

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 55, No. 2

TORONTO, MAY-JUNE, 1974

Price 50 Cents

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this Magazine, unless made in an official document



HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

August 11, 1831 - May 8, 1891

WHITE LOTUS DAY

MARTTA NIKULA

Today we are holding White Lotus Day. It is the conventional commemoration of the death of our Society's founder, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. As we know, she died in London, on May 8, 1891.

London was a fateful city to this aristocratic Russian woman. There, at the age of twenty she met her Master for the first time and there, when almost sixty she passed away. But in that interval of time much happened: endless journeys, work which included exhaustive toil and hardship; and also such spiritual ecstasy and hidden charm which only the Master's special presence can give to a pupil. When to all this we add her extraordinary character we find a person whose destiny is mysteriously cloaked and who has been criticized by posterity in a most contradictory manner.

When great ideas are first introduced to the world, hardly any of their advocates are publicly acknowledged. The world only recognizes them as being queer and is unable to understand them or to see the fire because it is hidden by smoke. Blavatsky appeared at a time when materialistic science held sway with an upstart's arrogance. Because she felt so strongly the opposing trend of the times she wrote in the preface of the "Secret Doctrine":

"No one styling himself a 'scholar', in whatever department of exact science, will be permitted to regard these teachings seriously. They will be derided and rejected *a priori* in this century; but only in this one. For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings ante-date the Vedas."

In a footnote she added: "This is no pretention to *prophecy*, but simply a

statement based on the knowledge of facts. Every century an attempt is being made to show the world that Occultism is no vain superstition. Once the door is permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century. The times are ripe for a more serious knowledge than hitherto permitted, though very limited, so far."

We members of the Theosophical Society honour Helena Petrovna Blavatsky for her lifework. She it was, as the Society's inner Teacher who brought us that light, which hundreds of thousands have been able to enjoy. She opened the door, which, in truth, was left ajar to bless future generations. She expanded the scope of our thinking to include unthought of realms of space and kingdoms of nature, but along with these outer teaching, or better, within it there bubbles always that ever-fresh spring of time-honoured wisdom (the Ancient Wisdom), which is the gist of the Theosophical message and is its life-blood. These characteristic ideas were never, as Col. Olcott said, as strong and as vital as when they yet lacked materiality and their spirit was still enclosed in mind, heart and soul of their founders.

There is a great danger when ideas are first given form, and these again give birth to other new forms, that these spiritual concepts lose their original freshness through endless interpretations and they become coloured by the personality of the expounder. Probably thinking of this H. P.B. suggested her wishes in regard to holding the three anniversaries, which Col. Olcott published in his letter dated 17-4-1892.

The first of these was, that when her friends gathered at the headquarters to commemorate her memory they would not confine themselves to extolling her personality but would have readings from

those texts which most clearly and purely bring forth the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, such as: *The Voice of Silence*, *Bhagavad Gita*, etc.

Secondly: that the poor fishermen of Adyar be given some presents that day, and thirdly that the lodges and members throughout the world celebrate the day in this manner.

Col. Olcott suggested that the day be called: "White Lotus Day". The lotus flower is the universal symbol, which has a deep philosophical significance, which can be interpreted in many ways. However, the one that appeals to most of us, is that of the human soul rising from the mire at the bottom through moving waters to the bright sunshine at the surface.

It is difficult to say how Theosophy has been expressed and taught in times gone by. Knowledge of our predecessors, even the Alexandrian Theosophists, is very limited. But Theosophy is Divine Wisdom and the world is God's world; then naturally Theosophy must have existed throughout all time. It is certain also, that during each era, it has satisfied the particular needs of the most developed individuals of each ruling race.

The Masters of Wisdom have told us that whenever a new race is born, the highest planetary beings, who no longer can err, appear amongst mankind long enough to imprint the ancient truths upon the plastic mind of the young race. In Theosophy we contact these ancient truths. We could say that they are the laws of nature which undeniably fulfil themselves as long as worlds circle in space. They have been taught by religions long since forgotten and the great religions of today have them in their original and pure form. They have been taught in the past by famous teachers and holy men. So we can conclude: that Theosophy was not yesterday's child, but it has always existed as the very essence of each spiritual teaching. And since, as we mentioned, it is Divine Wisdom, which is given out by the Wise Ones, it has always

been offered to each race in a suitable form.

So today the Theosophical message is to be heard and read in such a form as it most closely meets today's needs. Its principal theme, brotherhood, has sounded amongst a humanity that is crushed, distrustful, armed to its teeth, yet living in fear. As interesting as all discussions and investigations in lodges are they are not to be the main object of study in any lodge but the main object is and should be the spiritual development of its members. Their quiet, almost unperceived guidance from the unreal to the real, from the over-objective, proud, hate-filled thoughts and opinions of our world of today to another world where the restless mind finds repose in peace, sympathy and beauty and the heart is filled with tenderness towards all.

Each serious Theosophist grows gradually into a power working for good in the three-fold world on each of its planes. The work of Theosophy today and its never-ending task is to change the world's mode of thought. We should be able to demonstrate to mankind that all life is truly one and that universal brotherhood is a fact. It is possible to understand all this mentally, but yet, it still is not a vital truth either to ourselves or to others. The fact is not genuine to us until our own soul has been cleansed and opened and this will not happen to us in a group but as individuals. The Masters say in one of their letters: "To be a true philosophy, a true religion, Theosophy must have a rational response to all questions." And it is there, but our mind is perplexed, obscured by the pictures created by our senses and it is not able to find the true answer, therefore we must still our minds and ever strive for self-development.

As to the future, we know that Theosophy will be a way of life for us. The present Society has now survived almost a hundred years through even impassioned times, during which strong currents of thought have died. Yet, we are not to allow our-

selves to believe that all will now work out on its own.

No, we are not to relax, for we are all necessary. Those coming after us, look up to us, just as we have looked for help from older members. Is our life story, if it were to be told, one of noble deeds, well spent days and a striving for high ideals — as we have been directed to live? If this is so, then we, as a small minority, can be a powerful influence upon present day conditions.

We give all pertinent respect to the founders of the Society. They deserve our full admiration and gratitude. Doubtless they also knew much more than what they were able to give out publicly at that time, possibly all that which has been learned in the Theosophical Movement, but naturally the unprepared state of the audience of that day prevented them from receiving the full rich fare. It is very likely that a hundred years hence matters will be made public that we today are not ready to understand. Nevertheless, be it as it may, we are confident that Theosophy is something that is destined to endure. New generations will find new truths in it and they will use these in expressing new methods of work.

As we remarked earlier we are holding our annual memorial service to honour the lifework of our teacher, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. But what is our honour and homage? In the field of every day life it means appreciation of worthiness and as such it is understood by one and all and hence is one of the basic conditions of life. The holy books of different religions have much to say of honouring and respecting. They tell us to honour God, our teachers, our elders, the laws of the land, etc. In so far as honour is preserved, this touches on matters which are axiomatic to all. But when the pupil is hushed and quietly respects his teacher, one might say that he figuratively withdraws into the inner chamber of his heart and experiences a

mystic experience. With his own humble abilities the pupil reaches for heaven and heaven does not leave him unanswered. Under the shadow of a greater consciousness many hidden facts and writings of many holy books become clear to his consciousness and the joy of eternally green pastures enters his heart.

(Translated from *Teosofi*, the magazine of the Theosophical Society in Finland, by J. M.)

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, yet remain silent for lack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor has no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.

