

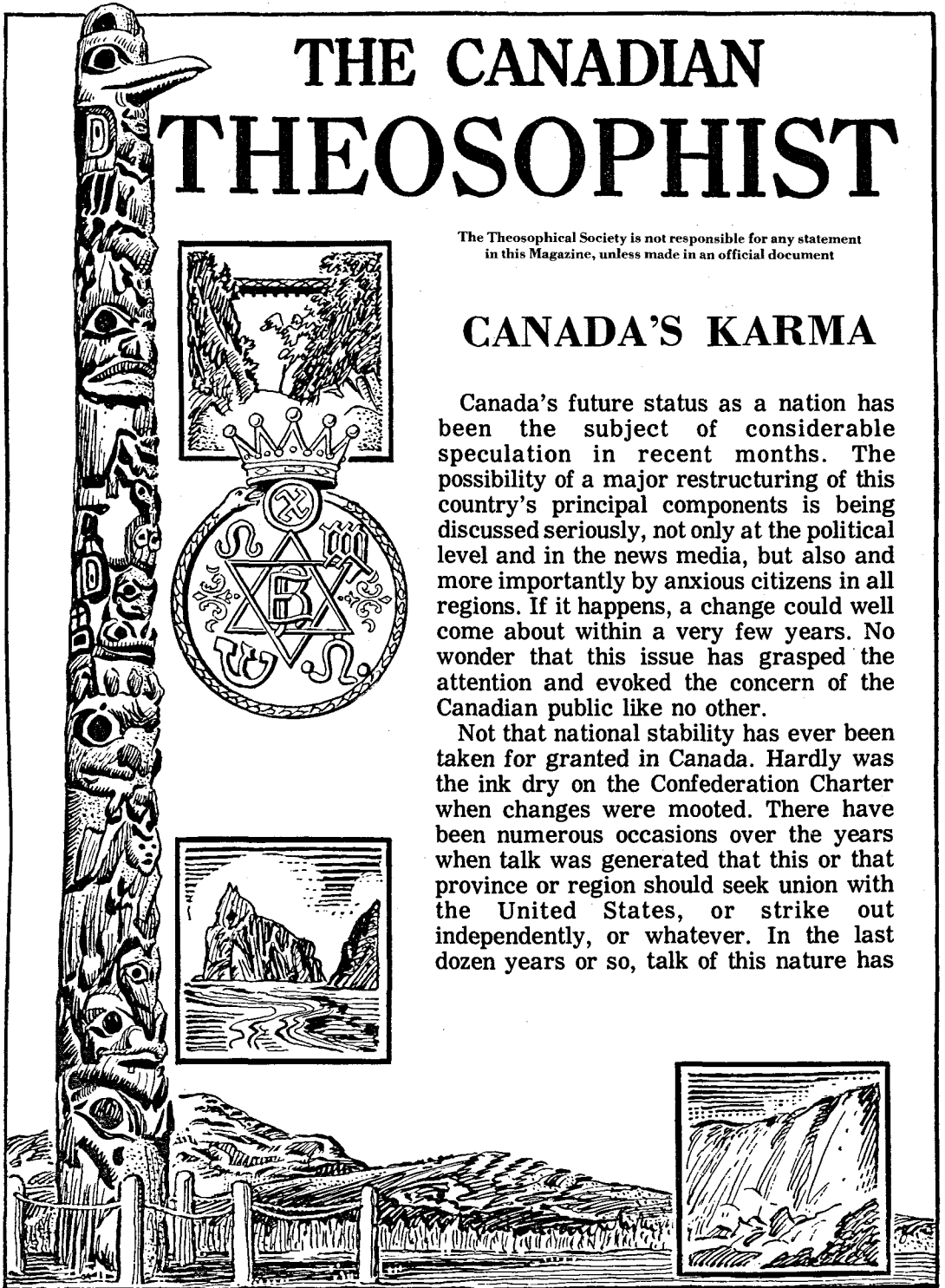
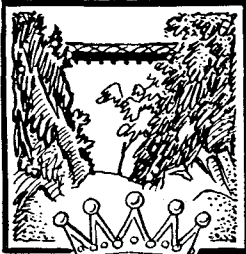
# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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## CANADA'S KARMA

