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CAPTURING A WORLD WITH IDEAS

G. DE PURUCKER

Dr. Gottfried de Purucker was born on January 15, 1874. Leader of the Point Loma Theosophical Society from 1929 until his death in 1942, Dr. de Purucker was one of the outstanding figures of the Theosophical Movement in the 20th Century. Among his several works are The Esoteric Tradition, Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy and Golden Precepts of Esotericism. In recognition of his centenary we present the following 1938 talk which is included in the recently republished Wind of the Spirit. Eds.

It takes some courage, I mean the true courage of the Seer, whom naught can daunt and none may stay, to oppose a world's thought-currents, and for this sublime work are called forth the truest heroism, the sublimest intellectual vision, and the deepest spiritual insight. These last prevail always. Sometimes he who runs counter to the world's thought-current loses what the world esteems highest: reputation, fortune, even perhaps life. But his work — that is never lost!

That is what H. P. Blavatsky did. And that is what the Theosophical Society has been doing ever since her time, in certain ways opposing a world's lower thought-currents and prevailing in the end. It is a strange paradox of our life on this earth that the noblest things call for sacrifice, and yet it is one of the most beautiful; so that the Theosophist may say with the proud boast of the Christian Church — and I deem it true, and even truer than in their case — that the blood of its martyrs is the seed of its success, and of its victory. The world is ruled by ideas, and an inescapable

truth it is also that the world's lower thought-currents must be opposed by ideas higher than they. It is only a greater idea which will capture and lead captive the less idea, the smaller. *Graecia capta Romam victricem captam subducit.* "Captured Greece leads conquering Rome captive."

What is this Theosophical Movement which was so magnificently voiced in some of its teachings by H. P. Blavatsky, but a series, an aggregate of grand ideas? Not hers, not collected by her from the different great thinkers of the world; but the god-wisdom of the world; and she brought together the world's human wisdom in order to bulwark, for the weaker minds who needed such bulwarking, the grand verities shining with their stellar light, and bearing the imprint of divinity upon them. Some men cannot see the imprints of divinity. Forsooth, they say, it is to be proved! They must put the finger into the nail-mark, into the hole. Millions are like that, they have not learned to think yet.

So the only way to conquer ideas is to lead them captive by grander ones; and that is

what Theosophy does: it is a body of divine ideas — not H. P. Blavatsky's, who was but the mouthpiece in this day of them, but the ancient god-wisdom of our earth, belonging to all men, all nations, all peoples, all times; and given to protoplasmic mankind in the very dawn of this earth's evolution by beings from higher spheres who had learned it themselves from beings higher still — a primeval revelation from divinities. The echo of this revelation you will find in every land, among every people, in every religion and philosophy that has ever gained adherents.

When H. P. Blavatsky brought our modern Theosophy to this world in our age, she did not bring something new, she brought the cosmic Wisdom, the god-wisdom studied by the Seers, as understood on this earth, which had been stated in all other ages preceding that in which she came. She merely repeated what she had been taught; the same starry Wisdom, divine in origin: Science because voicing nature's facts; Religion because raising man to divinity; Philosophy because explanatory of all the problems that have vexed human intelligence. No vain boast this — aye, no empty words; no vain boast I repeat, but truths which are provable by any thinking man or woman who will study our blessed god-wisdom faithfully and honestly.

It was an amazing world to which H. P. Blavatsky came, a world held by — the Western world I am now speaking of — held by one slender, yet in a way faithful, link to Spirit, to wit the teachings of the Avatara Jesus called the Christ, nevertheless held to by faith alone and by the efforts of a relative few in the Churches. On the other hand, millions, the major part of the men and women of the west, absolutely psychologized — by what? Facts? No! By theories, postulates, ideas, which had gained currency because they were put forth aggressively and with some few natural facts contained in them. Why, all the science of those days practically now is in the discard, and the scientists them-

selves have been the discarders, the later generations of scientists have themselves overthrown the overthrower of man's hope in those days.

It was in such a time that H. P. Blavatsky came, and almost single-handed in an era when even in the home-life, in society so-called, it was considered exceedingly bad form even to speak of the "soul" in a drawing-room; it was considered a mark of an inferior intelligence. Alone, she wrote her books, challenging the entire thought-current of the western world, backed as it was by authority, backed by so-called psychology, backed by everything that then was leading men astray. And today we Theosophists happen to know that her books are being read, mostly in secret, by some of the most eminent ultra-modern scientific thinkers of our time. What did she do? Mainly she based her attack on that world-psychology on two things: that the facts of nature are the facts of nature and are divine; but that the theories of pretentious thinkers about them are not facts of nature, but are human theorizings, and should be challenged, and if good accepted *pro tempore*, and if bad, cast aside. She set the example; and other minds who had the wit to catch, to see, to understand, to perceive what she was after, gathered around her. Some of the men eminent in science in her time belonged to the Theosophical Society, although they rarely worked for it. They lent their names to it occasionally. But she captured them by the ideas she enunciated, and these men did their work in their own fields. That indeed already was much.

Consider her titanic task: that of changing the shifting and varying ideas of a body of earnest scientific researchers after nature's facts: replacing these shifting ideas, then called science — which had for nearly two hundred years been casting out *all* that innumerable centuries of human experience had shown to be good and trustworthy — replacing these, I say, with thoughts that men could live by and become better by following, thoughts that

men could die by with hope and in peace; and bringing these back into human consciousness by the power of her own intellect

voicing the immemorial traditions of the god-wisdom which she brought to us!

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE THREE OBJECTS

JOAN SUTCLIFFE

In the north of England there are wide open spaces of countryside known as the moors. Often the landscape is bleak, a desolate stretch of windswept grass bordering on the horizon with a cold grey sky. To the stranger it may seem there is no kindness here. However, to the child who lives here and knows the moors, there is unsurpassing beauty to be discovered at every step and turn. A rather plain afternoon sky can suddenly give way to a flaming sunset, that burnishes the lonely terrain in a mysterious splendour. Unexpectedly beneath a gorse bush, sheltered from the north wind, he may come across the waiting eggs of the snow goose. The moors are pulsating with hidden life. He watches the tree that struggles so hard and long to grow in the barren soil, the December frost almost splitting the bark, and he learns of the life force within that will overcome; and he realizes the power of the will when the green leaves finally burst forth on the branches.

There is a striking parallel here with Theosophy. One individual's single lifetime, apart and alone like a fragile piece of china chipped from the great pattern of nature's whole, truly seems a bewildering tramp across such harsh land ending mysteriously in a scarcely distinguishable horizon. True, there are sweet moments, many of them, but how fleeting they are! Like the blue tailed swallows that fly away from the north with winter's first breath, they pass and are gone, and we are left with a chilling wind as companion to our cries.

The student of Theosophy, however, is one who, like the child of the moors, seeks to know the perturbing wilderness. Looking for the beauty in each moment, he utilizes its power to the full to direct the course of his life along channels of his own discernment. He looks deep into life, penetrating the surface and going beyond the mere physical covering, to find the laws that govern from the inner realms. Such a one is he who studies everything, who watches nature and draws the analogy in his own life. The Atma force in the struggling tree he recognizes and in its conquest he rejoices; for he realizes this same force is the source of his own being, that it is indeed the source of all being, and that within it all being is one. It is only through union with this source that perfect understanding of life can be found.