Idyll of the White Lotus

THE MISSION OF THEOSOPHY

W. KINGSLAND, F.T.S.

Theosophy has a special and particular mission for the present age — as for all ages.

That mission, expressed in the broadest and widest terms, is to assert *the divine nature of man*.

This is the root and essence of all Theosophical doctrine; and it is here that Theosophy joins issue with the teachings of dogmatic Christian theology on the one hand, and with materialistic science on the other.

Theosophy seeks to re-invest man with a dignity and heritage of which he has been deprived by both religion and science.

Understand that Theosophy is no new thing — it is the oldest thing in the world. Many through ignorance or wilfulness would represent Theosophy as being a new religion, a new sect, a new creed. It is nothing of the kind. The oldest records of religion, philosophy, or science, are the records of Theosophy. She claims them all, can trace them all back to the primordial source, back to that "Divine Hierarchy" which now, as through all the ages, watches and guides the evolution of the race.

And it is because the Ancient Wisdom comes from this Divine Hierarchy, that it claims the title of *Theosophia* or *divine wisdom*. It is because man is by nature a *divine being*, that he may lay claim to this *divine wisdom* as his birthright.

Is this too large a claim to make? Is it too much to assert, that there is a divine degree of knowledge in the possession of those who have passed through the stage of

evolution in which we now find ourselves; and that we, like these, may attain to this perfection of knowledge, when we have reached the fulness and fruition of our human nature — nay, not merely that we may, but that we must; for such is our destiny, in virtue of our spiritual nature, in virtue of that indwelling divine spark which makes of each human being, even now, the "temple of God". (I Cor. iii. 16.)

Let us examine this question a little more fully. Apart altogether from the universal belief in all ages that such a Divine Hierarchy does exist, apart from tradition or religious belief, we may consider the matter in connection with three concepts or factors with which we are familiar. These are (a) our human nature, (b) our spiritual nature, (c) the law of evolution.

We must content ourselves in the first place with a mere definition of each of these, and we shall be obliged to leave behind without any further comment those who cannot accept our definitions. We understand by the term, "our human nature", that physical body or organism, with its characteristic consciousness, which is the *temporary vehicle* for the manifestation on the phenomenal plane of those higher principles which constitute "our spiritual nature."

It will be found that at this point we shall at once part company with the materialist. Materialism denies *in toto* that man has any spiritual nature, and consequently cannot accept any definition which relates our physical nature to our spiritual life. In the view of the materialist, *consciousness* is simply a product of physical development, and mind and intelligence are functions of the brain. The materialist holds that outside of physical form there is no life, no consciousness, no mind.

By the term "our spiritual nature" we understand all that belongs to the sub-

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jective side of our nature — mind, thought, intelligence, consciousness, will — which we must conceive of as characteristic of the real *Ego*, that which survives the death of the physical organism, and is not a product of that organism, but functions in it during the period of life on the physical plan.

By the "law of evolution" we understand that process by which lower forms of organism on the physical plane develop into higher ones, and by which *consciousness* undergoes a corresponding extension or exaltation.

We must note in reference to this latter term, that the difference between our position and that of the materialistic evolutionist is this, that whereas the latter views *consciousness* as a product of the physical organism — and consequently regards those higher degrees of *consciousness* which accompany the higher forms of physical organism, as the result mainly of the evolution of physical form — in our view it is *consciousness* itself, considered as a part of our more permanent spiritual nature, which is evolving; and consequently requires, as it progresses, a more and more perfect vehicle for its manifestation. Thus though we see the evolution of *consciousness* running concurrently with the evolution of physical form — that is to say, that what is called evolution appears in its simplest expression to be a continual widening of the sphere of *consciousness* to embrace more and more of the environment of the individual — in our view *consciousness* is not the result of the evolution of physical form, but the evolution of physical form is the result of this ever-growing *consciousness*, is the result, in short, of the *experience* which the higher spiritual entity gains every time it clothes itself in a physical form.

And this is so because in our view the universe is simply *embodied consciousness*. We view the universe as one vast field of *consciousness*, of infinite degrees in its individualized aspect, from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, from animal to man, from man to

still higher degrees, which it is the province of Theosophy to unfold.

And it is just here that we base the existence of a Divine Hierarchy, as a logical deduction from the three concepts we have put forward. For if individually we are subject to this law of evolution, if our individual *consciousness* — while remaining a part of the universal *consciousness*, that which theology terms *God* — has in its individualized aspect passed through the lower stages of mineral, plant, animal, and now finds itself in the *human* stage, why should we break off there, and either deny any further progress, or make that further progress the great exception in the universe, separating man both from the universe and from *God*?

Theosophy teaches therefore that the next stage of man's evolutionary progress is that he shall become a *divine being*, by which is meant that he shall reach that perfection of his nature in which he will have become a self-conscious *spiritual* being, able to act consciously on those higher planes of nature which are at present *subjective*, and in which at present he merely builds all kinds of fancies according to his religious or emotional idiosyncrasies.

For let no man think that he will enter the spiritual world at death. The spiritual world is *here and now*, as an actual *physical fact*; and the full *consciousness* of that spiritual world is gradually dawning upon us, as we evolve out of that lower form of *consciousness*, which for the time being we term the *human*. And further, we must remain in the *human* until this higher *consciousness* is reached, and thus it is that we have to reincarnate over and over again, until through *experience* we reach the higher state.

It matters not what ideal *religion* may attach to the future of the individual, the *actual fact* is a process of nature. For what is the future but an extension of the present; and what is the *spiritual* world but an extension of the *natural*, or what is the *natural* world but an *aspect* of the

spiritual? There is no single atom of so-called *matter* which can be detached for a single moment, at any point of its inconceivable dimensions from the *spiritual* universe. Rightly considered, there is no distinction whatever between the *natural* and the *spiritual*. The universe is either all natural, or all spiritual, according as we view it from above or from below, that is, from its outermost or innermost aspect — for what is *spirit* but the *innermost* of all that exists — while even these terms are merely concessions to our finite intelligence.

The universe is a unity, consciousness is a unity, intelligence is a unity — yet how can we express these things in finite language. They must be grasped by the *intuition*. “Know of a truth”, says Carlyle — “know of a truth that only the time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and for ever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries; believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.”

And to those who have not grasped this, we can but offer in broken language — suggestions, hints. Yet let us take this now as a *scientific fact* — by whatever method we may have arrived at that fact — that man as a whole, in all his aspects — not the mere finite being who stands before us in physical form — touches the whole universe, partakes of the nature of the whole universe; that the divine power which sustains the whole universe is *within* him, not outside of him; that his mind, and consciousness, and will, are derived from, and part of, and one with the universal mind, and consciousness, and will — by whatever name these may be called.

We say again, to all who are prepared to listen, that the apparent isolation in which man stands from the spiritual world, from the guiding intelligence of the universe, and even from his fellow-men, is an *illusion*; not untraceable as to its cause and origin, and

not without a remedy which has been plainly indicated by all those great teachers whom the world has first crucified and then defied. And it is the conquest of this *illusion* which is the goal of our human evolution. It is the rebecoming divine of that which, through its “fall into matter”, has lost its birthright, has lost touch with that larger consciousness of which it is a part.

We may observe now how this view of man's nature tends to harmonize science and religion. By *science* we mean in this connection the *facts* of nature. By *religion* we mean the *forms* in which man's aspirations after the divine have been clothed or set before the world from time to time by many great teachers. And we find in this view a perfect harmony between the scientific fact of man's spiritual nature, and the religious aspect of that nature given to us in the records known as the Old and New Testaments.