Canada's future status as a nation has been the subject of considerable speculation in recent months. The possibility of a major restructuring of this country's principal components is being discussed seriously, not only at the political level and in the news media, but also and more importantly by anxious citizens in all regions. If it happens, a change could well come about within a very few years. No wonder that this issue has grasped the attention and evoked the concern of the Canadian public like no other.

Not that national stability has ever been taken for granted in Canada. Hardly was the ink dry on the Confederation Charter when changes were mooted. There have been numerous occasions over the years when talk was generated that this or that province or region should seek union with the United States, or strike out independently, or whatever. In the last dozen years or so, talk of this nature has



gradually been advancing beyond the conjectural stage, and if it were merely a question of economics, the subject might well have become an issue calling for firm decisions long before now. But it has not been until the last few months, sparked by the surge in the Quebec nationalistic movement, that the break-up of Canada has begun to be seen as a real possibility.

Separation is no longer merely hypothetical. Canadians now realize that separation, always an emotional word, means disintegration. One way or another it will have repercussions in every aspect of Canadian life.

All this speculation, prediction, and even actual threats, are received with much excitement by some, but with considerable uneasiness and sadness by most. Fragmentation would certainly create difficulties for a large number of people, so much so that the more moderate elements of the population are looking for a compromise that might keep the present country intact. The history of Canadian politics shows how often compromise has been a factor in the development of this country; perhaps the present crisis will be solved in this way.

The Canadian situation must be viewed in light of what is going on in other parts of the globe. Until recent times, short and medium term national stability was fairly common, but a new generation has grown up in a world where change, even in units as large as nations, is accepted as commonplace. One has only to remember what has taken place over the last thirty years to be aware of what seems to be an inevitable trend towards the establishment of an ever-increasing number of smaller nation-states.

An atlas of the world purchased in 1947 lacks much of what is pertinent to 1977 geography. Take continental Africa for example. A Toronto newspaper recently published a page-sized map, appropriately headlined, "The Changing Face of Africa", in which no fewer than 40 countries are indicated as having gained independence in

the past 20 years — most of them within the past ten. Several of these new states, incidentally, have populations smaller than some Canadian provinces.

Then again, the cry for regional autonomy — by whatever form it may eventually take — is also heard frequently in other quarters of the world. "Home Rule" now excites the ambitions of ardent nationalists in many countries hitherto considered among the most stable. Membership in the United Nations grows annually. Canada, therefore, is not an isolated case in a world where established national nuclei tend to split into multiple parts.

How does a student of Theosophy view this tendency towards subdivision? Does the apparent disunity, whether in Canada or elsewhere, indicate a movement away from the ideal of brotherhood? Is its relative universality a sign of a cycle phase during which separative aspirations are enhanced? What is the role of karma in the creation and dissolution of nations?

Each of us, of course, will answer these questions in our own way; and across the country, Canadian Theosophists are undoubtedly reacting in various ways to the current situation. In this regard, it is well to remember that one's opinion is influenced to no small degree by the geographical region one lives in. This being such a vast country, there are bound to be many diverse views, even by those who share a common philosophy.

Yes, Canada means different things to different Canadians, and its image abroad — even in the closely neighbouring U.S.A. — appears to have little in common to that seen at home. In spite of its critics, who are more likely to be found within the country than outside it, most Canadians find it a highly desirable place to live — at least relative to standards of living that have come to be expected and even taken for granted in the Western world.

Among modern nations Canada has set an example of brotherhood in the way it has accepted so many different cultures from

all over the world. This country rejects the "melting pot" principle, and it may be assumed that most Canadians are grateful for this aspect of their citizenship. They do seem to prefer an environment in which ethnic groups may preserve their distinctive characteristics while developing their Canadian identity at their own pace. It is far from Utopia, yet the concept of Canadian confederation has much to be said in its favour. But concepts are useless unless we are prepared to make them work. Has Canadian confederation outgrown its function? Will change come about despite what appears to be the logic of continued unity?