Herein, are there not contained the three objects of the Theosophical Society? Does not the first object urge the idea of Unity? The second instruct us to seek knowledge? And the third to look for the unseen laws? They are as follows:

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
 2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
 3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.
- Of course, all three are very closely tied together. In order to responsibly fulfil the first, it is necessary to work at the second. One must study, read many different

books, ponder the teachings of others, take note of the workings of nature, draw comparisons and match with the unfolding actions of one's own life. Then, to become alive to the knowledge we accumulate, must follow the application of the third object; to search within one's self, meditate, reach the higher consciousness, allow it expression and look for its guidance. It is through coming to an understanding of the hidden laws and applying their principles, and by cultivating new qualities of character in accordance therewith, that knowledge is transmuted into wisdom. Then one can really become conscious of the deeper connotations implied in the mystical idea symbolized by Brotherhood.

Let us look at some. First of all, what does Brotherhood mean? In 1893 William Q. Judge presented to the Theosophical Congress at Chicago a speech titled "Universal Brotherhood A Fact in Nature". It contains a particularly beautiful and explicit passage describing the atomic structure of man. He tells us that man is made up of numerous atoms, all living and in constant motion, interchanging all the time with the atoms of the other people with whom we come in contact. Atoms exude from the mind too, and are replaced by those that others have used. According to the nature of the life one is living is the nature of the characteristics impressed on the atoms one distributes and others receive. It behooves one, therefore, to attain to the highest degree of knowledge and understanding, and also to the highest standard of ethical conduct, of which he is capable, so that he will influence the atoms in his charge in such a way that they will benefit those to whom they pass.

This is an excellent explanation of a very deep occult fact inherent in Universal Brotherhood, and that is why it becomes the first duty of the disciple of Theosophy to strive to purify the vehicles he occupies. Of this rather mystical task, another Theosophical writer, L. W. Rogers has explained further: - "The progress of

purification is a process of changing the matter that composes the physical body and its invisible counterparts, as actually and literally as one would reconstruct a house, making it into a totally different habitation." How and why this must be, we can see. Our body is a mere aggregation of physical atoms constantly changing. The general shape and size of it appears to be permanent because the atoms rearrange according to the model of the astral body, of which the physical is a duplicate. The astral body is also an aggregation of changing atoms, of a finer substance, impressed in turn by the mental body, whose atoms are of a yet finer and more elastic material still. Therefore the interchange of the atoms of thought substance, outlined by Mr. Judge, is much more rapid and far reaching and influential. So, the work by the individual in remoulding the fabric of his thoughts should be the initial step in his active Theosophical work. It is either the consciousness of the Higher or Lower self that impresses the atoms, and it is not until we learn to think of ourselves as basically and completely part of a Unity and not as separate selves that we impress them favourably.

This work of transforming his nature is by no means an easy task, though, for the aspirant. Each individual life might be symbolized as a pendulum swinging between the two opposing poles of spirit and matter, and each being suspended at various stages along the gigantic course of a macrocosmic pendulum on its swing outwards to matter and back to spirit. In each lifetime we find a certain balance between the two and swing there quite easily to and fro. However, in becoming involved in an attempt to change one's basic nature by uprooting those unworthy traits and weaknesses that are merely pampering to the personal self, and by building up virtues like strength, courage, honesty, compassion, that are beneficial to the whole of humanity, the Theosophist is stretching the pendulum further and fur-

ther in one direction. Correspondingly, the pull in the opposite direction is immense. That is the difficulty. If let go, how much farther back it will swing! That is why so many potential candidates for discipleship appear to fail so bitterly.

It can be achieved though, through regular and persistent effort. The will to do so is one of the latent powers within, mentioned in the third object of the Society. If the pendulum can be held in its new position long enough, the force of the resistance will lessen, and finally the central point of the balance will accordingly shift to this higher spot. In other words, our natures can be changed: by persisting continuously we create a habit by means of which the atoms of our bodies can be transformed to a higher level.

This is the core of the mystery of discipleship. Books on occultism speak of the work of the advanced disciple as that of transmuting the force of evil. This must be accomplished first within his own nature, and we can see how, through transmuting the base elements within himself and so raising his own atomic structure, then by means of the interchange of atoms, he can also raise the level of those with whom he comes in contact. He can himself become a central force for the outpouring of spiritual qualities. This is the true work of the occultist.

When we have an active centre of such like minded people, as in the Theosophical Society, forming a nucleus radiating high thoughts, what a very powerful opportunity there is of lifting up humanity! One of the things we are working on at Toronto Lodge is the establishing of a serious study group of dedicated students concerned solely with the impersonal quest for the Divine

Wisdom. This, we hope, will become a nucleus at the heart of our society, emitting spiritual energy which will set in motion other groups, which in their turn will become other nuclei. Some day we should like to see many, many centres springing up all over Canada. One burning candle can set alight an infinite number of other candles, and from each of these countless other fires can be kindled. There is no limit to the spreading of the flame. Yet no matter how many times it is drawn from, there is no detracting from the power and brightness still blazing in the original fire.

The nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood is in a position similar to the sun at the heart of the solar system. Science manuals tell us that the energy from the sun is caused through the lighter hydrogen atoms fusing together to become the more condensed helium, which is being drawn inwards to a heavy central mass. Likewise, the students and seers through the ages and down to the present day have brought together their individual researches, testings, experiences etc. which have been collected into a central body of wisdom. This is Theosophy, and a tremendous power is radiating from it. Its light should be spread impartially, but also with care. A group of students should be altruistic in their searching, questioning, learning and teaching, never forcing an opinion, and always tolerant and open to a new viewpoint; for a very delicate balance exists. Without the heat and light from the sun, there could be no life on the earth, but the earth has to be surrounded with a belt of atmosphere for detracting some of the ultra violet rays which are too powerful. Human beings, too, are protected by an atmosphere of habits, attitudes, moods and inclinations. They cloud the light of truth, but truth in the brilliance of its unveiled essence would be dangerous to the unprepared.

The planets round the sun have a perfect balance between size and distance that holds them in their sway between the darkness of the outer limits and the

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destruction of drawing too near; similarly there should be a balance between the intellectual acquirement of knowledge and the development of the heart qualities. He who would draw close to the occult teachings without his moral nature sufficiently evolved will find himself caught up in a vortex of forces that are too fierce for him, and he will flounder.

The life of those who would become part of the nucleus should be an even interblending of aspiration, devotion and

discipline. They should be seekers and students of all life's mysteries. Most of all, they should strive to cultivate the most beautiful of all the latent powers — impersonal love. Even a smouldering spark can start a flame. Every one life contains at least one unselfish love. It may be tenderness for a child, harmony in friendship, compassion for an animal or devotion to an ideal: but this could be the spark to light the flame of the first candle, and the sacred fire will spread, like the warmth of the sun, to embrace the whole of humanity.

