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THE WINTER SOLSTICE

“We are in the Winter Solstice, the period at which the Sun entering the sign of Capricornus has already, since December 21st, ceased to advance in the Southern Hemisphere, and, cancer or crablike, begins to move back. It is at this particular time that, every year, he is born, and December 25th was the *day of the birth of the Sun* for those who inhabited the Northern Hemisphere. It is also on December 25th, Christmas, the day with the Christians on which the “Saviour of the World” was born, that were born ages before him, the Persian Mithra, the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Bacchus, the Phoenician Adonis, the Phrygian Athis. And, while at Memphis the people were shown the image of the god *Day*, taken out of his cradle, the Romans marked December 25th, in their calendar as the day *natalis solis invicti*.

“Sad derision of human destiny. So many Saviours of the world born unto it, so much and so often propitiated, and yet the world is as miserable — nay, far more wretched now than ever before — as though none of these had ever been born!”

— H.P. Blavatsky
Lucifer, January 1899.

THE ESSENCE OF HUMAN LIVING

A. TYRO

Maturity as human beings does not necessarily relate to age. Youngsters sometimes surprise us with the maturity of their questions regarding life. For maturity lies not so much in the accumulated knowledge about things and happenings, but marks rather the existence of a growing awareness that Life holds much more for us than merely experiencing the parade of events we now accept as life; that the common round cannot be accepted as a meaningful objective for existence; and finally, the realization that the vain search for pleasure and emotional satisfaction can never be an end in itself.

This awakening to a more meaningful evaluation of life impels us to seek a deeper reason for the things we do and to discover what it is that stands in the way of extending our consciousness into that realm we intuitively feel must exist. But to bring ourselves to study why we do the things we do, which would seem to be a natural outcome of our maturity, does not come easily as all who have tried know. The reason lies in the fact that in this exercise we are actually opposing what in large part constitutes our inclinations and nature. However, we do not have to plunge very deeply into the whys and wherefores of our thoughts and actions before discovering that we have within our makeup "elements" (for want of a better word) that exert a very definite influence in the manner in which we respond or react to the events of life. In fact, we will discover, as we think about it, that to a considerable degree our life is motivated in response to this influence and the desires evoked by these elements. It may come as a surprise to realize how little our real thinking Self participates in our daily activities and on the other hand the extent to which we follow or are motivated by the feelings and emotions induced by these elements.

It is not too difficult to envision how these elements come to be established within us. Whether we hold that our world is created from the living matter of the universe and given form through the agency of a universal intelligence, and that similarly we, as centres of intelligence, create ourselves according to the manner in which we have lived in the past; or whether we conceive that our present behaviour is the function of the cells of our brain, upon which have been impressed the pattern of the manner in which we have lived — their effects upon us are much the same. The fact that we are what we have made ourselves is inescapable, as are those elements which spring to life in us when faced with the appropriate conditions.

Those unrestrained desires and passions which most of us have experienced are a clear demonstration of the existence of such elements within us. Sooner or later we come to realize through our studies that a very large part of that entity we think of as ourselves is comprised of these elements, varying widely in their quality and degree according to the pattern of our life and lives. It is our identification of ourselves with these elements that has established within us the great illusion (*maya*) of a separate self. The consequences of this find frequent portrayal in the characters of Shakespeare's plays.

There is another power in our makeup which will assert itself as we become more aware of the forces that are active within us. Obviously there must be a balancing component that limits the field of these elemental forces and the extent to which we are aware of this restraining factor could be a measure of our maturity as human beings.

In the realm of "self-conscious beings" this balancing factor takes on an additional function: namely, the establishment of

individual "Souls" whose destiny is to become centres of consciousness aware of their own Divine nature. It is the *Self-awareness* of this element which enables us to restrain the instinctive reactions that well up within us, and to take a second look before we act. Furthermore, it is this "other" element in us that awakens a response to the life in nature, to beauty and many other things that our separative nature hides from us.

So far we have established the fact that there exists in our makeup two principal elements, one which is the source of our more personal inclinations and desires and the "other" which acts as a restraining force tending to keep our lives in balance.

The confrontation of these two elements in the field of our experience constitute the whole drama of Human Life. It is under these circumstances that it is so important to retain our *Self-awareness*, for it is here that both aspects of our nature reveal themselves. Here our thoughts, emotions and feelings come to the surface and can be observed. To the extent that we can remain detached in such confrontations, we can learn much about ourselves and why we do the things we do.

Deeply embedded in our nature is a desire for those things and conditions that give us a sense of pleasure, satisfaction and security. According to the conditions in which we live, these desires take different forms, but in general they all tend to strengthen our sense of separateness.

It is this deeply entrenched sense of separateness which is the major impediment to *Spiritual Perception*. So long as we identify ourselves with this self-seeking aspect of our individuality, our centre of consciousness is confined to it. Our whole general attitude towards life surely confirms this. Only when the exercise of our personal desires necessitate the balancing forces of that "other" side of our nature to become effective do they surface. Unfortunately, in our obsession to get what we want, we seldom become aware of their existence.

It is of little consequence to speculate at which stage in Human Life individuals begin to take cognizance of that "other" element or how it comes about. The fact that they do is significant enough to establish the fact. The awakening of this element in our conscious life brings with it the urge to seek its fulfilment. Embryonic as it is in its initial stages, the desires of our personal nature often lead us (in our ignorance) to follow strange and misleading paths.

But once we try to follow the new light within us, Karma will define more exactly than hitherto the conditions of our future so that in our new born *Self-Awareness* we can best learn the lessons most needed to fulfil our destiny. In general, however, it is the expression of the unbalanced forces in our separative nature which causes us to suffer. But once we are *Self-awakened*, we are able to cognize the causes of our suffering and to take steps to transmute those separative aspects of the elements within ourselves.

In this process of transmutation, we must remember that we are dealing with the living matter which comprises this entity we conceive as being ourselves, our personality as apart from our purely physical organism. This process of coping with the separative elements in our makeup is somewhat similar to that used to break ourselves of undesirable physical habits such as smoking, etc. It requires understanding, determination and energy. Blind suppression does not cure a bad habit in either realm.

This act demands a self-willed sacrifice of that aspect of our nature in which hitherto we have sought satisfaction. The more we are able to face up to all the elements with which we have to contend in such efforts, the greater will be our ability to deal with this and future confrontations. For this is the essence of *Human Living*: The bringing together of the forces of Spirit and Matter within the context of our living organism, from which meeting we can gain a greater knowledge and understanding of

those elements within us that make us do the things we do.

With our growing Self-awareness we begin to realize more and more how much of life has escaped our notice in consequence of the preoccupation of our minds with our personal needs. The ability to think, to use our minds, freed from this preoccupation brings to us a new breath of life. Freed from this preoccupation, we are able to embrace vistas of life which hitherto were hidden from us. Yet, self-imprisoned by the boundaries imposed by our self-interest, can we have knowledge of what lies beyond? On the other hand, are there any who can deny that at sometime in their lives a vision of that "other" Self has not come to them?

It is the possession of this vision that makes man more than an animal, and its

evocation in his consciousness makes possible the unfoldment of his essential nature within him. But constituted as we are, it is difficult to picture an all-embracing meaning to this life of ours. Yet deep within us we feel that somehow one must exist, and that the suffering, the problems and perplexities that constitute such a large part of our lives must in some way all be part of a meaningful whole.

The fact is that this "other" Self of ours — so weak in its appeal, yet so strong in its effect — becomes more potent within us each time we heed its call seems indicative of our Essential Nature. It is strengthened by the gradual realization that our separate self is no more than a great illusion, the dispelling of which enables us to discover our true Self.

WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON 1841-1922

A few thoughts from a Philosopher, Naturalist, Seer

"Nature alone can incarnate the spirit of limitless contemplation."

The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, Letter No. 31, p. 238 New Ed.

"The synthesis of occultism is therefore the philosophy of Nature and of Life; the full-or-free truth that apprehends every scientific fact in the light of the unerring processes of Eternal Nature."

W. Q. Judge

There was a spiritual kinship between this keen observer of living things, Henry Hudson, and the mystics of New England. There was also a physical link, since his father was born in Massachusetts and his mother in Maine. Hudson's early life in Argentina was full of sun-drenched color and movement; but the Downs, the woods and the quiet villages of Southern England provided the right milieu for his genius in later years.

In "Birds and Man", he tells of a visit to the village of Selbourne, which had been the home of Gilbert White whose book, *Selbourne*, written in 1793, had first introduced him to a systematic study of

nature. Sitting on the grass, he soliloquised on the important and exciting change in mental attitude which had begun to manifest as the nineteenth century waned:

"We are bound as much as ever to facts; we seek for them more and more diligently; knowing that to break from them is to be carried away by vain imaginations. All the same, facts in themselves are nothing to us; they are important only in their relations to other facts and things — to all things and the essence of things, material and spiritual. We are not like children gathering painted shells and pebbles on a beach; but, whether we know it or not, are seeking after

something beyond and above knowledge. The wilderness in which we are sojourning is not our home; it is enough that its herbs and roots and wild fruit nourish and give us strength to go onward. Intellectual curiosity with gratification of the individual for its own purpose, has no place in the scheme of things as we conceive it. Heart and soul are with the brain in all investigations — a truth which some know in rare, beautiful intervals, and others never; but we are all meanwhile busy with our work, like myriads of social insects engaged in raising a structure that was never planned. Perhaps we are not so wholly unconscious of our destinies as were the patient gatherers of facts of a hundred years ago. Even in one brief century the dawn has come nearer — perhaps a faint whiteness in the east has exhilarated us like wine. Undoubtedly we are conscious of many things, both within and without — of the length and breadth and depth of nature; of a unity that was hardly dreamed of by the naturalists of past ages, a commensalism on earth from which the meanest organism is not excluded. For we are no longer isolated, standing like starry visitors on a mountain top, surveying life from the outside; but are on a level with and part and parcel of it; and if the mystery of life daily deepens, it is because we view it more closely and with clearer vision.”

One must first see and appreciate beauty with feeling, cultivate the habit of seeing beauty everywhere.

“The sense of beauty is in reality a sense; a subject as proper to the Field Naturalist as the sense of smell, of direction and polarity and migration. All the arts spring from one root, one impulse, the sense of

beauty in any mortal, which is not an overflow of the sexual instinct as some of our philosophers imagine. The sense of beauty has its roots very deep in the world, and is in all sentient life and is inherent in the reality of life and pervades it like a subtle fire. Art is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, an everlasting aspiration and straining after something unobtainable or not yet obtained. Birds and insects sing and make music to please themselves, for joy.”

He cites the great green grasshopper *Locustus Viridissima*, which “sings to please himself and incidentally please the listening female. He is so absorbed in his own performance that he disregards her even when she follows him and casts herself in his way. His musical passion over-rules all others. His attention is drawn away to some other locust far away from sight in some distant place and insolently returning song for song, and forthwith sets out to find him, hidden somewhere in that thorny wilderness; and after some labor, having found him, these two sing against one another, whereupon each strives to tear the sounding instrument from his opponent’s back to silence him for ever, or, if possible, to kill him outright. We see then that this insect is moved by an artistic passion similar to man’s. And if this should seem a bold thing to say, I should ask what is the function of soul growth? of faith, hope and charity, reverence — in one word spirituality; of the sense of beauty, the love of humanity, altruism, the aspiration towards a lovelier, higher, better state.

“The desire of the moth for the star
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.”

At times, for this sensitive man there would be not only a rapture of beauty, but also a sense of the *thing* itself, of the tree, of the wood, of the mountain, of the snow and its whiteness, of the sand, or whatever — some special individual, penetrating quality which elevated him to a sense of

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oneness with Nature. On one such occasion: "It was a beautiful day, the sky was a deep, wonderful blue, and before me was a great spread of Viper's Buglos, such as I had seen on the Pampa. It was so wonderful a sight that I became the blue of the sky and the buglos and the air! Why, I didn't seem to walk, I just floated, floated . . ." (*A Portrait — Biography* by Morley Roberts)

Thus it was that, unlike the Darwinists, he believed the evolutionary processes to be due to a purely psychical cause, "For we do know that in the lower animals, as in man, mind does react on the organism sometimes with tremendous power to the production of strange results . . ."

To Hudson, his animism meant "not a doctrine of souls that survive the bodies and objects they inhabit, but the mind's projection of itself into nature, its attribution of its own sentient life and intelligence to all things — that primitive universal faculty on which the animistic philosophy of the savage is founded. When our philosophers tell us that the faculty is obsolete in us, that it is effectively killed by ratiocination, or that it only survives for a period in our children, I believe that they are wrong, a fact which they could find out for themselves if, leaving their books and theories they would take a solitary walk on a moonlight night in the Woods of Westermain, or any other woods, since all are enchanted."

Writing of his own experience among the trees on moonlight nights in his boyhood: "I imagine it would be correct to describe the sensations experienced as similar to the feeling a person would have if visited by a supernatural being, if he was perfectly convinced that it was there in his presence, albeit silent and unseen, intently regarding him and divining every thought in his head. He would be thrilled to the marrow, but not terrified, if he knew that it would take no visible shape, nor speak to him out of the silence. This faculty or instinct of the dawning mind is or has always seemed to me essentially religious in character. Undoubtedly it is the root of all nature

worship, from fetishism to the highest pantheistic development. It was more to me in those early days than all the religious teaching I received from my mother." (*Far Away and Long Ago*).

It is clearly stated by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*: "The Universe is worked and guided from within outwards. As above so it is below, as in heaven so on earth; and man — the microcosm and miniature copy of the macrocosm — is the living witness to this Universal Law and to the mode of its action. We see that every external motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by internal feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man's external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named, so with the external or manifested Universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who — whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyana-Chohans or Angels — are 'messengers' in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence . . ." — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 274-5, or. ed. I, 295 3rd ed., I, 317 6-vol. ed.

For Hudson, instinct or intuition was man's surest guide. In the "Hind in Richmond Park", he wrote: "Man has progressed mentally so far, that looking back at the other creatures, they appear practically mindless to him. Their actions, for example, are instinctive, whereas in the case of man, reason has taken the place of instinct. No doubt the higher we go in the organic scale, the more does intelligence enter into the instinctive act."

He would spend hours, silently watching

and observing: "One of the greatest pleasures in life, my life, I mean — is to be present, in a sense, invisible, in the midst of the domestic circle of beings of a different order, another world, than ours. Yet it is one which may be had by any person who desires it. Some of the smaller birds lend themselves easily to this innocent prying, and one is more in sympathy with them than with the smaller, more easily observed insects. The absolute indifference of these to our presence only accentuates the fact of their unlikeness to us in their senses and faculties. There is a perpetual fascination in some social insects, ants especially, but it disquiets us as well as delights us to mark their ways. They baffle our curiosity, and if we be of animistic mind, we become, when watching them uncomfortably conscious of a spirit, an entity in or behind nature that watches us and our watching with an unfathomable look in its eyes and a challenging and mocking smile on its lips. But little birds are vertebrates and relations, with knowing, emotional thinking brains like ours in their heads, and with senses like ours, only brighter. Their beauty and grace so much beyond ours — their winged swift souls in winged bodies do not make them uncanny but only fairy-like, on the same tree of life as ourselves, grown from the same root, with the same warm blood in their veins, and red blood is thicker than water — certainly it is thicker than the colorless fluid which is the life of the insect." (*Adventures Among Birds*.)

