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N. SRI RAM
1889 - 1973

N. SRI RAM

Mr. N. Sri Ram, President of the Theosophical Society, died of a heart attack at 6:45 p.m. on April 8, 1973.

Born in 1889 in Thanjavur, South India, Mr. Sri Ram graduated from Madras University in 1909. A year earlier he had become a member of the Theosophical Society. His father, Mr. Nilakanta Sastry, was a devoted Theosophist and a person of great scholarship in Sanskrit and Hindu scriptures. Mr. Sri Ram married Srimati Bhagirathi in 1908 and had two sons and a daughter, the latter being Mrs. Radha Burnier, who is now General Secretary of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society. Mrs. Sri Ram passed away in 1968.

Mr. Sri Ram worked hard on behalf of the Society throughout his 65 years of membership. He filled many offices, including those of Treasurer, Recording Secretary and International Vice-President (1942-46). He was also Deputy to the President for the administration of the Adyar Estate at various times and was acting President on the passing of Dr. G. S. Arundale in 1945, until Mr. C. Jinarajadasa was elected President in 1946.

Mr. Sri Ram was elected International President of the Theosophical Society in 1953, succeeding Mr. Jinarajadasa. Subsequently, he was twice successively re-elected in 1960 and 1967, and had filled the office of President continuously for 20 years when he died.

Nearly every year since 1946 Mr. Sri Ram had travelled and lectured for the Society in many countries. He visited Canada several times.

In addition to his work for the Society Mr. Sri Ram had a distinguished writing career. He was Assistant Editor of Dr. Besant's newspaper, *New India*, and also of the weekly journal *Commonweal*, edited by her. Later he was Co-Editor of the weekly journal *Conscience*, edited by Dr. Arundale. He edited *The Theosophist* from 1953 to 1973.

Mr. Sri Ram was the author of a number of books, including *Thoughts for Aspirants*,

The Human Interest, *An Approach to Reality*, *Life's Deeper Aspects*, and *Seeking Wisdom*. He contributed a large number of articles to *The Theosophist*, and also conducted the "On The Watch Tower" column in that magazine for several years. In 1951 the Subba Row medal was awarded to Mr. Sri Ram for his writings.

From 1929 to 1933 Mr. Sri Ram was Private Secretary to Dr. Besant. He served as Chairman of the New India League, which succeeded the Home Rule League, established by Dr. Besant.

The President was attending office regularly (which for him meant at least six days a week) until ten days before his passing on. Plans had been made for a visit to Indonesia in the middle of April. In the last week of March, however, he was experiencing a feeling of excessive tiredness, and his doctors advised him to rest. No specific cause for the fatigue was found, but it was felt that the President, with his devotion to duty, had been over-exerting himself. Nevertheless, his condition was not considered such as to cause anxiety. He attended office on the morning of March 29, but felt too tired to return in the afternoon. He remained at home on the following days. Papers were sent to him for his attention, and this continued until two days before the end.

It appeared as if the President was regaining strength but on Saturday, April 7, his condition became worse. He seemed to improve again on the morning of the 8th but his condition deteriorated again in the afternoon and a heart attack was diagnosed. There was a minimum of suffering. His daughter, Mrs. Radha Burnier, and sister, Dr. N. Sivakamu, were by his side.

Mr. Sri Ram's mother, Mrs. Seshammal, who is 101 years old, was by the body of her son until it was removed for cremation on Monday, April 9, as also were his brothers and sisters. The cremation took place at the Garden of Remembrance, which is situated by the side of the Adyar River.

WHITE LOTUS DAY

H.P.B.'S MESSAGE AND MISSION OF RIGHT ETHICS

Devotion, Sacrifice and Duty

EVA DE LISLE

Why do we meet, year after year, to commemorate the anniversary of the passing of H.P.B.? We call her our teacher, beloved and revered, and all can understand why we, her pupils, should gather on this day with a feeling of gratitude

We do not follow a person — as it might seem when we speak a lot about H.P.B. — H.P. Blavatsky represents to us a fact in Nature, and that fact has to have a name. The fact is valuable, because it points to the Source of the Message. If we look upon H.P.B. as something more than an ordinary woman, as a Being of power and knowledge, who had to step down to communicate with us in order to enable us to grasp at least a small part of the great message of Theosophy, then it will be understood why we speak of her in terms of the greatest love and the highest reverence.

What is it that we want and can share on White Lotus Day? Perhaps it is Devotion or Bhakti which we not only find in her magnificent writings, but also in the incidents in her life shown to us both by precept and by example. What kind of Devotion, Bhakti, did H.P.B. teach and herself practice all her life? It is the devotion which wells up in the heart as love for all men, as love wells up in the mother's bosom for her first-born babe. It is the devotion which yearns to express itself in sacrifice and service, as the father toils in service to nourish and educate his son. That devotion for orphaned humanity finds ways and means to gain knowledge so that service may be efficient and love fully

intelligent. Full of that high devotion, H.P.B. served the human race as a whole — served every continent and every country. To express that devotion she fitted herself by acquiring knowledge so that her service might be real and lasting. Twenty long years did she travel and study to obtain true knowledge, and it is by the aid of her knowledge, real and stupendous, that she teaches us to handle our own difficulties, our moral pain and mental ignorance. Her books and articles offer to us that mighty knowledge at which the scholar wonders; but it is her life, and especially the events and incidents of her twenty years of active service which bring to the server inspiration and strength to practice and to act. On White Lotus Day, we salute her with reverence for the precept and the example of true Devotion which she offered us. It is we who want to imbibe a little of that Bhakti so that we may become liberal cosmopolitans like her. We want to become brothers to all men everywhere as H.P.B. proved herself to be.

H.P.B., as her students call her, is not dead; she lives in a twofold manner; first as a powerful individuality which only her superiors could truly gauge, and the like of which appears in the world of men only at rare intervals; and secondly, in her message, her inspiration, the energy of her life and work, which she left behind to instruct, energize and inspire us. As an expert navigator she taught by precept and by example how every man should direct his own ship of life. Not keeping it a secret, she has left behind her the chart of this

boundless Ocean, also a compass which reveals directions, and the manual which contains rules and instructions for the proper use of both.

The message H.P.B. left for us was also a message of sacrifice, born of compassion, of understanding, and the realization of that law of laws, the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinctions of any kind whatsoever, because the same Self energizes the heart of all. H.P.B.'s mission was not only to deliver her message by precept but also to show forth in her life what true sacrifice meant. Born in a noble family, she sacrificed a life of ease and comfort to tread the "Path of Woe". At the bidding of him whom she called her Master, she lived a life of wandering and hardship, travelling up and down several continents at a time when travel was by no means an easy task. These were years spent in searching for the bread of life, not for herself, but for hungry, starving humanity; in learning at the feet of those great ones whose age-old philosophy she was to give out to a world that had forgotten it; and in preparing for the life of service she was to live. She gave up her all, and laid herself, soul, mind and body, in the world's mire so that men and women walking over her might enter the realm of the Masters with which she was so familiar and from which she had come to the world of men as an exile, bringing the priceless message of the truth that inspires and instructs by the language of love which is strength.

The central idea of her message lies in these two words — compassion and sacrifice. To those who have knowledge, strength, power, her message is: give freely to those who do not possess, lest out of that higher selfishness which springs from the non-use of spiritual possessions, the world would remain plunged in darkness. She taught that only when those who have, sacrifice for the sake of those who have not, can there be ushered in a new society, a new order of life, a new kingdom of righteousness, where the spiritual

socialism of brotherhood would reign supreme and the law of love operate. Hers was the message of brotherhood of all at the highest level, to be realized not through mass movements or through mass proselytism, but through the self-reform of individuals who come out, one by one, from among the herd of men, by the power of inner conversion, the power of sacrifice.

