

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 52, No. 5

TORONTO, NOV.-DEC., 1971

Price 50 Cents

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NORTH AMERICAN THEOSOPHICAL STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

October 9-11, 1971

JOAN SUTCLIFFE

There is a great incentive towards the realization of the causes of the Theosophical Society in the gathering of so many interested students at a conference such as this, and it is a delight to see the possibility of this becoming an annual occasion. The same magnetic power of spiritual union, which prevailed two years ago at the Niagara Falls Conference, and again last year at Detroit, could be felt here also at Toronto this (Canadian) Thanksgiving Weekend. Once again friends listened, learned and participated together in the search for ideas towards bringing to fruition in daily living our theme chosen for this year: "Theosophy in Action".

With messages of greetings from Lodges represented in attendance, and with these representations from as far as California in the west to New York City in the east, and in Canada from British Columbia to Halifax, Nova Scotia, the 1971 Conference opened on a high note of harmony and brotherhood. Mr. Ted G. Davy, the General Secretary, on behalf of the Theosophical Society in Canada, welcomed visitors from near and far with an effusion of enthusiasm for the program ahead.

The program commenced at 2.30 on the Saturday afternoon with a symposium headed, "Action '75—What Are We Doing?" Participating, Miss Joy Mills, National President of the Theosophical Society in America, opened with a short quotation from a letter written by H. P. Blavatsky: "Make your activities commensurate with your opportunities". Following on, she commented on the fact that opportunities for action have never been greater than today—opportunities to speak clearly and compassionately and to reach all places.

For the phrase, "What Are We Doing?" she suggested substituting, "What Are We *Being*?", for the latter will only explain the former.

It was a great thrill when we learned of ideas that are being visualized for the commemoration of our centenary: on Saturday, November 15, 1975 the United Nations Delegates' Lounge in New York had been suggested as a meeting place for Theosophists, united on a world basis, and sharing together in common dedication in preparation for the opening of the second century; afterwards, a world tour in the footsteps of the founders—from New York to Lon-

don, perhaps Europe, then to Bombay and on to Adyar.

Miss Helen Zahara, Chairman of the Kern Foundation Programs Committee spoke in great detail of new publishings to be undertaken in readiness for 1975. Enthused by the tremendous success of the film, "How Many Lifetimes", a second film was in the process of being prepared, also on the subject of reincarnation, but more extensive. Furthermore, especially in view of our centenary, a documentary on the Theosophical Society is anticipated.

"Action" being our theme, we were informed of the formation of a Brotherhood Committee to make known the Theosophical position on brotherhood. A monthly bulletin is issued, and "non-competitions" are promoted in such timely forms as essays on "How to improve human relations" and designs for brotherhood posters. So may our first object become a living truth.

Other programs linked to our preparations for 1975 are the Non-English Publications Loan Fund by means of which it is hoped to have Theosophical literature available in many more languages than at present, and the H. P. Blavatsky Publications Reserve Fund.

Mr. Davy then brought to view the Canadian approach to '75, stressing the importance of inner readiness, provided, though, that the outer forms are there too so that the message can be transmitted. It was a hopeful note he struck when he brought to light the fact that here we are at the end of a century with the Theosophical message still strong in the public domain.

Over the years the T.S. in Canada had recognized the importance of Theosophical literature, and Mr. Davy elaborated on the placement by the Canadian Section of Blavatsky works in 26 Canadian universities. Related to this was a Centennial project whereby the Section had offered the T.S. in America an interest free loan in the amount of \$7,500.00 towards the publishing of Volume XI of *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. He made a presentation

symbolic of this transaction to Clarence Pedersen, Manager of the Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton.

Continuing along the lines of Action '75 Mr. Davy mentioned a trust fund he hoped to see set up which would be used to offset registration fees for the Centennial, to enable more Canadian members to attend the wonderful gathering in New York.

The highlight of the day was the evening lecture by Raghavan Iyer, whose presence amongst us this weekend was a vibrating source of inspiration. The title was "Universalism and Sectarianism in Theosophy". The talk introduced and elaborated upon thoughts, the meditation on which could lead one to the realms of the deepest Theosophical searchings.

The problem of reconciling these two opposing aspects lies at the core of the world of reality itself, he explained. Historically, Unity is always followed by Separateness, and to develop continuity of consciousness, he suggested, is the only means of its transcendence. Theosophy teaches students it is possible to belong to every cult and sect, and at the same time to belong to none; and similarly there is the ideal situation of supreme compassion in the world in connection with all concerned with it, yet also at the same time detachment. The most crucial point, however, that which remained strongest in one's mind at the close of the lecture, was that there can be no half commitment to Theosophy: commitment has to be complete, and Theosophy has to become the way of life, as stated in his concluding remarks, so beautifully expressed in the words of the Master—"If you wish to know us, study our philosophy. If you wish to serve us, serve humanity."

Sunday followed along the same lines as Saturday, with present again that same unifying aura of harmony, as though a golden spider with threads of tolerance and understanding had woven an invisible web from the higher to the lower enveloping all in the serenity and warmth of brotherhood. The morning and afternoon were devoted

to symposiums, followed by group discussions on the same subjects. Mr. Fleetwood Berry, President of Toronto Lodge, Mrs. Virginia Hanson, Editor of *The American Theosophist*, and Mrs. Inge Jackson from York Lodge presented ideas on "A Pragmatic Philosophy for an Ever-Changing World". In the afternoon the subject of "The Obligations of a Theosophist" was explored by Mrs. Sally Lakin from Hamilton Lodge, Mr. Kwasi Donyina, a student from Ghana now studying in Canada, and Mrs. Eva de Lisle from Ottawa.

Emerging from these contributions were suggestions which flowed along the lines that the teachings of Theosophy are complete truth itself, which can be neither added to nor subtracted from, but religion and science in pure form. Organizations are transitory vehicles for the expression of this truth, and the task of Theosophical students is to preserve the Theosophical movement intact until 1975. Opinion is not knowledge, and we should be wary of exchanging the old lamp of impersonal truth for the new lamp of opinion. The dissemination of Theosophical teachings will only come about by application of the principles, which are inseparable from Theosophy itself. Unity, study and work are the watchdogs, and the acceptance on the same basis of all others who are drawn together by the law of Karma will give birth to unity, which will limit the defects that arise in study and work.

Sunday evening brought the high spot when Mr. Raghavan Iyer gave us a second lecture, which followed the banquet, where friends came to know each other also on a social vein. "Meditation and Self Study" was the title, and the opening words of our speaker suggesting that this topic concerns the deepest quest of every soul rang true in all hearts. This search for self analysis may move in opposite directions—the self transcendental, that is to opt out of the world and escape the wheel of life and death, or self advancement from re-entry into the world.

Theosophical literature has given to the

world, yet dedicated only to the few, *The Voice of the Silence* as a guide and teacher to the meditator and student of self, he pointed out, and those who have used the book have been immensely grateful to H.P.B. The pathway of ascent through the portals, though, is to be lived not only in the seclusion of the mountains but in the crowded cities. The delightful assertion that in every man is the embryo of the great man of meditation came as an upliftment; the difference between the Buddha and the ordinary man being in degree not in kind, though to attain to higher degrees comes not without great effort. There are many beginnings and many failures, and it is in moments of the greatest loneliness that often the momentum is found to come close to beings far removed.

The balance between meditation and self study is compassion, and our speaker urged us to expand on compassion: meditate on meditation and men of meditation, with honesty and humility, for meditation in its fullness is the greatest part of every urge, and all meditations are only stepping stones to the larger meditation. Persistence will lead to continuity of consciousness, for each fumbling attempt builds through lifetimes, as steps to the highest, the meditation of the Universal Good which transcends all. The closing remarks of the lecture, that we are grateful to the teachers of Theosophy who gave us the knowledge that we are The Path, were carried away with each of us in the silence of our own reverence.