In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1 p. 425 (Orig. Ed.) H.P.B. wrote:

"Instinct is the universal endowment of Nature by the Spirit of the Deity itself . . . Instinct, as a divine spark . . . exists in the lowest classes of the acephalous animals, as well as in those which have distinct heads; it grows and develops according to the law of the double evolution, physically and spiritually . . . It is the *divine instinct* in its ceaseless progress of development. This instinct of the animals . . . may, for the sake of exact

definition, be termed automatic; but it must have, either within the animal which possesses it or *without*, something's or someone's *intelligence* to guide it."

"The latent mentality which, in the lower kingdoms is recognized as semi-consciousness, consciousness, and instinct, is largely subdued in man. Reason, the outgrowth of the physical brain, develops at the expense of instinct, the flickering reminiscence of a once divine omniscience — Spirit . . . In losing instinct, man loses his intuitional powers, which are the crown and ultimatum of instinct . . .

"The Ant, with its wonderful architectural, social and political abilities, is inexpressibly higher in the scale than the subtle royal tiger watching its prey. 'With awe and wonder,' exclaims Du Bois-Raymond, 'must the student of nature regard that microscopic molecule of nervous substance which is the seat of the laborious, constructive, orderly, loyal, dauntless soul of the ant.'" ". . . (According to Plotinus) . . . 'Intuition (or divine instinct) . . . is absolute knowledge founded on the identification of the mind with the object known'."

— *ibid.* pp. 433-4

In "Hints to Adder-Seekers", Mr. Hudson wrote: "To kill your adder is to lose it . . . Alas! it took me a long time to discover the advantage of not killing . . . Abstention from killing has made me a better observer and a happier being, an account of the new or different feeling towards animal life which it has engendered . . . The power, beauty, and grace of the wild creature, its perfect harmony in nature, the exquisite correspondence between organism, form and faculties, and the environment, with the plasticity and intelligence for the readjustment of the vital machinery, daily, hourly, momentarily, to meet all changes in the conditions, all contingencies; and thus, amidst perpetual mutations and conflict with hostile and destructive forces, to perpetuate a form, a type, a species for

thousands and millions of years! All this was always present to my mind; yet even so it was but a lesser element in the complete feeling. The main thing was the wonderfulness and eternal mystery of life itself; this formative, informing energy — this flame that burns in and shines through the case, the habit, which in lighting another dies, and albeit dying yet endures for ever; and the sense, too, that this flame of life was one, and of my kinship with it in

all its appearances, in all organic shapes, however different from the human."

In her article, "What is Theosophy?" H.P.B. gives Vaughan's definition of a Theosophist: "A Theosophist is one who gives you a theory of God, or the works of God, which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis." (*H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. 2 p. 88)

— Jenno

PLASTIC POTENCY

In a conversation . . . which took place between the two editors of *Lucifer*, this question — or its equivalent — was asked by the sub-editor:

"What is the first step in occultism?"

It was H.P. Blavatsky herself who answered:

"To adapt your thoughts to your plastic potency."

This reply, quoted here from memory, might be developed into a volume of no mean size. It is an epitome of the science of thought. The many persons — and their number grows daily greater — who desire to study practical occultism, would do well to approach it by this, the only safe gate, which is also the gate of power. It is not sufficiently well understood that every one of those energetic emissions or processes which we call "a thought" does mould the subtle matter of the ether into etheric form. Such forms are condensed ether, and are held together by the formative power, or plastic potency of the soul substance, just so long as the thought energy inheres in them. The more intense the thought — or the greater the thought tension, to put it differently — the longer does that etheric form cohere as such. The same fact has been otherwise expressed when it has been said that life-elementals at once coalesce with such thought pictures and remain in them so long as they cohere. The atomic substance of the ether is, every atom of it, a

life. Some of these lives are the microbes of modern science, elementals of a low grade. They are the fiery lives, the devourers of the *Secret Doctrine*. They are also the builders. Anon they go to form a body or parts of a body; they sustain it awhile and then destroy it, often by fermentative or putrefactive processes: thus they are seen in the triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva; each function expressed by these names, creative, preservative, and destructive, being in turn manifested by each microbe or germ. See, for example, the giant cells of the bone, which at first go to form bone and afterward to absorb it.

The energetic pictures thus formed by the mental action of men are sensed by the inner man of each. Sometimes, even, the vibration thus sensed gets impressed upon the brain centers and enters the lower consciousness by avenues of which we have now but a feeble idea. The pictures inhere in the mental sphere of each of us, and the sphere is dense, turbid, contractive, or shows all the brightness of the higher vibration, according to the nature of these thought forms, which not only act outwardly but which also re-act upon their creators.

The importance of regulating our thoughts, in view of the plastic potency of the soul and its imaginative power, hence becomes apparent. As thought is dynamic, these pictures, often themselves an

agglomeration of lives, are felt far and wide. It has frequently been said that a man could be shut between prison walls and could yet work for Humanity, by the simple means of right thinking.

The reason why such adaptation is the first step in occultism must now be found.

Occultism has been defined by H.P. Blavatsky to be "the study of the workings of the Universal Mind." Our primary study of that Mind is at first confined to its reflection in ourselves. We must endeavor to find some trace of it within our own consciousness or in one of the modes of that consciousness. What is called the sub-conscious mind is a near approach to the Universal Mind. But how can we find that? We are inclined to say it is too difficult a task.

It is difficult, but not too much so. The very effort involved in the search is in itself helpful, for the greater emission of mental energy creates powerful centers or pictures in our sphere. It is through their constant re-action upon us, perhaps, that we at last discover a trace of the sub-conscious mind.

If we examine ourselves critically we see that there is, lying back of ceaseless mental change, of all the continual going to and fro of Thought, a power to observe, sum up, analyze, and dissect the whole process. We find ourselves possessed of another mode of consciousness, above or behind the fluctuations of thought, which calmly observes the whole panorama moving before it. Through this power even the sinner who knows his sin still feels that sin not to be representative of his entire nature, feels himself, at the core, to be better than that vile outward seeming. It is Patanjali who says of the soul that it is the Spectator, and when the question is asked, where is the soul at the time of concentration — or when the mental energy is at rest — he replies, "At the time of concentration the soul abides in the state of a spectator without a spectacle."

Before the student reaches this state of concentration, he makes a preliminary

step towards it when he discovers this center, place, mode, or state of consciousness in which he surveys his whole mental field as something not himself, and feels that self to be the perceptive power *per se*. For he has then only to enter that mental plane as often as possible, and to realize it as vividly as possible, and he has evolved a rudiment — if I may so call it — of the Universal Mind. That mind, that state of consciousness, observes the mayavic panorama spread before it as something apart from itself; the person who realizes that state of consciousness is nearer the Universal Mind; he has entered one of its phases or states; it is not a state of trance.

The best method to pursue is that of analysis along the line of the seven principles. So long as I look upon myself as a homogeneous whole, I contract my mental sphere into one dense and slowly vibrating mass. It is the picture of himself as uniform — as opposed to duality — which fetters the soul of man. The image he has made of himself is the prison house of his soul. When analysis comes into play he no longer says "I crave," "I win," "I desire," "I sin." No longer, intoxicated by the fumes of his own passions, does he plunge into the ocean of sensuality. He says, as one aspect of desires comes before him, "In this the Kamic principle is active"; another he ascribes to undue stimulus of the *linga-sarira*; here he sees the lower *manas* prevailing, and here the flash of intuitive perception. He ascribes each act to its parent principle; each becomes to him a result of one of these principles; they are no longer himself, but he is the judge of them all, and analysis destroys the heady fumes of desire. *For desire ceases to attract us when we no longer identify it with ourself.*

John Stuart Mill once said that he lost, for a long time, the power of emotional feeling, the loss being caused by constant self-analysis which finally deadened all mental enjoyment. It is not probable that this deadness would have resulted had his methods of thoughts permitted him to

ascribe his actions to their real sources, the principles in which they have their rise. When the action of the seven principles is realized, we at the same time realize ourself to be that which observes the said action, or the center of which the principles are modes or functions; that center is consciousness itself.

