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THERE IS A SONG OF LIFE

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

Above the turmoil of the outer world, beyond the strife and stress of contending wills, there is another field of life, another sphere of being—the world of higher thought.

The clamor of headlines, the horror of battlefields, the swirl of selfish emotions, can muffle but never drown the sounds of the Song of Life.

It is as if the strains of an uplifting symphony, the measured cadence of a distant choir, could be heard at times above all human sounds, echoing from one end of the earth to the other, in the inner spaces of the higher life.

The scenes of human selfish struggles deployed before our ordinary sight are but a by-product in the lowest levels of our emotions, wherein the battle of human wits is the order of the day. They are but the reaction of our animal passions to the dynamic spiritual change taking place within the structure of the human race. The realm of causes is not visible to our physical sight, though its essential factors may be perceived by meditative thought and the study of higher subjects.

Whenever a mighty spiritual energy is loosed upon the world, and the vibratory rate of human life is to be raised to a higher pitch, the natural reaction of the majority of present day mankind is along lines of destruction, contention and violence. These

are symptomatic of a relatively low state of evolution on our part, and should at no time be misconstrued as being descriptive of the actual energies at work behind the visible scene. If this fact is not clearly perceived, no correct appraisal is possible of what is going on around us in any historical era.

The evolution of the human race is not an haphazard affair left to contending elemental forces. It is a guided process, a measured unfoldment, regulated and adjusted—but never controlled—by spiritual agencies far above the stage of ordinary human consciousness, yet intimately correlated with it by bonds of past and present kinship. This process is one which at all times tends towards greater spiritual realization on the part of mankind, a wider outlook, a deeper understanding of the laws of nature, and a nobler ethical interrelation between all men. It has no national barriers whatever, and disregards altogether any limitations which our own clanishness and exclusiveness has set up through the centuries. The process is universal and all-inclusive, and its ultimate source is akin to the sun itself.

It is imperative for us, as students of an ancient wisdom-teaching, to become thoroughly aware of the worldwide drift of human thought, a drift occasioned by thought-currents originating in higher

spheres of being, and tending in the general direction of human unity.

It is an era in which some of our entrenched limitations are being challenged, and some of our cherished moulds are being broken up and removed. We are called upon to think in terms of the whole human race, instead of its many parts and sundry sections; we are called upon to build a progressively more and more unified field in which to operate with new social techniques, nobler aims in view, and better methods for cohesion and mutual interdependence; we are forced to abandon the divisive dogmas of religious movements, the crass materialism of bygone scientific dogmas, and the denial of other than material facts; we are challenged to accept for investigation hitherto unknown facts, undreamt of possibilities, unfamiliar events, and to open up research into the non-physical, the seemingly impossible, and the totally unknown, but not unknowable.

It is an era in which nothing less than the universal can be accepted, an age in which the familiar backyard called Earth must be expanded in our understanding to the less familiar scope of the solar system and beyond, a period when voyages to other planets in outer space must be supported and upheld by stranger voyages yet—journeys into the inner spaces of human consciousness, beyond the familiar sphere of ordinary senses. To all of this we are called by insistent voices from the more far-sighted men and women of the age, and by that overall current of thought which, arising from the inner worlds of spiritual being, and guided by higher intelligences, is spreading far and wide over the planet with increasing vigor and irresistible force.

In the midst of this rising tide of thought, the Theosophical Movement—in its widest sense—has a special mission to perform. In its essential characteristics, this Movement is nothing else but the most recent manifestation of the ancient *Gnosis*, in a form adapted to the changing consciousness of the human race. When centuries have

passed, the present-day Theosophical Movement may well be looked upon as another resurgence of the Gnostic movement of centuries past, and its noblest representatives be classed together with Valentinus, Basilides, Marcion, Saturninus, the Sethians and the Ophites. If the original Gnostic documents had not been destroyed by the fanatical shock-troops of early Christianity, we would have today, without the slightest doubt, a wealth of information concerning the same teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy which *The Secret Doctrine* outlines through the penmanship of the greatest Gnostic of the present era—H. P. Blavatsky.

We are entering with every year that passes into larger and wider spheres of thought the world over. As far as we students of the Ancient Wisdom are concerned, it is imperative for us to develop the widest possible sympathy for whatever is universal and spiritually progressive in the trends of human endeavor and the activities of human intellect, along lines of research, expansion, unification and stabilization. This, no doubt, will call on our part for a thorough housecleaning! The "Old Adam" is very well entrenched in most of us, and would like to preserve his nice little corner, warm and cozy in all of its dusty seclusion and comfortable anonymity. We have to break through many a barrier, in order to become world-citizens in an expanded historical era. We have to graduate—either *cum laude* or, more likely, *cum* bruises and shocks—from the stage of narrow national sympathies, entrenched superstitions of a religious, pseudo-religious or scientific kind, and from a departmental view of life, into a sphere of thought wherein we begin to feel at home in things unfamiliar to our former pursuits and incredible to our previous mental attitudes. It is this type of men and women that our Movement is sorely in need of. Unless we find them in considerable abundance, our efforts will not outlive the century, and the organized centers of today will have become mere sects of a once promising Movement, and the

Society itself, to use H. P. Blavatsky's own words, "will drift off onto some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 305). We hope and trust that it will not be so this time, but the risks are all around us, and we can never be too sure.

When next we feel despondency over existing conditions, or experience an onslaught of the depressing factors of life, when things all around us seem dark and foreboding, and the heavy clouds of human passions hem us in—let us retire for a while into the vibrant silence at the center of our own Selfhood and try to catch, however feebly and distant, the rhythmic cadence of that glorious symphony which some unknown musicians are performing above the din and clatter of the outer life. If we

but listen long enough, and try to free ourselves from the outer scenes of the seeming, we will hear the strains of that glorious paean which is but the echo of the music of the spheres. Its melodies transcend all human sorrow, rise above all human obstacles, soar higher than any of our pursuits. Its noble chords—born of transfigured suffering and transmuted pain—laugh at all our puny aims and frustrations, like the Spring flowers which bloom upon the rubble of bombed out cities, and proclaim in color and perfume the irresistible *élan vital* of universal life, the boundless resiliency of youth, the unquenchable flow of spiritual forces from the solar orb.

Let us turn our faces to the mystic East and greet the Sun of a New Age rising glorious and golden, with healing in its wings!

THE NEW REFORMATION

ALVIN BOYD KUHN

(Continued from page 45)

Eminent and conscientious clergymen have stated many times that the evidence for the Gospel story of the life of Jesus is "one of the most impregnable established facts of history." Sadly it has to be said that this is the outcome of pious belief and not historical material; or it is the inevitable sheer assumption that those Gospels, *Acts* and *Epistles* of the New Testament are veridical historical documents. The status of credibility of those Gospels as history is now being shaken till it seems ready to totter in ruins; the most eminent of the scholars are now ripping those documents—as history—to shreds!

They are reinterpreting them as spiritual allegory, legend, sanctified tradition, and rejecting them as history. If you do not think this is so, read the work of just about the most eminent theologian or exegetist of our time, Charles Guignebert, of the Sor-

bonne, entitled *Jesus*. (He explains in the preface that there is so little evidence of the life of Jesus that he practically has no right to call his work a "*Life of Jesus*".) Over and over again he states, on evidence, that the Gospel writers had no interest in, nor intent to write history; their motive all through was to advance the interests of the fanatical early Christian party by—as Van Passen said—haloing Jesus' name with the aura of divinity to uphold and "prove" the claim which he put forward, or they for him, or both, that he was at last this promised Messiah for whom that age in particular was feverishly looking. Guignebert shows, with a power of logic based on facts, that once this persuasion of Messiahship has seized the minds of a pietistic group, every ruse of literary subtlety to impress the ignorant populace was considered justified. Not only he, but other scholars are now going

through those Gospels with a fine-tooth comb and they have disqualified one incident, event, miracle, discourse after another as history, until there is not much left that can stand as such.