Where students of Theosophy gather together a vital part of interest and energy is applied to discussion, and so the discussion groups were a vibrant portion of the weekend's activities. In his opening remarks, the General Secretary had quoted the observation of a stranger, "Where there are two or three Theosophists there are bound to be four or five different opinions," and on the Monday morning, when the summaries of these groups' collective syntheses were brought to the attention of all as a unit, the group captains vouched for the authenticity of that remark.

(The reports of the group captains are published separately in this issue—Eds.)

The Conference closed on the same high note on which it started, and the harmonious music which played in between sessions will live long in the quiet valleys of the thoughts of each Theosophist who was present. What a splendid momentum towards the realization of Theosophy this Conference has been! Let us hope that the closing words of Miss Joy Mills may come to fruit-

ion, that our brothers in the west may have the chance next year to gather together in fellowship and love to further the cause of Theosophy, as we have done in Toronto this Thanksgiving weekend.

The Conference was closed by Ted Davy, William Harley, Raghavan Iyer, and Joy Mills, hand in hand, in strong representation of the Unity of Theosophy in North America.

DISCUSSION GROUPS IN ACTION

Discussions are a continuing popular feature of the North American Theosophical Students' Conferences. Three sessions were given over to the students to share and hear ideas on various aspects of "Theosophy in Action". In each session they divided into six groups. The group leaders met afterwards to pool the key points of the discussions they heard, and these in turn were reported by a "team captain" to the plenary session on the final morning. Following is a condensed version of their reports, which might be described as a synthesis of the views of the 140 delegates.

ACTION '75: WHAT SHOULD WE BE DOING?

STEVE TOREN

We should be . . .

- (1) *Living Theosophy* by:
 - Observing and studying ourselves
 - Being sincere
 - Trying to improve things—all the time
 - Recognizing Theosophy wherever we are
 - Determining our commitments and getting involved
 - Being responsible
 - Doing good things for all of mankind
- (2) *Publicizing Theosophy* by:
 - Living it!*

- Preparing ourselves so that we can represent the Society on all occasions
- Using Theosophy to bring a new viewpoint to discussions
- Presenting Theosophy in a concept based on our own experience
- Publishing the history of the Movement in all journals
- Providing a teaching kit with information on all religions
- Demonstrating Theosophy through science

- (3) Involving the younger members in the running of the Society
 - (4) Putting aside labels. The spirit of Theosophy transcends the organizations
- For future Conferences a thought:
More discussions.

A PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHY FOR AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

RENATE BOHRINGER

While everyone was discussing the pragmatic philosophy, no one seemed too concerned about what looks to be so rapidly changing in the world!

Participation throughout was very lively, any point raised brought about many counter thoughts and it was quite a thrill for me to have the opportunity and experience of floating, of looking in on all groups.

The idea of the perfect nucleus was picked up by all, and to no surprise, since the first object of the Theosophical Movement is to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood without any distinctions. Why did the founders not insist on founding a "universal brotherhood"? Why only the nucleus? Well, because they knew the law and knew therefore that the nucleus only is necessary, which will attract the "materials", the materials being like-minded souls. Obviously the nucleus which is to be formed by Theosophists will at all times be as pure—or impure—as the motives and aspirations of each individual that is attracted to this Movement.

So it seemed that if Theosophy is to be pragmatic—and we had a definition of pragmatic as referring to outward conduct; practical action; conscious application of effort to useful work—it would be up to each individual to make it so.

It was felt that to be truly pragmatic is to confine our efforts to tasks at hand as they come and not to waste our energies. Joy Mills' reminder that H.P.B. advised to make our activities commensurate with our opportunities would tie in with Krishna's advice to Arjuna—and therefore to us—of doing *our* duty and *not* the duty of *another* however much better we might be able to handle that, or at least think we would. We are to pause at all times and examine our motive. Each person's useful work may be quite different.

Does book-study come in as helpful at all? It was felt that as man reacts introspectively to the printed word, he then expresses himself in outward conduct and behaviour. To understand the printed word is to express ourselves in some semblance of wisdom.

There can be no discussion about Theosophy without reference to *The Secret Doctrine* and it was felt that the philosophy of the S.D., far from being just theory for the intellect to bathe itself in, gives one a more detached approach to matters in daily life. One is no longer too worried about lesser matters, it gives the peace of mind that instills the feeling of belonging to the whole universe. It gives purpose to life.

Naturally, study classes in *The Secret Doctrine* were mentioned and on the practical outer level it was suggested that handing out assignments on the S.D. to people really doesn't work, all that should be done is to stimulate interest and each will do their own study. A skilful student would be very informed of all that goes on around us, happenings in science, art, current trends etc., and correlate them with the Ancient Wisdom.

While visiting the groups I was impressed by the remark of a student who has devoted some decades to the study of the S.D. and conducts study classes. She said because she is no longer *caught* in the little trials of everyday living, people ask: "What have you got that makes you the way you are?" Then it is easy to refer to that wonderful science of life, called Theosophy. Many of us feel that we are not able to promulgate the teaching in a grand manner for lack of education; we might be too shy to speak. But we can all try to live the kind of life, radiate the kind of confidence and warmth, that makes people "feel good" when they are with us and it might prompt them to ask: "What have you got"?

As it was mentioned that assigning work on the S.D. isn't really good, so it was felt that asking a student to join the Society doesn't work either. Let us rather realize that we arouse the interest of others by our actions, so inquirers will judge the Society by its members. Also, it was mentioned that almost everyone resents pat answers, so why not refrain from giving them?

It would seem then that we have to engage in self-study. One way to learn about

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ourselves is to check one's relationships with other people. We will see much about ourselves in the way others react to us. They hold up a mirror to us, we need but look.

Meditation was said to be an essential part in the life of the student. It was felt that true meditation is living fully the whole of life as it unfolds before us. All attempts at meditation are really the building of a life meditation. So, as we try to study ourselves, we do it with the idea of making ourselves a channel for the great work.

To live life fully would be a not dwelling in the past, a not always looking into the future, but a combining of them into the Eternal Now. Say Yes to life Now, accept people as they are, give a person a chance to emerge: the thrill will be tremendous when we discover and rejoice in the greatness of our fellowmen. This—it was felt—is only possible if we look beyond personalities, see each man as individualized Manas, recognize what is real and be unconcerned with the unreal. And as individuals make progress on inner consciousness and being, so the Lodge will progress. As we become well grounded with elementary Theosophy, we will overcome many difficulties. Difficulties will have to be expected under law; we know that the impact of the last quarter of the century effort by the Great Lodge will arouse opposing forces. The trials will be and are very real, but all we have to remember is, that we are a spark of divinity—a God in the making—One Life, One Consciousness, imprisoned in very dense matter, but which shines at us through every pair of eyes.

As I was compiling these notes, I had so much material to work from, given to me by the discussion group leaders, to whom I say "Thanks" for being so wonderful, I was reminded of something in the foreward of *An Abridgement of the Secret Doctrine*. The editors said, that they had to decide what to leave in, rather than what to cut out.

In closing I ask: Can you think of a philosophy more pragmatic than one that

gives such advice as we heard in one of the talks here, where a Master was quoted as saying:

"If you wish to know us, study our philosophy,

If you wish to serve us, serve humanity."

This then is Theosophy in Action and Brotherhood in Action.

THE OBLIGATIONS OF A THEOSOPHIST

VIOLA P. LAW

It was indeed a rewarding experience to be privileged to listen to the opinions of the different groups who were discussing the subject chosen for Sunday afternoon.

The overall pattern which developed throughout the groups has given us food for thought for many months to come and perhaps we can all pursue this further in work in our different Lodges and centres when we go back.

Firstly, it was considered that a Theosophist, or perhaps we should say, a Theosophical Student, must feel it his bounden duty to help others climb the thorny path along with himself and not be desirous only of gaining knowledge so that he or she may reach Nirvana. The Masters have said that this knowledge must go forth to all the world if true progress is to be made before the end of this Manvantara. It was stated by one of the students that not one of us who is really sincere in our dedication to the work can be content while there is one soul who has not had the opportunity of hearing the wisdom brought to us by the Founders. One of the groups also suggested that indeed we T.S. members were apt to forget our great heritage when it was realized that in the past these writings could only have been found in the great Mystery Schools and now they were easily accessible to all of us.