From a Theosophical standpoint, the birth, rise and decline of a nation has significance beyond economics and sociological factors. History is crammed with examples which clearly show that a nation's growth and decay are cyclical.

In the case of Canada, the one hundred and eleven years of its existence seems relatively too short a period that its national cycle should abruptly complete its course at this time. This is especially so when it is considered that for at least a third of that period Canada was still in a formative stage — physically as in other ways.

We, however, are hardly in a position to judge the period of Canada's cycle. Just as some physical bodies are short-lived, analogously nations may complete their turn in what seems to be their very youth. History can show many such cases, as well as those at the other end of the scale, but there is no set formula.

Linked closely to the course of cycles is the influence on nations of the Law of Karma. The student of Theosophy can speculate that the effects now being put in motion in Canada are due to causes originating in who knows how many ages past — and where. There is probably also the karma of the land we occupy, once the preserve of a people whose strong feeling and rapport for the then relatively unspoiled territory is now inhibited by our

less respectful approach to nature and nature's bounty.

This country was given birth and developed by men and women with vision. They recognized its potential greatness — over and above mere material expansion. They left a legacy which can only be inherited by those touched with the spirit of Canada. Fifty years ago, Albert E.S. Smythe caught that spirit when he wrote in this magazine:

"Canada will not evolve . . . Canada will manifest herself as the new generations roll into her vast territory, an invasion from the skies such as brought Egypt into being a hundred milleniums ago . . . Thus the cycles unfold themselves, and the ancient times are reborn anew, but on higher levels . . .

"Perhaps Canadian Theosophists may be pardoned if they sometimes imagine that in the next 200,000 years, the period in which the Fifth Race is to draw to its close, there may be as good an opportunity for the development of the Sixth Race as in any other portion of the American continent. At any rate Canada has ideals of honesty, diligence, peace and brotherhood and is not forgetful of Truth and Beauty."

— *The Canadian Theosophist*, August, 1927

Whatever the outcome of the present challenge to national unity, the important thing is how, as Canadians, we respond to the pressures generated by the challenge. The more our individual reactions are altruistic and based on what is good for the country rather than ourselves, the more positive the karma we shall inherit as citizens of a New Canada.

T.G.D.

# THE BODHIDHARMA

EDITH FIELDING

*Edith Fielding passed away in March this year. The following article from her pen, written nearly fifty years ago, was brought to our attention by Michael Freeman, custodian of the H.P.B. Library. —Eds.*

It is said that Truth has never been without a witness in the world; from the beginning of Time until the present day, Great Souls have carried the message from age to age and delivered it either secretly or openly according to the meetness of all circumstances. The work of these Torchbearers gleams like a golden thread through the network of history, sometimes only faintly visible underneath and sometimes coming boldly to the surface.

An intelligent reading of history will show the student that at stated intervals noble efforts have been made to give something of Truth to the world, a cause in which all those who have taken part have suffered deeply. Not the least of these sufferers was H.P. Blavatsky, the Teacher of our own times.

H.P.B. made no claims to originality in the teaching she gave, but with a sincerity and consistency which cannot be doubted claimed that all that she taught was but a portion of the age-old Wisdom which has been jealously guarded in its purity by Those who, having mastered the world by first learning to master themselves, are alone fit for service.

These guardians of the Truth, or Masters of Wisdom, whom H.P.B. graphically describes as "superior mortals, not inferior flapdoodle gods", were responsible for the work she undertook. This work was unique in so far as never before had there been such an effort to make this Wisdom available for the Western world; and throughout her writings is undeniable evidence that the Masters of Wisdom themselves were responsible for all that she gave out.