For this indwelling spiritual nature is the *Christ principle*; the *mystic Christos* of the Gnostics, of St. John's Gospel, and of the Apostle Paul.

Christ never was and never could be a *person*, for he belongs to all humanity, is indeed the indwelling spiritual life or principle of all humanity, and can only be individualized to the extent that this universal spiritual aspect of humanity has its individual aspect in each human entity. This spiritual and mystical *Christ* is identical with the mystical *Saviours* of all the olden religions and mythologies, and the allegories connected with his nature and character were borrowed from the older religions, and incorporated in the Gospel narratives, being grafted upon a slight historical narrative of an actual person called *Jesus of Nazareth*.

The proof of this lies in the fact that the mythical and miraculous events related in the Gospels are common to the older systems, more especially to the Egyptian *Horus* and the Hindu *Krishna*. All these follow the so-called *history* of Christ almost incident for incident, commencing with a

miraculous conception and birth from a virgin, and ending with crucifixion.

But the Church, having lost the key to the nature of the inner divine principle of humanity, represented by the allegorical Krishna, Horus, or *Christ*, has identified absolutely the historical *Jesus*, and the mythical *Christ*. But when these two are again separated, and the nature of *Christ* studied not merely in the light of the gospel allegories, but also in the light of the older systems, all the difficulties which surround the gospel narratives will vanish; for the true historical portion relating to Jesus of Nazareth can be treated on its own ground on literary and historical evidences, while the mystical, mythical, and allegorical teaching concerning the *Christ* are left to those whose training or disposition will allow of their entering into the deeper mysteries of their own spiritual nature.

Therefore it is that to-day Theosophy preaches *Christianity* — not ecclesiasticism, or dogmatic theology. It preaches *Christianity* because it restores that ideal of a perfect humanity, of the human become *divine*, of which *Christ* is the type, and of which Jesus of Nazareth, and each one of those “Elder Brothers” of the Race, who have already reached the perfection of their nature, are the pledge and example.

And here we may note another error which is associated with the teachings of ecclesiastical *Christianity*. The Church has made of *Christ* an individual and separate divine being, a single personality occupying a unique position in the universe and in relation to “God”. But the term *Christ* is derived from the Gnostic *Christos*, meaning simply anointed, or initiated. It is synonymous with the Hindu term *Buddha*, or enlightened.

It means equally in each case, any individual who has reached the state of *adeptship*, who has reached that perfection of his nature which Paul describes as “the measure of the stature of the fulness of *Christ*” (*Eph. iv. 13*). And Jesus being such an one was rightly *Jesus Christ* and so also

Gautama is termed *Gautama Buddha*. We thus see how it is that Theosophy can embrace both *Christianity* and *Buddhism*. Not of course in their exoteric forms, but in their inner or *esoteric* meaning. Gautama and Jesus being both *Initiates*, taught exactly the same truths with regard to man’s spiritual nature, with regard to ethics and morality, and laid down the same rules for the attainment of that degree of perfection which each had reached.

It is the mission of Theosophy then to bring before the world once more the pure teachings of Gautama the Buddha, and Jesus the Christ; to hold up to mankind once more the divine ideal of man’s nature which these two not merely taught, but exemplified in their lives and works.

And this it can do because the key has once more been given out in clear and unmistakable language, by that Divine Hierarchy which preserves the pure truth, of which mankind is continually losing sight, in its folly and selfish greed for those allurements which the world offers to the senses in such abundance.

For it is true now, as it was and always will be, as Jesus and Buddha and all great teachers have taught — “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” And so, as long as men follow the promptings of their lower nature, as long as they spend their time and energies in gaining the approval or worship of their fellow men, in getting *for themselves* all the good things of this world, utterly regardless of the cries of the oppressed or unthinking of the share they take from others in order that their own pride or desires may be gratified, so long will they individually, and the race to which they belong, miss that higher goal which is their birthright, and be thrown back again and yet again into this lower life in which their consciousness is centred. For “where the treasure is, there will the heart be also”; and how shall they hope to attain to heaven, or any spiritual state whatever,

whose whole nature is soaked through and through with the dregs of earth?

But this Hierarchy of Initiates, who ever watch over humanity in its cycles of evolution, and ever preserve the sacred truth from defilement, lose no opportunity when the individual is ready or the time is ripe to impart the knowledge they possess. "When the pupil is ready, the master will be found", is true of the race as of the individual. And the time is ripe, now at this latter end of the nineteenth century; and so once again, after the darkness of centuries, the lamp of truth is lit, and held on high, that all those who are *ready* may recognise the guiding light. Those who are not ready scoff and mock at it, as they have done in all ages. The loss is theirs.

And those who are ready are those who are willing to lose their life in order that they may find it. Self-sacrifice even to the "endless end" is the keynote of the *faithful* teaching which Theosophy presents again as the only pledge which will avail to open the road to the highest good.

Tertullian — one of those delightful "Church Fathers" who helped to found the jumble of superstition and intolerance which has imposed itself upon the world for centuries under the title of Christianity — offered it as one of the joys of heaven, that the "elect" would witness the tortures of the "damned" in hell. And if it be said that such teaching is not possible now, we would refer to a recent "declaration of faith" by a prominent Baptist minister and his *confreres*: for whether these good Christians would or would not take a lively delight in witnessing the tortures of their fellow beings in hell, they can at all events contemplate with perfect satisfaction a "scheme of salvation" which will separate humanity into the "lost" and the "saved" and place the latter in a paradise of individual bliss, where they will be for ever separated from their less fortunate fellows — it may be those who were nearest and dearest to them on earth — and cannot if

they wish to — which is doubtful — do anything more for the "lost".

Not so Theosophy. It repudiates with scorn such unmeasured selfishness. Listen to its teachings:

"Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva — compassion speaks and saith: 'Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?'"

"Now thou hast heard that which was said.

"Thou shalt attain the seventh step and cross the gate of final knowledge but only to wed woe — if thou would'st be Tathagata, follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end.

"Thou art enlightened — choose thy way."

And so the Great Ones of the Earth, having reached the goal, having won Nirvana — put the prize aside, that they may help sinning, suffering, struggling humanity to attain, even as they have attained.

What a contrast to the teachings of the so-called *Evangelical* Christian Church; for that teaching is opposed in all its essentials to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and Gautama Buddha. For the Church has substituted creed for conduct — it is enough now if a man "believes" at the last moment of his life, he shall surely thereby be "saved", though his whole nature be saturated with sin and sensuality.

But whatever *ideal* Christianity may offer, the *reality* is ever the same. And that reality — fortunately for humanity — is that those who have attained to the Christ or Buddha state, do for the most part "remain unselfish to the endless end", and form the "guardian wall" which protects humanity during its long cycle of evolution.

From the SILENT WATCHER down to the Nirmanakayas, and from the Nirmanakayas, down to those *Adepts* who still

incarnate in physical bodies that they may better help humanity in some special way, there is an unbroken stream of evolution, and an unbroken purpose.

And it is to these *Adepts* we owe our knowledge of the *Secret Doctrine*, which is now presented to the world in plainer, clearer, and more unmistakable form than ever before.

To some members of the Theosophical Society these *Adepts* are personally known. Others who have not met them personally have been in constant communication with them.

But though the existence of these "Masters of Wisdom" is an established fact, and is the key, and the only key, to the existence of a store of knowledge held in trust for the race, and given out from time to time, and also to the existence and spread of the organization known as the Theosophical Society, yet no one is asked to accept any of the teachings of Theosophy, save on the authority of his own reason and individual judgment.