The complex word "Love" was discussed with regard to our subject. This word having so many meanings in this world of ours was gone into at some length. What is love?—this feeling that must go forth to every

other human being one encounters on the way. It was considered that love was compassion, an understanding of the other's pain and suffering, of his joy, not only for those we like but the most difficult task of all, to truly love those whom we found difficult to deal with or be at one with. This was thought to be the obligation of a Theosophist. It was realized that it is indeed easy to love those who are near and dear to us but to open one's heart and shed light on another human being who perhaps shows nothing but hostility and resentment to ourselves, is the mark of the soul attempting to tread the Path, it was thought. Soon it would be discovered that this soul is only searching and is perhaps not able at this stage to be other than he is.

Again, it was considered that a Theosophical Student must not judge his brother. Many souls are now passing through experiences brought from some far distant past and being worked out in this incarnation where the conditions are suitable. Personalities are a mask only, and although sometimes displeasing, they may cover a soul far in advance of ourselves. This point was emphasized again and again, that "No one has a right to judge his brother." How difficult for us to accept sometimes.

To seek truth was extremely important for a student of the Ancient Wisdom, to also attempt to form a nucleus wherever one found oneself, a nucleus of earnest searchers, not a rushing out to everyone one meets to talk about Theosophy, but to choose wisely when to speak. This was considered one of our biggest failings, to be so enthusiastic that one often put other souls off by presenting something they were not ready to accept.

Another interesting point was brought forth in the discussions, that of being patient with oneself, not being too hard on the personality. One must realize that indeed the God was within waiting for the dross to be removed so that the light could shine forth for all to see.

To keep an open mind and to be tolerant of all was of course considered to be one

of the most important obligations of a Theosophist. Humbleness was discussed, again not an artificial humbleness suggesting one was nothing, but a sincere humbleness.

A most interesting point was brought up which I found indeed very helpful as it comes to the fore often in our work in Montreal. The development of the powers latent in man, white magic it was called by one of the students. It was decided after much discussion that one must live the life first and that all these things would be added at the right time. When the life had been purified the powers would develop naturally like the flower unfolding.

Another student thought that a Theosophist should indeed be one who showed gentleness and consideration for others, often in most trying circumstances. Who was a comforting presence so that the others (whom one must come to realize is really oneself) feels that here is a friend who has inner strength and utter compassion. To do what is right with no desire for reward—how difficult for humanity at our present level. To be indifferent to praise or blame.

It was stated at this point that too often we are concerned with what this one or that one thinks of us. Theosophists should have the courage to stand up and be counted.

The Universal Brotherhood of Man was discussed, again with regard to the subject. There was doubt as to whether many of us really understood this, our first object.

Detachment from objects and things of earthly value was stressed. This did not mean that one should not possess lovely things, it meant that a Theosophist must be willing at any moment to give them up without feeling tied to anything but one's Higher Being.

It was also considered by another group that all experiences were useful in building one's capacity to be able to discriminate and do what is right. This was thought again to be another reason for not judging the actions of another, what he or she is

doing was probably right for the growth of the soul at this time. Every man in his right place at the right time, doing his thing.

Another group thought that not enough was done in the Lodges to answer teenagers' and young adults' questions. How could we help these searching souls who are growing up in a more difficult time in many respects than we had to go through. Older members, it was thought, must be willing to break down their thought patterns and habits and not expect these young people, who were only just starting out in this incarnation, to be like them—perhaps more complex than it sounds.

The subject of education was gone into at great length, it being stated that of course a T.S. member would realize that education is a bringing out of the soul's potentiality, not a pushing in of ideas.

To stand on one's own feet was also considered to be the obligation of a Theosophist. To depend finally on all that there really was, the God within, the Higher Self, call it what you will. Not that one would decry the help of a Teacher, but one must come to the realization that the secret of life is within and that this could be reached through right living, right thinking, meditation and a forgetfulness of the self in the service of others. In connection with service, it was mentioned that here one had to discriminate. One must be wary of letting others take advantage of one, lest one becomes an accessory to their greed and weakness.

To feel the pain of the world as if this was one's own pain, to be truly inside another human, feeling the frustrations, the limitations of the present body, these are indeed the obligations of a Theosophist. In doing the work it was felt one must come to a realization of non-separateness, that all was one, every man part of the other. In this way the world would change if ever so slowly.

The regeneration of man was stressed, this again being an obligation of a Theosophist to put his own house in order, to endeavour to grow so that he could be an

instrument in helping to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world.

One's duty then as a Theosophist, was to study with all one's might, so that one could present the teachings and continue with the work left by those who have gone before. To go out of incarnation feeling the light had been brought to one soul then, indeed, the obligations of a Theosophist would have been carried out.

It was also considered that Theosophists must be mindful of their thought patterns. Thoughts being so powerful that mountains could be moved by the right use of them. It was the obligation of Theosophists then, it was thought, to try to push out all critical thoughts, to stop comparing Lodges, to get on with what one has to do oneself and leave one's brother to his own Karma and to stop meddling.

And to finalize, the general feeling of the discussion groups was that indeed it was a privilege to be a Theosophist but that this brought with it great responsibility. The Masters were ever looking for useful tools and if the student would continue to struggle despite the constant failings every day, then a glimmer would be seen and the work could progress. The Masters were not looking for perfection it was emphasized, they were looking for earnest, sincere and compassionate souls willing to forsake all for the work.

No Theosophist ought to be contented with an idle or frivolous life, doing no real good to himself and still less to others. He should work for the benefit of the few who need his help if he is unable to toil for Humanity, and thus work for the advancement of the Theosophical cause. No working member should set too great value on his personal progress or proficiency in Theosophic studies; but must be prepared rather to do as much altruistic work as lies in his power. He should not leave the whole of the heavy burden and responsibility of the Theosophical movement on the shoulders of the few devoted workers.

—*The Key to Theosophy*

THE MAHA CHOCHAN'S LETTER

At the 1971 North American Theosophical Students' Conference a suggestion was made that it is timely for students to consider the words of the "Great Master", contained in the so-called "Maha Chohan's Letter" which was forwarded to Mr. A. P. Sinnett by the Master K.H. in 1881. Because of its nature and source it might well serve as a marker by which to assess the present nature and direction of the Theosophical Movement.

For the benefit of new members and others who might not have seen a copy of this important document we are pleased to reproduce it below. —Eds.

An abridged version of the view of the Chohan on the T.S. from his own words as given last night. My own letter the answer to your last will shortly follow.

K.H.

The Maha Chohan's Letter

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must, supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give, become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually, enforcing its theories, unimpeachable facts for those who know, with direct inferences deduced from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science. That is the reason why Col: H. S. O. who works but to revive Buddhism may be regarded as one who labours in the true path of theosophy, far more than any other man who chooses as his goal the gratification of his own ardent aspirations for occult knowledge. Buddhism stripped of its superstitions is eternal truth, and he who strives for the latter is striving for theosophia, Divine Wisdom, which is a synonym of truth.

For our doctrines to practically react on the so-called moral code, or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., we have to preach and popularise a knowledge of theosophy. It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining oneself Nirvana (the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom) which is after all only an exalted and glorious *selfishness*, but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neigh-

bour, to cause as many of our fellow-creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true *Theosophist*.

The intellectual portions of mankind seem to be fast dividing into two classes, the one unconsciously preparing for itself long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness, owing to the deliberate surrender of their intellect, its imprisonment in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition, a process which cannot fail to lead to the utter deformation of the intellectual principle; the other unrestrainedly indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of *submitting* to annihilation pure and simple, in cases of failure to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution.

Those "intellectual classes" reacting upon the ignorant masses, which they attract and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to follow, degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide. Between degrading superstition, and still more degrading brutal materialism, the white dove of truth has hardly room where to rest her weary unwelcome foot.