Joseph Warschauer, an eminent European theologian, writing his book *The Historical Life of Christ* definitely to substantiate the fact of Jesus' existence, says in his first sentence that of this character whose life changed the course of human history more than that of any man who ever lived, "we know practically nothing." Yet in the very next sentence he declares that just because we know virtually nothing about him, we therefore know everything about him. That is a fair example of what you get in reading any of the old-line books called "lives of Christ", namely pietistic credulity functioning in place of historical veracity. Every such "historian" of the Gospels has simply assumed that Jesus' personal existence was a fact, on the basis that "fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong."

We repeat—there exists not a single scrap of what can stand the test of authentic historical evidence that this man ever existed. There is much that can be, and has been contorted into a semblance of such evidence. I have looked at pretty much all of this so-called evidence; others have looked at it carefully, and it all lacks substance to win credence. Leaving the four Gospels aside for later discussion, all that has ever been found in secular history of that first century or later for which any reasonable claim can be made for credibility, consists of some twenty-four printed lines, and all of that has been with almost complete unanimity among scholars, even Catholic ones, pronounced to be literary forgery, pure spurious interpolation inserted for the aims of the early Christian party!

The testimony of contemporary historians to the life of Jesus, is found in the histories of Tacitus and Suetonius. Here is *all* that Tacitus has to say, taken from his *Annals*, XV:

"In order to suppress the rumor, Nero

falsely accused and punished with the most acute tortures persons who, already hated for their shameful deeds, were commonly called Christians. The founder of this name, Christus, had been put to death by the procurator, Pontius Pilate, in the region of Tiberius; but the deadly superstition, though repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judea, where the evil had its origin, but also through the city (Rome) whither all things horrible and vile flow from all quarters and are encouraged. Accordingly first those were arrested who confessed; then on their information a great multitude were convicted, not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race."

Incidentally this gives us a picture of the contempt with which those fanatical religionists were regarded by the intelligentsia of their day. Pliny, Celsus and others speak of the cult as an "execrable superstition," and they were tolerated and pitied for their ignorance.

As to Suetonius, another Roman historian, there are found two short statements in his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, and deal chiefly with some disturbance incited allegedly in Rome, *impulsore Chresto*, "at the instigation of Chresto," as result of which Claudius expelled some Christians from Rome. Since Jesus was never at Rome, how he could have incited a riot there is not clear. His followers, of course, were making themselves obnoxious to the authorities almost everywhere.

In passing, it may be worth a moment's digression to correct what has been the common belief among Christians that the sainted devotees of the cult were made the heroic victims of persecution by the horrid and barbarous pagans of the Roman government. This is a canard that has not a foot of ground to stand upon. No nation could have been more tolerant of the many cults, Orphism, Mithraism, worship of Cybele, Atis, Dionysus, Marduk, Tammuz and Ish-tar, the Essenes, Ebionites, the cult of Isis,

of Serapis, Horus and others. As a matter of fact they were not persecuted for their religion primarily at all, but because they violated stubbornly some of the statutes of the government, particularly the one forbidding meetings at night. Gibbon says that in their fanaticism they even deliberately committed crimes in order to win the crown of martyrdom, for its heavenly rewards. Pardoned by the Roman magistrates, they would go out and commit a second offence.

The only other claimed historical passage referring to Jesus is from the *Antiquities* (XVIII) by the famous Jewish historian Josephus and runs as follows:

“About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed he should be called man. He wrought miracles and was a teacher of those who gladly accept the truth, and had a large following among the Jews and pagans. He was the Christ. Although Pilate, at the complaint of the leaders of our people, condemned him to die on the cross, his earlier followers were faithful to him. For he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as God-sent prophets had foretold this and a thousand other wonderful things of him. The people of the Christians, which is called after him, survives until the present day.”

Scholars agree that this bears all the earmarks of a crude interpolation. But here, then, is the sum total of what is asserted to be the convincing testimony of the historians of the first centuries. And those who should know best advise us that this is not true history. When it is considered scandalous by pious Christians today that the early spirit-filled saints of the cult, their scribes and leaders, should be charged with literary skulduggery and forgery, we wonder

what the jolt would be to present pietist devotion if the adherents of the faith were really to examine the run of documents, whole books even, so obviously fictitious and preposterous, which the theologians of that early time concocted out of the whole cloth of their imagination in their effort to uphold the power of the movement over the popular masses. The academic world has simply attached to scores of them the appellation *pseudo*. We have the Pseudo-Mark, the Pseudo-Acts, the Pseudo-This and That. Any one denying these forgeries should take a look at the book named *The Gospel of the Infancy*, telling about the miraculous exploits of Jesus in his childhood (his telling his boy playmates that he could kill yon sparrow with a beam from his eye and doing so; and molding twelve sparrows out of clay and then causing them to fly away, etc.) If this would not open pious eyes, there is also the *Gospel of Mary*, in which are told wonderful things that took place during the months of her pregnancy, and that soon after the new-born babe opened his eyes, he announced to his mother from the crib, “Woman, I am the Son of God.”

But if the support of secular history has to be given up by pietists, they fall back on the four Gospels and demand that it be explained why they are not history, abundant and authentic. Well, scholars *are* explaining why they are not such. They have been almost totally lifted out of the category of history and reoriented in that of spiritual allegory. Says the great outstanding exegete of Bible criticism, Alfred Loisy, in his book *The Birth of The Christian Religion*:

“From the very beginning it was a tradition of faith . . . in all strictness the Gospels are not historical documents. They are catechisms for use in common worship . . . that and no other is the content they announce; that and no other is the quality they claim.”

What every person devoted to discovering the truth about religion today must now do is to wake up to realization that in the area of Bible interpretation and exegesis,

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verily old things are passed away and a new order prevails. At last, at last—and bells should ring to clang our eternal thanksgiving to high heaven—the mind of scholarship is free, free to discover truth about this black book and print it, with the risk of no more painful retribution than the snarl of a reviewer.

Scholars are now out with criticisms of "Holy Writ" for which their heads would have rolled or their flesh crisped in fagot fires but a few short centuries ago. Like a jack-in-the-box when the spring is released, almost with the first lifting of the lid, out sprang the captive genius of the human mind and its power of reason and critical judgment. As if in revenge for its long suppression under ecclesiastical tyranny it has well nigh torn to pieces the body of these four documents whose historical rendition by fanatical minds had been their gaoier. For their imprisoning power never had been other than pietism conjoined with ignorance and bigotry. Freedom to use the God-given faculty of reason was the key that unlocked the door to liberty. Threatened with losing all that its hands had grasped over centuries while it held the prison keys, it is ecclesiastical power that now is considering how far it can go with the tide and how best to pose as itself the giver of the new liberty. Now Schweitzer and Van Passen can say that early crazed dogmatists in their ignorance and arrogance turned a humble country preacher into the cosmic Logos; Johannes Weiss can say that no Christian can longer believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus from his rocky hillside tomb; Alfred Loisy can say that the Gospels are not history; and Guignebert can say that the four evangelists had no other motive than to decorate this Jesus with the sacred halo of accreditation as the long-expected Messiah.

Let us hear what Van Passen, who in his youth had been a pupil of the great Loisy in the Sorbonne in Paris, has to report as to his master's opinion of Jesus' claim to have been the author of the Ser-

mon on the Mount. Says Van Passen in *Why Jesus Died*:

"I shall still remember the time when the great Alfred Loisy, that master in the domain of theology, in a class in the College de France, of which I was a member, in tones of intense gravity declared it his firm opinion that Jesus, a village carpenter in a secluded region of Palestine, could not possibly have originated the Sermon on the Mount. One student broke into tears and others silently left the room."