For it is not in Theosophy as in Christianity a matter of dying in belief or unbelief, and so settling our future destiny for all eternity; neither is it a matter of one life-time of evolution, but of many lives, each the natural result and sequence of the others.

Those who have not accomplished that stage of evolution known as the *human*, must be reborn over and over again until it is accomplished: and therefore those who have not yet learnt the *reality*, the "scientific fact" of their nature, in connection with the higher planes of life and consciousness by which they are surrounded, must go on until the experience of many lives has brought them the requisite knowledge.

For physical man is but the vehicle, the temporary garment of spiritual man, that "divine spark" which — having set out ages and ages ago on its long pilgrimage through the universe, through those varying states of consciousness, which in

their sum total is the universe — having now accomplished its "descent into matter", allegorically represented in *Genesis* by the "fall", is now seeking to return to its divine source, to become that which in the New Testament is allegorically typified by the resurrected Christ.

Here then is our doctrine: —

"Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
 Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
 Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever,
 Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems!"

* * *
 "Nay, but as when one layeth
 His worn-out robes away,
 And, taking new ones, sayeth,
 'These will I wear to-day!'
 So putteth by the Spirit
 Lightly its garb of flesh,
 And passeth to inherit
 A residence afresh."

— *Bhagavad-Gita*
 — *Theosophical Siftings* 1892

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 38.

BIN EBVNDMZ QMBTC MB VB-
 SYNBSDCZC. DW ZDWKZN LAADNSC
 BN EZMDZC, ABN DW MZGZN
 WZLVKZC OIW WKLW TKDVK DW
 QMBTC WB OZ WKZ WNIWK.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

All Canadian members will wish to join me in sending congratulations to Joy Mills on her appointment as Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. (This office is nominated by the President and confirmed by the General Council.)

The Society is indeed fortunate to have a person with Miss Mills' capabilities available to fill this important position. As National President of the Theosophical Society in America, for several years past she has proved to be an extremely efficient administrator. At the same time, she is a warm, friendly person, and a devoted student of Theosophy.

We wish Joy well in the performance of her new duties.

* * *

By the time members receive this issue of the magazine they should also have received their balloting papers for the 1974-77 Triennial Election of the General Executive. (Those who have not should get in touch with me immediately.)

It is very important that the Theosophical Society in Canada has a strong executive body, one that will be confident of the support of the membership. I therefore urge all eligible voters to exercise their privilege and complete and return their ballots.

* * *

My name was the only one submitted for the office of General Secretary for the next three years. I am grateful for the privilege and the members' confidence in me, and will continue to do my best to carry out the duties associated with this office.

* * *

For some considerable time now, Dudley Barr, former General Secretary of the T. S. in Canada, has been confined to his bed at his home in Thornhill. I visited Mr. and Mrs. Barr recently and it was encouraging to find him in good spirits undiminished by pain and immobility.

Dudley still takes a lively interest in the affairs of the T. S., and particularly in news of the Canadian Section and Toronto Lodge, both of which he served so well and faithfully for over half a century.

For him, Theosophy has never been merely a study, but rather a practical approach to life and living. This is reflected today in his amazingly serene outlook even under trying conditions.

This brings to mind the collection of Dudley Barr's short writings, *Theosophy — An Attitude Toward Life*. Published by the Blavatsky Institute, it is a storehouse of inspired comment.

* * *

It was a pleasure to receive news recently from our nonagenarian member, Frank Boucher, several of whose articles have appeared in recent issues of this magazine. Frank now lives at "A Guest Home for the Aged" (his quotes) in Victoria and at 92 is far from idle.

Among other activities Frank edits and publishes a weekly newsletter for his fellow residents. Sample copies I have seen include a number of quotations which are Theosophical in nature and no doubt thought-provoking to his readers. For example, he closed an obituary with lines from John Masefield's lovely poem, "My Creed", the theme of which is reincarnation.

Frank Boucher is only one of several of our members in their eighties or nineties who are extremely active. For them, retirement is a period for developing latent talents and indulging in good works rather than one of slackening-off. They are a fine example to all of us, regardless of age.

* * *

The General Executive has decided that the T.S. in Canada should not sponsor a North American Theosophical Students' Conference this year. There did not seem to be sufficient interest in the Conference to justify the work and expense that must go into its preparation.

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

IN CANADA

Published Bi-Monthly

Second Class Mail Registration Number 0784

Return Postage Guaranteed

Subscription: THREE DOLLARS A YEAR



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All letters to the Editors, articles and reports for publication should be addressed to the Editors, Box 5051, Postal Station "A", Toronto, Ont. M5W 1N4

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

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

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

RANNIE PUBLICATIONS LIMITED
Beamsville, Ontario

For the benefit of readers in Canada and the U.S. who wish to examine some of the privately printed magazines mentioned elsewhere in this issue, sample copies of the English publications may be obtained through this office. This arrangement will save considerable time as transatlantic surface mail often takes several weeks.

—T.G.D.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

It was with disgust that I read the following statement in President John Coats' Presidential Address (C. T. Mar-Apr. 1974):

"In a totally different field, we are opening here (at Adyar) a centre for Child Welfare. This could also become a centre for family planning for the workers on our Estate . . ."

Theosophy in no way sanctions the revolting modern invention called so evasively "family planning". As everyone knows, "family planning" is the advice given on various forms of birth control, of which the ghastly crime of abortion is one.

In her pre-Theosophic days, Mrs. Annie Besant together with Mr. Charles Bradlaugh published a vile book called *The Fruits of Philosophy*. This book, which I glanced through some years ago, deals with birth control and so-called sexual freedom.

If anyone wants to see what the Mahatmas really think about birth control and such like, they can turn to *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, wherein it is stated that "*The Fruits of Philosophy* is infamous and highly pernicious in its effects . . ." The Mahatma K. H. added: "I have not read the work — nor ever will; but I have its unclean spirit, its brutal aura before me, and I say again in my sight the advices offered in the work are abominable . . ."

Madame Blavatsky in like manner took a very strong stand against the abuse and misuse of sex. Today, civilization has gone so far in this area of degradation that it would be the height of folly for Theosophists, of all people, to sanction any form of such acts against Nature.

I trust that the statement was a slip of the pen by Mr. Coats.

Elouise R. Wilson

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

Those interested in, or puzzled by, Gnostic ideas ought perhaps to read a few texts, though I do not recommend it:

“The first Archon, Ildabaoth, brought Adam and placed him in paradise, which he claimed was to be a ‘delight’ for him; in fact, he intended to deceive him. For the Archons’ delight is bitter and their beauty is lawless. Their delight is deceit and their tree was hostility. Their fruit is poison against which there is no cure, and their promise is death to him. Yet their tree was planted as a ‘tree of life.’ I shall show you what their ‘mystery of life’ is — it is their Counterfeit Spirit, which originated from them so as to turn him away, so that he might not know his own perfection.”

— *Apocryphon of John*, 55:18-56:17, W. Till.

In the *GINZA*, the pathetic “Little Anosh” (Everyman) says:

“The evil ones conspire against me. They say to one another, ‘In our own world the call of Life shall not be heard, it shall be ours . . .’ Day in, day out, I seek to escape them, as I stand alone in this world.”

GINZA, 261t.

“The King of Darkness caught sight of the world of Light from afar on the border between the Darkness and the Light, as a fire on the summit of high mountains, as stars shining in the firmament. He pondered in his heart, fell into a rage . . . and said, ‘If there is such a world, what is it to me this habitation of darkness? . . . I will rise up to that luminous earth and make war upon its King.’ ”

GINZA. 279

“From the day when I came to love the Life . . .
I no longer have trust in anything in the world.
In father and mother

I have no trust in the world . . .
In what is made and created,
I have no trust in the world.”