It's time that theosophy should enter the arena. The sons of Theosophists are more likely to become in their turn Theosophists than anything else. No messenger of truth, no prophet has ever achieved during his lifetime a complete triumph, not even Buddha. The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner-stone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity. To achieve the proposed object, a greater, wiser, and especially a more benevolent intermingling of

the high and the low, of the alpha and the omega of society, was determined upon. The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations, to call the poor despised "nigger"—brother. This prospect may not smile to all. He is no Theosophist who objects to this principle.

In view of the ever-increasing triumph and at the same time misuse of free-thought and LIBERTY (the universal reign of Satan, Eliphaz Levi would have called it), how is the combative *natural* instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto unheard-of cruelty and enormities, tyranny, injustice, etc., if not through the soothing influence of a brotherhood, and of the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines?

For as everyone knows, total emancipation from authority of the one all-pervading power or law called God by the priests, Buddha, Divine Wisdom and enlightenment or Theosophy, by the philosophers of all ages, means also the emancipation from that of human law? Once unfettered, delivered from their dead-weight of dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved identical in their esoteric meaning. Osiris, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, will be shown as different names for one and the same royal highway to final bliss: Nirvana.

Mystical Christianity, that is to say that Christianity which teaches *self*-redemption through our own seventh principle—the liberated Para-atma (Augeoides) called by the one Christ, by others Buddha, and equivalent to regeneration or re-birth in spirit—will be found just the same truth as the Nirvana of Buddhism. All of us have to get rid of our own Ego, the illusory apparent *self*, to recognise our true self in a transcendental divine life.

But if we would not be selfish we must strive to make other people see that truth, to recognise the reality of that transcendent-

al self, the Buddha, the Christ, or God of every preacher. This is why even exoteric Buddhism is the surest path to lead men towards the one esoteric truth.

As we find the world now, whether Christian, Mussalman or Pagan, justice is disregarded and honour and mercy both flung to the winds. In a word, how, seeing that the main objects of the T.S. are misinterpreted by those who are most willing to serve us *personally*, are we to deal with the rest of mankind, with that curse known as the "struggle for life" which is the real and most prolific parent of most woes and sorrows and all crimes? Why has that struggle become the almost universal scheme of the universe? We answer, because no religion, with the exception of Buddhism, has hitherto taught a practical contempt for this earthly life, while each of them, always with that one solitary exception, has through its hells and damnations inculcated the greatest dread of death. Therefore do we find that struggle for life raging most fiercely in Christian countries, most prevalent in Europe and America. It weakens in the Pagan lands, and is nearly unknown among Buddhist populations. (In China during famine and where the masses are most ignorant of their own or any religion, it was remarked that those mothers who devoured their children belonged to localities where there were the most of Christian missionaries to be found; where there were none, and the Bonzes alone had the field, the population died with the utmost indifference). Teach the people to see that life on this earth even the happiest is but a burden and an illusion, that it is but our own *karma*, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge, our Saviour in future lives, and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity. There are no penitentiaries in Buddhist lands, and crime is nearly unknown among the Buddhist Thibetans. (The above is not addressed to you, i.e., A.P.S., and has naught to do with the work of the Simla Eclectic Society. It is meant only as

(Continued on page 115)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death on September 27 of Mrs. E. Shelley Newcombe, a member of Toronto Lodge for more than twenty years. She was a keen student and she and her husband pursued their Theosophical and educational interests in close partnership. Our sympathy has been expressed to Mr. Newcombe.

* * *

His many friends around the world will be pleased to hear that Mr. Dudley W. Barr recently returned home after spending some weeks in hospital, during which time he underwent a successful operation. I know hundreds will join me in wishing our dear brother a speedy and comfortable convalescence.

* * *

Apologies to all members and subscribers whose copy of the Sept.-Oct. issue of *The Canadian Theosophist* was late in arriving. To the frustration of the editors, who endeavour to have the magazine in the mail by the middle of the odd numbered months, the shipment of the issue from the printer was inexplicably "lost" in the Express office for several days. As if that was not enough, there was then more than a week's delay in the post office. In addition, some members did not receive their copy at all. If any others missed theirs I would appreciate hearing from them.

* * *

In the Conference Program (which was also printed in the Sept.-Oct. issue of the magazine) Miss Helen Zahara is identified as a Trustee of the Kern Foundation. This is incorrect, and I apologize. Miss Zahara is Chairman of the Kern Foundation Programs Committee and Coordinator of the programs for The Theosophical Society in America.

* * *

Thanks to the initiative of Laszlo Sima, a Toronto Lodge member, recorded greetings from the Presidents of Canyon, Orpheus

and Victoria Lodges were heard at the Conference. This contribution added to the sense of unity which several delegates remarked was prevalent at the Conference.

* * *

I would like to thank all who participated in the 1971 North American Theosophical Students Conference. Many volunteered, many were asked to fill one role or another, all did their work cheerfully and efficiently, and the Conference was enriched thereby.

* * *

The Fall Meeting of the General Executive of The Theosophical Society in Canada was held at 12 MacPherson Avenue, Toronto, on Sunday, October 24. The following members were present: Miss Mary Seaton, Messrs. L. A. Dadswell, G. F. Gardner, W. Schmitt and C. Weaver. The General Secretary was in the Chair.

The members were pleased with the apparent success of the 1971 North American Theosophical Students' Conference. It was hoped that the Conferences would continue and that a proposal for 1972 would be forthcoming from the T.S. in America. The desirability of holding a Conference in the west was expressed and given unanimous support. In the meanwhile, it was suggested that the Conference be supplemented in the east with regional semi-annual meetings, with Kingston and London as central meeting places.

The General Executive heard and approved the Annual Report, a copy of which appears elsewhere in this issue. Membership at the year end (September 30) stood at 338, a drop of two from the previous year.

A Memorandum by the General Secretary in England on the subject of "World Wide Dissemination of Theosophy. What Should We Disseminate?" was given hearty endorsement. (If any member wishes to see a copy of this document, please get in touch with me.)

The proposed interest free loan to the T.S. in America in the amount of \$7,500.00 to help accelerate publication of the *H. P.*

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

IN CANADA

Published Bi-Monthly

Second Class Mail Registration Number 0784

Return Postage Guaranteed

Subscription: THREE DOLLARS A YEAR



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All letters to the Editors, articles and reports for publication should be addressed to the Editors, Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto 1, Ont.

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.

RANNIE PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
Beamsville, Ont.

Blavatsky Collected Writings Vol. XI was discussed further and the legal documentation approved. It is hoped that this transaction will be completed before the end of the year.

A recent generous donation to the Canadian Section stipulated that a portion be used to look into the subject of flying saucers. The General Secretary was corresponding with the donor and with Mr. Rex Dutta, author of *Flying Saucer Viewpoint*, and a member of the T.S. in England,

to try to identify a possible role for the Section in this regard.

Mr. Weaver presented a revised Constitution in draft form for consideration of the General Executive. This will no doubt be given much study in the coming months

The next meeting of the General Executive will be held on Sunday, January 9, at 2.30 p.m.

* * *

I am pleased to welcome the following new members into the fellowship of the Society:

Member-at-large. William Howse, Carragana, Sask.

Montreal Lodge. Marion Rabow

St. Thomas Lodge. Edith Harris

Toronto Lodge. Janise Richardson

—T.G.D.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1971

Quantitative measurements of Theosophical activity are not necessarily a reliable guide to real achievements. Bare statistics show little progress for The Theosophical Society in Canada in the year under review, but behind the figures are suggestions of accomplishments in these twelve months. Only time will indicate their true worth.

The period roughly coincided with the first year of activity in the new premises of the Toronto Lodge, the largest single unit in the Canadian Section. The official opening on November 21, 1970, heralded a busy season in which most of the traditional programs were resumed and several new ones started. The spacious facilities proved adaptable to the Lodge's requirements and were put to good use thereafter. It is particularly gratifying to report that after more than three years in which only partial service could be provided, the Lodge's excellent library is once again in a position to shelve its entire collection.

A new Lodge was chartered on May 8, White Lotus Day. This was the Atma Vidya Lodge in Victoria, British Columbia. Its Founder-President, Mr. Benjamin Garside,

was also instrumental in putting the St. Thomas Lodge on the Theosophical map more than fifty years ago, thus the new Lodge is fortunate to be linked with the robust early years of the Canadian Section.