This body of Truth is sometimes spoken

of as the Bodhidharma: "Bodhi" meaning "Wisdom"; and "Dharma", "Law". The word "Buddhi" is "the channel through which divine knowledge reaches the Ego, the Spiritual Soul". A Buddha is one who has so perfected himself as to be able to bring this Wisdom through to his objective consciousness in all its purity and transmit it to others. From this it will be understood that the teaching of Buddha was not a new religion, but a restatement of Eternal Truth.

As said before, the Bodhidharma was carefully guarded by the Masters whose retreat is in Tibet. It was there that H.P.B. received her training from them. For almost ten years she studied with them and all her writings were based on that portion of the teachings she was allowed to give out. The correlation between this and the secret teaching of the Buddha to his elect is plainly indicated in all her works.

In the introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. draws attention to the difference between the Buddha's exoteric teaching, which was meant for people generally, sometimes spoken of as the *Hinayana* system, and that which he gave to his immediate followers, which was the "soul" of the teachings, and which was no different from that which the initiated Brahmins possessed. Indeed, it is the Wisdom of all Initiates of all time. This is now called *Mahayana* Buddhism. While the teaching itself is, as stated, the ancient possession of enlightened ones, the particular school which now goes under that name did not originate until after the Buddha's death, and therefore is of a later date than the *Hinayana* school.

However, that which H.P.B. studied with

*the Masters in Tibet, and which she gave out in her various books, is Mahayana Buddhism, sometimes called the archaic Wisdom Religion, or Bodhidharma, the Wisdom of the Law.*

As to the place assigned to the Buddha by the Masters, and the veneration they have for him, one has only to read *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* to realize. These Letters, which were written by two of the Masters to one or two students in order to supplement the work of H.P.B., are full of references to the Buddha, of whom they speak of as the "Patron of all Adepts". And the Maha-Chohan, who is the chief of that school of Occultism to which the Masters belong, speaks of the doctrine they "promulgate" as "the only true one", being "Buddhism stripped of its superstition" — which superstition had gradually accumulated through the centuries through the ignorance of uninitiated lamas and priests.

Historically speaking, Buddhism (so-called) did not reach Tibet until the 7th century A.D., but the above-mentioned esoteric school of the Bodhidharma had always existed there. It was from there that, from time to time, issued such messengers as H.P.B., to bring a little more Light to the world.

From the 7th century until the 14th, Buddhism gradually degenerated in Tibet, when it is said that the Buddha, filled with compassion, left his own retreat, and incarnated as Tsong-Kha-pa.

Tsong-Kha-pa founded the order of the Geluggas, or Yellow Caps, in contradistinction to the Duggas, or Red Caps, those followers of the left-hand path devoted to the Black Arts whose opposition

to the first-named is not confined to Tibet alone, but can be observed by the discerning in many parts of the world.

As was stated, Tsong-Kha-pa was an incarnation of the Buddha, and he established at Tashilhumpa his "golden monastery", and founded the Hierarchy of Tashi Lamas, in whom the incarnation is said to continue. The Tashi Lama is always a high initiate and is the acknowledged head of all Buddhism.

Speaking of the then Tashi Lama, H.P.B. once wrote: "There is in the Himalayas a nucleus of Adepts of various nationalities, and the Tashi Lama knows them and they act together; and some of them are with him and yet remain unknown in their true character even to the average Lamas. My Master — and several others I know personally are there coming and going."

Within the Gelugpa Order, Tsong-Kha-pa founded an inner or Mystic Brotherhood, and for this he wrote special instructions included in his work "Lam-Rim". It was from this work H.P.B. quoted in her little book "Practical Occultism"; and her Esoteric School, while she was alive, was affiliated with that Brotherhood.