She taught the lofty metaphysics of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* because it is not possible to be truly compassionate and self-sacrificing when our minds are clouded with the lower knowledge that begets egotism, when our hearts are full of petty loves which shut out the greater love for the human race as a whole. To purify our minds and hearts it is necessary to see the one Self in all beings. As we go about, let us hear the music of Krishna's flute in every voice, every sound that is heard; see the powers of the Divine in the activities of every man, woman and child; behold the mighty magic of Prakriti, the wonderful panorama of life, dispassionately — as the Immortal Self. Let us pour out the blessing of loving sacrifice in every action of our life, in every word spoken, in every thought sent out, in every emotion expressed.

That is not possible unless a life of purity is lived in our everyday affairs. Through the study of H.P.B.'s philosophy we gain for ourselves a little of those waters of life which cleanse and purify, and are helped to kindle in the inner chamber that light belonging to the world of the Masters whom H.P.B. represented. That is the great inspiration of H.P.B.'s life. The mighty sacrifice of love that she poured out all her life speaks to us through every book, every line that she ever wrote. Her voice is audible and potent today for ears that are ready and willing to listen. To see that life, to hear that voice, we must do what H.P.B. and all the Great Ones do — sacrifice all that we have and all that we are on the altar of Human Service.

"With each morning's awakening", she says, "try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self. TRY is the

battle-cry taught by the teacher to each pupil. Naught else is expected of you. One who does his best, does all that can be asked." H.P.B. gives us through these words what we may well take as our motto on White Lotus Day: TRY. Our best is all that is expected of us, but what IS our best? None can determine it until he has tried.

Whatever the stage we are at, for each the taking of the step nearest to him is what matters most. None can do his best in Masters' Work, unless he performs ALL his tasks the best he can, no matter how insignificant they may seem.

The student also has a chance to contact H.P.B.'s mind and heart in a different way than through study. Of all the aspects of her marvellous message, the one which deals with the Ethics of Theosophy is the most important because the effects produced by it are more lasting, more permanent. The metaphysics of Theosophy reveal to the student Universal Principles, the laws of nature, the world process called evolution and his own place in the scheme of things. These may be found in H.P.B.'s *Secret Doctrine* and can be found, in one way or another, in all Theosophical writings; we call them the Three Fundamental Principles of Theosophy. All these have to be applied to himself, by himself. The value of study is great, but knowledge acquired by the brain, unless assimilated through practice and application by the Ego, parts company with the man on the threshold of Devachan. Without study, however, practice is not possible, for study yields the material to be applied.

The ferment of her teachings is working in the world. The ideas she set in motion act as magnets and those whose minds and hearts are ready to receive them, are drawn to them like bits of metal. The

inquirer in time becomes a student and the student grows into a devotee.

The Mission of H.P.B. is the Mission of Theosophy; to energize men and women to fight the Holy War against their own senses and passions; to inspire students to become victorious disciples. To obtain knowledge is to set the mind free; to practice Theosophy, is to set the heart free. And it is the free mind and the free heart that can fully serve orphan humanity. That is the Mission and Message of H. P. Blavatsky.

What is it that is most needed in Theosophy? H.P.B. says: nuclei of earnest students of the teachings of Theosophy; their earnestness is measured by their sincerity in practicing the virtues, the Paramitas, which implies the observance of a standard of morals that strikes the real imagination and awakens the heart aspiration towards the soul growth of other people. Ethics without philosophical knowledge lose their sustaining power; it is knowledge which freshens the mind and gives to ethics a dynamic energization to continuous elevation.

H.P.B.'s message combines in the most accurate proportion ethics and philosophy, or morality and metaphysics. The nuclei of student practitioners who make adequate use of this dual and well-proportioned message are the saviours of mankind in this day and generation.

These are the thoughts which arise most naturally as we think about White Lotus Day and contemplate on the conditions of the world and the influence that Theosophical students can exert. "Each member a centre", said Mr. Judge once, and each theosophist has the privilege and responsibility of becoming a living centre of beneficence, radiating the purity and intelligence gathered by the exercise of right morality and the acquirement of correct knowledge.

What better preparation for the next White Lotus Day can there be than to make the resolve that in the coming year each will learn to use the talisman named Duty. Let hopes for progress, desire for service,

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and all else be made subservient to the performance of duties — the small plain duties of life — but duties performed with the knowledge of theosophical principles, applying that very high standard of morality to each act. Thus will the soul be educated and strengthened. The student has to perceive the real inwardness of the saying that “the Chohan in his place, and the atom in its place, do what they can, no more”. This perception results from the discharge of one’s own duties by the light of the Message of the Masters of H.P.B. In the *Voice of the Silence* she tells us: “Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. . . If Sun

thou can’st not be then be the humble planet. Aye, if thou art debarred from flaming like the noonday Sun upon the snow-capped mount of purity eternal, then choose, O Neophyte, a humbler course.”

H.F.B. taught us many doctrines, among the most important ones are the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation; but she taught them in order that men might dissociate themselves from all forms of doctrine, and reach “Alaya’s Self”. There is no older doctrine than the one H.P.B. lived daily: the Doctrine of Divine Compassion, of Universal Brotherhood.

— From a *White Lotus Day* program, May 7, 1972

A VISIT WITH THE DALAI LAMA

JOY MILLS

As a contribution to the preservation of Tibetan culture and philosophy, the Theosophical Publishing House at Wheaton obtained the world publication rights to *The Opening of the Wisdom Eye* by H. H., the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, now in exile in India. This publishing achievement led to the suggestion that during our recent visit to India, Helen Zahara and I arrange a visit to Dharamsala (sometimes spelled Dharmasala or Dharmsala) in order to meet His Holiness. Miss Zahara, of course, had had considerable correspondence on publishing matters with the secretary to the Dalai Lama, Mr. Tenzin Geyche, and through his office an appointment was made.

An experience of such a nature as our trip to Dharamsala, the tour of the Tibetan refugee center in that north Indian mountain community, and our visit with His Holiness deserves to be shared, and therefore, in the belief that many members will find it of interest, I should like to relate something of our adventure.

Through friends in India, most of the

preliminary arrangements for travel to Dharamsala had been made. Following our arrival in Delhi, after the long hours of the flight from New York, we rested briefly before going to the bazaar to purchase bedding — a thin mattress and two blankets — for the overnight train journey from Delhi to Pathankot. A ride in an Indian train must be experienced to be fully appreciated: our “first class” tickets entitled us to a bare unheated compartment, with European and Indian toilet facilities at the end of a corridor. While Helen spread out her bedding on the lower bunk, I clambered to the top bunk where my mattress and blankets were unrolled; no undressing was done because we needed every bit of clothing we had on, or with us, to ward off the cold of a December night! The closed and locked windows failed to keep out the chill wind and the sooty black dust which it carried with it. Dawn revealed the fact that we were one hour behind schedule but, eventually, at one stop, tea and the semblance of a breakfast were brought in.

Arriving in Pathankot, we hired a car for

the nearly three hour drive to Dharamsala. Anyone who has traveled in India will know that most roads are narrow and quite often crowded, not only with pedestrians, but also with bicycles, buses, bullock carts, goats, cows, camels, dogs, and a variety of other animals and conveyances. The Indian driver proceeds by a combination of horn-blowing and skillful maneuvering, somehow managing to escape collision, collapse, and catastrophe. The usual hazards of the road in India were complicated on the drive to Dharamsala by the fact that, very soon after leaving Pathankot, the road began to wind uphill into the mountains, with numerous hairpin turns obscuring any vision of oncoming traffic. Dharamsala, a hill station in the foothills of the Himalayas, is gloriously situated against a backdrop of snow-clad peaks; here our accommodations had been arranged at the Government Tourist Bungalow, where again we made use of our "bedroll," since only the bare necessities are provided the "guest."