The election held in the Spring was the first under the amended by-law which provides for a three-year (instead of one-year) term of office for the General Secretary and Executive. As well as saving the significant cost of holding annual elections it is hoped the new arrangement will result in the development of longer term projects than have been considered hitherto.

During the year discussions were held with the T.S. in America whereby the Canadian Section would provide an interest free loan to assist with the publication of the *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. It is hoped this would allow the publishing program to be accelerated. Arrangements are expected to be completed before the end of 1971.

With the resources available in Canada it is not easy to make Theosophy known to a wider public except through open meetings held by the larger Lodges. Sometimes we are asked by other organizations to provide speakers on Theosophy and reincarnation, and in the past year such occasions have been instrumental in creating new interest in different areas.

Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Barborka were again kind enough to stop over in Canada en route from Europe to their home in California. In November, 1970, as in the previous year, they visited Lodges in eastern Canada while in this country as guests of the T.S. in Canada.

Preparations for the 1971 North American Theosophical Students' Conference, which will be held in Toronto October 9-11, have been a major activity of the Section in the past six months. Co-sponsor of the Conference, the third of its kind, is The Theosophical Society in America. All students, regardless of affiliation, are invited to the Conference, which like its predecessors will encourage individual participation.

—Ted G. Davy, General Secretary

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

*The Editors,
The Canadian Theosophist*

A few words written in a provocative manner about the immediate prospects of the Theosophical Society might inspire others to give vent to their feelings. In 1975 our organization is to be a century old, and as written in *The Key to Theosophy*, "... during the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by the Masters . . . to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity in a marked and definite way." We are now close to this final period.

As I look back on fifty years of membership and reflect on our seeming progression, I have poignant memories of individuals who as members gave much time to Lodge activities. Many died in little comfort, some in dire poverty.

Why was the Society created? My first provocative suggestion is that it came into existence for the sole purpose of influencing modern thought, and to attract an essential nucleus of individuals who, although a minority amongst mankind, would nevertheless have the potential capacity to direct human affairs.

There has been an influence. In the recent adventures of astronauts from two countries we have evidence of man's quest for knowledge beyond the known physical earth. When we read of the Americans and Russians getting ready to receive sounds and signals from other planets we are reminded of the words of the Master K.H. on this subject. In 1882, he wrote, "Science will *hear* sounds from certain planets before she *sees* them. This is a *prophecy*."

From this I deduce a second provocative matter. It is that the Society does not receive popular support, and will in fact suffer if given same. In my opinion we need to grow smaller in numbers, and in fact not seek too much public attention.

Theosophy cannot be taught in a few simple stages. We could use words to discuss what the twin doctrines of karma and reincarnation mean, but the sad truth is the

answers can only be obtained by an individual. The meaning of an occult saying, "When the pupil is ready, the Master appears" is, in my conception, when we are ready we are able to become a Master.

Frederick E. Tyler, F.T.S.

TORONTO LODGE

Toronto Lodge was host to the 1971 North American Theosophical Students' Conference on Thanksgiving Weekend October 9-11.

The fine facilities of the Lodge contributed greatly to the enjoyment of the Conference, the large auditorium was used for talks and symposiums, various parts of the building were taken up with discussion groups and the kitchen provided an almost continuous "coffee and cookie" service. The excellent library was a source of interest to many of the delegates between sessions. On Sunday evening about 140 delegates sat down to a banquet in the spacious basement. The organ which remained in the building when it was purchased last year provided some beautiful music during the weekend.

The Lodge has now entered into a busy programme for the Fall and Winter months and in addition to the Sunday evening lectures and discussions and the regular Secret Doctrine Class on Sunday morning at 10.30 a.m., it is intended, if sufficient interest is forthcoming, to commence classes on The Secret Doctrine, The Mahatma Letters, Basic and Advanced Theosophy, Astrology, Kabala, Mental Alchemy, Public Speaking, Yoga, Self Realization, Occult Way of Healing and Cartomancy.

MONTREAL LODGE

Montreal Lodge was well represented this year at the North American Theosophical Students' Conference in Toronto and it was indeed a happy and rewarding experience to meet old and new friends in such wonderful surroundings. Our thanks to Toronto Lodge for their hospitality and to all those who made our stay so comfortable.

Now we look forward to the next Conference, perhaps in the wonderful West which Miss Joy Mills spoke of so eloquently. And then, the next, with our thoughts on "Forward to Adyar" in 1975.

Members' Meetings are held each Tuesday at 7 p.m. and a study of a Meditation Course obtained from The Theosophical Society in England has commenced as well as a study of *An Abridgement of The Secret Doctrine*. Public meetings also take place on Tuesday at 8.15 p.m. and it is felt that a nucleus of earnest students is being built up at these meetings.

Viola P. Law,
Secretary.

VICTORIA LODGE

At the Annual Meeting of the Victoria Lodge, the following officers were elected:
President Mrs. Dorothy Armstrong
Vice-President Mrs. Jo Andrews
Secretary Mrs. Mollie Yorke
Treasurer Mrs. Mollie Griffith
Librarian Mrs. Grace Wiley
Social Mrs. Rose Sadler

We are sorry to report that our former Secretary, Mr. Frank Boucher, has been confined to hospital. An earlier Secretary, Mrs. Sybil Bateman, is now settled in England.

Most of the meetings in the past year have been devoted to a study of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, using several translations in conjunction with *The Yoga of the Bhagavad-Gita* by Sri Krishna Prem.

One of the highlights of the year was the showing of the film, "How Many Lifetimes", attended by 150 people.

The White Lotus Day meeting was devoted to readings both about H.P.B. and those she herself had suggested be read on this occasion. Our President, Mrs. Dorothy Armstrong, elaborated on the symbol of the Lotus using a fascinating demonstration to illustrate her theme.

In September of this year we welcomed an unheralded visitor from Toronto Lodge, Mr. Laszlo Sima. As well as bringing greet-

ings to Victoria Lodge, he invited our President to make a tape recording of greetings from our Lodge to the North American Theosophical Students' Conference in Toronto. Mr. Sima also gave an informal talk on Tarot cards—their origin and the significance of their symbols and how these are related to Theosophical studies.

At first glance it might appear that Victoria Lodge remains static. However, it is reasonable to suppose that through regular Lodge meetings, as well as through individual members, contacts are made and lines thrown out which reach some known, some unknown travellers whose ultimate aim is to find Truth.

Mollie Yorke
Secretary

YULE AND NOEL

The supreme message of the Yule is that we have been given, deep within the confines of our own natures, a divine babe of consciousness to raise from infancy to the fulness of the stature of his godly nature. His coming has linked us with the skies, for he is a child of celestial kingliness. Hence it is that the dominant note of Christmas joyousness is the uniting of our earthly voices with the choirs of heaven. Those choirs are chanting halleluias in jubilation over the gift of heaven to earth; on her part earth must lift her voice to hail in utter joy the advent of her divine visitant from the empyrean. So the Yule resounds with the strains of "angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold;" of hosts of heavenly citizens caroling "Peace on earth, good-will to men." And, in the deepest sense of its sublime connotation, the symbolism of angelic hosts filling the skies of Christmas-time with soul-lifting music must be translated psychically into the realities of surges of mystical sweetness sweeping through the upper areas of the human soul. For the angelic voices that man can hear are the echoes in his own consciousness of the outpouring of divine radiations of Love and Light from the mind of God.

—Alvin Boyd Kuhn

SUMMER SCHOOL, ENGLAND

JULY-AUG., 1971

With Fall comes new ideas: new plans of action, new programmes of work, new courses of study; and the zest to accomplish such new goals is born from memories of bohemian summer days.

One such beautiful memory I shall cherish from this summer's experiences is the day I spent at Summer School in England. Of course any time spent with fellow Theosophists in the mutual pursuit of Theosophy should be a great source of inspiration, and this was no exception.