GREAT PAN RETURNS

ALVIN BOYD KUHN, PH. D.

The late Dr. Kuhn left some unpublished writings. Several have been published in earlier volumes of The Canadian Theosophist. In this issue we commence a new series, again published by kind permission of his son, Professor Alfred Kuhn. We are indebted to our friend Richard Sattelberg, whose efforts have made this possible. Eds.

The human being finds himself conscious of his existence in a world of a certain kind. Under the necessity of relating himself harmoniously and happily in that world he conditions his life as best he can. In his natural endeavour to fathom the significance of his situation in this cosmic environment, his mind — as exercised upon the problem by the most astute and brilliant philosophical thinkers — has ever striven to probe the terms of this relationship to his world. His hope has ever been that his findings might empower him to adjust himself in the most commodious and felicitous manner to the universe whose life he participates in and obviously from which he derives his physical existence. It is therefore startling to realize that the best of man's philosophical efforts directed upon the solution of this fundamental inquiry have not yet produced an answer acceptable for veracity and completeness.

Philosophers are still wrestling with the question of man's relationship to his physical habitat, primarily concerned, of course, with the terms of his physical relationship to it but also with the profound significance of his intellectual understanding of it. In a matter so immediately basic as this, the inquiry forces the human mind to consider the most profound questions confronting thought, involving the ultimate meaning of life and the universe.

In the immediate purview arises the question: is man a being independent of his environing universe or is he, in view of his dependence upon the earth for sustenance, even for the breath of life, an integral portion of that universe, one with its life and processes?

In philosophy, theology and anthropology, human intelligence is ever insistently challenged to determine how closely man's life is linked to the world of

physical nature; whether and to what extent his being is congenitally, integrally bound in with nature, or is only incidentally cast in with it, as by fortuitous circumstances in the play of forces exterior to his own life. The problem might be phrased in the form: is man himself a portion of that nature which the living world outside him manifests, or is he, a Son of God, spiritual in ultimate composition, only casually and incidentally plunged into temporary and unessential proximity to it, immersed in and dependent on it?

The astute Greeks, drawing basic enlightenment from the wells of intelligence of ancient Egypt, set man sharply apart from what they called *physis*, or Nature, and scrutinized and expounded his life in relation to it. Man, they asserted, is a being of a dual constitution. In one half of his selfhood he is a creature of the universal world life, by virtue of which he lives in a body and subsists with other living bodies; in the other half he is a soul or spirit, coming here from another world of non-physical order, and having to deal with it as an extraneous and alien condition. Indeed, so far from rating it as a world kindred to man's own life, congenital and homogeneous with it, they characterized it as a region whose influences were hostile to the interests of human souls, as they tended to smother out the finer, more subtly activated energies of a higher consciousness. In Greek philosophy this strain of ideology rang so loudly that man's physical body, an aggregate of elements of *physis*, was dramatized as the prison house, dungeon, grave, and tomb of the divine soul.

One of the verses of the Chaldean Oracles proclaims (the soul-character in the drama speaking): "I am a child of earth and the starry skies, but my race is of heaven alone." Attracted to earth by reason of its incorporation in a body of flesh, the soul thus asserts its inalienable selfhood as a product of heaven and its imperishable essences of real being. It might have elaborated the statement by saying: "I am

a child of the primordial empyreal spirit-fire; my essential nature, which has given me birth, sustains me and renders me eternal; but I periodically link myself to *physis*, on a convenient planet, in order to acquire mastery of the energies of atomic matter. To become coadjutor with God in his creation, I must gain conscious control of the universal power embosomed in *physis*. Therefore I am, in a body and for a time, a child of earth."

Approaching it from the human side, Wordsworth chants:

To her fair words did nature link,

The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

From the tone of this verse and all his poems it is patent that the poet allies human nature very definitely with the order of physical nature, a theme which will come prominently into the centre of the discussion here. But his envisagement of the kinship is through the spectroscope of the aesthetic, though it verges at times into the area of intellectual perception.

It may be timely to say here that while the aesthetic, what might even be termed the emotional, rapport between man and nature has been powerfully registered by people of refined sensibilities, another and even deeper communion of the human mind — that of the intellect with nature — has never been capably and with full force consummated. It is in large measure the succinct purpose of this work to formulate the basic principia of this science of the mind's vision of the "wisdom and spirit of the universe", as Wordsworth phrases it. Our theme is the concordance of the mind of man with the Mind that gave generation, structure and order to the cosmos. The study is designed to crown the feeling kinship between humanity and nature with its apical glory of intellectual perception of the relationship, thus demonstrating on the highest and most unassailable level the unity of man with nature.

Both by analogy and actuality, as surely as a plant in the garden or a tree in the

forest is a child of the earth on its physical side and a child of heaven on the side of its minor grade of consciousness, so man is, as the Chaldean Oracles report, a child of earth and the starry skies. If by virtue of his link with *physis* he is "of the earth, earthy", no less is he, by virtue of his progeneration from the mind of God, a child of the starry skies. As a tree is nourished by earth and water for its physical sustenance, and is thus earth-born and earth-natured, but also is animated by the life-giving energies of growth derived from air and sun-fire, so is man sustained in bodily subsistence by the two lower elements, earth and water (his body being seven-eighths water and one-eighth earthy or mineral constituency); while his consciousness is the product of the two higher elements, ever symbolical of spirit — air for mind and fire for spirit-soul.

The words in nearly all languages used to denote mind or soul have invariably been those for air, wind, breath; while the universal symbol of spirit has been the sun or its light and fire. Through body man is bound to earth; through mind-soul-spirit, three modifications of the one divine ray of his conscious selfhood, he is free to roam the heavens of higher being. As says Plato: "Through body it (man) is an animal; through intellect it is a god." And Heraclitus defines man in the terms of Greek philosophy as "a god imprisoned in a body of earth and water."

Here, definitely, are the ground works for the study of the relation of the human race to its natural tenement-house — the earth, deep in the soil of which his spirit ego has sunk its roots. Numberless religious movements have, in exaltation of spirit and derogation of matter, glorified his spiritual being while degrading and denouncing the material environment of his existence. But this has been a sad miscarriage of intellectual faculty, an unnatural distortion of the law of polarity by which the positive node of spirit must be exactly counterbalanced by the negative node of matter, if both forces together are to

generate new cycles of life. Instead of straining to transplant the ego-souls of its devotees out of the mires of the earth, the more fully to partake of the joys of the spiritual skies, as so many misguided religious upsurgings have endeavoured to do, and to elevate it in transcendental rhapsodies of hypothecated spiritual consciousness, the devotional enterprise should have been to infiltrate the ground of our natural life with the magical root-sap of the overshadowing divine impregnation (germination). Through the projected radiations of divine force, which as individual units are called souls, the energy of God-mind plunges its roots deep into the body of matter, there to inseminate and transmute its atomic sub-potencies with the inoculation of its more dynamic spiritual energies.