What is important to us here and now, to spare us our tears, is that we should be concerned enough to know on what grounds the great scholar based an opinion which he could only have been very reluctant to express, at the imminent risk of loss of his position and at the certain risk of rebuking the religious infatuations of those pupils and their families. The grounds that gave him not only the reason but the right to make that radical and devastating statement were elements of his knowledge that virtually every verse of that sermon can be paralleled, almost word for word, in the hagadic literature of Judaism. By the sheer logic of a known fact, he had a right to declare that Jesus could not have originated a collection of moral-spiritual maxims which already existed in print. And scholars are exercising that right liberally now.

Another scholarly theologian, Steudal, adds his conclusions to this general status of things: "I shall be obliged to any theologian who will bring me a saying of Jesus which I can not prove to have been already in existence in his time." Says Guignebert; referring to the four Gospel writers: "They are exclusively interested, not in reporting what they knew, but in proving what they believe." And let us hear him further:

"The poverty and uncertainty of our information about Jesus long ago gave rise to the question, of first importance to us here, whether this person, of whom we know practically nothing, ever really existed, or whether that which claims to

be the record of his life is anything more than a tissue of myths, allegories and symbols. The controversy was started at the end of the seventeenth century by some of the French philosophers, notably Dupuis and Volney, and has continued ever since, alternately raging furiously and lapsing into periods of quiescence. It is evident that if the personality and influence of Jesus disappear from history, the birth of Christianity has still to be explained, and it is to this task that those who deny his historicity have applied themselves."

And this brings us face to face with what the protagonists for his existence have always regarded as the ultimate and unshakable argument in support of it. A movement of the proportions of Christianity just could not have sprung up and gained momentum without some great and central figure and dynamic personality to impart to it its initial push, runs this logic. Speciously this looms up as a formidable argument. Many minds rest upon it as convincing and it carries cogency if one has not gone to the trouble to investigate the whole situation covering the conditions extant at that time, and from such a study gained a knowledge of other influences that could far more rationally have accounted for the sweep into pious zealotry that pushed the movement ahead.

When these factors are recognized and understood it is clear to intelligence that this surge of ignorant fanaticism—for such it was—needed nothing but ignorance to implement it. Jesus may have been there and may have contributed something to the agitation—nobody knows. But even if he was not there, Van Passen tells us what happened: they took a character that was there, the dramatic figure of our divinity, a figure that was never absent from intelligent religious understanding, wholly symbolic and spiritual, *and entified it as a man*. They took the universal figure of man divine and made a divine man out of it. In fact, as it is now being seen, the religious fate of the Western half of humanity was determin-

ed by the misuse of the article "a." Pure literary stupidity took man divine and made a divine man out of it.

It was exactly the same as if a party would arise now claiming that Shylock in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* had been a living man. The figure typifying the divine upper half of our nature had been a living presence, that is, mentally, psychically, semantically alive in the thought, imagination and aspirations of all advanced peoples. The advent, the "coming" of this divine principle of Christliness into human history, necessarily in the hearts and minds of *all men*, was devoutly pictured and awaited. It was the central motive, the gist, of all religious writing and ceremonialism. It was mythicized, allegorized, but above all dramatized in a wide variety of forms and representations. In all such modes of ideation, a purely spiritual principle, this Christly spirit, was personalized in the figure of a man, for in a drama the part had to be taken and enacted by a character on the stage. This had to be a man. Then, once in the history of the world there happened something that had never happened before. A party arose that lost entirely the ideal concept of this spiritual principle and reified it as a man. Messiah would come, they said, not in the form of a spirit of love and brotherhood among all men, but as a man. God would appear in one human body. That concept has hypnotized one-third of humanity for two thousand years. That is what Mr. George Rulf means by asserting that Christianity is a baseless fabrication.

Shocking it is, admittedly, to say it; yet if truth be worth its cost, it has to be said that never before had there been a cult group so steeped in ignorance as to turn the Greek principle of Christos (infinitely less that of the cosmic Logos) into a man of flesh. So low had the level of general intelligence sunk at that time, just a few centuries after the glorious lift of the Greek mind in the Platonic era, that the phenomenon of this conversion of the divine principle into a human being became a

possibility requiring that degree of ignorance to implement it. Sir Gilbert Murray has described this relapse of the philosophical genius of the Hellenistic world at the time in his famous phrase, "the failure of nerve." What he means in the main is that the zest of intelligence for the living attainment of an ideal state for humanity, such as was pictured by Plato in his great *Republic*, had been so dissipated by disappointment and hard conditions of actual life that the general thought had abandoned the hope of a better world through human effort and turned its hopes on the coming of the Messiah, not as a spirit, but as a man. For sacred prophecy had in glowing terms pictured the coming of glory with the consummation of

the cycle—tragically mistranslated as the "end of the world"—and lo, we had the fanatical fervor of pietism that generated the religion of Christianity.

We have had to wait two thousand years to gain this perspective of what happened back there in an age of extra-ordinary decadence in world history. I have not out of the evil disposition of my mind invented the canard that the early Christians were people of the most ignorant type. History records the fact, and we get truth only as we are guided by facts. Gibbon gives abundant evidence of this fact in his great work on the downfall of Rome.

(To Be Continued)

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.

The following question comes from Holland. The query is introduced in this manner:

In the "Introductory" to *The Secret Doctrine* I read:

"Volume I of 'Isis' begins with a reference to 'an old book'—'. . . so very old that our modern antiquarians might ponder over its pages an indefinite time, and still not quite agree as to the nature of the fabric upon which it is written. It is the only original copy now in existence . . .'

"This very 'old book' is the original work from which the many volumes of *Kiu-ti* were compiled. Not only the latter and the *Siphrah Dzenioutha*, but even the *Sepher Yetzireh*—the work attributed by the Hebrew Kabalists to their Patriarch Abraham (!), the *Shu-king*, China's primitive Bible, the sacred volumes of the Egyptian Thoth-Hermes, the

Puranas in India, the Chaldean *Book of Numbers* and the *Pentateuch* itself, are all derived from that one small parent volume." (S.D. I, xlii-xliii; I, 25 3rd ed.; I, 64 6-vol. ed.)

On the following pages it is stated:

"But there exists another book. None of its possessors regard it as very ancient, as it was born with, and is only as old as the Black Age, namely, about 5,000 years. In about nine years hence, the first cycle of the first five millenniums, that began with the great cycle of the Kali-Yuga, will end. And then the last prophecy contained in that book (the first volume of the prophetic record for the Black Age) will be accomplished. We have not long to wait, and many of us will witness the Dawn of the New Cycle, at the end of which not a few accounts will be settled and squared be-

(Continued on page 62)

HANNAH BUCHANAN

November 10, 1886 - May 2, 1971

From the time Hannah Buchanan joined Vancouver Lodge on January 19, 1915, to the time of her passing on May 2 this year, she gradually became imbued with one main purpose in life—to spread the teachings of Madame H. P. Blavatsky to as many earnest and willing students as she could possibly reach. Her certificate of membership in the Theosophical Society was signed by Annie Besant and Mr. Warrington, then General Secretary of the American Section, but her oath of allegiance was to H.P.B. and the Masters. Throughout her years of service to Theosophy she had the unfailing support of her husband Marshall, who joined the Society on December 31, 1916.

In those earlier days, when the Vancouver Lodge had a large membership, Mrs. Buchanan took a particular interest in the children of the members and started a "Lotus Class" of about 30 young children, and a "Chela Class" for the 'teens, keeping their interest with varied activities including directing them in annual plays. Some of these early Lotus children are still members of the Lodge, including Miss Judith Myrtle, whose name replaced Mrs. Buchanan's as Member of the Executive of the Canadian Section recently.

Hannah Buchanan was elected President of Vancouver Lodge in 1931, following in the footsteps of Mrs. Teeple, and retained that position until her death. In 1969 she was elected a member of the Executive of the Canadian Section.