If any person desires to rid himself of a bad mental or physical habit, sincere and constant trial of the method above described must cause the habit to loosen its grip upon his mind. It is not a form of mind-cure, for that acts by denial, while in

this case there are analysis and the tracing of effects to their true source, or, at least, somewhat further up stream. By means of this cold analysis the personal mental image is broken up into a series of thought forms true in themselves, each one an image of the Universal, each instinct with a life of its own. The prison house is rent asunder, and man, the prisoner of himself, dazed, startled, but unbound, finds himself slowly emerging into the large fields of Universal Thought.

Julius
The Path, January, 1892.

THIS GOLCONDA — LIFE

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

Golconda — Kutb Shahi's fabulous Diamond Kingdom of the Deccan — has long since fallen from the capital of a powerful empire, to become just another human settlement in an arid rocky desert.

Like Golconda, the diamond-rich kingdom, Life, tends to become an unrewarding incident in an arid desert of the Commonplace. Jewels, unrecovered, still lie buried here; but they are jewels whose lustre and beauty have been replaced by the potent synthetic creations of a temporarily triumphant technology. The uncovering of Golconda's riches awaits the rebirth of a vision of life that replaces "luck" with "destiny", "destiny" with "understanding", the wealth that Time can so certainly tarnish, with incorruptible jewels of an Eternal Truth.

Man's capacity to discount the miraculous potencies of Life can only spring from an increasing blindness as to its meaning and laws. It appears to me that anyone, cognizant of the wonder of the

stars, the solar system, the tides, the seasons — all the dimensions and properties of this universe — should find it impossible to accept any but a divine, harmonious, beneficent pattern governing it. Mere rational contemplation renders the idea of chance or whimsy giving birth to, and maintaining such a universe, impossible. And if such an origin be impossible for this universe, must it not be equally impossible for its noblest creation, Man? But, naturally, a slight and inadequate conception of the universe must tend to diminish the stature of Man. And may not this diminution have found some support in an accepted faith rooted in man's innate sinfulness and inadequacy?

This is the conclusion drawn by those who see in Theosophy's daring proclamation: "There is no religion higher than Truth" a stirring promise of "Golconda Revisited"; figuratively speaking, a fearlessly new evaluation of Life as a fabulously rich,

(Continued on page 111)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death in Peterborough on August 27 of Ralph A. Webb. He was in his 86th year.

Mr. Webb joined the Society in 1954, and for 21 years — until failing eyesight forced him to stop — he was a tireless worker. For many of those years he served as Treasurer for Toronto Lodge.

When, on the death of Col. Thomson in 1960, Mr. Dudley Barr assumed the office of General Secretary, he asked Ralph Webb to assist him by acting as the Section Treasurer. Ralph continued to serve in this capacity for fifteen years. In the summer of 1975, when he knew he could no longer rely on his vision, he finally asked to be relieved of this important responsibility.

Ralph was a shy person, but full of warmth. His quiet sense of humor would probably have surprised those who did not know him well. I for one shall always count it a privilege to have worked side by side with him. He performed his voluntary duties cheerfully, punctually, efficiently and accurately — a fine example of right attitude and dedication. Financial auditors, both government and business, spoke admiringly of the way he kept our financial books; and I can attest to the excellent state of other Section records, which he also helped maintain.

Members of the T.S. in Canada owe a debt of gratitude to Ralph Webb, and I am sure all will join me in expressing sympathy to his family on their great loss.

* * *

Mention in earlier columns of active older members prompted a note from Doreen Chatwin, President of the Vancouver Lodge. She tells me that her husband Ralph's mother, Annie L. Chatwin, is now nearly 97, but still mentally alert and ever-interested in her beloved Theosophy.

The senior Mrs. Chatwin is living in a rest home. She likes to talk "philosophy" to those around her, and keeps her mind in trim by reading daily.

* * *

We look to our older members for example and inspiration — and are generally not disappointed. But let us not forget that it is going to be today's younger students of Theosophy who will be taking the Society into the 21st century.

* * *

Going from the young to the very young. We are pleased to welcome a new writer to the pages of *The Canadian Theosophist*. He is Keith Sutcliffe, elder son of Joan and Alan Sutcliffe, both members of the Toronto Lodge. Keith and his mother both wrote reviews of a new Quest publication, *The Kiss*, and both are printed in this issue.

* * *

Mrs. Sutcliffe has written a number of thoughtful articles for our magazine over the past few years. The most recent was "Light and Shade on the Path" in the Sep.-Oct. 1976 issue.

It is with much satisfaction that I can report that Joan's work has lately been published in another Theosophical journal. Her article, "Theosophy and Mythology" appeared in two parts in the Spring and Summer, 1976, issues of *Theosophia*.

* * *

For those not familiar with *Theosophia*, it is edited and published quarterly by Boris de Zirkoff, the compiler of *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. The annual subscription is \$2.00, from No. 301-634 South Gramercy Place, Los Angeles, California 90005, U.S.A.

T.G.D.

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VICTORIA LODGE

On July 21, Victoria Lodge had the honor of hosting the first Annual General Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Canada following incorporation. At this meeting in the far West, the Society was represented by thirty-three persons. The General Secretary, Mr. Téd G. Davy from Calgary; and the new Section Treasurer, Mr. Emory P. Wood from Edmonton, were joined by members of the Vancouver and Orpheus Lodges of Vancouver, and from the Atma Vidya and Victoria Lodges of Victoria. It was a very pleasant occasion, and the members took full advantage of the opportunity to become acquainted.

On August 26 at the morning coffee hour, the Executive of the Victoria Lodge met Mr. Boris de Zirkoff at the home of Mrs. Mollie Griffith. Mr. de Zirkoff spoke briefly about the 1975 Centenary Congress in New York, and also about the new volume, soon to be issued, of the *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*.

The Lodge re-assembled for the new season on Tuesday, September 14, and commenced meetings for enquirers on September 21. We are continuing a program of modest but persistent advertising.

For some time our President, Mrs. Dorita Gilmour, has been making a research in the hope of learning something of the early history of Victoria Lodge. We were therefore very pleased when *The Victorian* newspaper in its feature "Yesterday and Today" recently published a photograph showing the site of the building which was "the headquarters of the Theosophical Society" in 1894. The total population of Victoria and its environs at that time was roughly 18,000 persons.

J. Ferguson
Secretary

Perfection, to be fully such, must be born out of imperfection, the *incorruptible* must grow out of the corruptible, having the latter as its vehicle and basis and contrast.

— *The Secret Doctrine*

CENTENARY CONGRESS REVISITED

Some comments on the Reports of the Task Force Study Groups, by Members of the Orpheus Lodge, T.S.

General

(a) Perusal of the reports of the various study groups held during the 1975 Centennial meeting leaves one with very mixed feelings. What has happened to Theosophy? With few exceptions, the main concern of the discussions was with outward activities. There seemed little concern with Theosophy as such, and with what it is all about. Is this all that Theosophy means to us after 100 years of custodianship? Has the ancient behest, "Man, Know Thyself!" fallen on entirely deaf ears?