From the moment I entered the grounds of Nottingham University there was a wonderful atmosphere of peace. In walking along the winding pathways among ivy-clad buildings and well-kept lawns, reflecting so well the "care" that Geoffrey Farthing mentioned later in his talk as being significant in living theosophically, there came the realization that life's shabbier aspects never touch the real self. That self dwells here in this feeling of harmony with the grassy hills and bushes of azacaeas running wild.

The most remarkable thing though was meeting new friends and learning of activities in the English Lodges in exchange for details of our Lodge at Toronto. Everyone was delighted to hear about our new building and the fresh energy it seems to have aroused in our older members, which in turn has been responsible for bringing in many new young members. The world over, there is an interest in the young and the growing spiritual awareness that is apparent in young music, poetry and art forms.

Unfortunately I just missed seeing our President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, who had been speaking in the early morning, but his presence could still be felt, and his words had made a deep impact on his listeners.

There was a lecture by Mrs. Nan Walker, who is an active worker in the Library of the London Headquarters, and later she led an interesting, informal discussion group which formed beside the French windows

as dark rain clouds gathered outside. Amongst many other subjects she spoke about her friendship with students of C. W. Leadbeater. This was my greatest thrill, meeting people who had known personally these early pioneers of the Theosophical movement. Miss Martin, a beautifully refined elderly lady with a delectable twinkle in her eyes, reminded of the time as a girl she spoke with H.P.B.

Perhaps some day I shall be able to tell my sons, and so pass on with the flow of life the personal touch which, like the mountain spring, refreshes and re-energizes on the upward climb.

In the late afternoon, as the sun came out again after the storm, Mr. Geoffrey Farthing gave a talk entitled "Living Theosophy", in which he attempted to sum up into a concise bundle the whole theme of the week's study. He approached the subject from three angles: 1. the science of life, 2. living theosophically, 3. the individual as

living; reaching the conclusion of man's responsibility for himself and the necessity of controlling thoughts and feelings which affect the psychic atmosphere, and so to reach self realization.

After supper we were invited to be guests of the Nottingham Lodge for tea and cakes and entertainment: a touch of brilliance and a touch of humour, all adding to the magic of a summer memory. I was reminded of Kahlil Gibran's lovely words in *The Prophet*:

"And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures. For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."

I hope that I came away from Summer School with a little of scholarly acquirements, but I do know I gained a certain warmth in the heart that comes from true comradeship born of the spirit.

—Joan Sutcliffe

THE NEW REFORMATION

ALVIN BOYD KUHN

(Continued from page 79)

One of the finest histories of Christianity is that of Dean Milman, written perhaps a century and a half ago. Along with most others, he deals with the so-called "pious frauds" perpetrated *en masse* by the over-ardent promulgators of the faith in those early centuries.

As previously indicated, these were literary frauds, the concoction of stories purporting to be accounts of miracles and prodigies of extraordinary character, all designed to underwrite the Christian movement with the evidence of divine authority. What is notable about this is what it reveals of the peculiar disposition of the human mind when obsessed by the hypnotization of religion. An end sanctified by such an obsession is always apologized for and just-

ified because of its assumed divine character. As for Christianity, this tendency, so unctuously developed in those early centuries, was the origin of that policy which has manifested its operation to extreme degree in the history of this religion, now known as Jesuitry—the end justifies the means. If your motive is sufficiently pious any means are justified to attain your desired ends, no matter how heinous. This is what nerved devout religionists inspired by the love of the gentle Jesus to gouge out eyes, cut out tongues, wrench limbs from torsos, burn and behead the thousands of those who used reason instead of hypnotized faith and ventured to differ.

We are accused of "prejudice" if we are nasty enough to register our revulsion at

this sort of thing. It is one of the signs of our inertness and palsy of the spirit today that there is too much palliation of these atrocities and too feeble an appreciation of the lesson they should have taught us.

Why should not a religion be suspect that has goaded its devotees to the perpetration of the foulest inhumanity of man to man ever recorded in history? Any form of idealism that engages the best sincerities and loyalties of the general mind for centuries is bound to do a great amount of what is considered "good." Nevertheless, the historic record of this particular faith is through and through one that sickens the heart and devastates the mind of any one who will read it. The fine Christian historian Dean Milman speaks of "the tyranny exercised over the human mind in the name of religion." All too often it has served as the excuse and the cloak behind which the lowest of human motive can exercise their beastliness.

I wish now to bring the readers of this essay to the consideration of an item of history in connection with the debate which I feel bears with the most cogent force upon the discussion of the historicity and significance of the life of Jesus. There may have been a man of this character about whose activities and claims the Gospel narratives were aggregated; for the sake of giving point to the significant item now to be mentioned, I am *assuming* that such a figure was in fact present in that first century. But in spite of many years of intensive study in this field it was only comparatively recently that I became cognizant of a most singular fact touching his history and his claims to Messiahship, and it is one that assuredly must weigh heavily in the judgment of any intelligent person on the whole question of his existence and his status.

I had not previously read Jewish history closely enough to have become acquainted with one particular item that shook me with new and startling realizations; I had for some reason assumed that the execution of Jesus by Judaeo-Roman power was

a lone event of its kind in Judaeo history. What was my amazement to read, only a few years ago, that his crucifixion was by no means a solitary instance of the kind; that it was but one of a continuing run of the same sort of thing, men coming forward one after the other in those times with the claim that they were the Messiah, preaching their doctrine and asserting their credentials; and that because in each case the agitation that always went with their pretence attracted a following and their activities conducted to political disorder, the Judaeo-Roman authority simply executed them one after the other.

Well, what of it? What is so exciting about this? Well, first because it proves that the general level of intelligence of that age had sunk so low that the idea of the purely spiritual concept of "Messiah" had been replaced by the personal concept to such a degree that the public was not too outraged by the announcement that such-and-such a man was the divine messenger in person. Otherwise no man could have been emboldened to make the claim as for himself.

But there is another and far stronger reason for my excitement about this. It reflects on what the Christian Church asks you and me to think about it. Of course, it would have us understand, these other claimants for the mantle of Messiahship were poor deluded idiots, crack-brained enthusiasts under a hallucination, psychotic cases fit for clinical observation. Only in the case of Jesus was the claim genuine. He was the true and only Son of God, the whole of God's nature manifest in the flesh. These other men were demented simpletons, but not Jesus; he was true, he was divine.

Has it ever occurred to the Christian mind to ask the question how any one would identify such a claimant as a weak human crackpot or as exclusively a divine being? Albert Schweitzer must have asked himself about this. Let us use our imagination constructively for a moment on this. Let us suppose that Jesus and these other

pretenders could have been lined up together before our eyes. By what signs could we assert that he was clearly distinguishable from the others? Not to be scurrilous about it, but simply to be realistically true to the picture, how would any one gazing at these men know what a cosmic Logos or even a universal Christos would look like? How would Galilean peasants know they were looking at this cosmic Logos and Christos when they gazed on this array of men claiming exclusive title to divinity? Were the others presenting an appearance of obvious lunacy and Jesus haloed with a nimbus of glorious light? How does one "spot" a cosmic Logos when one sees one? Are these questions illegitimate, irreverent, blasphemous?

And if we fall back on simple human common sense, is there not another and still more crucial question to be asked here? Is not any man of the human order to be put down as a demented crackpot who would in this or any age come forward and seriously ask the world to believe that he was the Messiah? Would not any man who could even assume that his claim to Messiahship would be believed be self-condemned to the general judgment of his insanity? Would we not right now pronounce any man crazy who seriously proclaimed himself as God's only Son? Is it or is it not a crazy idea for the human mind to think that the only manifestation that God deigned to make of his nature to his children on earth was registered solely through this one particular mortal? In what way had he distinguished himself from the generality of his race that he was chosen for this honour? Why also was the year 1 A.D. chosen in all the run of history to be the time of his manifestation?

Many a pious historian of Christianity has affirmed that God only entered human history by and through this projection of his life into the texture of world affairs. If this wild surge of infatuated presumption is true, then we have to ask why God had not cared to reveal his nature to this planet's

inhabitants until two thousand years ago. Why had he not thought us worthy of this mark of his attention and act of his love for us (God so loved the world . . .) until that dismal first century A.D.? Does it not show how bizarre, how freakish, how senseless is this whole series of presumptions underlying the Christian faith?