Mrs. B., as she was fondly called, led the Vancouver Lodge in *Secret Doctrine* classes, usually with short readings from other inspirational works. During July and August *Isis Unveiled* or *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* were studied. Each week, her schedule included Thursday, the regular Lodge night, Wednesday afternoon, and for about the last fifteen years, another class on Monday afternoon. Some members attend two classes a week. These meetings

will all continue. At home she read and studied, and with her knowledge of *The Secret Doctrine*, acquired over the years, together with a depth of intuition attributable only to memory of the Wisdom gained in other incarnations, she brought to her fortunate students an understanding of H.P.B.'s teachings found all too rarely in today's Theosophical world. She was firmly and irrevocably devoted to the cause of keeping Theosophy true to the ideals set by Madame Blavatsky.

Mrs. B. had a delightful quality of agelessness which appealed to all. It was a great reward to her that in the past two years a group of young high school and university students sought her guidance and ended up attending the Thursday evening classes as regularly as homework and exams would permit. They brought the fresh enthusiasm of young minds to our meetings, and are much enjoyed by all of us.

Mrs. B. however, was far more than our teacher. She was our friend, and a pillar of strength in times of trouble—the one person you could always turn to. An inner spiritual strength and quiet sensitive dignity, coupled with a Scottish sense of humour, endeared her to everyone.

Mrs. Buchanan lived her philosophy and made her philosophy live through an ardent perseverance and the ability to share her understanding with others. In tribute to her passing, Vancouver Lodge can only affirm its determination to perpetuate the memory of her long years of service by continuing studies earnestly, and by living Theosophy to the best of our ability.

The funeral service for Mrs. Buchanan, whose body was cremated, was held on May 4, 1971. Mrs. Doreen Chatwin, Vice-President of Vancouver Lodge, read the Theosophical service which had been originally created by Mrs. B. for use in memory of other Lodge members.

—Vancouver Lodge, T.S.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA - Election 1971

Members to be Elected - 7

Total Votes 187
 Spoiled Ballots 1
 Votes to be Counted 186

Quota - $\frac{186}{8} + 1 = 24$

Names of Candidates	1st Count		2nd Count		3rd Count		4th Count		5th Count		6th Count	
		Transfer	Total	Dadswell Myrtle	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total	Transfer	Total
Dadswell	36		24		24		24		24		24	
Gardiner	16		4		2		22		2		24	
Lakin	13		2		1		16		2		19	
Myrtle	36		-12		24		24				24	
Oberlechner	1		1		2		2		-2		-	
Schmitt	15		1		16		18		1		20	
Seaton	18		1		19		20		4		24	
Weaver	16		3		19		20		7		27	
Webb	7		2		9		16		-16		-	
Wood	28		10		38		24				24	
Totals	186		186		186		186		186		186	

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

In view of the fine tribute to Mrs. Hannah Buchanan on page 57 it would be superfluous for me to add anything by way of an obituary.

Mrs. Buchanan was a student of Theosophy the like of which few exist. Those who knew her will remember with gratitude her kindness, strength of character and devotion to the cause.

By way of interest, one of her friends told me that just before her death Mrs. Buchanan and her regular class were going through *The Secret Doctrine* for the fourteenth time.

* * *

I regret to report the recent death of Henry Gadd, one time member of the now inactive Winnipeg Lodge. For the past three or four years Mr. Gadd had been living with his family in Minneapolis.

* * *

Death has recently removed three prominent workers from our international ranks.

Miss Katherine A. Beechey, Recording Secretary at Adyar, died in early May after a long illness. She had served the Society in various capacities at the international Headquarters for more than twenty years following her retirement from business.

Miss Clara M. Codd died April 3 while under an anaesthetic for an operation following a fall at Camberley, England. She was 94. It was only in the last two or three years that she retired from an active career devoted entirely to the T.S. She wrote and lectured extensively and was last in Canada in 1959.

A tireless worker in the American Section, Mr. Samuel H. Wylie passed away on April 18. He was well-known in Eastern Canada where he frequently lectured. To his widow, Ann Wylie, and family, we extend our sympathy.

* * *

The results of the election are given in tabular form on another page. Counting took place on Tuesday evening, June 1, at 12 MacPherson Avenue, Toronto.

The scrutineers were: Mrs. K. Moffett, Centennial Lodge; Miss Frances Moon and Miss Irene McArthur, both of Toronto Lodge. I was also present.

Mr. Dadswell and Miss Myrtle tied with the largest number of first-place votes. Mr. Wood was also elected on first count. These three received more than the quota and were automatically elected. Redistribution of votes on the following counts then elected Mr. Gardiner, Miss Seaton, Mr. Weaver and Mr. Schmitt in that order.

* * *

Members are again reminded of their opportunity to attend the School of the Wisdom, in Adyar. The 23rd session will commence November 15. Those interested are asked to contact the General Secretary for details.

* * *

In his report on the fourth Inter-American Theosophical Conference, reprinted in this issue, Felix Layton reminds us that still not a single work by H. P. Blavatsky is available in the Portuguese language. This is but one example of many deficiencies of Theosophical publishing in several of the world's languages, and the Non-English Publications Loan Fund exists to correct them. It is hoped that English-speaking students, grateful for an abundance of literature, will support the Fund and help provide books for less fortunate Theosophists in other countries.

It has been proposed that through the Fund, the Humphreys-Preston *Abridgement of the Secret Doctrine* will be made available in twenty languages by 1975. You can help by sending a donation to the Non-English Publications Loan Fund, c/o The Theosophical Society in America, P.O. Box 270, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, U.S.A.

In late 1969 the Canadian Section earmarked part of a donation to the Non-Eng-

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

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lish Publications Loan Fund to the Indian Section. This has helped towards the publication by the Bengali Federation of a Bengali version of H. P. Blavatsky's *Practical Occultism*.

* * *

I have much pleasure in welcoming into the fellowship of the Society Mr. and Mrs. William Russell and Mrs. Victoria Wlaiko of Toronto Lodge. —T.G.D.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

Still an unorthodox Theosophist, after fifty years of membership, I read your May-June 1971 issue with great pleasure.

"My Talk With The Dalai Lama" by Raghavan Iyer was a bright and colourful contribution.

If the Society is to take a positive role in aiding humanity in the present international complexities, and move closer to modern realities, it must share with the Dalai Lama the recognition that swift and rapid changes in man's political lot will have their reign before our philosophy can have its day. Also that those who use power for their own ends are not beyond our compassion and sympathy because they but weave the pattern of their own fate.

With a world growing smaller in terms of human consciousness because instant news transmission is now universal, the first principle of our Society is now a fact in focus. Brotherhood—international, economically interdependent—is now a positive realization.

We stand at the threshold of a scientific impasse. The second principle of our Society, that of study of comparative religion, philosophy and science, may yet be found a safe refuge for those seeking by research to unfathom the mysteries of life. They may become aware of the existence of other than presently known causes of physiological disease; the treatment of man's other bodies, once they are known to exist, will be a key to aiding many sicknesses—but only by a recognition of natural law.

—Frederick E. Tyler, F.T.S.

NIAGARA PICNIC

On June 12 a full busload of members and friends left 12 MacPherson Avenue, Toronto, for the Annual Picnic at Niagara Falls. They were joined there by others who had driven from Toronto and other Ontario points and also by a number of members of the Buffalo Lodge.

Between 60 and 70, including several children, sat down to lunch in view of the beautiful Falls and it was interesting to note that their ages ranged from only five weeks to well over ninety years.

Although thunderstorms had been forecast, they did not appear and the day was hot and sunny. In the afternoon, many enjoyed the beautiful display of flowers in the Niagara Parks greenhouses while others viewed the Falls or sat and talked.