(To be continued)

CRYPTOSOPHIA

Here is a familiar quotation from a well-known Theosophical work. In its present form it is not easily recognizable because it is hidden in a cipher.

Can you decode it? Each letter of the alphabet simply stands for another letter.

What is the quotation, and from what book is it taken? Answer on page 141.

—IJQ VPXN PA WKG YV YWWP—

FIKN, KGH YIV AXIXFQ YV IJQ

AXIXFQ PA K IJYGT RJPVQ TFPRIJ

KGH VBNQGHXPX JKV GP NYWYI

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL (AE)

1867 - 1935

One cannot recall memories of AE without such concepts as magnanimity and compassion coming to mind. However, these are but words, they cannot convey to those who have come to adulthood since he died, and to whom he is perhaps unknown, the essence of this man and the enlightening effect that his genius and nobility had on all who knew him. This is a man in whom that rarest of human qualities, 'The Love of Humanity', shone with a living fire.

A starry-eyed mystic in early life, his poetry showed that notwithstanding his more practical and worldly activities, the spirit which enflamed his early writings never left him. In fact, the success of the great work of introducing co-operatives, loans, and economic methods of farming into the life of Ireland's peasantry — where ignorance, supported by bigotry and superstition predominated — suggests that he possessed powers far beyond those of ordinary persuasion.

P. G. Bowen, who succeeded AE as President of the Dublin Theosophical Group, cited the following quotation from him: "My own writing is trivial, and whatever merit is to be found in it is due to its having been written in a spiritual atmosphere generated by study of H.P.B. and the sacred books of the East". It is curious that, notwithstanding the great influence he had on those who knew him during his life and who acclaimed his poetry and literary work, that so little reference is made to them today. Fortunately, many of his literary friends and admirers have preserved for us in their books and articles much of his life and activities, and the impressions he made on peoples' lives. But it is in his own books and poetry that AE reveals himself to us. It is unfortunate that they are not easy to come by today.

In the August 1935 issue of *The Canadian*

Theosophist there are a number of splendid articles written when he died by those who knew him, and by others from different walks of life. From these much more than a superficial picture of this great man can be learned.

To those who have been fortunate enough to have been led to the study of AE's life and works, it will be realized only too well how difficult it is to convey in words that which truly can only be apprehended as we give to them our individual study and appreciation. In the book *Man, Son of Man* the author presents a concept which most adequately expresses what the study of AE's life can give us:

"When our inward groping makes us capable of recognizing in another the presence of what we seek in ourselves, then if he has gained certainty on these matters, something of his certainty is transferred to us. Our hearts respond. And though we cannot claim personal knowledge, we trust in the authenticity of that man's experience, because he is authentic in himself."

Those who have achieved some inner realization of their Essential Nature and have dedicated their lives to convey through their writings and activities their own illumination tend to be more withdrawn than otherwise from personal publicity. There are possibly many who, though little known beyond their own particular circle, have made similar achievements in some degree. Many have endeavoured in one way or another to convey their insight to others. It is through the validity of their vision that their works can touch us.

AE was a master of the art of giving expression to spiritual concepts, not that he could inspire the hopelessly purblind, but to those who were "inwardly groping" he had much to impart.

E.F.W.

THINE IS THE KINGDOM

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

To turn one's back on the sun, while peering into one's own shadow hardly offers an advantageous perspective; yet it is one that many of us put up with. We are all too prone to confront Light from a Universal Source with the darkness of personal doubts and mistrust, presumably due to the conviction that we are either unworthy or incapable of contributing to that Source a degree of radiance as authentic, if not as potent, as the Source itself. Man's contemplation of spiritual values seems to insist upon their remoteness and inaccessibility.

Theosophy's insistence upon the innate divinity of every human being, plus his fundamental identity with Its splendor, encourages an attitude of spiritual assurance, wherein a fearless projection of the splendor of the Inner Self tends to lessen the gap between Man and Deity. Obeying the Buddhist injunction, "Look inward; thou art Buddha", the disciple slowly awakens to the fact that a human life, in its deepest and richest essence, can achieve a radiance akin to that of the Source. Making a practical application of Jesus' words: "I and my Father are one", while rejecting their *exclusive* application to the Master, a Theosophist, is justified in assuring himself with the words: "Thine is the Kingdom!" whose pronunciation tacitly unifies Heaven and Earth. The immediacy of a genuinely celestial experience here on earth, without waiting for earthly death and burial, which these words make real, can actually lend to daily living undreamed beauty and significance, thereby shattering that fatal "either, or," perennially associated with Heaven and Hell, Life and Death, Joy and Sorrow.

"Thine is the Kingdom!"
— a declaration accentuating the wholeness of that potential benediction —
LIFE. He whose "Kingdom" is consciously

spiritual, discovers, little by little that, since "There is only Life", therefore, rightly interpreted, Life is a heavenly destiny. Man must live not merely *in hopes* of Heaven, but in conscious creating of it Here and Now. Gradually, he comes to transfer thought, effort and aspiration from an imagined Hereafter to a richly real and exalted Here. If the purpose of living is the realization of Heaven *eventually* — why not Now? Is not *living* one's dream more rewarding than supinely waiting for it to come true?

Are we not selling Life short in waiting for death to let down that heavenly backdrop? What about dressing earth's stage and writing earth's lines and action with a heavenly intent? What matter, after all, are the plot and action of Today's Here. Since this drama of life is a cathartic experience that shall render us more and more unearthly in our portrayal of the role, are we not called upon, hour by hour and day by day, to invoke Deity's meaning into daily doing? Our only verisimilitude on the stage of life is writ in terms of unhesitating godliness. In this sense, above all, it is forever true that "The Play's the thing!" and, since Eternity's Plot is immeasurably meaningful, are we not expected to invest each day's dialogue with more than momentary meaning? Our contract with the Master Playwright is of a scope wherein Time's significance is only intelligible in an *eternal* context. And since, so long as we insist upon our own humanity, there is no other Master whose contract we can accept, intelligent living demands that we fulfill the terms of this one joyously and lovingly.

Looking inward, fearlessly and honestly, our stage directions require us to discern the undying beauty of the Spiritual Self

(continued on page 135)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the deaths of three members of Toronto Lodge.

Miss Welda Cox died on November 7 following a long confinement in hospital. She joined the Society in 1962.

A member since 1935, Mrs. Laud Sword passed away on November 17. She, too, had been in hospital for some considerable time.

Mr. John Shore died on December 31. He had been a member since 1969.

Our deepest sympathies go to the families and friends of these members.

* * *

Students of Theosophy will welcome the news that Volume XI of the *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* will be available shortly. It is hoped to make a definite announcement in the next issue.

The publication of Volume XI was partially made possible by an interest-free loan to the Theosophical Publishing House by the Theosophical Society in Canada. While this particular publishing venture is a costly one, however, it is the work that goes into it that is the critical factor. In the *Collected Writings* we are fortunate that such an able and dedicated compiler as Boris de Zirkoff has been involved. His care and skill as editor has ensured that posterity will inherit a complete collection of Blavatsky's works, faithful to the original, fully indexed, and supplemented with valuable notes.