The following morning, a young Tibetan, Lobsang Wangchuk, who had escaped from Tibet in the great refugee exodus of 1959 and had been educated in India (he now holds a degree in political science), arrived at our Tourist Bungalow to serve as our guide for the day. Higher up the mountainside we were driven, along a road that had no guardrail or other protection against the precipitous cliffs. Our first stop was at the newly erected Central Tibetan Library and Archives, where we were introduced to Gyatsho Tshering, the acting director. (Later we were to meet Prof. Thubten Norbu, brother of the Dalai Lama and Director of the Library, with whom we had a long visit regarding publications and other matters.) We were shown through the rooms that house the large collection of manuscripts brought out of Tibet and on which translation teams are now working, the classrooms where lessons on the "Dharma" are being held, and other features of the library. A particularly interesting item was the Tibetan typewriter,

the first of its kind ever constructed, manufactured by Remington Rand of Calcutta; this machine will obviously greatly facilitate the work of the library and make possible xerographic copying of many of the Tibetan works.

From the library we drove on up the mountainous road to a much higher elevation where there is located the Tibetan Children's Village, established in 1960 under the personal direction of Mrs. Tsering Dolma, elder sister of His Holiness, and now, since her death, conducted by His Holiness' younger sister, Mrs. Pama Gyalpo. Here some 800 children, between the ages of seven months and 15 years, are housed, cared for, and educated. Perhaps the most notable impression of our visit to the Children's Village was the happiness of the children; indeed, Tibetan children smile so easily and quickly that one cannot but respond warmly to their friendliness.

Again the drive continued upward, to the area known as Upper Dharamsala (altitude about 5400 feet), where nearly 2000 Tibetans have nested huts among pine trees and established second homes for themselves in an environment nostalgically Tibetan in character. The Tibetan village, with its interesting bazaar, clean streets, and charming shops, is, so far as the residents are concerned, the "legitimate Lhasa," for wherever "Yeshi Norbu" (Precious One) resides, there is the Holy City.

In the centre of the village is a stupa, or Buddhist Temple, with its prayer wheels in almost constant motion. Here also is an astro-medical center, where astrological computations and Tibetan calendars are prepared, Tibetan medicine (compounded of herbs, minerals, and animal bones) made, and a small hospital maintained for those undergoing Tibetan medical treatment. Nearby is the handicraft center, where some 80 skilled weavers work at producing the beautiful hand-woven carpets for which Tibet has long been famous. In the village we paused for lunch at a tiny Tibetan restaurant; such a delicious meal,

reminiscent in some ways of Chinese cooking, for it included an egg soup and a delectable noodle and vegetable dish!

A further drive brought us to the large compound which includes the Dalai Lama's residence, the central cathedral or temple, and the Tibetan Secretariat. We visited first the large temple, adjacent to which are living quarters for about 70 monks. Within the temple, monks were gathered for the chanting of the Kanjur and Tanjur; each of these famous works takes about six months to read or chant through. In the temple are a number of relics and mementos brought out of Tibet, as well as the three main images of the Buddha, the Guru Padma Sambhava and Avolokit-severa. In the small room used by His Holiness is one of three most sacred statues of the Lord Buddha, a small exquisite statue brought out of Tibet at the time of the "exile." Beside the little statue is another, equally exquisite, of Tara, Goddess of Mercy. On the wall is the first Tibetan written letter.

Moving to the residential buildings, we were met by the Dalai Lama's secretary, Mr. Tenzin Geyche, with whom Helen had preliminary discussions concerning publications and other matters. As Helen and Mr. Geyche talked together, we were suddenly aware of a movement of people outside in the courtyard; a large group of pilgrims, mainly Bhutanese women in colorful native dress, had been admitted for the afternoon's "public audience" with the Dalai Lama. When His Holiness appeared on the verandah, just one step above the courtyard, the pilgrims placed white scarves on the pavement before them, bowing or prostrating in reverence; one sensed at once the simplicity and gentleness of His Holiness as he motioned to them to place the scarves, now blessed, about their own shoulders and then continued to speak to them for several minutes.

Soon it was time for our appointment. Ushered into a simply furnished living room, we were greeted cordially, with a

firm western handshake, by His Holiness, who put us at once at ease with his friendly and warm manner. At the outset of the conversation, he spoke mainly in Tibetan, with his secretary serving as translator. Our initial discussions concerned his writings, his interest in visiting the United States, and other topics generally related to the business aspect of our visit. Tea in the English style, served in delicate china cups, was brought in as we continued our conversation, the discussion turning more and more to points of philosophy, questions on Tibetan Buddhism, the work and writings of H.P. Blavatsky and her Teachers. Increasingly, as he answered our questions, elucidating the "Dharma," His Holiness spoke directly to us in English, exhibiting a fluency in the language, although occasionally he would turn to his secretary for the translation of some technical or philosophical word. What emerged from our visit was the realization that we were privileged to sit and talk with a rare individual, one not only highly educated in the philosophy of Tibetan Buddhism, but deeply compassionate, spiritually reflective, vitally concerned with human problems, yet withal a man of gentle humor, well-read on current world affairs, and keenly interested in all that was going on about him. He laughed easily and smiled frequently, mingling serious discussion with moments of lighter conversation.

Our visit concluded, we retraced our steps: the return to the Tourist Bungalow for a second night, the drive down to Pathankot, the train journey to Delhi, and so on to Adyar. Never to be forgotten, however, was the day spent among the Tibetans in Dharamsala and the memorable afternoon visit with His Holiness, Tenzin Gyatsho, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, a man who is not only head of state in exile, but an individual whose sympathy for the human condition would make him at home anywhere in the world

— *The American Theosophist* March, 1973

WE CAN HELP

MOLLIE GRIFFITH

When we look at this world in the present age and see and hear what is going on through television, radio and the newspapers, it is difficult not to be discouraged. So many principles for which our society stands are being violated and one often hears people say "What can we do about it? The whole thing is too big"

So it might be interesting to remind ourselves of two things. First, what do we consider to be the object of life? Secondly, what is the object of the Theosophical Society? On the surface, these questions may seem fairly obvious, but a deeper understanding of them will give us a wider perspective in this present confusing world situation.

The purpose of life is a very large subject, and one that we may not yet fully understand but we are firmly convinced of one thing and that is, that life does have a purpose and our aim should be to cooperate with it. According to Theosophy, which we believe to be a recent interpretation of the age-old Wisdom Religion, the object of life is growth, or in other words, the bringing into expression the inner powers and possibilities latent within the various units of life. A flower developing from a tiny seed, or an oak tree from an acorn are well known examples of this process in the vegetable kingdom.

We are also taught that life is divided into kingdoms or hierarchies, each with its own place in the overall scheme of things, and with its own work to perform through evolution.

As human beings we are beginning to realize that all units of life, however seemingly insignificant, affect all others. With this conviction comes a greater feeling of responsibility.

This is the great teaching of the Oneness of Life. But beyond the human kingdom is the super-human kingdom consisting of

many degrees of those whom we call Masters, or Elder Brothers. They have already passed through the human stage of evolution, and having risen above it, have earned the right to proceed on their evolutionary journey inwards and upwards.

However, there are some who remain in touch with their younger brothers who are struggling through the dangers and difficulties of their earthly pilgrimage. Among these advanced beings are our own Masters who were the inspiration for the formation of the Theosophical Society. At present there is a lot of talk everywhere about Masters and Adepts, and we meet and read about people who claim to be in close touch with them, or even claim to be chelas, and we wonder if what they say is true, why do they publicize it? To us, the Masters stand as an inspiration, as they work in harmony with the great forces of light as opposed to the forces of darkness, with the wisdom they have acquired through many lives of self-sacrifice and self-development.