The return trip for the Toronto members was via the "scenic route", taking them through historic Queenston and Niagara-on-the-Lake. The bus also stopped at the Welland Canal in time to watch a large lake carrier pass through the St. Lawrence Seaway locks there.

Altogether a lovely day and a vote of thanks is due to the organizers.

ATMA VIDYA LODGE

The official opening of Atma Vidya Lodge took place on White Lotus Day, May 8, 1971, at 2358 Oak Bay Avenue, Victoria, B.C. when the Charter was received and a letter of welcome read from the General Secretary. Greetings from Montreal Lodge were also read by the Secretary, Philip H. Wilson.

A beautiful array of flowers graced the room: white gillyflowers, white narcissus, white carnations and white and gold fleur-de-lis, the white fleur-de-lis representing the lotus.

Readings were given from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Light of Asia* and *The Key to Theosophy*. A lively discussion followed on "Theosophy and Today".

The meeting concluded with a charming tea served by the Vice-President, Mrs. Elouise R. Wilson, assisted by the members.

Officers of Atma Vidya Lodge for the year 1971/72 are:

President Mr. Benjamin T. Garside
 Vice-President Mrs. Elouise R. Wilson
 Secretary Mr. Philip H. Wilson
 Treasurer Mrs. Helen Tidberry
 Librarian Mrs. Lucy Lawder

Meetings will take place every Saturday throughout the year at 8 p.m. at the Lodge rooms, 2358 Oak Bay Avenue, Victoria, B.C.

Philip H. Wilson,
 Secretary.

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. Stanford L. Treloar
 2nd Vice-President Mr. Stephen L. Peer
 Corresponding Secretary

Recording Secretary Mrs. Jean A. Frazer
 Treasurer Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe
 Directors — Mr. Blair Birmingham, Mrs. Gaile Campbell, Mr. Leslie A. Dadswell, Mr. William Diamond, Mr. Gordon F. Gardiner, Mr. Wolfgang Schmitt, Mr. Laszlo F. Sima, Mr. Clare Watson, Mrs. Doris Wettlaufer.

MONTREAL LODGE

White Lotus Day was celebrated by members and friends and after various readings, refreshments were served. This was indeed a joyous occasion and a fresh impetus was given to all to continue with the work left to us by Madame Blavatsky to whom we owe so much.

At the final meeting of the season, the Lodge had the pleasure of welcoming a student who had brought some wood-cuts which had been painted by his great aunt in Vienna. These were an artistic interpretation of Parsifal, Knight of the Holy Grail, sensitively portrayed and full of the hidden side of life.

The Lodge closed at the end of May for the summer but the Librarian has kindly consented to be available each Sunday from 1 to 3 p.m. for members and friends who wish to use the Library facilities.

Montreal Lodge sends good wishes to all Theosophical students for a refreshing summer and especially do our thoughts go out

to the youth of this great land travelling their various paths at this season.

Our quarters are situated at 1522 Sherbrooke St. West, Suite 20 and our telephone number is 932-9432.

Viola P. Law,
Secretary.

H. P. BLAVATSKY PUBLICATIONS RESERVE FUND

The National Board of Directors of The Theosophical Society in America has established a special fund to be known as the H. P. Blavatsky Publications Reserve Fund. The purpose of this Fund is to maintain in print the Blavatsky writings, as well as to insure the continued publication of additional volumes in the series of *H.P.B. Collected Writings* under the general editorship of Boris de Zirkoff. A percentage of the net sales on all Blavatsky works sold by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, is being set aside for the Publications Reserve Fund. The Theosophical Publishing Houses of Adyar and London have been invited to share in this program. In addition, members and friends of the Society, who believe this to be an important project are invited to make special contributions. As attention must be given within the coming year to the reprinting of Volumes VI and VII of the *Collected Writings*, contributions to the Fund are now urgently needed.

THE KROTONA SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY

The Krotona School of Theosophy opens its 15th term, Fall 1971, on September 12, with classes continuing through November 20.

Mr. Geoffrey Hodson will be a Guest Teacher for three terms. His Fall Term courses are "Outline of Theosophical Teachings" and "Yoga and Meditation." Mr. Oliver Greene, Guest Teacher, will speak on "The World Today."

Dr. Balak Mullik, formerly of Agra,

India, now joins the Resident Faculty, and will teach "Theosophy and the Perfection of Man." Dr. Gerrit Munnik's course will be on "Symbolism" and Dr. Frederick Werth will teach a class on "The Inner Dimensions of Man." Dr. Alfred Taylor, Director of the School, continues "Studies in The Secret Doctrine."

For a brochure giving details, write: The Krotona School of Theosophy, Route 2, Box 4-B, Ojai, CA 93023. Applications for scholarships may be obtained from the same address.

SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION

(Continued from page 56)

tween the races. Volume II of the Prophecies is nearly ready, having been in preparation since the time of Buddha's grand successor, Sankaracharya." (S.D. I, xliii-xliv; I, 27 3rd ed.; I, 65 6-vol. ed.)

An editorial footnote was appended to this paragraph on page 65, together with an additional note on page 340 of the 6-vol. edition.

Question. (a) What is meant here with "the last prophecy"; (b) and that "nearly ready Volume II" of those Prophecies? (c) Real existing occult or esoteric "books"? (d) as H.P.B. hints to "a series of proofs given of the existence of one primeval, universal Wisdom . . . for Christian Kabalists and students"?

Answer. (a) It would seem that certain members of the Occult Fraternity function as scribes in connection with the preparation of a history of the Fifth Root-Race of humanity, inasmuch as "the very Old Book" gives "the true history of the races from the *First* down to the Fifth (our) race." (S.D. *Ibid.*) It should also be mentioned that the Old Book also provides the record of the cycles of the Yugas, and determines the age of the Kali Yuga, for *The Secret Doctrine* continues the account prepared in the Old Book in these words: "It stops short at the beginning of the *Kali Yuga* just

4989 years ago at the death of Krishna, the bright 'Sun-god,' the once living hero and reformer." (*Ibid.*) This would be equivalent to 3102 B.C. Based on this figure the Scribes began the recording of the Kali Yuga cycle also setting down their prophecies; these are referred to as having been entered in "another book" not regarded as very ancient. It is also described as "the first volume of the prophetic record for the Black Age." From the passage in *The Secret Doctrine* it would seem that the "last prophecy" has reference to what was recorded in the "first volume of the prophecies" and evidently the prediction was accomplished when the nine-year period elapsed. This occurred in February 1897.

In the very first letter which Mr. Sinnett received from Mahatma K.H. there is a passage which gives a hint as to the manner in which the prophecies are prepared. It has to do with having a "glimpse into the world of *esotericism* with its laws based upon mathematically correct calculations of the future—the necessary results of the causes which we are always at liberty to create and shape at our will but are as unable to control their consequences which thus become our masters." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 4-5)

Answer (b) The quotation mentions "the dawn of the new Cycle." This very likely refers to the dawn of the Aquarian Age. The suggestion is offered that the closing portion of this sentence in regard to the settling and squaring of accounts between the races has reference to the end of the Aquarian Age about two thousand years hence, and not to the end of the Piscean Age. As to the next sentence: "Volume II of the Prophecies is nearly ready . . ."—this is not a precise statement. It all depends upon what H.P.B. had in mind: whether she was referring to the time-period of events in the "new cycle", or perhaps a certain cycle in the Kali Yuga; however, nothing definite was specified in this sentence. Unquestionably, initiates versed in the secret calculations of cyclic events are those

who would enter the prophecies in "Volume II." Judging from what Mahatma K.H. wrote to Mr. Hume, calculations of cycles are not an easy task; witness this passage:

"Learn first our laws and educate your perceptions, dear Brother. Control your involuntary powers and develop in the right direction your will and you will become a teacher instead of a learner. I would not refuse what I have a right to teach. Only I had to study for fifteen years before I came to the doctrines of cycles and had to learn simpler things at first." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, Letter No. XXII, p. 144 2nd ed.; p. 141 3rd ed.)