Even before Volume XI and the remaining volumes become available we already have on our library shelves some 6,750 pages (including the definitive *Isis Unveiled*). A remarkable achievement by both author and compiler.

* * *

Prof. Raghavan Iyer, Guest Speaker at the 1971 North American Theosophical Students' Conference, has written a new book. It is entitled *The Moral and Political*

Thought of Mahatma Gandhi and is published by the Oxford University Press. We hope to publish a review of this work in the next issue of the C.T.

* * *

In this issue we commence another series of hitherto unpublished writings by the late Dr. Alvin Boyd Kuhn. The earlier series ("The Greeks and Their Gods", "Philosophical Implications of Polarity" and "The New Reformation") were particularly well received by our readers and we hope this one will be equally popular.

In Toronto, at least, where he lectured regularly every year for thirty years or so before his death, Dr. Kuhn's name is still fresh in the memories of those who heard him. As a lecturer he had a stimulatory effect on the audience and in my experience the quality of his talks is rarely equalled.

* * *

The two Quest films, "Reincarnation" and "How Many Lifetimes" are still being borrowed by groups across the country. I would remind readers that these films are available on free loan to any responsible group — Theosophical affiliation is unnecessary. Please drop me a line for further details.

* * *

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

Member-at-large: Elli Aro.

Toronto Lodge: Dianne Burrows, Malcolm Burrows.

A welcome is also extended to the following members who have transferred from other Sections:

Members-at-large: Gool Amrolia, Phyllis Bordman, Beth Kitchen, Lucette Plourde.

T.G.D.

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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
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**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR
ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1973**

In the last few years Canadian life styles have changed remarkably. During the same period Theosophical activity in this country has also altered, though not to any significant degree. In view of the challenges presented by change, it is important we be sensitive to opportunities that might only come once.

Alteration in the pattern can be seen most readily in the publication and distribution of Theosophical literature. In this regard we are fortunate that when opportunity knocked the door was opened — thanks to the Kern Foundation funds and the way they were put to work by the American Section.

Through Quest Books the Society is now reaching a far wider public than ever before. Most of the major book outlets in Canada stock at least some of the Quest titles, and a surprising number of readers of these books go to the trouble of making enquiries regarding Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. Perhaps most significant in this new widespread availability of our literature is the possibility of reaching potential students who live in remote parts of the country.

This is reflected in a trend which began in the United States some time ago and which is increasingly noticeable in Canada. I refer to a rise in the relative numbers of members-at-large, due in large part to those who are joining from centres removed from any organized Theosophical activity.

Films are a relatively new medium through which to present Theosophy and they help provide variety in our approach to the public. During the year the Section purchased a print of the new Quest film, "Reincarnation." Along with the first film in this series, "How Many Lifetimes", it has already travelled thousands of miles to and fro across Canada. It is difficult to assess their impact, but no doubt they are of great value in planting seed ideas in the minds of many who otherwise would not be reached.

In Canada the international aspects of the Society are frequently in evidence. On four occasions in the year under review we had the pleasure of forging new links with other parts of the Theosophical world. A highlight was the 1972 North American Theosophical Students' Conference, held October 7-9 at "Olcott", headquarters of the American Section, co-sponsors of these

events. The Conference was so organized as to provide maximum individual participation. Working in small groups, each delegate was invited to contribute to the theme, "The Roots of Theosophy" and it was impressive to see the quality of work produced in a very short time, to say nothing of the wide variety of approaches that were chosen. Needless to say, full advantage was taken of the excellent reference facilities available in the "Olcott" Library.

A national tour by Geoffrey Farthing, former General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England, took place in November. Mr. Farthing gave talks in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Montreal, and was well received at all of these centres. Particular mention should be made of the innovative program arranged by Edmonton Lodge to take advantage of Mr. Farthing's visit: in Red Deer, Alberta, a city in which Theosophy was hitherto unknown, our guest was featured on a radio program and gave a public lecture which was well-attended.

A surprise but welcome visitor to Toronto in the Spring was Mrs. Gool Minwalla, Presidential Agent of the Theosophical Society in Pakistan. She was in Canada for the purpose of a family visit, but kindly made the time available to give a talk to local members.

Finally, in September, the Montreal and Toronto Lodges were each fortunate to receive a visit from Mr. John B.S. Coats. Mr. Coats kindly took time out of a busy lecture tour of the United States to make possible this diversion into Eastern Canada.

In what was otherwise a year of pleasant memories, the activities of both the Toronto Lodge and the Canadian Section were upset by a fire that occurred in January. Serious damage was suffered by both the Library and the Travelling Library operated by the Lodge, and the general program was necessarily curtailed

for several weeks. The office of the Canadian Section, which occupies space in the building, was also damaged. Unfortunately, among the items destroyed were a number of irreplaceable ones. All in all, however, we were fortunate that the fire was contained just before the loss would have been virtually complete.

Ted G. Davy
General Secretary

ELECTION

Nominations for the office of General Secretary and seven members of the General Executive should be made during March and should be received at Headquarters by April 1, 1974.

The officers of each Lodge are asked to have this matter brought before their Lodge and then have the nominations sent promptly to the General Secretary at Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto, Ontario M5W 1N4.

According to the constitution, nominations must be made through a Lodge and the consent of the persons nominated should be obtained.

The election of the General Secretary and the General Executive will be for a three-year term.

— Ted G. Davy,
General Secretary

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

If you are a subscriber or a member-at-large and are planning to change your address, please send us a change of address card as soon as possible. If you are a member of a Lodge, please advise your Lodge Secretary so that the information may be passed to us. Second class mail is not re-addressed by the post office. - Eds.

MORE INFORMATION PLEASE, — ABOUT THE DEAD!

VICTOR RUSSELL

For the past three decades wars, great and small, have been raging almost continuously in every quarter of the globe. Thousands upon thousands of combatant troops, and not a few civilians, have met instant death, while thousands of others have died within only a few days from wounds or injuries incurred in connection with one or another of these wars. Countless relatives and friends of these dead have mourned and are still mourning their untimely passing. Some of the more sensitive among them have grieved so deeply that it has adversely affected their own lives. Others of more practical natures, while reconciled to their loss, still find themselves wondering at times about the after-death status of the son, brother, or friend whose promising young life was cut short by participation in a war the reason for which he knew little or nothing.

The teachings of most orthodox religions are quite vague and confusing on this most important subject of life after death — so much so, in fact, that a widespread belief has arisen to the effect that on this important subject there is really no exact information available, — only speculation and hope.

Students of Theosophy, however, know differently, or should. They know that there is exact information available; that among the esoteric teachings of the East that were given to the West through the Theosophical Society a little less than a century ago there are facts, plenty of them, about after-death states, the seven-fold constitution of man, the seven planes of nature on which he exists, the nature of the transition from the physical to these higher planes of nature, the conditions of one's existence there and its opportunities and restraints. This information, we are told, was made available

to the western world in the hope that it would be passed on — broadcast, so to speak, to each and all of its citizens to clarify the doubts, abate the sorrows, and confirm the hopes of immortality of those who mourn.