- *GINZA*, 390f.

Thus the Gnostic version of the creation and purpose of the universe and conscious life. It is the basis of *all* Gnostic teaching and of its immense, flimsy but closely-argued logical structure. It slanders the Dhyān Chohans and repudiates brotherhood. If it distresses the Theosophical reader as it does myself, I apologize.

Writing these excerpts was not enjoyable, but was a necessary revelation. Rebellion against oppression is just, and protest is proper, but the wrathful thought-forms that arise therefrom fulfil their Karmic purpose and should be suffered to depart. I believe that Gnosticism is a poisoned well, and if this be narrow-minded, so be it. Enough is enough, and I shall write no more on this depressing subject.

F.W. Wilkes

* * *

The Editors

The Canadian Theosophist

With reference to his letter on Gnosticism (C.T. Mar-Apr 1974), Richard I. Robb has my sympathy. As a long-time student of *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, it is likewise to my knowledge that H. P. Blavatsky did deal quite extensively with this subject — at least with Gnosticism worthy of the name.

I do not say this without regard to H.P.B.’s inner meaning in the matter, which is far from being “Theosophy turned upside down”. Among the many comparisons and evaluations Mr. Robb mentions in this connection may be cited the section entitled “The Upanishads in Gnostic Literature” in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 563 or. ed., II, 594 3rd ed., IV, 133 6-vol. ed.). Then again:

“In *Isis Unveiled* several of these Gnostic systems are given. One is taken

from the *Codex Nazaraeus*, the Scriptures of the Nazarenes . . . They held their "Mysteries of Life" in Nazara (ancient and modern Nazareth), and their doctrines are a faithful echo of the teachings of the Secret Doctrine . . ." (S.D. II, 96 or. ed., II, 100 3rd ed., IV, 105 6-vol. ed. fn.) In her priceless article, "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels" (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* Vol. VIII, 172-217) she unveils the Sophia (Wisdom) of the Gnostics: that terms such as chrestos, christos and christian are all based on Gnostic and Eastern mysticism. These Gnostics — the inspirers of primitive Christianity — were the most cultured, most learned, and most worthy of the Christian name. Likewise also, H.P.B. brings out that Gnostic records contained the epitome of the chief scenes enacted during the mysteries of initiation. She also mentions "the most precious relic of Gnostic literature, a fragment called *Pistis-Sophia*, "Knowledge-Wisdom." (p. 216).

It is important to note, however, that in *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. B. states: "The primitive pure Oriental Gnosticism was completely corrupted and degraded by the different subsequent sects." (I, 271 fn.) Mr. Robb says he refers to the most ancient Gnostic texts, while Mr. Wilkes refers to the later texts. This is exactly what I had in mind when I read Mr. Robb's earlier letter (C.T. Sept-Oct. 1973), and thought that Mr. Wilkes might be quite correct concerning the later degradations of ancient Gnosticism.

Really, it could be said that true Gnosticism came to an end with the brutal murder of the Greek maiden philosopher Hypatia in the year 414 A.D. — the last of the Neo-Platonists. The death of Hypatia marked the beginning of the Dark Ages and the reign of Wisdom closed. In this connection, we are reminded of H.P.B.'s words in the Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*: "The period, beginning with Buddha and

Pythagoras at the one end and the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics at the other, is the only focus left in history wherein converge for the last time the bright rays of light streaming from the aeons of time gone by, unobscured by the hand of bigotry and fanaticism."

John Oberlechner

TORONTO LODGE

At the Annual Meeting of the Toronto Lodge held on May 15 the following officers and directors were elected for the ensuing year:

President	Mr. Fleetwood B. Berry
Vice-President	Mr. Stanford L. Treloar
Secretary	Mrs. Marie Schlauch
Treasurer	Mrs. Barbara Treloar
Directors:	Mrs. Vera Berry, Mr. Malcolm Goodall, Mrs. Audrey Hallas, Mrs. Emma Obodiac, Miss Amelia Saumur, Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe.

ANNUAL PICNIC

The joint annual picnic of Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Lodges will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. Cunningham, Fonthill, Ontario, on Saturday, June 15, 1974.

A bus for Toronto members and friends will leave 12 MacPherson Avenue at 9:30 a.m. Tickets: \$4.00. Children \$2.00 (The price includes ice cream, tea, coffee or milk).

For further information, please call Alan Sutcliffe, Phone: (416) 762-6748.

ANSWER TO CRYPTOSOPHIA

A. P. Sinnett, P. 52.
The Mahatma Letters to

Our doctrine knows no compromises. It either affirms or denies, for it never teaches but that which it knows to be the truth.

CONVENTION 1974

The 99th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the Indian Section Headquarters at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India, December 26-31, 1974.

ADYAR EMPLOYEES FUND

The President is asking members throughout the world to contribute to the Adyar Employees Fund. This fund will be used to supplement the wages of those who work on the Adyar Estate.

The Theosophical Society, with its limited finances, cannot afford to compete with the level of wages paid by industry and government. At present, the wage scale does not cover the basic needs of our workers, and the rapidly escalating cost of living in India renders life increasingly difficult for them.

Members who wish to contribute to the Adyar Employees Fund may send donations care of the General Secretary.

HELP WANTED—ADYAR

The President has issued an appeal for helpers to work at the Society's headquarters at Adyar.

In the normal course of events, some of those who have been working at Adyar for a number of years find it necessary for one or another reason to return home or move to another field of work. As a result of a number of such departures, Adyar now stands in need of several new workers, and especially in relation to the preparations for the Centenary Celebrations of 1975.

Secretarial help is urgently needed, particularly shorthand and typing. Other aspects of the work for which helpers are required include: printing and publishing; editing and proof-reading; accounting and business administration; cataloguing and preservation of manuscripts in the Ar-

chives; management of repairs and maintenance.

Members who can serve for one or two years are asked to consider this appeal. A living allowance is given to those with insufficient funds to support themselves.

SEMINAR STUDIES

IN THEOSOPHY

November 17, 1974 — February 17, 1975

Dr. Jean Raymond, Recording Secretary, has announced a three-month seminar series commencing November 17 at the Society's headquarters in Adyar. There will be a two-week vacation period in December for the International Convention.

Joy Mills is Director of Seminar Studies. The focus will be on the basic concepts of Theosophy, with particular emphasis on individual study and research. Texts to be used are:

Abridgement of The Secret Doctrine, edited by Christmas Hymphreys and Elizabeth Preston

The Key to Theosophy: An Abridgement, edited by Joy Mills.

Supplementary texts will be recommended, based on individual and group research projects. The resources of the Adyar Library and Research Centre will be called on to enrich the seminar programs.

Students wishing to enrol for Seminar Studies must be members of the Society, with some background knowledge of Theosophical principles. They will require a letter of recommendation from the General Secretary.

There is no charge for attendance at the Seminar, but the normal accommodation charges will apply over the period.

This new series replaces the old School of the Wisdom. It is intended it will form the basis for the eventual establishment of an institute of Theosophical Studies at Adyar.

Prospective students are asked to contact the General Secretary.

GREAT PAN RETURNS

ALVIN BOYD KUHN, PH.D.

(continued from page 10)

Humanity's relationship to nature can be distinguished at three levels. First, there is the immediate attachment of one's life to nature through the body. This subsists wholly in the domain of the natural forces, being composed of nature's elements. This linkage is purely physical.