It is only natural that when we realize this, we should want to be of some use in this struggle, which has to be fought not only in the outer world but in the inner world of each one of us. In fact, the outcome of the one depends on the outcome of the other. Obviously, to be of real use, we have to do a great deal of work on ourselves. However, even now we can surely do something — or why are we members of the Theosophical Society?

Anyone who has collected money for charity runs across people who say that they can give so little that their contribution is hardly worthwhile. But they are always assured that even a quarter or ten cents will be a help, because a number of people giving a small sum adds up to something quite big.

HELEN VASANTA ZAHARA

1917 - 1973

The death of Helen Zahara on February 26, 1973, has deprived the Theosophical Society of one of its most active workers. She was born into a theosophical family in New Zealand and joined the Society in 1937. Most of her adult life was spent working for this organization.

In 1946 Miss Zahara went to the Society's international headquarters at Adyar to serve as secretary to the then President, C. Jinarajadasa. Shortly afterwards she was appointed to the important office of Recording Secretary. Her versatility was such that she took in her stride the responsibility of managing the Society's Diamond Jubilee Convention in 1950, when Adyar was host to a large number of delegates.

Helen Zahara first came to the United States in 1953. She served for two years at the headquarters of the T.S. in America, "Olcott", mostly in the capacity of Assistant Editor of *The American Theosophist*. In 1955 she was asked to tour the Central and South American Sections, and undertook to learn Spanish in order to lecture in that language. From 1957 to 1965 she served as General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Australia.

There then began what was to be the most dynamic phase of her theosophical career. She returned to the United States and, in January, 1966, was appointed coordinator of the Kern Foundation Programs. Among others these included the Quest Books and the production of two Quest films. Her accomplishments in the seven year period to her death are therefore a legacy to the Society and indeed to the public at large, because the programs were designed to have the widest possible impact.

In the same period she also served as Chairman of the American Section's Department of Education. But of all her activities she undoubtedly would have assigned a high priority to the Non-English

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The membership of the Theosophical Society is not vast, so it makes it all the more important that we do not depend entirely on our leaders but that we all try to do something to justify the faith of the Masters and the courageous self-sacrifice of H.P.B. herself. The heads of any organization need the co-operation of the whole staff, not only the members of the Board. Even a responsible office-boy can be a real asset!

So while trying to do what we can now, we may still ask ourselves what is it that prevents us doing more, and the answer is not difficult. It is surely egotism. Nevertheless, although the answer is easy the removal of the cause is not. We know that our Society was formed with the object of bringing understanding between the various races, religions and ideologies, and never was this more needed than at present. To be of help in this work, we too need understanding and the ability to listen and be aware of what is going on in the world around us, without making ourselves the centre of that world.

More important still, if we seek guidance where true guidance is, namely by the light of our own Higher Self, once more we have to listen and become aware, at the same time trying to clear away the mental and emotional debris which blocks the path of that light. Only when we attempt to do this, do we realize the strength and subtlety and even downright cunning of the personality. It is an opponent we cannot afford to underestimate, but one we are told when relegated to its rightful place, can become a powerful ally. There is a dramatic description of this process in *Through the Gates of Gold*, written down by Mabel Collins. In it she writes "Once force the animal into its rightful place and you find yourself in possession of a great force hitherto unsuspected." She adds, "Do not fancy it is easily done".

Like a gardener at the end of a season who says, "Next year I will do this or that," we who are getting old say "Next life I will

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NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Any organization fortunate to be served by such dedicated workers as N. Sri Ram and Helen Zahara is fortunate indeed. Both were exceptionally talented individuals; both were highly motivated to give their utmost to the Theosophical Society.

Mr. Sri Ram visited Toronto several times and his lectures always attracted large audiences. I well remember hearing him for the first time, in 1954, and how impressed I was with his talks. Although gentle by nature, his platform personality was confident and persuasive; he possessed an enviable command of the English language. As his numerous writings testify, his interests were wide-ranging, but whatever the subject he approached it as a humanitarian.

His principal function, however, was that of a leader. As President for over twenty years it was his task to guide the Society through the rapidly changing post-war era. By no means have these been easy years (either for the world or the T.S.) but he carried out his duties with cheerful resolution. Well-loved and respected throughout the Society, he ran unopposed in the last Presidential election, seven years ago.

* * *

Helen Zahara also was an inspiring colleague. I knew her only as well as a half-dozen brief meetings would allow; however, these were sufficient to reveal her selfless dedication to the Society, her absolute determination that the First Object was not compromised by the slightest degree, and the singularly energetic and efficient way in which she put her ideals into practice.

Helen attended the North American Theosophical Students' Conferences each year from 1969 to 1972 and was highly regarded by the Canadian delegates. She always participated to the full, and had much to contribute.

In a memorial address on February 27, Joy Mills, National President of the Theosophical Society in America, paid Miss Zahara a beautiful tribute. She said: "... Helen was a Theosophical activist to whom brotherhood was a way of life, compassion a deed of love, truth a practical experience."

* * *

A welcome visitor to Toronto in early April was Mrs. Ida Stephen, Secretary of the Canadian Federation. We were able to get together for an all-too-short meeting during which matters of mutual interest were discussed. This was our first meeting because last year, when I was in Vancouver, where she lives, Ida was out of town on vacation. In spite of the distance between our cities, it is to be hoped that we shall be able to meet more frequently in future. Such personal contact is very helpful in understanding problems.

It is my pleasure to convey to the Section greetings from the Canadian Federation given me personally by their Secretary. I know our members will be happy to join me in reciprocating this gesture of friendship and fraternity.

* * *

I wish to thank all those readers who sent copies of the July - August, 1972 issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*. We now have a sufficient number of clean copies that can be sent for binding.

* * *

The Spring Meeting of the General Executive of the T.S. in Canada was held in Toronto on April 8 with the following members present: Miss M. E. Seaton, Messrs. L. A. Dadswell, G. F. Gardiner and C. Weaver.

The Committee received a report on the fire damage to the Section office at 12 MacPherson Avenue. A satisfactory financial settlement had been reached with the insurance company, although some of the items lost were irreplaceable at any cost. It was decided to produce a new pamphlet for distribution to enquirers, and suggestions as to its nature will be

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General Secretary

TED G. DAVY

Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto Ont. M5W 1N4

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

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

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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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welcomed. A decision regarding the 1974 North American Theosophical Students' Conference was held over. It was decided to send a \$100 donation to the Non-English Publications Loan Fund in memory of Helen Zahara.

* * *

Readers wishing to contribute to the memory of Helen Zahara may send donations to the Non-English Publications

Loan Fund. Cheques, money orders, etc., should be made payable to The Theosophical Society in America and sent to P.O. Box 270, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, U.S.A.

Helen worked hard to make the Fund a success. There is a great need for Theosophical literature in languages other than English, and the Fund is a practical program which provides for the translation and publication of our books so that all countries may benefit.

* * *

Members' dues for the 1973-4 year should be paid by June 30. Lodge members are asked to pay through their Lodge; Members-at-Large remit direct to the General Secretary.

* * *

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

Member-at-Large. Mariano A. Avila.

T.G.D.

MONTREAL LODGE

Montreal Lodge reports a season of continued Theosophical study. The Tuesday meetings are felt to be vital and stimulating: the Lodge opens at 7:00 p.m. for a Members' meeting, and at 8:15 p.m. for the general public.

In March, to honour St. Patrick, a talk was given on "Ancient and Mystical Ireland" which was well attended. The Lodge recently welcomed a member of the Canadian Federation to its platform. A member of the Anthroposophical Society will also give a paper to the Lodge in the near future.