To some extent this has been done, but apparently not to a sufficient degree, for the great mass of mankind today, 100 years after this information was first given out, still dwell in darkness, still suffer the pangs of doubt, separation and hopelessness that have beset the bereaved since the days of the Mahabarata. Has the Theosophical Society, therefore, been remiss in its responsibility to the Brothers of the Great White Lodge in failing to make this precious information more generally available? Has it proved an inept steward of the truths committed to it for the helping of humanity? Not altogether, for in its earlier days its leaders, lecturers, writers, and teachers did promulgate to the best of their ability and resources this important and helpful teaching regarding life after death, and their writings and lectures still bring hope and comfort to the bereaved who have been fortunate enough to contact them.

It would seem that the trend in the Society's thoughts and activities in more recent years has been away from the energetic and continuous promulgation of these basic theosophical teachings calculated to enlighten and help the segment of humanity now in incarnation, toward psychology, — a trend which so alarmed the Maha Chohan back in the early days of the Society — toward speculative philosophy, ESP, psychism and other sidelines of occultism, interesting to the curiosity but valueless so far as

bringing enlightenment and comfort to the mass of humanity which has always appeared to be paramount to the Brothers of the Great White Lodge.

Would it not appear appropriate, therefore for the Society in all of its national sections to turn aside, at least for awhile, from its almost complete concern over these intriguing sidelines, and embark upon an active campaign of promulgating in every practicable way the more basic theosophical truths, especially that of life after death for which the tremendous and continuous toll of war casualties would provide a dramatic background at this particular time.

Following the end of World War I, the late L. W. Rogers, former president, and for years the outstanding lecturer of the American section, declared in a public address:

“There is perhaps no greater need in the world just now than to know that man is immortal; that he does not run his course in one brief life; that death does not close his career; that life here and hereafter is one continuous whole; that all the countless dead still live and love and wait to greet once more those they have left behind.”

Is this not a challenge to the officers and members of the Theosophical Society? A challenge that if successfully met could go far toward relieving the sorrows of the bereaved of the world and merit, perhaps, the attention and encouragement of the Brothers of the Great White Lodge, since it would be in line with the purposes and hopes which they once entertained for the Society?

Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead nor for the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be.

- *Bhagavad-Gita.*

THINE IS THE KINGDOM

(continued from page 130)

with such clarity and sincerity that, without pride or self-approbation, we shall remind ourselves again and again, “Thine is the Kingdom!” Constant reiteration constitutes a constant reminder that “living” is a lofty vigil wherein guardianship of the holy precincts of the Spirit lends our daily actions more than momentary significance. There is no escaping from the eternal demands of immortality; the horizons of our meditations prescribe the dimensions of our interpretation of the Play.

Crowned with the diadem of self-knowledge, we are pledged to do justice to that interpretation. In terms of The Kingdom, our inheritance enjoys both regal lustre and royal responsibilities. “Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown”. But he in whose heart of hearts the King is enthroned, walks robed in wisdom. Consciously imbued with the sense of spiritual dominion, he will forego the petty plottings and treasons of earthly princelings, in the realization that this ruler, of godlike descent, shall find his name, sooner or later, inscribed in the Book of Kings. In this realization earthly ventures give way to heavenly aspirations.

And these earthly ventures occur in cycles of earthly time. Age-old commemorations such as Christmas, New Year, Easter, are as portals opening on new vistas of Time, which must *reveal*, not limit, vaster fields of attainment. Each New Year presents us with a vista from a new angle of Time, each vista being an unveiling of another aspect of the Eternal, to be utilized, understood, without distortion of personal regard or the delusions of a self of Time.

must mark the opening, petal by petal of the exquisite bud of Karmic Fulfilment, new potency and new mystery are added to each New Year. The petal that opens in the heart's imagination is the petal of the flower of Self-Knowledge. Each New Year

poses the question, "How far does this New Year reveal vistas of attainment exceeding those of last New Year? GROWTH is measured in terms of our slowly ripening "kingship".

What slowly fortifies and reaffirms our legitimacy as Rulers of the Kingdom is an intelligent regime of self-conquest. If "Thine is the Kingdom", how consciously and how wisely do you wield the scepter? The wisdom and integrity of your rule are an exact measure of your Spiritual Reality.

Minute by minute, hour by hour, incarnation by incarnation, an accounting of your stewardship is kept in terms of your growing penetration into the mystery of inner unfoldment. This is true of all of us. How *deeply* are we alive? Must we not abandon this inept questioning as to "What will the New Year hold for me", asking, instead, "With what new implements of spiritual magic can I penetrate this new vista of Eternity?" THINE IS THE KINGDOM!

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.

A reader was reviewing some of the Secret Doctrine Question and Answer series, and on coming to the issue of November - December, 1970, which dealt with the subject of the prototypes, sent in further questions upon the quotation from *The Secret Doctrine* which reads:

"Everything that *is, was, and will be*, eternally IS, even the countless forms, which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not in their *ideal Form*. They existed as Ideas, in the Eternity, and, when they pass away, will exist as reflections. Neither the form of man, nor that of any animal, plant or stone has ever been *created*, and it is only on this plane of ours that it commenced 'becoming,' i.e., objectivising into its present materiality, or expanding *from within outwards*, from the most sublimated and supersensuous essence into its grossest appearance. Therefore *our human forms* have existed in the

Eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes; according to which models, the Spiritual Beings (or Gods) whose duty it was to bring them into objective being and terrestrial Life, evolved the protoplasmic forms of the future *Egos* from *their own essence*. After which, when this human *Upadhi*, or basic mould was ready, the natural terrestrial Forces began to work on those supersensuous moulds *which contained, besides their own, the elements of all the past vegetable and future animal forms of this globe in them*. Therefore, man's outward shell passed through every vegetable and animal body before it assumed the human shape." (S.D. I, 282, I, 324 6-vol. ed.; I, 302 3rd ed.)

This explains why the foetus passes through these phases during its evolution in the womb.

Here are the questions now submitted. In regard to the portion of this sentence: "our

human forms have existed in the Eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes": Question — Does ethereal mean here the akashic Aether?

Answer. In *The Secret Doctrine* the "Astral Light" is sometimes used as an equivalent for Akasha, and in this instance "astral and ethereal prototypes" would indeed signify that the "prototypes" would be registered in the Akasha (or "Akashic records"), for this statement is made in *The Secret Doctrine*:-

"(The Lipikas) impress on the (to us) invisible tablets of the Astral Light, 'the great picture-gallery of eternity' — a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal Universe." (S.D. I, 104; I, 165 6-vol. ed.; I, 130 3rd ed.)

In regard to the next portion of the sentence which reads: "according to which models, the Spiritual Beings (or Gods) whose duty it was to bring them into objective being and terrestrial Life, evolved the protoplasmic forms of the future *Egos* from their own essence."