(b) Taken as a whole I found the results of the groups disappointing. Considering we are at the very important point in the Movement's history where a new influx of spiritual energy may be expected, and considering that this was a world-wide gathering of the most influential people in the Movement, I found a definite lack of real imagination and "divine fire". Surely something more provocative and stimulating could have been expected.

Study Group No. 1

"The Relation of Theosophy to the Theosophical Society".

One of the comments in the report is that "We should be making it known clearly that there is such a thing as Theosophy and what pertains to it." Know what is the original Theosophy, so we can recommend it; know its distinction from what was added later — some on "psychic" authority. Make a distinction between Theosophy and the T.S. Theosophy is permanent, not devised, created or built. The T.S. is an organization — it was built. Theosophy is life, the T.S. its vehicle. The T.S. should be the caretaker and guardian of Theosophy; it has not been that.

Work of the Lodges should not be too broadly based. It should not include too many "fringe" subjects and literature. That is looked after elsewhere. Lodges should have at least the theosophical classics. Lodges are needed as "Force Centres", the members' meetings generating this force.

*Study Group No. 2,
"Theosophical Education";
and Study Group No. 13,
"Educational Programs."*

(a) The importance placed on educating Theosophical workers, particularly the young, in training schools and workshops, in order to go forth and convey Theosophy to others poses the danger of making the approach to Theosophy too exclusively intellectual. Even though the individual has to obtain an intellectual comprehension of the teaching, another way than this should be found to convey its real meaning. The need is for vital Theosophical Lodges where students can work together trying to understand and make meaningful in their lives the spiritual message of the teaching given through H.P.B. The problem of how to produce the quality of such Lodges becomes entirely snowed under in this proliferation of educational methods at the popular level.

(b) The message brought by H.P.B. not only emphasized the need for Man's spiritual regeneration, which is common to all the great religious teachings, but more importantly it provided a teaching enabling him to discover for himself, through his own efforts, the real nature of life and his relation to it. Until Man has grown a conviction of his own spiritual nature, which is a power far transcending even the most highly intellectual appreciation of it, it is an

effrontery to try and teach others Theosophy.

It would seem that the T.S. has still to appreciate the fact that Theosophy is a spiritual teaching, and that only those who strive to become spiritually endowed are fit to become its teachers. Who is there to bring home to the vast numbers in the T.S. that all their outward activities are but a cover-up to avoid facing their real duty, namely, that of self regeneration and all that that implies?

Surely it is the study of the teaching, no matter how difficult it may appear at first, that should be our prime concern, until we can intuit the spiritual message that lies behind the words. For words alone can never portray what Theosophy is. It is the awakening in our consciousness of a realm of knowledge which lies beyond the field of reasoning. This power in us grows as we implement the fruit of this new found knowledge in our lives and make it our own through the fire of personal experience.

Study Group No. 4,
"Theosophy and Modern Science".

Care would have to be taken with the suggestion of applying scientific research and methods to Theosophy. For one thing, Theosophical work cannot be tested in the way science tests its hypotheses; for Theosophy deals with energies required to regenerate ourselves, science with the region of sense perception. The suggestion that science could help us with its methods and structure, its concepts and data, is not applicable to a spiritual teaching dealing with the unfolding of consciousness. But since there are those in the scientific field who are drawing close to the occult teaching, e.g., that life has intelligent purpose, the idea of mutual communication is good. After all, H.P.B. tried to move science towards the investigation of occult laws.

The suggestion of a panel, of members of the Society with credentials in science to keep the T.S. abreast of scientific research may be good, but the second point in this

suggestion: to originate, solicit, review and support Theosophical scientific research proposals and projects from within the Society, would result in a meaningless scattering of energy for the Lodges and most unlikely to meet scientific standards.

Study Group No. 5,

"Examining the Society's Objects".

The idea of letting the Objects stand, but using an addendum to make clear their meaning is questionable. Interpreting the meaning of the Objects is so much a part of individual study of the teaching, an understanding of which is an unfolding process, that it might be a mistake to lay out a blueprint. Also, interpretations of the Objects could be influenced perhaps undesirably at some time.

Study Group No. 9,

"Theosophical Publications, Programs and Policies".

It all resolves into what you are trying to get across. The ideas of Karma and Reincarnation are already being used by many popular writers, and so have entered the mind of the West at the popular level. Today in the T.S. there is so much literature stemming from interpretations of Theosophy, and so much is based on pseudo-Theosophy, that real Theosophy becomes lost in the proliferation of these books.

The great and urgent need is to safeguard the vital stream of Theosophical literature which contains the spiritual message of 1875. Publishers and educators are so overlaid by their particular fields as to render themselves unable to see the wood for the trees.

Study Group No. 10,

"Ethical and Moral Values
in the Light of Theosophy".

(a) As to ethical and moral values, one should not be dogmatic, but must endeavour to state Theosophical principles in a way that it can be seen that a certain ethical behaviour flows naturally from an application of such principles in the life of the individual.

(b) This approach is based too much on the level of social reform. Social conditions would certainly improve with a real Theosophical attitude to Human Brotherhood, but to attack such problems at the social level is not our work.

Study Group No. 11,
"The Third Object:

Its Implications and Implementation
in the Light of Modern Research".

(a) Referring to "Unexplained Laws of Nature" in the Third Object, surely this means more than the acquisition of powers enabling us to manipulate the forces of Nature. If Man has to perfect himself in order to fulfil his destiny surely it must be the Laws of his own nature that is meant, and which he must understand and use in his work or self redemption. The "Powers Latent in Man" refer to those which when developed enable him to achieve this objective.

(b) Although the report mentions the importance of motive in studying the Third Object — that it must be undertaken with the idea of human betterment in mind, as otherwise danger of black magic arises — it also makes the statement that there is no "clear line of demarcation between the psychical and the spiritual . . ." This allows for the inclusion of research into the innumerable occult expressions of the day without basing it on an appeal to the latent spiritual intelligence, which is a very definite and entirely different part of man's makeup. At our stage it is the spiritual intelligence which we have to learn to recognize and follow. Is there not a danger here that the Third Object could degenerate into a sort of a psychic workshop?

The third question at the end of this report asks, "Should the structure of the Theosophical Society be modified or extended so as to permit the formation of a recognized section or group within the Society which is open to all members, dedicated to the process of self-transformation and offers specific op-

portunities for study, discipline, service and practice for those who wish to give themselves to this goal?" This again raises the question of what is the work of a Theosophical Lodge, and what is the proper field of Theosophy. Surely the whole Theosophical effort of the 19th century was meant to open out a way of living in which we take responsibility for our own development. To suggest the creation of a special section for what falls within the scope of Theosophical work shows a great lack of recognition of its challenge.

THIS GOLCONDA — LIFE

(Continued from page 106)

diamond-studded empire wherein it is man's destiny to uncover those jewels of wisdom that shall equip him to "live magnificently" in a universe magnificent in proportions and destiny.

But such an empire can only win recognition as the result of that spiritually illuminated perception it is the province of Theosophy to awaken in man. Such an awakening presupposes in the disciple a readiness to live *above* Time's cyclic depths and summits, as the result of the acceptance of Divine Immortality that is the essential characteristic of man's Spiritual Reality. Such an acceptance demands that the disciple lift his thinking to that plane of heroic dimensions in which this universe has its origin. Too long have we attempted to make living easy by scaling down universal dimensions to the petty proportions of our cherished personal limitations. It is only to the degree that the divine Prometheus in man surveys the limitless horizons of Universal Destiny that Golconda can enter his purview.