Other program plans include a talk by our Secretary, Jean Low, on "Atlantis". This will be given in a Discussion Group Centre in a large apartment complex in the city, and will enable us to bring Theosophy to many persons who otherwise would probably never hear of our teachings.

Spring is here in Montreal and the grass can be seen once more, showing us the perfection of Mother Nature.

Viola P. Law
President

TORONTO LODGE

The Annual Dinner which had to be postponed due to the fire in January, was held at 12 MacPherson Avenue, on Saturday, April 28. Some forty members and friends sat down to dinner at tables decorated with Mother Nature's gift of daffodils and tulips.

After the dinner a talented musical program was given in the auditorium by Miss Wild and her group and by Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe. Following the musical entertainment, Miss Ruth Playle showed slides and gave a commentary on her visit to Yugoslavia.

The regular Sunday evening lectures continue at the Lodge as well as the Sunday

morning Secret Doctrine Class. On Tuesdays at 8 p.m. there are classes in Occult Studies and Astrology and on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. a class on the Qabala and the Tarot.

ANNUAL PICNIC

The Annual Picnic for members and friends in Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo (and all convenient points) will be held on Saturday, June 16.

The usual picnic spot of former years is no longer available and the picnic lunch will be held at the Niagara Glen Park. This is a lovely spot with views of the Niagara Glen and Gorge. Afterwards, a visit to the Falls themselves will be arranged.

For Toronto members and friends a 'bus will be provided. It will leave 12 MacPherson Avenue at 9.30 a.m. Fare for adults will be \$4.00; for children \$2.00.

Tickets and information may be obtained from Mr. Alan Sutcliffe, Phone: (416) 762-6748.

SOME THOUGHTS ON REALITY AND ILLUSION

A. TYRO

I would like to try to show how it is that so many of us make the mistake of thinking that our world, the world we objectify as our own and which we accept as a reality, is no reality at all. The Eastern teachers look upon it as an illusion — *maya*, they call it. But this does not help us very much unless we can get some concept of what it means.

What is reality, and what is illusion in regard to it? If this world of ours is an illusion, then what or where is reality? Here is where we get into trouble. It is not too difficult to show the illusory aspect of our world, but to demonstrate its reality is another thing. However, perhaps we can approach it by trying to find out as much as we can about the illusory aspect.

Let us ask ourselves what constitutes our world in contradistinction to The World, which for the moment we may consider to be the reality. Our world is our conception of the real world. How do we conceive the real world? Through our five senses, surely. Is there any other way?

But what our senses portray to us has to be interpreted by our mind, and this is where the key to the matter lies. To penetrate into the intricacies of our minds, and all that is implied, is a monumental task not to be attempted head on. Let us first ask ourselves, what makes us think the way we do? Why do we react to circumstances the way we do? If we think about this we shall discover it is largely a

matter of habit, but of course not all of it. Apart from those aspects of our thinking that are intense and self-directed towards some particular problem, our thinking does follow along pretty well established lines.

Now, therefore, we have to ask ourselves why, or for what reasons have we come to establish these lines of thought. The answer is because we want it that way. This may not be immediately apparent but it will when the data has been well and honestly sifted through.

It resolves, then, to the conclusion that our world is that aspect of The World which is largely what we want it to be. We see The World through the veil of our prejudices, predilections and desires. If we are dishonest at heart, if we are selfish and given to self-indulgence, cruel and indifferent to the needs of others, we can never hope to know what The World is really like.

Our world is what we make it. It is a reflection of what we really are. It is ours to make or remake as we will. It is our creation and only we can recreate it. And remember this: our world, which we have made, whichever way it is, will create us if we do not recreate it!

How can we come to know the Real World, how can we pierce the illusions of our self-created world? One might say that this is the burden of the teachings of Krishnamurti, and his answer, in brief, is: "Try to see the world as it is, and not as we would have it be." This is the job of a lifetime. The deep channels of habitual thought cannot be turned away from by merely wishing to do so. We have to set a new mould in which to pour our lives; we have to find a new source about which to centre our lives. The deep natural urge we all share for fulfilment, vague and obscure as it generally is, has for most of us found direction in satisfying our needs both objective and subjective.

As we have become more civilized in our passage down the ages, our physical needs have become more readily acquired and we have more time at our disposal. Our

natural tendency has been to follow along familiar lines seeking to find satisfaction in purely personal things, giving little heed to the needs of others except when it suits our purpose. But sooner or later we find that there is something in our nature which cannot continue to find satisfaction in living wholly at this level. It is well said, "Man cannot live unto himself alone," and while for a long time we turn a deaf ear, the truth of this gnaws deeper into our consciousness.

It would be as well if we could truthfully say that the conflict between the two aspects of our nature was an even one, but the cards are stacked. For too long we have given our allegiance to that aspect of our nature which is separative and materially inclined in the search for fulfilment. The world we have built for ourselves is circumscribed and delineated by the manner in which we have acted and reacted; conclusions have been drawn according to our preconceptions derived from our past actions and reactions. Better put, our world is the complex of feelings and emotions experienced in the past, and what we have cognized within the limits of our consciousness.

Nowhere in this complex being is there a stable centre, nothing basic to use as a point of reference. The noble and fine elements representing the essential human aspects of our nature are fitfully awakened by our contacts with characters or actions of like nature which bestir some kindred element within ourselves and for brief moments we experience a passing glimpse of the Real World.

This is really all we have to work on. If there is anything basic or real in these moods of illumination they will prove themselves to us as we give them a place in our lives. If we give our allegiance to the concepts that arise from these all but too rare experiences, and express them as best we can in our personal relationships in daily life, then may we expect a growing expansion of consciousness along these lines.

CONCENTRATION

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

In the hurly-burly of a hectic era whose idolatry is that of speedy efficiency, mental concentration tends to get lost in the shuffle. Not that your successful businessman or technologist lacks this gift, but that he rarely enjoys inducement to employ it outside of strictly business (money-making) fields. The moment he turns his thought to what he is prone to regard as "the vague irrelevancies of ethics or religion", his capacity to concentrate falls off — mainly because almost anything beyond "business" presents itself to him as obviously irrelevant and "impractical".

To him and his circle, it may be said that religion, as preached today, is a luxury he has not time for. He may deem it expedient to associate himself with it for social and status reasons, but hardly with "salvation" in mind. His immediate obligation, he is quite sure, is to get on with "making money and paying his taxes"! And so long as religion is little more than a set of dogmas agreed upon and enunciated by other men, not unlike himself, it will remain demoted to a secondary place in the thinking of a vast majority.

A spiritual teacher, whose pronouncements are highly regarded by all, but personally applied by a very small minority, made the statement: "I am the way, the truth, and the life". He who used these words, placed religion on a plane of sufficient importance to be worth giving one's life for. To him religion was life. Because it meant all this to him, he equated denial of freedom to devote himself to Truth, with death; so equating the two, rejecting the first, he accepted the second.

Jesus was but one of many spiritual teachers who viewed Truth as the mainspring of living. Today it so remains. And yet, through the blind dogmatism of those who have "organized" the simple basic

truths enunciated by Jesus, what was to him Life, and is Life today, has been allowed to become to many an irrelevance! Wherefore the deepest, most significant and indispensable "concentration" of all — concentration on basic, spiritual Truth — has become a secondary and more or less dispensable quest. It has ceased to be either timely or "practical".

Theosophy — a Way of Spiritual Living — places TRUTH *first!* It has the temerity to declare that the search for, and application of, Spiritual Truth, is the highest religion, and takes precedence over all other earthly preoccupations. Moreover, since ultimate spiritual Truth must be discovered in the heart of man himself, the quest of it must prevail over all other distractions. Concentration in this quest, must become the mainspring of daily living.

