies a few thoughts from Ancient Africa, is a beautiful book, simple in language yet full of mystical and occult teachings given in the form of charming allegories and dialogues. It is highly recommended to those students earnestly desiring to follow on the "Path of Light" as taught therein. The original edition consisted of three fragments entitled respectively, "The Wilderness of the Mind of Man", "The Path to Manhood" and "The Temple and the Pool". These fragments are translations of "very ancient records" found by Mehlo Moya, a Berber philosopher and teacher, "in a subterranean chamber in one of the ancient ruined cities of Southern Africa". Mr. Bowen, the translator, was allowed to publish only three fragments and it depended on how the lessons would be "received by mystics, occultists and Theosophists" if more was to be offered to the public.

The first fragment deals allegorically with the descent of the Soul from its state of

Bliss and Oneness to that of *personal* self-consciousness and then upward again to *spiritual* self-consciousness. The Soul learns the lessons of Life through much suffering, through weariness and dangers, but realizes at the end the necessity of all these trials, for, "only through learning the False and Imperfect, can you come to know that which is TRUE and PERFECT."

The second fragment reminds the student of Theosophy very much of *Light on the Path*. It would almost seem as if the inspiration came from a similar source. In this fragment, which is in the form of a dialogue, the Ancient One gives occult instruction to his disciple to assist him entering on the "Path of Light".

The third fragment has been completely left out of this Quest Miniature edition, though fortunately for the reader the first two have been left unaltered. This deletion is much to be regretted in a book which by nature is already small and so unique. This last fragment is a remarkable allegory and, in the opinion of the reviewer, the most mystical and beautiful of the three. Its deletion is a definite loss to the reader; however, the first two fragments can stand alone. —E.R.

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### MADAME BLAVATSKY AND ASTROLOGY

A 7,500-word open letter to the Editors of *Astrology* magazine rebutting an article which contained scurrilous statements about H. P. Blavatsky has been reprinted by the Blavatsky Foundation. It was written by Walter J. Carrithers Jr.

As well as refuting the several errors found in the article, Mr. Carrithers uses his long letter as a vehicle to discuss Madame Blavatsky's position on Astrology. He writes from the point of view of a student of both Theosophy and Astrology and supports his argument with a number of interesting and pertinent quotations. He maintains: "What Madame Blavatsky contributed to the subject is rooted in the *philosophical* basis of Astrology and pertains

to the understanding of its *modus operandi*, together with its relationship to the spirit of man."

The contents of the letter add up to a valuable source of information on a subject which should be of interest to many students. They may obtain copies of the reprints at 2/\$1.00 postpaid from:

The Blavatsky Foundation  
P.O. Box 1543  
Fresno, California 93716

The object of The Blavatsky Foundation is "To promote public knowledge of the life and works of Helena P. Blavatsky".

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### IMPORTANT NEW EDITIONS

*The Gnosis*, or Ancient Wisdom in the Christian Scriptures, by William Kingsland. A Quest Paperback edition, published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 230 pp. Price \$1.95.

*The Voice of the Silence* and other chosen fragments from The Book of the Golden Precepts, translated and annotated by H.P.B. A Quest Miniature, published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 94 pp. Price \$1.00.

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### THE KROTONA SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY

The Krotona School of Theosophy will begin the Fall Term with a Preview of Courses on September 13. Classes are scheduled for September 14 through November 21. Professor B. R. Mullik will be the featured Guest Teacher. Dr. Mullik is currently a teacher of English literature at Agra College, Agra, India. He has recently lectured in countries of western Europe, and is now making an abridgement of *Isis Unveiled* for the Kern Foundation. Courses will also be taught by the resident faculty, Drs. Munnik, Werth and Taylor.

Write for a brochure giving details to: The Krotona School of Theosophy, Route 2, Box 4-B, Ojai, Calif. 93023, U.S.A.

Nell Taylor, Secretary



**ANNOUNCING THE**  
**1970**  
**NORTH AMERICAN**  
**THEOSOPHICAL STUDENTS'**  
**CONFERENCE**

**Detroit, Michigan**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1970**

**"H. P. BLAVATSKY AND TODAY'S**  
**SEARCH FOR MEANING"**

**Speakers — Discussions**

**Convention Headquarters: Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel**

Room reservations at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel should be made directly with the hotel. Hotel reservation cards are available from your Lodge Secretary or the General Secretary.

A registration fee of \$10.00 will include registration for all the sessions, and the banquet on Sunday evening, September 6. Conference registration forms are available from your Lodge Secretary or the General Secretary. Registrants should indicate in advance whether they prefer a chicken dinner or a vegetarian plate.

# TENTATIVE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Conference Theme:

**"H. P. BLAVATSKY AND TODAY'S SEARCH FOR MEANING"**

## Saturday, September 5

10.00 a.m. Registration

1.30 p.m. Official Opening of Conference

Ted G. Davy, General Secretary, The Theosophical Society  
in Canada.

Joy Mills, National President, The Theosophical Society  
in America.

Introductions and Greetings.

3.00 p.m. Coffee Break.

3.30 p.m. "H. P. Blavatsky: Woman and Teacher"—Boris de Zirkoff.

8.00 p.m. Public Showing: Quest Books Film—  
"How Many Lifetimes?"

## Sunday, September 6

10.00 a.m. Symposium: "Is H.P.B. Relevant to the Present Scene?"

Helen V. Zahara, Leslie A. Dadswell, Peter Lakin.

Open Discussion.

1.30 p.m. "Questions and Quotes"—Introduction to Group  
Discussions.

Seetha Neelakantan, Richard W. Brooks, Camille  
Svensson, and three members from Canada.

**2.00 p.m. Discussion Groups:**

**Theosophy and . . .**

- A. Social Issues**
- B. Environmental Issues**
- C. Moral and Religious Issues**
- D. The "Occult Explosion"**

**3.00 p.m. Coffee Break.**

**3.30 p.m. Continuation of Discussion Groups.**

**6.00 p.m. Banquet.**

**"Incidents in the Life of H.P.B."—Boris de Zirkoff,  
illustrated by slides by Helen Zahara.**

## **Monday, September 7**

**10.00 a.m. Reports by Group Leaders.**

**11.30 a.m. Closing of Conference.**

**Concluding talks by Ted G. Davy**

**Joy Mills**

**Boris de Zirkoff**

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