The riches of that Timeless Destiny are not the gems and baubles of earthly barter and exchange. They are the age-old revelations won from an unswerving conviction that "There is no religion higher than Truth", *plus* the will to forego lesser

gains for irreplaceably enduring splendor. To discover this Golconda, Life, man's frame of reference must go beyond mere earthly values, for the reason that he *perceives* the ultimate slide-rule of living to be a *spiritual* slide-rule: *We are on this earth to unfold spiritually!* This objective, and our uncompromising dedication to it, entitles us to the jewelled crown of Conscious Manhood. He alone, who, by right of self-conquest, wears that crown, wins, thereby, the capability of perceiving the heroic splendor of this symbol-steeped Golconda.

Such a one is not lifting up his hands in prayer for "forgiveness", for "salvation", for some particular personal dispensation. He is standing proudly firm, giving thanks that it is his divine prerogative to be a conscious spiritual entity in this sublime pattern of Universal Unfoldment. From such unfoldment alone can this humanity mount slowly and painfully out of the mire of fear and illusion toward the sunlit peaks of Truth. This tide of Unfoldment, embracing the entire universe, is the Shining Pattern the Theosophist calls "Life". He alone who fearlessly embraces it, identifying himself with a forward-moving Crusade for Illumination, is truly availing himself of It's incalculable resources.

The profound problem, of course, consists of making a Universal Point of View native and natural to a *temporal* personality. Actually, *it cannot be done*. It is because a personality native to Time is incapable of thinking *beyond* Time, the way of the Seeker is a series of hills and valleys. Cyclic Law (inescapable on the Time plane), reveals itself in an uninterrupted ebb and flow of spiritual perception. To outmanoeuvre this ebb and flow means *living in the impersonal Timeless Self* — thinking and meditating in Its language. This is our problem — consciously and consistently to operate on the plane of Spirit; and we might as well reconcile ourselves to the fact that peaks and valleys will not disappear until this treasured, "indispensable" *personality* has died of

inanition — a vastly remote consummation for the majority of us! In the meantime, we are required to master the difficult technique of "marking time" at those points on the Way where the path grows dim, and productiveness shrinks pitifully. At these times one's proudest achievement, probably, is *not* to become productive of Illusion — wait for the cycle to change.

To be alive — Consciously — is a portentous privilege — too great a privilege to be enjoyed by a slowly germinating Spiritual Seed. To exercise that privilege to the utmost is to be at one with Universal Unfoldment. And let us all remind ourselves, again and again, that the means of attaining this vision will *not* be found set forth in the daily press or current publications. It will *not* be preached from orthodox pulpits. It will be laughed to scorn by many up-to-date researchers. It is a quest too secret, too profound, too ancient, to be admitted into the counsels of most "modern" thinkers, who are, in so many instances, bent on tearing down beliefs our forefathers and their forefathers revered. Only Theosophy's "Secret Doctrine" can adequately explain and illumine the profoundly ancient wisdom of those Initiates who, cycle after cycle, have re-echoed the original truths of The Wisdom Religion, that, forgotten and overlaid by man-made dogmas, must again sound its note in the hearts of a searching society that has well-nigh lost all hope of forfending imminent world-chaos.

This Golconda — Life — must speak to the heart of its citizens, daily and hourly whispering those key-words of Brotherhood, Daring, Faith, Selflessness and Purity in the presence of Truth undefiled. These high mantra, echoing from the far peaks of Time, are those that wrought their magic in ancient Egypt, in snow-peaked Tibet, along the sacred Ganges, in the holy precincts of the Vestal Virgins of Hellas and 'neath Druid ash trees of ancient Wales. As a Truth, it has never been entirely absent from this earth. Yet, being the profound, esoteric Truth that

it is, Its compromisers and betrayers have concealed it among masses of creedal refuse; their shrewd manipulations have placed the power to bless and to damn in the hands of a powerfully organized Orthodoxy. Power, and its abuse, have again and again led those astray whose mission should have been to channel universal redemption through universal channels. "To live to benefit mankind is the first step", in the performance of which the Servant of Truth must become *selfless!*

Life's Golconda is, and ever has been, a repository of the priceless jewels of Truth.

But, to unearth them, one must "live the life" — live for LIFE in place of foolishly living for the deification of an inconstant *self*. "Golconda" is "the land of the free", wherein its citizens have grown wise to the evil of the domination of personal desire for a *separate salvation*. GROWTH for all alone can win a rightful and fruitful citizenship. This spells the obligation of every man to unfold limitlessly! Such unfoldment is beyond any man-made creed to attain. "There is no religion higher than truth!"

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. How long is the interval between the first and the second death? Does it depend upon the type of character or the manner of death?

Answer. Since many people may not be aware of the significance of the first and the second death, that point should first be clarified. It was Plutarch who wrote about the two deaths: the first death takes place in the region of Demeter and the second death in the region of Persephone. This signifies that the first passing occurs when leaving the Earth; the second upon leaving Kama-loka. Kama-loka is described as:

"the *semi-material* plane, to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied 'personalities', the astral forms called Kama Rupa, remain until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effects of the mental impulses that created these *eidolons* of the lower animal passions and desires. It is the Hades of the ancient Greeks and

the Amenti of the Egyptians — the land of Silent Shadows:" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 340)

As to the length of time in Kama-loka, this was one of the questions asked of Mahatma K.H. by A.P. Sinnett. The answer is given in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*:

"Every just disembodied *four-fold* entity (i.e. Atman, Buddhi, Manas, Kama) — whether it died a natural or violent death, from suicide or accident, mentally sane or insane, young or old, good, bad, or indifferent — loses at the instant of death all recollection, it is mentally — *annihilated*; it sleeps its akasic sleep in the Kama-loka. This state lasts from a few hours, (rarely less) days, weeks, months — sometimes to several years. All this according to the entity, to its mental states at the moment of death; to the character of its death, etc. That remembrance will return

slowly and gradually toward the end of the gestation (to the entity or Ego), still more slowly but far more imperfectly and *incompletely* to the *shell*, and *fully* to the Ego at the moment of its entrance into the Devachan. And now the latter being a state determined and brought by its past life, the Ego does not fall headlong but sinks into it gradually and by easy stages." (pp. 186-7; p 184 3rd ed.)

The next sentence (of the quoted passage which follows) gives the reason why the process which will be described should be termed "the second death". For the first panoramic vision (in which a person's life is reviewed by the Reincarnating Ego) takes place at the moment when death occurs. Therefore the second death has reference to the second panoramic vision, namely when the Reincarnating Ego enters the state of Devachan and leaves Kama-loka. Continuing the quotation:

"With the first dawn of that state appears that life (or rather *is once more lived over* by the Ego) from its first day of consciousness to its last. From the most important down to the most trifling event, all are marshalled before the spiritual eye of the Ego; only, unlike the events of real life, those of them remain only that are chosen by the new *liver* (pardon the word) clinging to certain scenes and actors, these remain *permanently* — while all the others fade away to disappear for ever, or to return to their creator *the shell*. Now try to understand this highly important, because so highly just and retributive law, in its effects. Out of the resurrected Past *nothing* remains but what the Ego has felt *spiritually* — that was evolved by and through, and lived over by his spiritual faculties — they be *love or hatred*." (*ibid* p. 187; p 184 3rd ed.)

Question. What determines the entity's state of Devachan?

Answer. Just as the entity's stay in Kama-loka is determined by the life that is lived on Earth, so too the state of Devachan

is also so determined. To quote *The Mahatma Letters* again:

"The Devachan *State* can be as little described or explained, by giving a however minute and graphic description of the state of one ego taken at random, as all the human lives collectively could be described by the 'Life of Napoleon' or that of any other man. There are millions of various states of happiness and misery, *emotional* states having their source in the *physical* as well as the *spiritual* faculties and senses, and only the latter surviving. An honest labourer will feel differently from an honest *millionaire*. Miss Nightingale's *state* will differ considerably from that of a young bride who dies before the consummation of what she regards as happiness. The two former love their families; the philanthropist — humanity; the girl centres the whole world in her future husband; the *melomaniac* knows of no *higher* state of bliss and happiness than music — the most divine and *spiritual* of arts. The devachan merges from its highest into its lowest degree — by insensible gradations." (*ibid* pp. 187-8; p 185 3rd ed.)