By definition, physical nature appertains to those materials, faculties and forces lying below the level of the rational self-consciousness in living entities. In the broadest general sense, therefore, it may be said that the study of man in this phase of his relationship to nature lies in the field of physiology, and natural science, having nothing to do directly with the cognitive function of the mind. It has to be realized, however, that in this analytical effort it is probably rash to run the lines of distinction arbitrarily through what is in the end a total and indivisible unity.

Life is certainly integral in all its diversity of manifestation, and its principles are uniform in operation. Beyond question, it is structurally organic. Nevertheless, for purposes of understanding, the human mind revels in dissecting, as it were, the components of the whole assemblage if only for the satisfaction of seeing how it performs its given function.

The positing of polarity itself is a legitimate distinction of elements in a composite. We must surely distinguish consciousness from lifeless matter. And once that division is made, the gamut of gradations in the manifestation of living energies furnishes the mind with the necessary data for the understanding of phenomena.

The supreme function of mind is to effect a synthesis of all the parts in the infinite diversity of natural objects and processes. But synthesis must be preceded by analysis. Our creative mind has the task of

putting together what God has separated out of his original unit wholeness; and if there is to be a re-assemblage of the parts, these must at least be seen *as parts*, and named and classified in their individuality.

For the security of his existence, man has to discriminate sharply among the numberless things he encounters. One of the great paradoxes of Life is the maintenance of unity — total oneness — in all the multiplicity of an incredibly pluralistic universe. Nevertheless, the creatures of Life must differentiate among the constituent units which, by their very difference compose the unity. We must drink water and not sulphuric acid; eat bread and not clay. The multiple parts of the organic whole maintain the unity in blessedness when associated with each other in the most harmonious way; if wrongly related, they disrupt the order and balance.

There is, then, the purely physical linkage of man with nature. Secondly, there is the aesthetic. This is the response to nature's forms and influences through the human susceptibilities of feeling. The body, with its brain and nervous equipment, again enters this realm, but only mediately as providing the mechanism of the conscious registration. It is a relation of nature to consciousness, and the impact of nature upon consciousness is that of nature's objective forms upon the feelings and sensibilities of *homo sentiens*.

Man has been placed on this planet to carry on his life in the milieu of nature. It is inevitable that nature should exert upon him her influences, salutary or pernicious — and this from the bare fact of his relation of dependence upon and immersion in nature.

This impact of the physical world upon human life has been observed, analyzed and theorized upon throughout the history

of civilization. Its influences exerted upon first the body, then the mind or soul of the human, have been meticulously catalogued. Anthropology, sociology and every branch of humanistic science have digested all the particulars of the physical side of the influence; it has been the metier of philosophy to trace the effect of nature upon humanity's ideological postures, intellectually conceptualized. But it has been the province of poetic inspiration to catch and register the high elevations of the feeling response to nature — the third linkage.

Whether as pure feeling, or thought exalted and illuminated by feeling, it is the soul of poetry that responds in deepest sentiency to the aura of beauty with which nature suffuses the mind-soul of the mortal living amid her charms. This form of nature's influence on mankind has been delineated by many philosophers. In religion, the mystical tendency most signally exemplified by St. Francis of Assisi, but experienced to a degree by most mystics, has drawn contemplatives into a close rapport with nature. From nature, as they have declared, have been born some of their most exalted realizations of their oneness with the Oversoul of the world.

Seclusion in mountain fastnesses or forest retreats has ever been looked upon as the most favourable condition for the successful pursuit of the contemplative life. The quietude of the forest, the beauty of the scenery, have been held conducive to the free play of the mystical afflatus as these things exert a soothing influence upon the psyche.

Perhaps supreme among the philosophers in the elucidation of this afflatus has been the Neoplatonic Plotinus. His was a masterly exposition of the character and force of nature's influence in this area of human affectability. Nearly all poets of deep sensitivity have breathed the breath of nature into the body of their effusions. Indeed, it is not extravagant to say that natural Truth, perceived and delineated through mystical rhapsodies

and visions of supreme beauty, is pretty near to being the soul of poetry.

Poetry abounds ubiquitously in tropes and figures based on nature. By instinct the poetic mind discerns in natural phenomena the suggestive paradigms or models of both intellectual conceptions and universal truths. The mind that tries to portray thoughts and feelings of deep character is forced to go to nature to find living forms to represent them in words. Or, these logical ideas find themselves almost intuitively dramatized by their contratypes in nature's world.

Nature is at all times the handmaid of poetic figurism, supplying a suggestive analogue for every emotion or concept. When Tennyson says that "like summer tempest came her tears" he simply finds it easiest to copy nature's ready dramatization of this human emotional upsurge.

Nature is thus intellectually suggestive of luminous images of Truth. But beyond that, or perhaps through its very efficacy, it also becomes morally — sometimes spiritually — ennobling. The poet Wordsworth stands out as a notable exponent and artist. John Ruskin traced the salutary and beneficent effects of the beauties of nature upon character and morals most forcefully and significantly. Nor can we overlook Goethe when the theme is the recognition of the rapport between nature and the human mind. In fact, the whole great movement of German romantic idealism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries drew its motivation and vision from a deep perception of the kinship of the mind with nature.

Philo, the outstanding Jewish philosopher of the early period, expounded the four levels at which the mind is capable of apprehending truth: (a) the literal-historical-factual; (b) the ethical-emotional; (c) the allegorical-mental; and (d) the anagogical-spiritual. In contemplation we realize that the mind likewise perceives nature at the same four levels and in the same four forms. First we

see her forms and phenomena, in simple objectivity. Then we view them with closer attention and receive the impression of a feeling nature, arousing sentiments of beauty, tenderness, goodness. At a higher pitch of consciousness we catch the shadowy intimations of sublime truth, as Wordsworth so royally describes them, by

the working of the mind's instinctive sense of analogical identity of the seen with the unseen. And, lastly, we can at rare moments be swept with a veritable inundation of light and truth as to be lifted high into the realm of pure ideality and cosmic vision of reality itself.

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. What distinguishes Kali-yuga from the period that preceded it and the one that will follow it?

Answer. The Kali-yuga is commonly called the Dark Age, or sometimes the Age of Iron (*yuga* signifies a time-period, a cycle, or an age). The period which preceded the Kali-yuga is known as the Dvapara-yuga, and the period that will follow is known as the Satya-yuga (also called the Krita-yuga) and is referred to as the Golden Age.

The best way of describing "what distinguishes Kali-yuga from the period that preceded it" is by telling how the Brahmanical books describe the four yugas. Dharma (Divine Truth) is represented by a bull who is standing firmly on his four feet during the period of Satya-yuga — the age which is four times longer than that of the Kali-yuga. But in the age which follows the Satya-yuga, known as the Treta-yuga, the bull is shown as standing on only three feet — one foot is raised. In the age following the Treta-yuga, termed the Dvapara-yuga, two of the bull's feet are raised, so that he is represented as standing on two feet. However, in the fourth age or Kali-yuga the bull has three of his feet raised and is shown standing on only

one foot and is therefore tottering and on the point of falling — consequently Truth has barely a leg to stand on.

Explaining now the significance of the Sanskrit words. The word Kali is the name of the die, or side of the die, marked with one dot, called the "one-spot" by dice-players. It thus represents the yuga or age of Number One or 1,000 Divine Years. To render the age in mortal years, 1,000 is multiplied by 360; and to this figure is added the Sandhyas and Sandhyansas (representing Dawns and Twilights each of 100 divine years). Therefore in mortal years the Kali-yuga is equal to 432,000 years. As the Dvapara-yuga signified the Age of Number Two (dvapara means 2), this yuga is equal to 864,000 mortal years. Treta-yuga (the Age of Number Three — treta means 3) is three times longer than the Kali-yuga and consists of 1,296,000 mortal years. The Satya-yuga, which follows the Kali-yuga is equal to 1,728,000 mortal years.