Question: In regard to "the future *Egos*," does this mean "our *Ego*," the higher part of man (a); or is it the upadhi of the ego equivalent to the upadhi of the monadic ray? (b) So it is not the Monad building up its upadhis? (c) Or should one say the monads are assisted by the gods? (d)

Answer to (a): In this particular case the term "future *Egos*" is equivalent to the term "future Monads" — signifying the Monads which are now passing through the stage of evolutionary development represented by the human kingdom. In this particular case the "Spiritual Beings" are represented by the Lunar Pitris, who actually provided the rupas (forms) "from their own essence." In corroboration of this statement attention is directed to this quotation from the Commentaries from the Book of Dzyan which in turn was cited in *The Secret Doctrine*:

"It is from the material Worlds that descend they, who fashion physical man

at the new Manvantaras. They are inferior Lha (Spirits), possessed of a dual body (an astral within an ethereal form). They are the fashioners and creators of our body of illusion." (S.D. II, 57; III, 67 6-vol ed.; II, 60 3rd ed.)

Answer to (b): First clarifying the term *upadhi*: This term may be rendered as "a basis for operation," for the literal meaning of the Sanskrit compound means "a basis or place upon which to stand" — *upa-adha*. In this instance "the upadhi of the *Ego*" is NOT equivalent to the "upadhi of the monadic ray." The upadhi of the monadic ray has reference to the basis of operation for a principle, whereas reference to the upadhi of the ego here signifies the rupa or form which is provided for the ego. In clarification: the upadhi for the monadic ray would signify the principle of Buddhi; the upadhi for the ego represents the rupa provided for the Atma-Buddhi-Higher-Manas (or the "three-in-one") representing the divine Pilgrim who is undergoing the evolutionary pilgrimage through the human stage of evolution on our earth.

Answer to (c): As pointed out in the answer to question (b), the quotation from *The Secret Doctrine* in this case is NOT referring to the Monad building up its upadhis. This phase of the evolutionary pilgrimage has actually been going on through the evolutionary period of the Three Rounds of the Earth planetary system. That is to say, the monad has been building up its upadhis in the earlier three Rounds as conveyed by the terms of the three principles: the Sthula-sarira, the Linga-sarira and Prana. This represents one of the phases of what is termed Monadic Evolution. During the present Fourth Round the monad is engaged in building up the upadhi of the fourth principle — Kama. This was made possible by the protoplasmic form provided by the Spiritual Beings.

So this is the answer to question (d): When the gods — the Lunar Pitris — supplied the rupas, the incoming monads were

assisted in furthering their evolutionary development in the human kingdom on this earth.

Question. It is said that the Nirvana of a Pratyeka-Buddha is not lasting, that for such a one rebirth eventually re-occurs. Can you tell us why this is so?

Answer. First explaining the terms used by the questioner. Nirvana signifies the state which has been attained whereby the individual is freed from the bonds of rebirth. Such a one is termed a Pratyeka-Buddha, signifying literally a Buddha who has attained Nirvana for "one's self alone" (*pratyeka*), and is termed a Nirvaneer. Such a Buddha is enabled to enter into that glorified state as a Dharmakaya, whereas a Buddha of Compassion renounces Nirvana's exalted state of bliss and remains on earth to help humanity as a Nirmanakaya.

A definite answer to this question is supplied in *The Secret Doctrine*. It occurs in a passage where H. P. Blavatsky was explaining the significance of the actions of the Lords of the Flame (the Superior Dhyani-Chohans who assisted the evolution of humanity) in considering the third Stanza of Dzyan, sloka 13 of the second series, and she states:

"If the reader were told, as in the *semi-esoteric* allegories, that these Beings were returning *Nirvanees*, from preceding *Maha-Manvantaras* — ages of incalculable duration which have rolled away in the Eternity, a still more incalculable time ago — he would hardly understand the text correctly; while some Vedantins might say: 'This is not so; the Nirvaneer can never return'; which is true during the *Manvantara* he belongs to, and erroneous where Eternity is concerned." (S.D. II, 79-80; III, 89 6-vol. ed.; II, 83 3rd ed.)

A Vedantin signifies a follower of one of the six schools of Hindu philosophy. A *Manvantara* signifies a life-cycle of a planetary system, or its period of evolutionary activity. The passage from *The Secret Doctrine* continues by quoting

from a sacred sloka — meaning from the Book of Dzyan:

"For it is said in the Sacred Slokas:

"'The thread of radiance which is imperishable and dissolves only in Nirvana, re-emerges from it in its integrity on the day when the Great Law calls all things back into action.' "

(*Ibid.*)

Here the significance of the Great Law is emphasized (the Great Law meaning Eternal Motion — which is evolutionary activity). This is brought forward in a further explanatory passage and quoted below. The thread of radiance signifies the thread of Atman — *Sutratman*:

"which is the golden thread on which, like beads, the various personalities . . . are strung." (*Ibid.*)

"The answer is difficult to comprehend, unless one is well acquainted with the philosophical metaphysics of a beginningless and endless series of Cosmic Re-births; and becomes well impressed and familiarized with that immutable law of Nature which is Eternal Motion, cyclic and spiral, therefore progressive even in its seeming retrogression." (S.D. II, 80; III, 90 6-vol. ed.; II, 84 3rd ed.)

MAN'S CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

A friend wrote recently of losing a much-loved pet. It was a cat that had been deliberately and brutally murdered in her own neighbourhood. The responsible party was probably deranged; nevertheless, incidents like this one are by no means isolated. Cruelty towards animals is very common in what we like to think is an advanced society.

Humane associations exist in every major centre. Part of their work is directed to investigating cases like that which caused my friend so much anguish. Their reports invariably include shocking ac-

counts of pet and livestock animals being subjected to physical discomfiture of all kinds. Starvation, butchery and the infliction of pain are met with daily by those responsible for inspecting conditions in which animals live — and die.

Nor is this all. The so-called factory farming, now increasingly practised in the interests of improving food productivity, is the source of considerable cruelty. Authorities even condone living conditions imposed by these new methods of raising livestock, even though these are of a nature that would have been abhorrent to farmers of bygone years.

Descriptions of some of these conditions would probably not be believed by the large majority of people who eat the products of factory farming. An article in the *London Observer* magazine for November 4, 1973, told of veal calf units measuring 1 ft. 10 in. by 5 ft., with slatted floors and no bedding — the home of a calf from one week old until the end of its miserable existence 14 weeks later; of hens living their lives in an area of half a square foot; of pigs tethered in incredibly cramped spaces, sometimes spending their last months in darkness.

And still not all. In the interests of science millions of animals are used and abused in all kinds of terrible ways. This sort of deliberate cruelty — vivisection — has been perpetrated for over a century and is likely to continue as long as the general public remain ignorant or indifferent and governments can be influenced by those with interests in the results.

A large number of individual Theosophists have always been identified with the humane movement. One of the most famous of the 19th Century humanitarians, Anna Bonus Kingsford, was an early member of the T.S. and her work was approved by both H.P.B. and the Master M. Annie Besant was actively

opposing vivisection long before she joined the Society. And down through the years this cause has readily found sympathizers among students of Theosophy. This is not surprising. The One Life is the cornerstone of the theosophic philosophy, which admits no exceptions in man's special responsibility to all that evolves within that unity.