THE SECRET DOCTRINE AND CURRENT THOUGHT

With this issue we introduce a new C.T. series in which *The Secret Doctrine* will be considered in the light of current thought in the fields of religion, philosophy and science. Specifically, the aim is to assemble ideas expressed in modern literature which could be quoted by way of illustration or elucidation of any part of Madame Blavatsky's magnum opus; or which would serve as up-to-date substitutes for any S.D. quotations taken from 19th century works.

Readers of this magazine who are students of *The Secret Doctrine* are invited to participate. Their suggestions of suitable quotations from books or articles published

since 1950 should be fully identified, and the relevant pages in the S.D. should also be cited.

— Editors

* * *

In *The Secret Doctrine*, the theories of evolution popular in the latter half of the 19th century are analysed and found wanting in many respects. Strong arguments are directed against one of the crucial postulates of contemporary evolutionists — that of the “missing link” between ape and man. The position of occult science is given in a number of places. An example is:

“The ape we know is not the product of natural evolution but an *accident*, a cross-breed between an animal being, or form, and man . . . The apes are millions of years later than the speaking human beings . . . There were none before man.”

It is interesting to compare this with the view of a modern distinguished scientist, Bjorn Kurten:

“Man did not descend from the apes. It would be more correct to say that apes and monkeys descended from early ancestors of man.”

— *Not From The Apes*, p. vii. Published by Pantheon Books, a Division of Random House, New York. 1972.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Peopling of the Earth, by Geoffrey Barborka. Published 1975 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. xiv + 233 pp. Price \$10.00.

“What a piece of work is man!” Hamlet’s observation might well be exclaimed by a student of Theosophy in expressing wonderment concerning humanity. Man is a complex being, and this is true even when examined only in the most elementary way at the levels of physical body and personality. The complexities multiply by an enormous factor when the whole man is

scrutinized Theosophically — never mind trying to fit him into a logical cosmic scheme.

What a piece of work is man, indeed! The very concept of humanity and its place in the universe fills us with awe and not a little perplexity.

In her major opus, *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P. Blavatsky provides many valuable clues to the solving of the enigma of humanity. But discovering them in that work is only the first step. To find out how to apply them demands finely tuned faculties; ultimately, no doubt, the use also of those yet latent within us. At our present stage of development we can but be grateful that, thanks to the clues found mainly in the S.D., parts of the mystery can be unravelled through reason and intellect.

In attempting this task we can turn for assistance to other sources, chief among which are those who have devoted the better part of a lifetime to this study. In this regard, *The Peopling of the Earth* should prove a boon to many a struggling student.

In his new book, Geoffrey Barborka has taken all the pertinent material on this subject in the S.D. and assembled it in a system which carefully delineates the stages that led to man’s appearance on earth, as well as explaining the development of the entity known as a human being and its ultimate destiny. This is not to suggest that this presentation is merely an attempt to simplify Madame Blavatsky’s teaching. After all, there is a limit to the degree to which a complex and difficult subject can be simplified. *The Peopling of the Earth* is extremely helpful, however, if only on account of its superb organization. The author’s comments (few in number) and here and there citations from other reliable sources also illuminate a number of points.

The final chapter is a guide to the chronology of the great evolutionary cycles affecting humanity. To supplement the usual sources of information, Mr. Barborka has drawn from an article written by H.P. Blavatsky but which remained unpublished

in her lifetime. The ages involved are vast — necessarily so for the desired evolutionary goal, to which end the peopling of the earth is a critical phase.

The Peopling of the Earth complements Barborcka's *The Divine Plan*. Both works will probably long serve to assist serious students of Theosophy in their striving to understand the mysteries of man and the universe.

Ted G. Davy

* * *

Self-realization Through Love, or the *Bhakti-Sutra* of Narada, with text in Sanskrit, transliteration in Roman, translation in English and commentary by I.K. Taimni. Published 1975 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras 600020, India. xv + 79 pp.

Though in Eastern Literature one encounters descriptions of various systems of Yoga, it is significant that H.P.B. invariably recognizes but two types, namely, *Raja* and *Hatha* Yoga, or what she calls the higher and the lower Yoga respectively. She further specifies that the first is the one followed and taught by the White Adepts (cf. S.D. I-158) who discountenance the second as being "injurious to the health" and ineffectual in leading the aspirant towards the former (S.D. I-95). How then can one account for the existence of many works dealing with *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti* Yoga, or in particular of the *Bhakti-Sutra* of Narada, which belongs to the latter category? The *Bhakti-Sutra* goes even so far as to claim that *Bhakti* Yoga is superior to all others, among which *Raja* Yoga is not even mentioned. According to some commentators on the *Bhagavad Gita*—the book on Yoga par excellence—the various systems of Yoga or disciplines should be looked upon as different aspects or divisions of YOGA; according to others, as special applications of, or complements to YOGA. Whatever the case may be, there seems to be but a faint line of demarcation between these Yogas, and ultimately—say the same commentators—even this difference disappears when all these Yogas merge into one YOGA (H.P.B.'s *Raja*

Yoga, perhaps?).

But what then does the word "Yoga" stand for? Patanjali, the founder of the Yoga Philosophy in India, defines it as "the restraining of the modifications (faculties) of the thinking principle" by means of which the aspirant becomes freed from the fetters of the mind and attains spiritual liberation. Taimni, the translator and commentator of the 81 aphorisms comprising the *Bhakti-Sutra*, essentially expresses the same idea though in a different form. He states that the gradual attenuation and the final removal of the subjective barrier between the Divine Mind and the individual mind "is the ultimate objective of all systems of Yoga and spiritual culture and the successful accomplishment of this aim is what is referred to as Self-realization." When the latter is attained through the Path of Devotion or Love to God—where God is to be understood as the all-pervading Reality—then the practice is specifically called *Bhakti* Yoga. It is the purpose of the *Bhakti-Sutra* to give some of the salient features of this Path.

The *Bhakti-Sutra* is especially suited to those who are emotional by nature; to the truly religious person, the mystic whose sole object of knowledge and devotion is GOD in its highest sense. However, Taimni himself admits that this treatise "does not deal with the subject with the mastery which is evident in treatises like *Yoga-Sutra* (of Patanjali) and *Siva-Sutra*," but he feels that it "is of great help to those who...want some guidance and information on the subject in the early stages of its development." On the other hand, Taimni states further on that this treatise does not deal "clearly and satisfactorily" with the problem of how to set out cultivating devotion to God, for which method other treatises must first be consulted.

The aphorisms of the *Bhakti-Sutra* are simple to read, but with not much substance in them. To compensate for this superficiality Taimni has offered the reader a comprehensive Preface and ex-

cellent commentaries, without which this book would have remained of not much value to the Western aspirant to *Bhakti* Yoga.

Elinor Roos

* * *

The Kiss. Written and illustrated by Ashok Davar. A Quest Book, published 1976 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill. U.S.A. 83 pp. Price \$4.50.

Teachings, philosophical and moral, which might be described as Theosophy, underlie the simple prose of an interesting story; and the writer uses delightful penstroke sketches to convey abstract ideas in figure form, which will capture the attention of the young reader. Events unfold in symbols of expression to meet the intuitional recognition of the alert child, who perhaps might sense in the water separating the two islands of the story an identity with the emotional atmosphere often preventing our clear understanding of our neighbour.