Question: What did Madame Blavatsky mean by the "blessings" of Kali-yuga? (S.D.I, 378; II, 93, 6 vol. ed.; I, 405, 3rd ed.)

Answer. In order to understand the significance of the meaning of the "blessings", one should read the

paragraph in which the word "blessings" occurs, as well as the passage which was quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* prior to her remark concerning the blessings. What takes place during Kali-yuga is described in the *Vishnu-Purana*, and the description is introduced by Mme. Blavatsky in this manner (the square brackets in the quoted passage represent H.P.B.'s interpolations):

"As the 'Satya-yuga' is always the first in the series of the four ages or Yugas, so the Kali ever comes the last. The Kali-yuga reigns now supreme in India, and it seems to coincide with that of the Western age. Anyhow, it is curious to see how prophetic in almost all things was the writer of Vishnu Purana when foretelling to Maitreya some of the dark influences and sins of this Kali-yug. For after saying that the 'barbarians' will be masters of the banks of the Indus, of Chandrabhaga and Kasmera, he adds:

"There will be contemporary monarchs, reigning over the earth, kings of churlish spirit, violent temper, and ever addicted to falsehood and wickedness. They will inflict death on women, children, and cows; they will size upon the property of their subjects

[or, according to another reading, be intent upon the wives of others] ; they will be of unlimited power . . . their lives will be short, their desires insatiable People of various countries intermingling with them will follow their example; and the barbarians being powerful [in India] in the patronage of the princes, while purer tribes are neglected, the people will perish [or, as the commentator has it: 'the Mlechchas will be in the centre, and the Aryas in the end'] . Wealth and piety will decrease until the world will be wholly depraved Property alone will confer rank; wealth will be the only source of devotion; passion will be the sole bond of union between the sexes; falsehood will be the only means of success in litigation; and women will be

objects merely of sensual gratification . . . *External types will be the only distinction of the several orders of life; . . . dishonesty [anyaya] will be the universal means of subsistence; weakness the cause of dependence, menace and presumption will be substituted for learning; liberality will be devotion; mutual assent, marriage; fine clothes, dignity. He who is the strongest will reign; the people, unable to bear the heavy burthen Khara bhara [the load of taxes] will take refuge among the valleys. . . . Thus, in the Kali age, will decay constantly proceed, until the human race approaches its annihilation [pralaya] When the close of the Kali age shall be nigh, a portion of that divine being which exists, of its own spiritual nature . . . shall descend on earth . . . [Kalki Avatara] endowed with the eight superhuman faculties . . . He will re-establish righteousness on earth; and the minds of those who live at the end of Kali Yuga shall be awakened, and become as pellucid as crystal. The men who are thus changed . . . shall be the seeds of human beings, and shall give birth to a race who shall follow the laws of the Krita age, the age of purity. As it is said: 'When the sun and moon and the lunar asterism Tishya, and the planet Jupiter are in one mansion, the Krita [or Satya] age shall return . . .'*" (*Vishnu-Purana*, Wilson transl. Vol. IV, pp. 224-9)

Following this quotation H.P. Blavatsky commented:

"Whether right or wrong with regard to the latter prophecy, the *blessings* of Kali Yuga are well described, and fit in admirably even with that which one sees and hears in Europe and other civilized and Christian lands in the full XIXth, and at the dawn of the XXth century of our great era of *Enlightenment*." (S.D.I, 377-8; II, 92-3 6-vol. ed., I, 404-5 3rd ed.

After reading the above description of what occurs during Kali-yuga the questioner is right in asking: Did H. P. Blavatsky really

mean "blessings"? She did italicize the word. Nevertheless there really is one blessing that is applicable in spite of the woeful picture presented in the *Vishnu-Purana*. A "blessing" was provided by H.P. Blavatsky in another quotation, and it should be ever borne in mind during the Dark Age. The passage now quoted was written in response to this question: "What mitigation is there about this age [the Kai-yuga]? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?"

"There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-yuga* that may be used by the student . . . A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under *Kali-yuga's* reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly . . .

"Yes, there are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that a lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to *effects* and do not take away the *causes* of the evils. Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men which can only be eradicated by spiritual living." (*H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, IX, 102-3)

Question. What is the significance of the ending of the first 5,000 years of *Kali-yuga* in 1897? (See S.D.I, 612, II, 338, 6 vol. ed.; I, 672, 3rd ed.)

Answer. The significance is that this ending of the first five thousand years of *Kali-yuga* coincided with more than one cyclic conjunction, to use a familiar astrological term. H.P. Blavatsky did

mention a very important cycle which did occur at the same time-period, although she did not explain the actual five thousand year cycle. Here are her words:

"There are several remarkable cycles that come to a close at the end of this century. First, the 5,000 years of the *Kali-yuga* cycle; again the Messianic cycle of the Samaritan (also Kabalistic) Jews of the man connected with *Pisces* (Ichthys or 'Fish-man' *Dag*). It is a cycle, historic and not very long, but very occult, lasting about 2,155 solar years, but having a true significance only when computed by lunar months." (*H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VIII, 174.)

Then there is another cycle which may be mentioned; it coincided about that time-period and is referred to as the hundred-year cycle. It signifies that a special effort is made to enlighten humanity. (S.D.V, 396; 6 vol. ed.: III, 413, 3rd ed.)

A passage from one of the Mahatma's letters is appropriate:

"Let us all do our best. There are cycles of 7, 11, 21, 77, 107; 700, 11,000, 21,000 etc.; so many cycles will make a major and so on." (*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnet*, Letter No. 47; p. 272; 3rd ed. p. 268)

THEOSOPHY SCIENCE SEMINAR TO BE PART OF 1975 CENTENARY CONVENTION

The President has provisionally decided to hold a Theosophy Science Seminar during the 1975 Centenary Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. It will extend over three days, each having a general science lecture plus technical and review sessions.

The subjects to be discussed in the technical sessions are:

(1) Yoga and religious experience in the light of modern scholarship;

MISCELLANY OF MAGAZINES

(2) Science, particularly its impart on society;

(3) Some aspects of Theosophy and science.

All members of the T.S. who are qualified and have experience in lecturing, article writing, or participation in previous seminars, etc., and who are interested in the subjects announced for this seminar, are welcome to participate.

The idea is that papers will be submitted by specialists. The papers may indicate how theosophical ideas help scientific development and how modern developments may contribute to our theosophical understanding.

It is hoped that the papers will be submitted in time to be duplicated in draft form for the use of the delegates. The authors will not read their papers in full, but only summarize them at the meeting so that plenty of time will be available for discussion. If the author cannot attend in person he will be asked to also supply a summary in addition to the full text to be read on his behalf.

It is hoped that eventually the papers, with a summary of the discussion, will be published in book or pamphlet form.

This memorandum is being circulated by the undersigned who have been asked to organize the seminar. Prospective contributors are asked, in the first instance, to send their names and proposed subject to

Dr. A. Kannan
The Theosophical Society
Adyar,
Madras 600020
India

or to

Mr. V.W. Slater
10 Cranmer Court
Wickcliffe Avenue
London N3 3HG
England

A future historian of the Theosophical Movement will probably be astounded at the amount of literature generated by our relatively small number. As well as books, we have always been well-served with magazines. If all of these latter had been collected over the past nearly one hundred years, they would themselves add up to a sizeable library.