Such a goal goes far beyond merely accepting or "believing" a set of dogmas concerning God and Jesus. It is a "way of life", wherein one makes divinity of the Immortal Self the director and law-giver of all living. It is, actually, a readiness to at least essay Godly Living — verily a Religious Concentrate. When a Theosophist declares "There is no religion higher than Truth", he is making Living, and the quest for Truth identical goals of existence, *here and now!*

Because in these days of triumphing science and technology, with the accent ever more forcefully materialistic, a man being overwhelmed with the distractions of materialism, together with those incident to adjusting to an ever more technical and artificial program for living, finds concentration on an inner spiritual reality more and more difficult. He who in spite of obstructions, cleaves to an inner life of the spirit, finds himself more and more isolated from his fellows, more and more alone, on a path of inner discovery, foreign

and unattractive to the majority of his fellows. On this path distractions exert their influence every hour of the day, because all about him are those completely won over to more superficial goals. He who would be "about his Father's business" must take shelter in the tabernacle of the spirit, whose sublime and infinite goals he finds completely compelling. In this concentration, let him understand that he is pioneering new paths of existence for these very ones who would distract him. The path he has chosen, each of them, sooner or later, must choose and follow. His choice is made for *them* as well as for himself.

His unwavering concentration on the Supreme Pattern can become a counter-current to all this spiritual inconstancy; that pattern made visible in a single life, can and must lend itself to a "trend" in the thinking and acting of others — a trend away from Matter, toward Spirit. Only a superb triumph of Concentration can bring him to the point at which the words "I am the way, the truth and the life" can begin to have a relation to his own living. Until "believing" becomes "being", it remains a weak reed. Human salvation is the responsibility of *all*, not of just one; but it is accepted, one by one! In this sense, not one of us but can choose to enroll among the Saviors of the Race, in place of being mere driftwood tossed on the sea of life.

With this attitude of awareness of the sublime resources of spiritual living, one is impelled to seek the heights of life, from which to note the sacredness of the moment and the day. People, events, circumstances are replaced with slowly expanding "values", the heretofore unperceived potency of a thought kindled with awareness of the deathless Self. None of us are related merely to today or tomorrow. Behind and before each of us stretch aeons of time marked by a gradual awakening from the coma of materialism to the Awareness of Spirit, upon whose concentration of purpose each of us depends for the ultimate Revelation — of his own undreamed potential.

This conscious "living on the heights" is an important step in the direction of that revelation, the fruit of concentration on the Ultimate Goal, whose attainment lends living whatever inner vitality it holds for us. Increasing vitality spells increasing growth of our own Spiritual Reality. Why else should Theosophy stress the indispensability of reincarnation, but that man's growth should have unlimited time and opportunity? Once one has given up those neatly formulated dogmas that have sought to "domesticate Deity" and make "getting to Heaven" a matter of a few prayers and confessions, he becomes aware of the unearthly implications of that simple but terrifying injunction: "Man, know thyself!" Self-knowledge on the part of the dedicated seeker reveals itself as *infinite* in time and scope. It amounts to mortality daring to measure its length with immortality whose ultimate responsibility is the rehabilitation of this earthly hell!

In this sense, "serving humanity" *begins* with putting one's own house in order, in the light of the superhuman dimensions of the Life Pattern, in which each must find his place. Each incarnation contributing to this consummation is one step in the direction of man's accepted immortality. Does not such a program lend new meaning to Jesus' words: "I came to bring you Life Everlasting"? Do they not answer to the interpretation: "I came to help you discover immortality in your inadequate mortality."? Assuredly, "growing up" in this context becomes a princely mystery, whose solution demands eternal concentration.

Let a man, wrestling with his inconstancies, but *see* himself the spiritual titan it is his Karma to become. A little of this vision will unveil sublimely mystical implications in this earth he treads: to truly love and revere Nature all about him is to lift a tiny hem of the "Veil of Isis" — the goddess of heavenly wisdom. Let him but crush earthly facts, and get to the mystical heart of them. Spiritually approached, each of them is more than it

seems. Concentration upon a single sunbeam can mean a footstep on the stairway to Elysium! Is it not time that across the dusty highways of earthly commerce, one, here and there, now and then, should uncover a small, inconspicuous lane leading to the Hesperides? For what was man given the Inner Eye, but to discover those "mysteries" buried in the heart of "facts"? Is he not entitled to know more of the heavenliness of living than mere eating, drinking and propagating can reveal? "Concentration" in its spiritual meaning

seeks release of hidden splendor for him who consciously lives on the plane of that splendor. Thither leads the Road to Revelation.

"As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. There is no purifier in this world to be compared to spiritual knowledge; and he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time." *Bhagavad-Gita.*

SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION

CONDUCTED BY GEOFFREY A. BARBORKA

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

Question. In *The Secret Doctrine* there is a passage regarding the "inner man": "During the activity of the inner man (during trances and spiritual visions) the eye swells and expands. The Arhat sees and feels it, and regulates his action accordingly." (S.D. II, 294; III, 296 6-vol. ed., II, 308 3rd ed.) Can you further explain this passage?

Answer. The passage is from one of the Commentaries, quoted from the Book of Dzyan. In connection with so many of the passages quoted from the Book of Dzyan, symbols are used to express the ideas presented in the esoteric philosophy. Consequently the terms should not be taken literally. For instance, the term "inner man" certainly is not intended to convey the idea that there is a "man" within the physical body which may be brought into activity so as to produce spiritual visions. Nevertheless there is an "inner organ" which may be activated by one who knows how to do so and this inner organ will

produce spiritual visions. It is referred to in the quotation in the words following the parenthetical clause as "the eye" which "swells and expands" — again using symbolic words to clarify the idea — as well as the term "deva-eye":

"The 'deva-eye' exists no more for the majority of mankind. The *third eye* is dead, and acts no longer; but it has left behind a witness to its existence. This witness is now the *pineal gland*." (*ibid.*, II, 295; III, 296 6-vol. ed.; II, 308 3rd ed.)

A footnote also explains the significance of the activation of the "inner man" in connection with the "inner eye":

"The *Inner sight* could henceforth be acquired only through training and initiation, save in the cases of 'natural and born magicians,' sensitives and mediums, as they are called now." (*ibid*)

Question. Does the Eye of the Dangma refer to the pineal gland?

Answer. It does indeed, and further

explanation regarding its activity was provided in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*:

"In India it is called 'the Eye of Siva,' but beyond the great range it is known as 'Dangma's opened eye' in esoteric phraseology.

"Dangma means a purified soul, one who has become a Jivanmukta, the highest adept, or rather a Mahatma so-called. His 'opened eye' is the inner spiritual eye of the seer, and the faculty which manifests through it is not clairvoyance as ordinarily understood, i.e., the power of seeing at a distance, but rather the faculty of spiritual intuition, through which direct and certain knowledge is obtainable. This faculty is intimately connected with the 'third eye,' which mythological tradition ascribes to certain races of men." (S.D., I, 46; I, 118 6-vol. ed.; I, 77 3rd ed.)

Question. Are the following terms synonymous: a consciousness point, a ray, a monad, a Jiva, the inner god?

Answer. Generally speaking these five terms have been used by writers on Theosophy to express more or less the same idea, although dictionary definitions seem to express concepts which would not be applicable. In illustration: the first term "consciousness point:" the second component of which focuses attention to this dictionary definition (listed as number 6): that which is conceived to have position but not parts, dimension or extent, as the extremity of a line. Then the first component "consciousness" signifies the state of being aware, with especial reference in the dictionary sense of being aware of oneself and one's surroundings. In philosophy, however, the term has greater significance. Thus in Hindu philosophy four states of consciousness are enumerated, termed Avasthas: Jagrat, the consciousness during the waking state, which is quite different from that experienced in the second state which is termed Svapna — the state of dreaming. The third state, Sushupti, called "the state of deep sleep",

is totally different from the waking state, as is also the fourth state of Samadhi, the ecstasy of supreme bliss. Thus there is a different level or "frame of reference" for each one of these four states of consciousness.