Most histories of Christianity also speculate as to when it was in the life and career of Jesus that *he* became unmistakably cognizant that *he* was the only-begotten Son of God, in the Christian theological sense. In this guessing contest the writers mostly pick the day of his baptism in the Jordan by John, his forerunner. Others suppose it was when he asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" and "Whom do you say that I am?" But what these historians and apparently no one else has ever realized is that this is not a question that has a rational right to be asked at all. Because it asks about a partly mental, partly factual event that never could have happened, never did happen and never will happen, in the way the question conditions it.

If it is seriously asked when Jesus recognized that he was God's only cosmic son, the answer is—never. For the substance of the question is something that never was and never could be a reality. No man of human flesh ever was or could be God's only Son in the ecclesiastical sense. The Scriptures themselves repudiate all possibility of it, for it declares several times that now are we all sons of God. That any one born of woman could be in any distinctive sense God's exclusive Son is close to the most devastating idea that ever afflicted the human brain. Ignorance alone gave it birth and vogue; intelligence has repudiated it at every turn. If Jesus lived, and at any moment of his career arrived at that conviction, it is that much positive evidence to the not unreasonable surmise that he was in fact just another in the list of those imbecile-minded psychopathic crackpots who came forward with their absurd Messianic claims.

And since the discussion swings back to this theme again, let those who no doubt regard it as sacrilegious to bring up so disillusioning a matter as this be reminded that the Gospels themselves debate the point and adduce what certainly must be considered the most likely true evidence in the case, given by those who should have known the man better than any others, in short the verdict of *his own mother and family!* For when he had acted the part of a lay preacher of the countryside in local synagogues and had announced that all the burden of worldwide ancient religious prophecy as to the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth "has been fulfilled this day in your eyes" in and through himself and his preachment, and the villagers naturally asked how he presumed to put himself in that cosmic category, his mother and brethren declared that he was a bit mentally off the beam.

This situation, which I have never seen outlined or broached in any book dealing with Christianity, opens wide the door to speculations, surmises and, yes, some quite definite conclusions as to the possibility that this faith that has dominated the West could be the most outrageous delusion that has ever crazed the reason of mankind. To prove that this Jesus did live and preach his asseveration of his divinity, may be the most horrendous self-indictment which the institution could perpetrate. Its future fate hangs now not only on the already badly frayed rope of doubt as to his actual existence, but on the infinitely weaker thread of the impossible assumption of his cosmic creative role.

The crucial issue narrows down to this: if the cult can not continue to hold its following firmly in the belief that this singular person embodied the force that populated the realm of space with the hosts of the suns and the galaxies, it seems doomed to perish. It is altogether likely that it will ere long be indubitably seen by all thinking persons that its existence down to the present has been perpetuated only by the force of a hallucination that has overpowered the

reason of Western humanity. It originated out of ignorance and its reign has been made possible only by the perpetuation of that same nescience. One must abandon one's reason to accept its postulates.

Not a soul that ever entered its communion has ever rationally understood how the shedding of a quart or two of this man's bodily blood (and the *water* that issued with it) centuries in the past could in the remotest way have been the *sole* means of its own salvation. Not a soul in all these centuries has been able to comprehend in any rational way how this momentary blood (and water) letting could satisfy the wrath of a despotic Father, so as to shift the guilt of sin from his earthly children to this sacrificial victim. This can bear repeating: no devotee of the cult has ever understood how this man's death exonerated him from the moral onus of his sins. Puzzled, bewildered at the asseveration of its truth by the all-dominant ecclesiastical power, the believer has simply stifled his reason and gone along with the general persuasion.

How avidly this power grabs at the mind of childhood! Too well knowing the susceptibility of the child mind to impressions and the durability of inculcated ideas, the cult gets in its mental soporific before the age of reason is able to subject it all to critical test. We have heard its unblushing boast: give me the child until he is seven and he is mine thereafter!

(To Be Continued)

THE MAHA CHOCHAN'S LETTER

(Continued from page 106)

an answer to the erroneous impression in Mr. Hume's mind of the "Ceylon work" as no *theosophy*).

The world in general and Christendom especially, left for two thousand years to the regime of a personal God, as well as its political and social systems based on that idea, has now proved a failure. If the

Theosophists say: We have nothing to do with all this; the lower classes and the inferior races (those of India for instance in the conception of the British) cannot concern us and must manage as they can—what becomes of our fine professions of benevolence, philanthropy, reform, etc.? Are these professions a mockery? And if a mockery, can ours be the true path? Should we devote ourselves to teaching a few Europeans, fed on the fat of the land, many of them loaded with the gifts of blind fortune, the rationale of bell-ringing, cup-growing, of the spiritual telephone and astral body formations, and leave the teeming millions of the ignorant, of the poor and despised, the lowly and the oppressed, to take care of themselves and of their hereafter as best they know how? Never. Rather perish the Theosophical Society with both its hapless founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism. That we, the devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self-sacrifice, of philanthropy, and divine kindness, as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, the man of men, Gautama Buddha, should ever allow the Theosophical Society to represent the *embodiment of selfishness*, the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea, my brothers.

Among the few glimpses obtained by Europeans of Thibet and its mystical hierarchy of "perfect Lamas," there is one which was correctly understood and described. "The incarnations of the Bodhisattva, Padma Pani, or Avalokitesvara and of Tsong-ka-pa and that of Amitabha, relinquish at their death the attainment of Buddhahood, *i.e.*, the *summum bonum* of bliss and of individual personal felicity, that they might be born again and again for the benefit of mankind" (R.D.).¹ In other words that they might be again and again subjected to misery, imprisonment in the

flesh, and all the sorrows of life, provided that by such a self-sacrifice repeated throughout long and dreary centuries, they might become the means of securing salvation and bliss in the hereafter for a handful of men chosen among but one of the many races of mankind. And it is we, the humble disciples of these perfect Lamas, who are expected to allow the T.S. to drop its noble title, that of the Brotherhood of Humanity, to become a simple school of psychology? No, no, good brothers, you have been labouring under the mistake too long already. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently, to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. But there is hardly a Theosophist in the whole Society unable to effectually help it by correcting the erroneous impressions of the outsiders, if not by actually propagating himself this idea. Oh for the noble and unselfish man to help us *effectually* in India in that divine task. All our knowledge, past and present, would not be sufficient to repay him. Having explained our views and aspirations. I have but a few words more to add.

To be *true*, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilized* races less than any other, have ever possessed the TRUTH. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles, right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism, are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were—but to these there *must* be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines prove their competence to offer it, then the world will be the first one to confess *that* must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives *truth* and nothing but the *truth*.

¹Rhys Davids

SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION

CONDUCTED BY GEOFFREY A. BARBORKA

Readers of The Canadian Theosophist are invited to participate in this feature by sending their questions c/o The Editors to be forwarded to Mr. Barborka.

Question. I am puzzled about the term Unmanifested Logos. How can a Logos be unmanifest?

Answer. It is a matter of understanding the idea associated with the term and not be caught up with the words. For instance, in connection with the word "idea": can you logically say that the "idea" pertains to manifestation; is it not rather something that is unmanifested? It may be manifested in a particular kind of way to me, but not at all manifest to you. But when I tell you what the idea represents, then it may become manifest to you—provided that you understand it. If you do not understand the concept that is presented, then it still is "unmanifest" to you.

Applying the concept to the three Logoi: the First Logos represents the idea; the Second Logos, the formulation and the means of expressing the idea through speech and words; the Third Logos, the expression of the idea by means of spoken words. And yet, even when the words have been spoken the First Logos, or idea, is still "unmanifest."