In 1925 the Tashi Lama set his seal to the reprint of H.P.B.'s work, *The Voice of the Silence* known as the "Peking Edition". This is an exact reproduction of the First Edition, and was published by Alice Leighton Cleather and Basil Crump, who were in close touch with the Tashi Lama and his work. Those who would know more of this would be well advised to read this edition, which contains some most instructive editorial notes. The following is taken from a foreword by the Editors:

"...we were privileged to come into close touch with H.H. the Tashi Lama, who had left Tibet in 1924 on a special mission to China and Mongolia. As members of his Order, part of the work we undertook at his request for Buddhism was the present reprint, as the only true exposition in English of the Heart Doctrine of the *Mahayana* and its

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noble ideal of self-sacrifice for humanity."

Thus is the work of H.P.B. vindicated. Referring to that School of the Mystic Brotherhood just mentioned, H.P.B. says in her Preface to *The Voice of the Silence*:

"The following pages are derived from 'The Book of the Golden Precepts,' one of the works put into the hands of mystic students in the East. The knowledge of them is obligatory in that school, the teachings of which are accepted by many Theosophists."

At the present time there seems to be a revival of Buddhism in different parts of the world, and it would be as well to consider the chief points of difference between *Hinayana* and *Mahayana*.

There are two outstanding differences in the teachings of the two schools, one on the question of the Ego, and the other on the matter of compassion, or self-sacrifice.

*Hinayana* stresses the impermanence of things and, ignoring the Ego, deals only with the personality as consisting of the Skandhas. A part of this teaching was the prominence given to the misery of existence and the necessity to escape from the wheel of birth and death, which led to the other important differences, relating to the Pratyeka Buddhas.

W.M. McGovern, in his book *An Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism*, deals with these points very carefully and this is of great interest as bearing out the doctrines put forward by H.P.B.

The question of the Pratyeka Buddhas is a very important one. Writing on this McGovern says that according to *Hinayana*, Buddhahood is attained through three distinct stages:

- 1) Arhatship, or mere salvation.
- 2) Pratyeka Buddhahood, or private Buddhahood, supreme enlightenment for oneself alone.
- 3) Buddhahood proper, supreme enlightenment gained in order to teach the world.

*Hinayana* also insists that "there is an immense difference between each stage, but for the average man the only possible goal is Arhatship"; that "only one of many millions may aspire to Pratyeka Buddhahood, and only one in many cycles may attain Buddhahood". In other words, *Hinayana* teaches that the path of Renunciation and Compassion is not for all, but only for the infinitesimal few, and it was inevitable that it should develop into a degraded and materialistic philosophy.

McGovern then proceeds to make a distinction between *Hinayana* and Primitive Buddhism, and says the latter "made little distinction save one of *degree* between the Buddha and his illumined disciples and the highest goal is open to all."

About 200 B.C., *Mahayana* Buddhism arose as a protest against these teachings of *Hinayana* (in which can surely be traced the hand of the priest) through a strong desire to revert to the original teachings, and called its followers Bodhisattvas.

Not until H.P.B. published her books did the Western world gain a knowledge of these things, and since then, the number of other books which have been published dealing with these questions, bear testimony to the strong influence this teacher has had on modern thought.

*Mahayana*, rightly considering that those who strove for Arhatship or Pratyeka Buddhahood were essentially selfish, laid great emphasis on the self-sacrificing nature of true Buddhahood, which it recognized as the final goal for everyone.

In *The Voice of the Silence* we find this idea stressed as the very foundation of right-living, and H.P.B. also draws attention to the selfish Pratyeka Buddhas. This has brought forth much criticism from those evidently ignorant of the points mentioned above.

"Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self, that springeth the sweet fruit of final Liberation."

—*The Voice of the Silence*, P. 35

"To live to benefit mankind is the first step."

—*ibid.*, p. 33

"But, O Lanoo, be of clean heart before thou startest on thy journey. Before thou takest thy first step learn to discern the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the everlasting. Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom, the 'Eye' from the 'Heart' doctrine."

—*ibid.*, p. 25

This is the beginning of the Path. But the Paths are two: the first is Liberation and is called the "open" path. It leads to the goal but, as we have seen, is but a selfish way. The second Path is that of Renunciation, spoken of as the Secret Path, or "The Path of Woe":

"...mental woe unspeakable;  
woe for the living Dead ..."