The peak achievement of a human being would then be attaining the Samadhi consciousness, which would be equivalent to the state of the Arhat — as described in the opening quotation.

The next term, "ray", does not seem to convey a similarity when the dictionary definition is stated to mean "a narrow beam of light," and consequently "anything representing or suggesting this." But the philosophical definition is applicable, for the word is used to represent that which is emanated from a source without diminution of the source. Here a statement regarding Atman may be quoted:

"This principle is but a temporary and periodical ray of the One eternal and infinite Flame or Fire." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p 34; also in *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. X, p. 335).

The third term is "monad", signifying the immortal constituents of man, representing the principles Atma-Buddhi.

The fourth word, "Jiva", should be scrutinized carefully, for it has two distinct meanings. When used in the Stanzas of Dzyan or in the Commentaries from the Book of Dzyan it is equivalent in meaning to the word "monad". But the Sanskrit word Jiva also means the kosmic life-principle, which in its individualized aspect is termed Prana. Here is a quotation in which the terms Monad, Jiva and Ray are used:

"For the Monad or Jiva *per se* cannot be even called spirit: it is a ray, a breath of the *Absolute*, or the Absoluteness rather, and the Absolute Homogeneity, having no relations with the conditioned and relative finiteness, is unconscious on our plane." (S.D. I, 247; I, 292 6-vol. ed.; I, 267 3rd ed.)

As for the words "inner god," the idea is conveyed that essentially that portion of man which is immortal and not visible — hence termed inner or within man — is divine in origin and will eventually attain

the status of existing as a divine being, a god. As expressed in *The Secret Doctrine*: "Yes; there is a God in each human being, for man was, and will re-become, God." (S.D. V, 453 6-vol. ed.; III, 475 3rd ed.)

AMBITION VERSUS ATTAINMENT

GEORGE CARDINAL LEGROS

On the first page of *Light on the Path* we read the number one rule for disciples — "Kill out ambition." The Adept-author explains that "Ambition is the first curse: the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows. It is the simplest form of looking for reward. Men of intelligence and power are led away from their higher possibilities by it continually. Yet it is a necessary teacher. Its results turn to dust and ashes in the mouth; like death and estrangement it shows the man at last that to work for self is to work for disappointment."

Ambition may even persist in the life of the Occultist ". . . who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life." We see this everywhere — "astral projection," "psychic powers," "third-eye clairvoyance," "hypnotic control over others," etc. Ambition is a hydra-headed thing.

In another book — *Fragments of Life and Thought* — the same Adept points out that ". . . not until the man has triumphed again and again in one incarnation after another, not until success has become tedious to him, and the high places of the earth all seem low and poor to him, is he beginning to be ready to go beyond it. And only so can it be killed out." Man must go on struggling for earthly prizes until he reaches the point ". . . where the excelling of his fellows becomes suddenly and forever contemptible in his eyes, beneath the dignity

and greatness of his soul, and then he will kill out ambition and cast it from him as a weed of earth. He will perceive that the strength which he has developed must be used, not in order to excel, but in the endeavor to attain."

Attainment is different from Ambition because the latter fires one with a passion to outdistance all others striving for the same goal. The ambitious man is by necessity personal, jealous, envious, and ruthless — in other words, a menace to the world because he sows discord. To realize his aims he will stop at nothing save that which imperils his own preservation. And sometimes he will risk even that, like Shakespeare's soldier ". . . seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth."

Attainment, on the other hand, is a reaching out from self to SELF, from the finite to the Infinite, from the conditioned to the Unconditioned. The man who attains finds no rivals at his side, no single prize waiting at the end of the race. He moves in Eternity, where there is room for all.

Ambition is the effort of man to add to himself some coveted fragment of Earth, hoping thereby to exalt and increase his stature before others; but Attainment is *the giving of oneself to the Whole*.

A good example is the poet who wins first prize in an important contest. At the reception which follows, he receives honor and praise, and for a little hour feels as a god among men. But he also looks upon the faces of other poets who had competed and lost. They regard him as a thief, a

usurper of the prize they sought, and which, in their opinion, they deserve.

He also thinks of next year's contest, and wonders if he will win again, or only receive honorable mention, or no mention at all. Instead of rejoicing in his triumph, he finds himself under a cloud of apprehension. Victory is not the splendid thing he had envisioned.

Looking back, he sees that writing the poem was Attainment; but competing and winning the prize was Ambition. In the joy of creating something beautiful, he reached out of himself into the starry spaces where the Gods of Glory sing, and where, for a moment, he was one with their song.

But winning the prize, and humbling his rivals, was an earthly thing that compressed his soul, and imprisoned him in a little world made by the littleness of men, where Ambition is king, demanding its terrible price.

The poet should sing as a bird sings — not for reward, but to Attain, to reach out from self to Infinity.

The poet can be taken as a symbol of all men because everyone strives to express what he is — what is in him — either to win something from the world that may be added unto himself, or to give something of himself to the world. Each man is, by nature, either a taker or a giver.

The taker, following the path of Ambition, loses with every step because he violates the Supreme Order of the Universe, which is Duty, Service, and Cooperation. The giver, following the path of Attainment, wins with every step because he acts in keeping with the Harmony of the Whole, thereby enriching himself, because *he is the Universe*.

Attainment is the foundation of the Ultimate Discipline of Life. "Work as those work who are ambitious." Make the utmost of the life that is yours; but seek no personal victories which, once realized, crush those around you. Regard men not as rivals, but as fellow pilgrims walking beside you on the Eternal Highway. Help them to attain with you, to become whole

with you, and all the treasures of the Universe will be yours!

WE CAN HELP

(Continued from page 34)

do differently". This may set a pattern, but might it not be wise to let in a little light NOW and pull up a few weeds while we are conscious of where the dark spots are and where the weeds are lurking?

H.P.B. said, "If Sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet". Perhaps this may be beyond us, but if we could each produce a spark the whole result might be a beacon to others and a justification of our membership in the Theosophical Society.

Although humanity at large and the world in general may have to go through countless experiences, some of which are hard to understand, the Divine Plan itself will not fail. We can help in this work if we will. No one can be denied that opportunity.

And so, when we are discouraged perhaps we should remind ourselves that there are great Beings ahead of us, guiding with their wisdom the course of Evolution.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Mahatmas and Genuine Occultism, by G. de Purucker. Second Edition, Revised and Edited 1972, by Point Loma Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, California 92109, U.S.A. Paperback. 73pp. Price \$1.50.

The specific purpose of this new edition is to clear away some of the pseudo-ideas that have arisen concerning the over popularized term "Occultism", and its content is gathered mainly from a series of lectures, given by the author during his period of leadership of the Point Loma Lodge, called "Questions We All Ask". This object is attempted, largely with a degree of success, by returning to the pure form of the basic teachings of the Mahatmas. The method of re-presentation, here, of old, old Truths is both simple and profound; and the integrity of expression employed by Dr.

de Purucker, as always, is such that there is lost none of the beauty and nobility of the original.

Who are the Mahatmas? We are treated to a wonderful description of these Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, the caretakers of the sacred Knowledge, brought back by direct experience from behind the veil of appearances, and passed down through the ages from messenger to messenger.