Pythagoras was the first to formulate the concept of the Logoi. He expressed it by means of numbers: the Monad, Duad, Triad. The Monad first appears and emanates the Duad; when the Monad and Duad have emanated the Triad, the Monad retires into silence and darkness. Hence the Monad is named the Unmanifested Logos; the Duad, the Unmanifest-Manifest Logos (forming the "bridge" between non-manifestation and manifestation); the Triad is the Manifested Logos. In further exposition: the Unmanifested Logos represents the divine potency for the coming into being of a cosmos; the Unmanifest-Manifest Logos, the Primordial Substance; the Man-

ifested Logos, the phenomenal world.

H. P. Blavatsky uses the third Stanza of Dzyan (sloka 1) to explain the Three Logoi. "The last vibration of the Seventh Eternity thrills through infinitude. The Mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus." (S.D. I, 28; I, 92 6-vol. ed.; I, 57 3rd ed.)

"'the seventh vibration' applies to both the First, and to the manifested Logos (the Third)—the first out of Space and Time, the second, when Time has commenced. It is only when 'the mother swells' that differentiation sets in, for when the first Logos radiates through primordial and undifferentiated matter there is as yet no action in Chaos. 'The last vibration of the Seventh Eternity' is the first which announces the Dawn, and is a synonym for the First or unmanifested Logos. There is no Time at this stage. There is neither Space nor Time when beginning is made; but it is all in space and Time, once that differentiation sets in. At the time of the primordial radiation, or when the Second Logos emanates, it is Father-Mother potentially, but when the Third or manifested Logos appears, it becomes the Virgin-Mother. The 'Father and the Son' are one in all the world Theogonies; hence, the expression corresponds to the appearance of both the unmanifested and the manifested Logos, one at the beginning, the other at the end, of the 'Seventh Eternity.'" (*Translations of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 73)

Question. Is the Central Point the same as the Unmanifested Logos?

Answer. Yes indeed, if by "Central Point" is meant that which is represented

in *The Secret Doctrine* as the second of the symbols described in the "Archaic Manuscript" on the opening page of the first volume of that work:

"An Archaic Manuscript—a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific unknown process—is before the writer's eye. On the first page is an immaculate white disk within a dull black ground. On the following page, the same disk, but with a central point. The first, the student knows to represent Kosmos in Eternity, before the reawakening of still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the Word in later systems. The point in the hitherto immaculate Disk, Space and Eternity in Pralaya, denotes the dawn of differentiation." (S.D. I, 1; I, 69 6 vol. ed.; I, 31 3rd ed.)

The potential Energy—described as still slumbering—resides in the Unmanifested Logos and is re-awakened by the "last vibration of the Seventh Eternity." The emanation of the Word signifies the manifestation of the Logos—the *manifestation* meaning the Third Logos. But care must be taken not to confuse the Central Point with the Point in the Mundane Egg.

Question. What is the difference between the Central Point and the Point in the Mundane Egg?

Answer. The difference between the concept of the Unmanifested Logos and the Manifested Logos. The Unmanifested Logos is depicted as a Point in the Circle, whereas the Manifested Logos is shown as a Triangle. H. P. Blavatsky herself explained the difference:

"Pythagoras speaks of the never manifested Monad which lives in solitude and darkness; when the hour strikes it radiates from itself ONE, the first number. This number descending, produces TWO, the second number, and TWO, in its turn, produces THREE, forming a triangle, the first complete geometrical figure in the world of form. It is this ideal or abstract triangle which is the Point in the Mundane Egg, which, after gesta-

tion, and in the third remove, will start from the Egg to form the Triangle. This is Brahma-Vach-Viraj in the Hindu Philosophy and Kether-Chochmah-Binah in the *Zohar*. The First Manifested Logos is the Potentia, the unrevealed Cause; the Second, the still latent thought; the Third, the Demiurgus, the active Will evolving from its universal Self the active effect, which, in its turn, becomes the cause on a lower plane." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 67)

Brahma-Vach-Viraj represents one of the Hindu trinities and is explained in this way. Brahma-Vach represents the Divine Androgyne. From the feminine aspect of the duality was produced Viraj—the male power, who then produced the first Manu. In the Kabbala Kether-Chochmah-Binah represents the first triad of the Sephiroth—emanating from Kether. But there is a slight difference in the potencies, for Kether is described as the Divine Androgyne; Chochmah as the masculine and active potency; Binah a female and passive potency.

Further, in regard to the Energy residing in the Central Point in the Circle and the emanations proceeding therefrom—resulting in the Second and Third Logoi—H. P. Blavatsky provided this paragraph:

"To the Occultist and Chela the difference made between *Energy* and *Emanation* need not be explained. The Sanskrit word 'Shakti' is untranslatable. It may be Energy, but it is one that proceeds through itself, not being due to the active or conscious will of the one that produces it. The 'First-Born,' or Logos, is not an Emanation, but an Energy inherent in and co-eternal with Parabrahman, the One. The *Zohar* speaks of emanations, but reserves the word for the seven Sephiroth emanated from the first three—which form one triad—Kether, Chochmah and Binah. As for these three, it explains the difference by calling them 'immanations,' something inherent to and coeval with the subject postulated, or in other words, 'Energies.'" (S.D. V, 213 6-vol. ed.; III, 208 3rd ed.)

BOOK REVIEWS

Tao Teh King, by Lao Tzu. A tentative translation from the Chinese by Dr. Isabella Mears. First Edition 1922, reprinted 1971 by the Theosophical Publishing House, London, England. 105 pp. Price 65p.

Tao, a poetic version of the *Tao Teh Ching* of Lao Tsze by Charles H. Mackintosh. First Edition 1926, reprinted 1971 as a Quest Book Miniature by the Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. 79 pp. Price \$1.00.

The first translation I ever read of the *Tao Teh King* impressed me more than any other since, and by far. Unfortunately, I have never been able to find a copy since.

The one I saw belonged to a young student from Szechwan Province. Circumstances had thrown us together as shipmates and, unlikely as it seems for two matelots to spend their off-watch hours philosophizing, we used to discuss Lao Tzu's famous work (he knew the original well) and other Chinese classics.

Looking back, I am grateful for our friendship and the knowledge it brought to me. The *Tao Teh King* is deceptively simple. A good guide is helpful, an inspiring translation essential, if one is to explore its depths.

I must honestly say that neither Isabella Mears' nor Charles Mackintosh's translations appeal to me, and if one or the other had been my introduction to this classic twenty-five years ago I doubt if they would have stimulated my interest in Taoism as did the elusive first-mentioned.

The Mackintosh translation is in verse. But he is no Edwin Arnold and his poetry fails to transmit Lao Tzu's subtle abstractions. Mears is better but her lines cling doggedly to the page. Both are handicapped with a "western" outlook. The *Tao Teh King* must be approached with an open mind; to try to make it fit into our traditional values is an impossible task.

It might be wondered why two Theosophical Publishing Houses have reprinted

these two versions almost simultaneously. However, where translations are concerned, no objection can be made to duplication. No one version is likely to please all, and no serious student should restrict his study to one.

—Ted G. Davy

☆ ☆ ☆

Many Paths To God, by Ruby L. Radford. A Quest Book published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A. 137 pp. Price \$3.95.

Comparative religion is a popular area of study today and this recent work by the late Miss Radford, a Theosophist, is a welcome addition to the available literature. Although primarily intended for young adults, the book will be of value to older readers as well, either as a general introduction to the various world faiths or as a concise "refresher" course on them.

Twelve world religions, still extant, are outlined here. A chapter is devoted to each of the major faiths: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, while the remaining religions of Taoism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Shintoism and the Baha'i Faith receive lesser attention. The major religious teachers are all cited and their principal teachings simply stated. At the end of each chapter, a helpful bibliography is given. A number of illustrations, primarily of places of worship, accompany the text.

Although not a profound study, the book certainly has its merits. In the concluding chapter, "New Horizons", the author notes how relatively new organizations like The Theosophical Society and the World Council of Churches "are doing much to bring people into harmony and to overcome prejudices and racial hatreds".

—Richard Sattelberg

CORRECTION

The correct postal address of the publishers of *Mme Blavatsky Defended* (C.T. July/Aug. 1971) should be: Point Loma Publications, Inc. P.O. Box 9966, Pacific Beach, Calif. 92109, U.S.A.—Eds.

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