Answer (c) The questioner asks: "Real existing occult or esoteric books?" There is no doubt whatsoever that there are real existing esoteric books—but we do not have access to them. To mention some: There are "the many volumes of Kiu-ti" which the Mahatmas themselves study. Nor should the Book of Dzyan and its commentaries be omitted. There is the *Chaldean Book of Numbers*: "It is very rare indeed, there being perhaps only two or three copies extant, and these in private hands." (*Theos. Glossary*, p. 75)

". . . the Secret Books distinctly teach, as we see, an astronomy that would not be rejected even by modern speculation could the latter thoroughly understand its teachings." (S.D. I, 203; I, 252 6-vol. ed.; I 224 3rd ed.)

Answer. (d) The next portion of the quotation added by the questioner is part of a sentence: here is the full sentence:

"One more important point must be noticed, one that stands foremost in the series of proofs given of the existence of one primeval, universal Wisdom—at any rate for the Christian Kabalists and students." (S.D. I, xlv; I, 65 6-vol. ed.; I, 27 3rd ed.)

It may be pointed out that this sentence does *not* refer to the paragraph beginning "But there exists another book" (quoted before the Question). Instead it goes back

to the paragraph which preceded the paragraph reading "Volume I of 'Isis' begins with a reference to 'an old book.'" (This is the first quotation which opened this study.) In order to clarify the point: the paragraph to which the above quoted sentence refers (namely "One more important point . . ."), reads as follows:

"Concerned simply with the philosophies within our historical times and the respective symbolism of the fallen nations, only a hurried glance could be thrown at the panorama of Occultism in the two volumes of Isis. In the present work, detailed Cosmogony and the evolution of the four races that preceded our Fifth race Humanity are given, and now two large volumes explain that which was stated on the first page of *Isis Unveiled* alone, and in a few allusions scattered hither and thither throughout that work. Nor could the vast catalogue of the Archaic sciences be attempted in the present volumes, before we have disposed of such tremendous problems as Cosmic and Planetary Evolution, and the gradual development of the mysterious Humanities and races that preceded our 'Adamic' Humanity. Therefore, the present attempt to elucidate some mysteries of the Esoteric philosophy has, in truth, nothing to do with the earlier work." (S.D. I, xlii; I, 63-vol. ed.; I, 25 3rd ed.)

There is yet another matter to be considered. Reference was made by the questioner to the footnote which was added to page 65 and an additional note on page 340 of the 6-volume edition. In view of the fact that the editorial footnote added to page 65 of Volume I of the 6-volume edition was not published in the 1888 edition, it is now quoted here:

"H.P.B. wrote in the *Vahan*, December, 1890, p. 2: . . . 'If you would really help the noble cause—you must do so now; for, a few years more and your, as well as our efforts, will be in vain . . . We are in the very midst of the Egyptian darkness of Kali Yuga, the Black Age,

the first 5,000 Years of which, its dreary first cycle, is preparing to close on the world between 1897 and 1898. Unless we succeed in placing the T.S. before this date on the safe side of the spiritual current, it will be swept away irretrievably in to the Deep called Failures and the cold waves of oblivion will close over its doomed head. Thus will have ingloriously perished the *only* association whose aims, and rules and original purposes answer in every particular and detail—if strictly carried out—to the innermost fundamental thought of every great Adept Reformer, the beautiful dream of a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.'" (S.D. I, 65 fn, 6-vol. ed.)

Turning now to page 340 of Volume I of the 6-volume edition, headed "Additional Notes". The first one is a "Note provided by Probohd Chandra Sen Gupta, at the request of Mr. Hirendranath Datta."

"There are two distinct Kali Yugas.

(1) The astronomical Kali Yuga which began 3102 B.C., most probably determined by Aryabhata I, in 499 A.D. This was an *unreal* Kali Yuga beginning (17-18 February, 3102 B.C.), and was undoubtedly the result of a calculation backwards, as detected by Bentley, Burgess, etc., and I fully corroborate their view . . . (2) The other Kali Yuga as spoken of in the *Mahabharata* and the Puranas, began on 7 January, 2454 B.C., with the winter solstice day, being the day of the full moon near the star Regulus. Then followed a period of *sandhi* (interval) of 100 years in which, in 2449 B.C. happened the Bharata battle, and in 2413 the death of Shri Krishna. Of this Kali Yuga, 5000 years will elapse in 609 years more, i.e., in 2547 A.D. Personally, I have accepted this as the real Kali Yuga in all my researches." (S.D. I, 340, 6-vol. ed.)

Attention is now directed to an article entitled "Theosophy and Spiritism" written by H. P. Blavatsky:

"In order to prove what we put for-

ward about the *Yugas*, we give here the two calculations, the one that is adopted by the Northern Brahmanas and which is exoteric, and that of the Southern Brahmanas which has hitherto been an esoteric calculation, and whose key is in the hands of the initiates. There are no others. Both are correct, because the totals are in agreement."

H.P.B. then gives the ages of the four *Yugas* and continues:

"From these numbers we observe that the number 432,000 serves as the basis of the calculation, since it must be multiplied by 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively, to obtain the duration of the Kali, Dvapara, Treta and Krita or Satya *Yugas*; hence we see that the period of Dvapara is double that of Kali *yuga*, and that the period of Treta is three times that of Kali *yuga*. Now the present Kali *Yuga* (the age in which we are) having begun on the 18th of February 3,102 years before the Christian era, at midnight, on the meridian of Ujjaini at the death of Krishna . . ." (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. V, pp. 57-8)

In addition to the fact that H. P. Blavatsky was referring to the esoteric calculations of the Southern Brahmanas, attention is now directed to an article written by T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L., of Southern India, who also refers to the commencement of the Kali *Yuga* as occurring in 3102 B.C., basing his statement upon the *Surya-Siddhanta*, which H.P.B. declares to be "the oldest astronomical work in the whole world" (S.D. II, 326; III, 325 6-vol ed.; II, 340 3rd ed.) It is indeed far older than the Puranas or the Mahabharata. Quoting Subba Row:

"According to the Hindu works on Astronomy a Sauramanam year consists of 365 days, 15 ghadias and 31 vighadias." (Sauramanam—a solar measurement; ghadias—minutes; vighadias—1/23 of a ghadia)

"As the Christian era commenced on the 3102nd year of Kaliyuga (according

to Sauramanam) Buddha died in the year 2565 of Kaliyuga and the inscription was written in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga (according to Sauramanam). And now the question is whether according to the *Hindu Almanac*, the first day of the waning moon of Karttika coincided with a Wednesday.

"According to *Suryasiddhanta* the number of days from the beginning of Kaliyuga up to midnight on the 15th day of increasing moon of Aswina is 1,593,072, the number of Adhikamasas (extra months) during the interval being 1608 and the number of Kshayatithis 25,323." (Aswina signifies one of the 28 lunar mansions, the sixth.)

"If we divide this number by 7 the remainder would be 5. As Kaliyuga commenced with Friday, the period of time above defined closed with Tuesday, as according to *Suryasiddhanta* a week-day is counted from midnight to midnight." (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. V. pp. 261-2)

There is yet another reference to the beginning of the Kaliyuga. It is in an article on "The Antiquity of the Vedas," by Krishna Shastri Godbole, published in *The Theosophist*, October, 1881. The Sanskrit terms Krittika, Mrigashirsha, Purva-Bhadrapada, signify asterisms or constellations through which the moon passes, hence regarded as "lunar mansions." Quoting from the article:

"The vernal equinoctial point, we have seen, coincided with the beginning of Krittika in 1421 B.C.; and from the beginning of Krittika to that of Mrigashirsha, was, in consequence, $1421 + 26 \frac{2}{3} \times 72 = 1421 + 1920 = 3341$ B.C., supposing the rate of precession to be 50° a year. When we take the rate to be $3^\circ 20'$ in 247 years, the time comes up to $1516 + 1960.7 = 3476.7$ B.C.