In considering the meaning of "Occultism", we are told simply "it is the science of things unseen"; that is, the study of the inner structure and workings of the universe. An expansion of this view teaches us that there is nothing weird or unnatural in these invisible operations, and that man can learn these secrets; indeed that to do so is the next step in his evolution. His comprehension, however, depends on the full realization of his own true nature, the inner as well as the outer constitution, an achievement of which necessitates the treading of the pathway inwards. He must light in his own soul the divine flame, which is inseparable from the Central Fire of All-Being, and consequently no further apart from that same spark that is at the heart of every living entity. Brotherhood is not, therefore, merely a flash of idealism, but a real, basic fact at the heart of genuine Occultism.

In his pursuit of that which is hidden, the Occult student will discover corresponding forces latent in himself, and a word of caution is put forward, lest the cultivation of psychic faculties such as thought-transference, popular clairvoyance etc. should be mistaken for the true Occult powers. Here, development of intellect, will, intuition, etc., is the key; and the golden rule is: all powers gained must be laid on the altar of service to mankind.

The final chapters are devoted to touching on the Mystery Schools of Antiquity, whose teachings in their palmy days at the peak of the thriving cultures of the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, etc., constituted what is essentially genuine Occultism. Some explanation is also given

to the steps of Initiation taken by the candidate, as symbolizing inner progressive stages in his self-directed evolutionary pilgrimage.

The message of the book is compact, and, though relatively small in size, it contains a treasury of wisdom. To the newcomer, as to the progressing student, I feel the reading of it would be instructive and worthwhile.

— Joan Sutcliffe

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The Hathayogapradipika of Svata-marama, with the commentary 'Jyotsna' of Brahmananda and English Translation. Published 1972 by The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Adyar, Madras, India. 302 pp.

A well-known authoritative treatise on yoga, the first edition of this work was brought out in 1893 by one Mr. Tookaram Tatya of the Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund. This was one of the first fruits of the many efforts made by The Theosophical Society in the last century to bring to the attention of the western world the eastern wisdom. A second edition was published in 1933 by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Since then it was never republished. Because of the deep interest in yoga, particularly in the west, and the great demand for the book, the Adyar Library has now brought out a revised edition of it in its General Series. This edition has been thoroughly revised with many lacunas set aright and corrections made based on the manuscripts in the library's collection. The translation has also been revised so as to conform more closely to the text and commentary and yet readable.

As pointed out in the introduction by Tookaram Tatya, one of the early members of The Theosophical Society in India and who was privileged to work with the Founders, this work is perhaps the only one "which stands unrivalled in its attempt to grapple with the task of reconciling the Raja-yoga and Hatha-yoga." The Raja-yoga and the Hatha-yoga are considered

not as two different systems but counterparts of each other, "the limbs as it were of the same body," and so one cannot be pursued excluding the other. It is considered that to be a perfect yogin one needs to have a knowledge of the practice of both systems. The object of practicing Hatha-yoga is to prepare the ground for Raja-yoga, leading to "the purification of man's body and moral nature." This is very essential if the practice of Raja-yoga is to be fruitful, leading one to the final state of liberation or Kaivalya. It has also been stressed that the purpose of Hatha-yoga is not for obtaining psychical powers or Siddhis. At every step the commentator points out that these powers are only incidental and of secondary importance.

Repeated warnings are given in the commentary that the treatise abounds with veiled meanings, sometimes under apparently absurd symbols, and that only the pure in heart and mind, under the guidance of a *real* guru will be able to know the true interpretation. Anyone with a superficial knowledge and very much earthly plunging into this yoga with selfish motives will only, as rightly pointed out, come to grief. In many a place in the commentary such obtruse passages are explained to help the student (e.g., p. 45, verses 47-49; p.55, v. 100).

Interesting light is thrown on some words such as *laya void*, etc.: *Laya* is explained as "the non-recollection of the objects of sense due to the non-recurrence of previously acquired impressions and tendencies (*vasanas*)" (p.67, v.34). *Void*: "It is called void, because it is not affected by Time, Place or Matter. It is void of things like itself and also of things different from itself" (p. 68, v.38). The state of a yogin in meditation is described as "Void within, void without, void like a pot in space (*akasa*). Full within, full without, full like the pot in the ocean" (p. 72, v. 56). Again "The original natural state in which the mind, being free from all modifications, exists is called Parabrahman and Paramatman" (p. 81, v. 101).

The Adyar Library, in making this work once again available to students of Yoga, hopes that this will give a right directive to aspirants on this path.

—Seetha Neelakantan

* * *

Sacred Mysteries Among the Mayas and the Quiches, by Augustus Le Plongeon. One of the Secret Doctrine Reference Series, published 1973 by Wizards Bookshelf, Box 66, Savage, Minnesota 55378, U.S.A. xvi + 163 pp. Illustrated. Price \$7.00.

In the last century Dr. Le Plongeon spent some considerable time in Central America. He was keenly interested in the prehistoric civilizations of that region, and though an "amateur" he amassed a considerable knowledge of the ancient Mayas and probably knew more about them than most of his contemporaries.

In this book he propounds his own theories regarding the ancient mysteries as they were preserved and practiced on the American continent. Some of his views are unorthodox — certainly they received limited acceptance in his day — but are not to be rejected on that score; some require modification or rejection in the light of present knowledge; on the whole, however, they deserve serious consideration.

Le Plongeon enhanced his work by employing comparative studies to shed light on his own specialty. (One of the subtitles is, "Their Relation to the Sacred Mysteries of Egypt, Greece, Chaldea and India".) In showing the similarities of the ancient American mysteries to those of other parts of the world he helps our better understanding of all of them. If for no other reason, this is a valuable book.

At the same time there is implied the question of prehistoric transatlantic links. This will not bother the student of Theosophy, but interestingly, even the modern orthodox view now assigns a high degree of probability that there were such communications in the remote past. Le Plongeon's theories, therefore, surely

Publications Loan Fund, of whose Committee she was first Chairman. Any one of these responsibilities would be a challenge to any capable organizer; Helen took them all in her stride and did a good job in each. deserve an across-the-board re-evaluation.

This book was quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*. The present edition is verbatim with the 1886 edition used by H. P. Blavatsky. Its value as a reference work for S.D. students goes without saying.

— Ted G. Davy

* * *

The Book of Enoch the Prophet, translated by Richard Laurence. One of the Secret Doctrine Reference Series, published 1972 by Wizards Bookshelf, Box 66, Savage, Minnesota 55378, U.S.A. xlviii + 180 pp. Price \$6.00.

The Book of Enoch is quoted and commented on extensively in *The Secret Doctrine*. It is a strange work, difficult to comprehend, yet even on the surface obviously worth study by any student of the occult.

An Apocalyptic work, the most part of *The Book of Enoch* was written not later than the second century B.C. In spite of the fact that its influence on early Christianity is reflected in the New Testament, and that it was known and used by the early church fathers, this book was never accepted into the canon of the *Apocrypha*. Except for fragments it was "lost" for centuries until manuscripts were brought to light in Ethiopia in 1773. (Nevertheless, it was certainly known to the Druidic bards of the middle ages, from which might be concluded that this work continued an underground existence long after it had been forgotten by the theologians.)

A matter of interest, and probably of no little significance, is the fact that *The Book of Enoch* was a "staunch favourite" of the Essene Community, according to John Allegro, on the basis of references found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Moreover, the earliest known use of certain terminology found in the Scrolls is in *Enoch*.

This new edition of the Archbishop Laurence translation is a photographic reproduction of the 1883 edition which was used by H. P. Blavatsky. The Laurence version reads well, but should be supplemented with comparisons to the textual differences and additions contained in the Greek manuscript discovered in 1886.

— Ted G. Davy

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Programs for several Theosophical Summer Camps in the United States have been announced. Members wishing full information on the various camps should write as follows:

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— Helen V. Zahara.

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