As long as inhumane treatment of animals persists, man's own spiritual evolution is necessarily going to be slow. The karmic effects of individual acts of cruelty are one thing. But what of our group responsibilities in matters such as factory farming and vivisection? The whole race is surely being impeded in its progress while we are sharing the results of organized mass cruelty.

The situation won't be changed overnight. The most we can hope for is a gradual change in attitudes. In this regard, perhaps my friend's cat did not suffer and die in vain. Its fate was well publicized locally; perhaps the neighbours were prompted to take measures to reduce the chances of another pet meeting the same end and increasing the chances of apprehending the one responsible; perhaps a few thought about the precious nature of the life that had been channelled for a few years through the body of that cat; perhaps . . .

T.G.D.

BOOK REVIEWS

Nature's Merry-Go-Round, by Shirley J. Nicholson, A Quest Book for children, published 1970 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 100 pp. Price \$3.75.

An excellent introduction to science for

children, eight years and upwards, this book includes a great variety of its different aspects. Enlightening descriptions of the processes that take place in the vast field of nature's workshop are offered in chapters that deal with such subjects as geology, biology, astronomy, physics and a touch on reincarnation.

Besides being instructive and interesting, the information is brought alive by the presentation of practical experiments, which the reader is encouraged to try for himself. All of them are simple to carry out, necessitating only the use of ready available materials and utensils. This enhances greatly the understanding and retaining of the scientific knowledge by the young student.

Also assisting the mind to grasp the ideas are the illustrations by Michael B. Sellon, for they visualize so expressively the unfolding laws that proceed in the working out of nature's plan.

The most important point in the book, though, is the linking thread that runs throughout, drawing together all the apparent divisions in the complexity at work in the universe by the constant allusion to the underlying presence of a One Life. Each chapter's content demonstrates clearly for us the intelligent guiding of this Unified Force in all its different phases, and repeatedly it is urged that the reader search to become aware of it himself.

The existence everywhere of the cyclic law is shown, from the metamorphosis in the firefly to the life and death of stars, and not just as individual merry-go-rounds gyrating at random, but the overall pattern is emphasized. The interdependence of all nature's cycles is explained, e.g., how the earth's journey round the sun causes the changing seasons, which in turn affect the growth of plants. A more metaphysical outlook is introduced in the final chapter, and the concept of evolutionary growth through cycles is mentioned. The concluding experiment is a simple but very illuminating lesson on meditation.

Shirley Nicholson is both a mother and a

science teacher, and this book is a charming interblending of her scientific knowledge and her artistic talent in communicating it to the young.

— Joan Sutcliffe

* * *

The Nameless Experience, A Comprehensive Discussion of J. Krishnamurti's Approach to Life, by Rohit Mehta. Published 1973 by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, India. 473 pp. Price Rupees 32.

A new book by Rohit Mehta is always a welcome event. This title deals with some recurring questions about J. Krishnamurti's work. In particular it is concerned with the question, "Does the approach of Krishnamurti contain only negations; is there nothing positive in his way of thinking?"

At the outset the author makes it clear that Krishnamurti's contribution to modern thinking is an approach, a vital process rather than a static system or teaching. As such it does not lend itself to dissecting or putting into any category. There is nothing to be learned and by its very simplicity the approach is open to all.

Mr. Mehta is thus giving us neither a digest nor strictly a commentary but a scholarly treatise in its own right of the whole field of psycho-mental activity leading up to, and culminating in total awareness. In ten chapters he discusses in detail the processes Krishnamurti asks his listeners to examine as they occur in themselves. Of much relevance and interest are the chapters on "The Mysteries of the Brain", and "The Grasp of the Mind", describing the mechanics of perception, and throwing light on the mind-brain relationship. The chapters following give further insight into psychological processes involved in the act of perception, the state of communion and its relation to communication.

In "The Wearing of the Mask" the many facets of this subject are revealed. Lastly,

there are fine distinctions made between different functions relating to meditation; an understanding of these should go a long way toward clearing away any misconceptions regarding the state of meditation, or total awareness.

This is certainly not an introductory book. With its wealth of information, mathematically precise exposition, and complete absence of special terminology it can be a helpful work. It will give the careful reader a sound mental base for his own deeper exploration provided he does not say, "now I know", but keeps in mind that the best description is not the thing described. However, any reader not sufficiently familiar with the state of meditation may find himself in the position of the centipede who when asked how he walked became so confused that he came to a complete standstill.

To quote from page 469, "It may seem strange, but in spite of complete and uncompromising negation, Krishnamurti's approach is intensely positive. But he says that the positive has to be discovered; it cannot be affirmed, nor can it be described."

—Inge M. Jackson

* * *

The Mysteries Today and other essays, by Lawrence J. Bendit. Published 1973 by The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England. 154 pp. Price £1.50.

The nineteen essays which comprise this volume originally appeared as articles in such journals as *The American Theosophist* and *The Theosophical Journal*. It is Dr. Bendit's purpose, as stated in the Introduction, "to try and bring out the validity which one usually finds underlying some of the more conditioned and 'Victorian' expressions of what seem to be basic Theosophical ideas." To some extent he achieves his goal, but it is this reviewer's opinion that he leaves much to be desired.

The title essay actually says very little about the Mysteries so prominent in ancient Egypt and Greece. The author, in fact, feels there is no point in reviving them today since they are "much out of place". He argues that man's Manas has changed so noticeably since those bygone days that Truth and Reality are to be sought "through" it rather than in "outer ceremonies and rites".

Other essays are devoted to such diverse themes as "Some Thoughts About the Masters"; "Meditation in a Vacuum"; "Fifth Race, Sixth Race"; and "Love, Sex, Marriage". The author, being a psychiatrist, is often at his best when drawing upon his psychological training to make us aware of the "tricks" of the personal ego ("The Perils of Spiritual Aspiration"); or advancing the view that "the black magician is a projection of one's own mind" in most instances ("Those Dark Forces"). At other times he seems equally at home in discussing terms common to Taoism or Vedanta philosophy. Thus he elaborates upon Karma and the Lipika in "No Accident"; Yin and Yang in several essays; and the importance of Viveka, discriminative understanding, and Vairagya, emotional objectivity, in "The Incarnation of the Angels".

It is unfortunate that the author has to refer to some Theosophical writers as not being "original". He also exempts C. W. Leadbeater from all criticism while displaying what is at best an ambivalent attitude towards H. P. Blavatsky. Such unnecessary digressions tend to detract from the book's essential spiritual message.

Richard A. Sattelberg

ANSWER TO CRYPTOSOPHIA

—The Idyll of the White Lotus
splendour has no limit
is the future of a thing whose growth and
The soul of man is immortal, and its future

EVERY WORD YOU SAY

Every word you say,
Every look you give,
Each thought within your mind,
Has the force to live,
In a special way,
Touching all mankind.

- Laura E. Baldwin

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