"When the winter solstice by its retrograde motion coincided after that with the beginning of Purva-Bhadrapada, then the commencement of the quinquennial

age was changed from the 15th to the 1st of Phalguna (February-March). This change took place 240 years after the date of the above observation, that is, in 3101 B.C. This date is most important, as from it an era was reckoned in after times. The commencement of the

Kali or Kali-Yuga (derived from 'kal,' 'to reckon'), though said by European scholars to be an imaginary date, becomes thus an astronomical fact." (*The Secret Doctrine*, V, 343-4 6-vol. ed.; chapter entitled "Secret Cycles".)

THE FOURTH INTER-AMERICAN THEOSOPHICAL CONFERENCE

FELIX LAYTON

There are splendid enthusiastic members, of all ages, in the Latin American countries, and an increasing interest in occult matters. Thus, there is great hope for the future of The Theosophical Society here. This is the dominant impression in our minds after attending the Fourth Inter-American Theosophical Conference meeting in Bogota, Colombia in February and visiting and lecturing in Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil.

Delegates from most countries in the Americas participated in the preliminary Bogota business meeting and drew up By-laws for the newly established Inter-American Theosophical Federation which will now meet every four years. Its next meeting will be in New York in November 1975 in connection with the centenary celebrations. A council meeting of delegates from the member nations will be held every two years, the next such meeting to be in the Argentine in connection with their summer school in March 1973. Luis Spairani, General-Secretary of the Theosophical Society in the Argentine, is the first president of the Inter-American Federation.

The business completed, the whole gathering moved to a beautiful new recreation camp near the Magdalena River some 75 miles from Bogota, with three swimming pools, beautiful landscaped grounds, and semi-open air meeting hall and dining room. In these beautiful surroundings the delegates

then divided into groups to explore the theme "The realization of the Inner Life."

It was extremely interesting to hear the different ideas presented from the different countries. The members in Colombia, in charge of Group III, had worked extensively for months on the subject of "Methods of Spreading Theosophy" and they presented a most comprehensive outline of subjects to be covered, possible techniques and ways of working. Their report on the activities of a "young marrieds group" in Bogota, which discussed all kinds of family and current problems in the light of Theosophy in regular weekly meetings, was unique and encouraging.

When the group reports were given the entire group sat up in front to support the group spokesman. This caused those in front to equal the rest of the audience in numbers when the largest of the three groups reported.

An extraordinary feature of this congress was the price: \$25 per person for registration, board and lodging for four days, and each delegate received a handsome brief-case containing all necessary papers for the conference, a pencil, a sharpener, and a bottle opener! The meals were excellent and the bottle opener was most useful for the weather was hot and each guest cottage had a refrigerator which the management kept supplied with an assortment of soft drinks free! The delegates from the Latin coun-

tries thought this an extraordinary good buy. The delegates from the United States were flabbergasted!

Three weeks were then spent visiting, lecturing, and talking to members in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro.

Good audiences attended all meetings. Felix was able to *read* a public lecture on reincarnation in Spanish, but other talks were translated. There was much interest among the members in publicity and group discussion methods in the United States. There were good groups of Young Theosophists in all these cities. Unfortunately our visit came at the end of the summer for these towns but, even so, good results were obtained.

Outstanding memories of the tour include: fine headquarters buildings of The Theosophical Society in Colombia, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and Uruguay; the remarkable buildings of the Pythagoras Institute and Raja Center in Sao Paola, Brazil; and the extraordinarily fine quality of the new Portuguese editions of *First Principles of Theosophy*, *The Kingdom of the Gods*, *Thought Forms*, and *The Chakras* with beautiful color plate illustrations, which all sell for much less than the English editions. There is still, however, no work by H. P. Blavatsky in Portuguese.

Theosophists in all these countries have an extraordinary flexibility about their programs and a tremendous enthusiasm for the work. The "Hymn to Theosophy" was sung with great fervor at several meetings. While it is probable that members from the United States can teach something of new methods of organization and work, there is no doubt that we can learn much from our friends south of the border, and if we each appreciate one another's good qualities rather than our weaknesses The Theosophical Society in the Americas will be enormously enriched by the activities of the newly organized Inter-American Federation of The Theosophical Society.

—*The American Theosophist*, June 1971.

BOOK REVIEWS

Treasures Beyond the Snows, by Marie Gouffe. An illustrated Quest Book for Children, published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. 103 pp. Price \$3.75.

The setting of this children's book is the Himalayas in whose proximity lies a "mythical kingdom" that has been seized by a dictator. The true heir to this kingdom is young Jigme who, determined to free his people, goes in search of treasures beyond the snows which in the end are to provide him with the means to fulfill his mission and regain his realm. But to become worthy of such treasures Jigme has first to undergo severe hardships in the inhospitable snowy mountains; he has to face great dangers that serve as trials to his faith, courage and determination. The treasures awaiting him are admittance and initiation into an order, and the support of his new fellow Brothers in his high undertaking.

Though the basic idea of this story is good, it has been dressed in a somewhat incongruous fashion. On the one hand the book shadows forth, however remotely, a few of the incidents that have lately unfolded in Tibet and some aspects characteristic of Tibetan life thus stamping the narrative with an Eastern aura. On the other hand it describes at length a series of experiences related to specialized mountaineering practices that are strongly associated with Western interests and life. Such a mixture of incompatible elements leaves an unhappy effect on the mind which cannot easily be shaken off with the plea that the book is, after all, but fiction. Furthermore, by wishing at all costs to express certain ideas, the author forces too much the narrative thereby producing a work of inferior quality.

One wonders whether notwithstanding the glossary of terms children will have patience with all the mountaineering technicalities, and also whether they will be awake enough to fathom the value of such a treasure as initiation into a secret Order!

—Elinor Roos

Scientific Evidence of The Existence of The Soul, by Benito F. Reyes, with an Introduction by Edgar S. Brightman. Revised edition published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. xx + 259 pp. Price \$6.95. Also available as a Quest Book paperback, price \$2.45.

Dr. Reyes, long a professional philosopher, is currently serving as the first President of the University of the City of Manila in the Philippines. The original edition of this work appeared in 1949; it has been updated by the author: the footnotes have been revised and a new index and bibliography have been included.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I familiarizes the reader with the objectives of the author, why he has chosen to use the word "soul," and why he regards the Soul-Problem as both legitimate and urgent. Deploring the materialism of the past three centuries which, despite great progress in industry and science, has nevertheless created a narrow "dehumanized image of Homo Sapiens," Dr. Reyes calls for a "psychological reorientation," noting that this is already coming about through Humanistic Psychology, which takes into consideration the whole man.

Part II centers upon an explanation of the scientific method and what is commonly meant by such terms as "induction," "fact," and "scientific evidence." Dr. Reyes seems to feel that modern science has gone astray in the employment of its scale of observation which consistently reduces all reality to sensory phenomena alone. He proposes instead that one utilizes the scientific method in conjunction with an extrasensory scale of observation in order to prove the existence of the soul. The author's starting point is the assumption that the self or "I am" exists. He postulates four hypotheses of the self which he finally reduces to two: (1) the Body Hypothesis ("I am the Body"); and (2) the Soul Hypothesis ("I am the Soul with a Body").

In Part III the author cites examples of

facts from eleven categories to substantiate the Soul Hypothesis. These phenomenal categories include consciousness, memory, sleep, dreams, death, psychical research, ESP, traveling clairvoyance, hypnotism, mysticism and yoga, and psychedelic experience. The simple conclusion to be drawn from the facts presented, maintains Dr. Reyes, is "The soul exists. There is in man a nonphysical element which alone can explain a multitude of phenomena concerning human life and behavior" (p. 227).