The theme in general is that of growth and development along materialistic lines. Technical achievements, worthy in themselves, without however the guidance of an awakened moral responsibility, become misdirected and lead to a state of distrust, hate and war. One is shown how man learns through suffering: when too many are killed, the fighting must cease for care of the injured, reassessment of ideas, building of hospitals. As prosperity recurs, though, factories are constructed too for the creation of more advanced weapons; then destruction takes over again. You might be reminded of the ferocious statues in Chinese temples, which signify the danger of arousing the lower chakras before the higher spirituality is attained.

The kiss might portray the birth of a new idea, a change of attitude, the dawning awareness of the inner spiritual source common to all. Symbolically, it is a small child who first realizes the truth and thus brings about a great peace. The childlike state of pure heart and eager mind is often hinted at in books of precepts, and the

neophyte is described as a babe at the threshold of greater knowledge. The mind, attuned away from the personal to the universal beneficence, making wise use of the lower nature, is shown perhaps by the young boy entering the water to meet one from the enemy side with the kiss of friendship. A magical force, born from the kiss, spreads, and all within the aura is drawn together in an inspirational change of heart.

There is definitely a Theosophical message in this mystery tale, which penetrates straight to the heart of the child, where there is less conditioning and rigidity of outlook to intersect its passage; and its voice is clear, but open enough to activate thought and imagination.

— Joan Sutcliffe

* * *

There were once two islands and the people on them were afraid of each other. They pulled faces at each other. As they worked they found new ideas and they used them for making weapons.

There was a little boy playing happily while the men were fighting and he watched the birds flying from island to island with friendly thoughts. The little boy started to wave and wave and wave. Then another little boy started to wave back from the other island.

Then the two boys jumped to meet each other in the water and they kissed each other and there was a light. The light grew bigger and bigger until the islands were joined together in the glow. The people could not fight because now it is one big island.

The story is important because it shows that you should not be afraid of other people. If you think good thoughts it will make a light and it will grow and help other people.

I like the drawings because they helped my little brother to understand the story.

— Keith Sutcliffe

(age 8)

Animal Liberation, by Peter Singer. Published 1975 by the New York Review. Distributed by Random House, Inc. 301 pp. Price \$11.55.

The author, a young Australian philosopher, is interested in ethics and political philosophy. He has studied and taught in Australia, England and the U.S.A.

Singer asks some very relevant questions and deals with the needless suffering that is imposed on millions of animals by scientific, military and commercial research — suffering for which there is no convincing justification. Experimentation on animals is promoted by governments and largely paid for by tax money. Commerce has vested interests and wants to sell animal equipment, feed, drugs and services.

In the second part he deals with the use and abuse of animals raised for food. Their number exceeds by far those suffering any other kind of mistreatment. The trend in North America, where he made his studies, is towards mass production in extremely crowded, unnatural and painful situations, where animals are looked upon as non-sentient beings that produce food.

Both the first and second parts are documented with references from papers produced by researchers and from agricultural magazines and various studies.

In answer to science, Singer proposes a "Public Science Council", consisting of non-animal-using scientists, which would have authority to regulate the sums of public money that go into research in fields in which animals are used at present. By gradually introducing alternative methods not involving animals, such a council would be able to foster the growth of a new and more humane approach to scientific inquiry.

Having become a vegetarian because of his studies, the author ponders the influence of the Judeo-Christian tradition on the attitudes of people in the Western hemisphere in regard to animals. The book concludes with some hints for new

vegetarians, and a list of vegetarian cook-books.

A well-documented book, that deals with two main areas of animal mistreatment — in laboratories and in food production.

Eight pages of photo illustrations are included.

Laetitia van Hees

* * *

Initiation Into Yoga. An introduction to the Spiritual Life, by Sri Krishna Prem. Foreword by Sri Madhava Ashish. A Quest Book, published 1976 by the Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, IL 60187, U.S.A. 128 pp. Price \$3.25.

Those who are acquainted with the works of Sri Krishna Prem will find much of interest in the Foreword to this volume. It covers his life from the time he re-entered Cambridge University after doing his bit in the R.A.F. in World War I ("The unpleasantness of war having sated his appetite for applied science," he changed his studies to philosophy and literature) to the time he became a professor at the University of Lucknow, where he met his subsequent guru, with whom he later established an ashram in Northern India.

This Foreword was written by Sri Madhava Ashish, who was his close friend and associate, and who selected the nine articles comprising this volume for publication.

The first article, "Initiation into Yoga", has little in common with the formal practices with which this term is associated but more with that which can best be interpreted as the science of wise living. It deals primarily with Man's essential task: "The Finding of the Path and the Treading of It". His teaching is intensely practical. It tears away every shred of self-delusion and brings us to see ourselves as we really are. This is an essential stage to be attained before a reconstruction of our lives in any real sense can begin. This is strong medicine and makes no pretence that "The Way" is easy,

or that there are any short cuts. Rather, it is the most difficult task we can undertake and at the same time the most rewarding.

"Symbolism and Knowledge" is the title of the next article. The knowledge here referred to is that related to the Eternal rather than that of the transitional with which we are more familiar. It is the source or root of knowledge and our relation to it that the author endeavours to portray and, more emphatically, that the process of relating ourselves to the content of that source is a living, feeling and experiencing one.

Truth and reality cannot be expressed through words and therefore can never rise from the study of the teaching alone, no matter how loftily it has been inspired. Rather it is through the interpretation of the symbolism in the teaching related to our living experience that true knowledge is attained. It was due to the failure of the Fathers of the Christian Church to read the symbolism of the scriptures that their teaching failed to make effective its Spiritual content.

In the third article, "The Secret Marriage", Krishna Prem deals with a subject the importance of which would be difficult to over-emphasize. Here, in plain language, we are brought face to face with our essential Human problem and responsibility.

This is in no way a religious diatribe, but rather the presentation of facts regarding our own nature, many of which, like the proverbial "skeleton in the cupboard", we prefer due to their disturbing character to keep locked away. Unfortunately, just because we refuse to look at them does not prevent them from affecting our lives. But it is much more than this. Trying to summarize this article would be futile; the author himself concludes with the words: "There will be those who will ask what it is all about ... cannot the matter ... be set forth plainly and simply? To such it can only be replied that these are symbols carved on the doorway of the Temple. Hence the uselessness in these realms of

the spurious clarity of a language merely rooted in the mind, and the necessity for learning to read and use the language of concrete symbol which is as it has always been, the language of the deeper psychic levels."

"The Forgotten Land", which is the title of the third article, deals with "That undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns". Dealing first with what religion, science, spiritualism and philosophy can do in answer to the great question of what lies beyond, the author presents us with a dialogue between a Mortal and his Soul on this question. Here, those impressions gained by the student from his studies come to life with renewed vigour in a comprehensive whole so sane and balanced that no uncluttered mind could refute. Herein, as always, it is in the purity of our hearts that the Truth lies.

In the final article, "Religion and Philosophy", after dealing with their more superficial aspects, the author bursts out with "For God's sake let's get away from words and plunge into the heart's deep core....It is only when philosophy comes from the heart that it will appeal to the heart....Philosophy if it is to be a real love of wisdom....must not divorce itself from the practical and emotional discipline of life that constitutes the heart of religion."

What follows deals largely with the relation between these two subjects, religion and philosophy. It indicates that where the evolution and perfection of Man is concerned they complement each other, just as do Spirit and Matter.

As with all books written by men with knowledge, the content of this one does not all come to us at first reading, but affirms itself more and more as it is re-read. This is a book most students will want to keep by them for some time.

With a book such as this the reviewer naturally feels he has done it scant justice, and therefore makes no excuse for assuring the sincere student that its perusal will be most rewarding.

Ernest Wilks.

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