Today, in addition to *The Theosophist*, nearly every Section of the T.S. publishes a regular magazine. (There are at least ten in the English language alone.) The United Lodge of Theosophists puts out *Theosophy* in the U.S., and *The Theosophical Movement* in India; and from the Santa Barbara ULT comes *Theosophy Weekly*, which certainly wins the prize for the most frequently published organ. Then there are others such as the *Parents' Bulletin* and the various publications of the Young Theosophists. It is quite a collection.

On top of all these there are a number of journals published by individuals or small, independent groups with or without (mostly without) affiliation to one of the larger organizations. On the whole these miscellaneous additions to current Theosophical periodical literature are valuable. Much of their content would for various reasons be unacceptable to the editors of most of the official journals. Yet they are written and edited by some of the most devoted and knowledgeable students of Theosophy, whose views deserve the widest possible dissemination.

For the benefit of readers who might wish to explore the Theosophical literary fringe, following are brief descriptions of some of the currently published independent periodicals.

The Blavatsky Foundation Newsletter
Actively engaged in rebutting H.P. Blavatsky's denigrators, the Blavatsky Foundation is among other things, a research organization. Its *Newsletter* is

often the only source of information on organizations and individuals who, for one motive or another, persist in attacking the Founder of modern Theosophy.

Foolscap. Variable length. Published infrequently. Subscription by donation.

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

C.F.L. Bulletin

Edited by Mrs. Harry Benjamin for the Corresponding Fellows Lodge of Theosophists — "Following the Blavatsky Tradition." First-class articles by and for persevering students of Theosophy. A large proportion of space is given over to "Discussion and Comment" by correspondents from all over the world. In a single issue there may be extracts from a dozen or more subscribers' letters — a fascinating and informative mix of opinions on a variety of Theosophical subjects.

Foolscap. Variable length (at least ten pages). Published monthly. Subscription: Minimum £1 (about \$2.40)

Mrs. Harry Benjamin, 24 Upper Brighton Road, Worthing, Sussex, England. BN14 9HU.

The Eclectic Theosophist

Edited by W. Emmett Small and Helen Todd. The newsletter of Point Loma Publications Inc.

Articles mostly by students who were affiliated with the Theosophical Society (Point Loma) and who reflect the all-round excellence of that community. Most issues feature book reviews and an exchange of correspondence.

Quarto (Printed — double column) Eight pages. Published bimonthly. Subscription: \$2.50 (U.S.)

The Eclectic Theosophist, P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, California 92109, U.S.A.

Messiah

Edited and published by George Cardinal Legros. The first issue was published in March, 1974. News concerning the 1975 Messenger.

Quarto. Published monthly or bimonthly "depending on news". Sent free of charge

to all interested Theosophists — the work is supported by free will contributions.

George Cardinal Legros, 301 North Wall Avenue, Joplin, Missouri 64801, U.S.A.

NEON

A publication of the North London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, edited by Jimmy Sturzaker.

An open forum. Has the most liberal policy of any Theosophical journal published today. Frank and refreshing. Pointed editorials frequently take the Theosophical "establishment" to task. Articles cover a wide range of interests and are not restricted to authors of a particular viewpoint. Correspondence columns are open.

Quarto. Variable length. Published bimonthly. Subscription: 50 p. (approx. \$1.20) per year.

Mr. J. Sturzaker, 25 Circle Gardens, Merton Park, London, S.W.19, England.

Sunrise

Edited by Grace F. Knoche. Well-researched articles on subjects of interest to Theosophists. Some correspondence.

Octavo. 32 pages. Published monthly except July and August. Subscription: \$3.00 per year (ten issues).

Sunrise, Post Office Bin C, Pasadena, California 91109, U.S.A.

Theosophia

Edited by Boris de Zirkoff. A variety of short articles. Objectives: "To uphold and promote the Original Principles of the modern Theosophical Movement, and to disseminate the teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy as set forth by H.P. Blavatsky and her Teachers."

Octavo. (Printed — mixed double and single column.) Published every three months. Subscription: \$2.00 per year.

Theosophia, 551 South Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90020, U.S.A.

Theosophical Notes

Edited and written by Victor Endersby. Publication of *Notes* resumed recently after several years of inactivity. Various topics dealt with from a scientific-theosophic viewpoint. These include

valuable original studies on cycles, and a no-nonsense examination of some "third object" subjects; however, anything from politics to psionics might be covered in a single issue.

Quarto. 36 pages. Published monthly. Subscription: \$1.00 per copy; \$10.00 per year.

Theosophical Notes, Box 427, Napa, California 94558, U.S.A.

Theosophists: Reunite!

Edited by F. Pierce Spinks. "..... devoted to a complete reconciliation of all groups of Theosophists." Articles and correspondence mostly pertaining to the campaign for unity within the Theosophical Movement.

Quarto. Variable length. Published quarterly. Distributed free to members of all Theosophical communities throughout the world. Costs of publication have been partially met by donations from interested members.

F. Pierce Spinks, P.O. Box 672, Belmont, California 94002, U.S.A.

Viewpoint Aquarius

Edited by Jean Coulsting. Written by a group of students whose approach to Theosophical studies is dynamic to say the least. In three sections: in-depth analysis of portions of *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Key to Theosophy* using the "Concentric Key" method; news and discussion of Flying Saucers; down-to-earth, helpful commentary on Yoga-Meditation.

Foolscap. Variable length but frequently over 30 pages. Published monthly except August. Sample copy free; subscription by donation. (Costs are 25 p — approx. 60c — each issue.)

Viewpoint Aquarius, c/o Fish Tanks Ltd., 49 Blandford Street, London W.1, England.

* * *

The formats of these journals vary. Most are typewritten.

Not all of this miscellaneous selection of magazines will appeal to all other students, but they are worth looking into. Most of the material is original; much of it is excellent.

Publication is possible only by a labour of love, and in a number of cases a substantial personal expenditure is involved.

BOOK REVIEW

The Aryan Ecliptic Cycle, by H. S. Spencer. Published by H. P. Vaswani, Sadhu Vaswani Kunj, 3 Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona 1, India. Also obtainable from the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras 600020, India. 442 pp. Price Rupees 25.

This *magnum opus* covers a vast period of Indo-Iranian religious & cultural history from 25,628 B.C. to 292 A.D.

It commences from Lokmanya Tilak's thesis of the ancient habitat of the Aryan race being in the North Polar regions but, as Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer points out, the book takes the thesis much further. A well known scholar of Calcutta says that no one has traced the track of the Aryans from the Arctic home to Bactria in such a convincing way.

The work is based on an intimate knowledge of Major and minor spiritual cycles. "There are cycles and cycles . . .", as one of the Mahatma Letters says.

A number of ancient and now extinct religions are also reviewed. The glimpse of religious customs in ancient civilizations like the Chinese, the Semitics (Assyrian, Babylonian, Hittite Caonite, Phoenicians etc) will be found very reward and interesting.

This work is a valuable contribution to Indo-Iranian scriptural understanding. It is a *must* for libraries and colleges and certainly of vast importance for the student interested.

As Mr. Sri Ram has said, "it is obviously the product of an enormous amount of research". But on the other hand, as Mr. J. G. Bennett of the Institute of Comparative study of History, Philosophy and Sciences of the University of London points out: "it is very sad to think that such a remarkable book will almost certainly go unnoticed by historians of human culture".

D. J. Buxey

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