Part IV is composed of three appendices, one of which describes the well-known Shanti Devi case. The book is very readable and it certainly can be said that the author has covered the Soul-Problem thoroughly. The only major shortcoming of the book is the fact that, although updated to a degree, it still omits the latest research findings on the human aura, astral projection, and reincarnation and does not even mention the extensive contributions of Dr. Robert Crookall and Dr. Ian Stevenson.

—Richard Sattelberg

☆ ☆ ☆

Man, God and The Universe, by Dr. I. K. Taimni. Published 1969 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. xliii + 447 pp. Price Rs. 20.00.

This compact volume of less than 500 pages consists of 35 streamlined chapters. Chapter headings range from the Concept of the Absolute, and the Unmanifest Cosmic Logos to the Manifest Logos, the Monad, the Individuality and their interrelationships. Further subjects are the Great Illusion, the Point (Mahabindu), Time and Space, Fohat, Prana and Kundalini, and Reality, Consciousness, Mind and Matter. Covering as it does the whole field of human existence, macrocosm and microcosm, the book abundantly fulfills the title's promise. Also included are a concise Sanskrit Glossary, and Index.

The most profound principles of Hindu philosophy are here presented in such masterly fashion that one seems always to have known them. With the aid of scientific ex-

amples, and a number of illuminating diagrams occult truths are conveyed in clear concepts. From this firm foundation one is able to reach into deeper realms of understanding, and to realize some of the vast implications.

In spite of its basic presentation the work does not represent a simplification or popular version of the subject matter. Although much previous study is not necessary in approaching it, a readiness for serious thought and reflection is.

In Dr. Taimni's style are blended deep insight with apt expression, metaphysical scholarship with some forty years of scientific research and teaching experience. The scope and depth of his work coupled with its wide appeal are unequalled.

—Inge M. Jackson

☆ ☆ ☆

Shakespeare—Prophet For Our Time, by Henry Douglas Wild. Published 1971 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. xi + 129 pp. Price \$3.75.

For those students whose exposure to Shakespeare has fortunately avoided pedantic frostbite, this book should prove rewarding. It should also appeal to students of Theosophy and when both are embodied in one and the same person it will surely have the effect of an outstandingly enjoyable literary experience.

Dr. Wild knows his Shakespeare and is no stranger to the Ancient Wisdom. He uses one to illustrate the other with remarkable effectiveness. His commentaries on the characters of the plays and his deft analyses of the plots are original and thought-provoking. He demonstrates that the Bard had a remarkable grasp of the truths of existence, and that the plays can be read in such a way as to unveil a deeper and more Theosophic philosophy than traditional interpretations reveal.

Shakespeare's heroines are seldom given the depth of study Dr. Wild proves they deserve. He devotes a chapter solely to these characters and concludes they are

"intended to awaken man to the role ordained for the feminine principle in each one of us and in the world process itself." This study alone deserves a book rather than a chapter; it offers a completely new perspective to the roles of the heroines and gives yet another example (there are several in the book) of the Theosophic material hidden in the plays.

Other chapters are equally exciting. "Be Your Own Hamlet" is as challenging as its title. In another, *The Tempest*, a play of special interest to students of Theosophy, is given special treatment—paired with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Curiously enough, Dr. Wild does not mention Colin Still's *Shakespeare's Mystery Play*, nor gives any indication that he is familiar with it, yet some of his conclusions from a study of *The Tempest* are in accord with Still. (*Shakespeare's Mystery Play* was first published fifty years ago and deserves to be in print. Quest editors, please note!)

The final chapter, "*Troilus and Cressida* and the United States" attempts to justify the book's title. Certainly there are parts of Shakespeare that might have been written for the 1970's, yet there is surely more to his genius than that. The plays have lasted with contemporary freshness over nearly four hundred years because they deal with that which is always present in man; and whether the scene is set in a tent in classical Greece or in a White House council room it can be relevant. Therefore, I am sure Dr. Wild would be the first to agree that Shakespeare is more than a "prophet for our time", indeed, he is a "prophet for all time". —Ted G. Davy

☆ ☆ ☆

Mme. Blavatsky Defended, by Iverson L. Harris. Published 1971 by Point Loma Publications, Inc., San Diego, Calif., U.S.A. 174 pp. Price \$3.00.

The tragic events of June 5, 1968, the day Senator Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated, are well known and for the most part vividly remembered. Among the side effects was one which implicated the Theo-

sophical Movement, and this will not be soon forgotten, either, by those who were closely involved. *Mme. Blavatsky Defended* records this aspect of the tragedy and its aftermath.

A simple request from his gaol by accused assassin Sirhan B. Sirhan for a copy of *The Secret Doctrine* touched off an incredible chain of events which might have been exceedingly harmful to the Movement. Even so and notwithstanding, they included a vicious slander of H. P. Blavatsky which called for refutation. Mr. Iverson L. Harris painstakingly details all that he and other students did in the following days and months to try to clear her name by obtaining apologies and withdrawals from those who had shamefully lied about her. That the efforts of these loyal Theosophists did not result in the desired complete rectification cannot be considered failure. They *tried*, and it is obvious from this book that they left no stone unturned. Although the ramifications were felt mainly in the United States, they are owed a debt of gratitude by students all over the world.

One of the more disturbing aspects of the case, obvious at the time, and clearly proved in this book, was the irresponsible attitude of the media. Not so much the daily press, but television, radio, and *Time* magazine in particular showed quite unmistakably that they were more interested in reporting sensational items than facts. Worse, that they recognized no moral obligation to admit their mistakes.

On the bright side is the record of the known reaction to the calumny by Theosophical students everywhere. An interesting sidelight is that the undesirable publicity resulted in an unusual demand for books by H. P. Blavatsky, and perhaps in the long run this will be seen as a form of compensation.

Mme Blavatsky Defended contains supplementary material indicating who and what she really was. It shows up in strong contrast to the revolutionary and anarchistic character with which she was labelled by

various commentators following Sirhan's request. This includes the well-known New York *Tribune* editorial of May 10, 1891, and a selection of statements made by those who actually knew her.

Finally, a chapter on "What H.P.B. Really Taught" might be guessed the antithesis to the material probably contained in *A Manual for Revolutionaries*, a book whose authorship was ascribed to her over the N.B.C. TV network.

It is to be hoped that a place for *Mme. Blavatsky Defended* will be found in all Theosophical libraries. —Ted G. Davy

YOUNG THEOSOPHISTS' ACTIVITIES

The American Federation of Young Theosophists will hold their summer camp August 8-14, 1971 at Far Horizons School. Theme will be "A Yoga of Aware Groupness". Information from Marc Wenner, P.O. Box 961, Ojai, Calif. 93023, U.S.A.

The European Federation of Young Theosophists will camp this summer in France July 21 - August 4. Those who are able will stay for the Congress of the Theosophical Society in Europe, which will be held in Paris August 8-15.

The Y.T.'s publish interesting magazines. In Europe, *Lotos* is published quarterly at an annual subscription of 7.50 Sv. Kr. (Swedish Crowns) or equivalent. (1 Sv. Kr. is approx. \$0.20 Can.)

Titles of articles in *Lotos* 35 (a recent issue) are: "Man's Inner Resources" (theme of Summercamp '71); "Towards Consciousness Expansion"; and "The 'New Man' in Cuba". Those wishing to subscribe are invited to write: Anna-Lena Berg, Dobelnsgr. 6 II o.g., Stockholm S-11140, Sweden.

The American Federation of Young Theosophists publish *The National Young Theosophists' Review*. A special issue was put out in February, 1971, entitled, "The Challenge of Today's Youth—Building a Better World". It may be obtained for fifty cents from: Mrs. Ijya C. Tulloss, 3101 S. Wabash, Apt. 302, Chicago, Ill., 60616, U.S.A.

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