—*ibid.*, p. 42

—those who are dead in spirit, living only in the material side of nature.

This is a book to teach us how to live. Its rules are simple, and are the same as the rules given by all sages: simple to understand, intellectually, but truly difficult to live. The first step is to become "indifferent to objects of perception". Only as we sincerely endeavour to accomplish this do we realize just how much it means.

*The Voice of the Silence* takes us from this beginning through all the stages up to "COMPASSION ABSOLUTE". The Way is long, and lonely too, and can only be travelled safely through unswerving steadfastness of purpose.

As one of the Masters quoted for a student:

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.  
But there is also this for our comfort:

"If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not

courage: fight on and to the charge return again, and yet again:"

"Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time."

—*ibid.*, p. 63.

Such is the Bodhidharma! For the philosophical and scientific teachings we must turn to *The Secret Doctrine*. So much of what was written there in the last century, and scorned as imaginative extravagances at the time, has since been proven by material science, that we are surely justified in taking the rest of it at least as a workable hypothesis.

But the S.D. can only be really understood when the teaching of *The Voice of the Silence* has been put into practice, when it will be found that all Wisdom is the result of individual effort and can neither be given nor sold. At most the compassionate ones can but show us the way; we must tread it alone, but our unbounded gratitude must forever go out to Those who renounce the blessedness of final Liberation in order to watch over and encourage us.

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## 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.

*Idyll of the White Lotus*

# THE MESSAGE

A. TYRO

In the last quarter of the 19th century a message was brought to the Western world by a remarkable woman with great powers and abilities. Her two great works, *Istis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, are of monumental dimensions. In these, and in her other literary works, she endeavoured to portray the essential nature of Man and the Universe. This message was especially aimed at our Western civilization, due to its ever-growing materialistic involvement — with the consequent deprivation of its religious instincts.

H.P. Blavatsky gave the name of Theosophy to her message, and she and her co-workers established a Society under that name. The source of the teachings of Theosophy were not drawn from the imagination of a gifted woman, as some of her detractors would suggest: rather are they based on fundamental concepts derived from great spiritual teachings given out at various times in our history. In her work, *The Secret Doctrine*, she provides ample corroboration for these concepts by drawing on other thinkers and writers of more recent times.

In view of the permissiveness, lawlessness and violence which seems to be increasing in the world today, together with the economic and other problems which beset us, it should become apparent to every thinking student of this teaching — those who have been touched by it in more than a superficial way — that to alleviate such conditions the spiritual forces latent in mankind must be awakened and stimulated into action. Those able to perceive this need must realize their great responsibility to make the best use of such insight and enlightenment they possess, for surely the salvation of humanity lies largely through the efforts of those who can respond to a spiritual teaching. It is mainly through the striving of such awakened people to raise

the level of their lives, that spiritual forces can find their way into human life generally.

It is indicated in the teaching that the urge in us to raise our lives is akin to that which brought the Cosmos into being. This suggests that we have a duty to fulfil, a Divine responsibility. To turn to "It" rather than to our habitual ties to personal needs is a challenge which Life must ultimately present to all of us. But those who can now see some Light in the darkness that surrounds us must realize that such illumination also implies a responsibility to the source from whence it comes.

This burden, which is implicit on all who seek to join the Theosophical Brotherhood, is no light one. In fact, it makes necessary the long and arduous task of purifying our lives in every aspect of thought and deed. It challenges so much of our customary way of living, which in the main is devoted to personal needs and well being, that to avoid facing it we instinctively indulge in all kinds of external activities in order to salve our consciences.

To change this love of self to a love for all humanity, which is called for by the teaching, should be looked upon as an aim rather than an accomplishment within our present reach. This is because in order to acquire the Will and the power to effect this change we have to face making the drastic decision to enter that unknown realm of the Spirit from which our separative nature instinctively rebels. No matter how invitingly the Divine may seem to stand on the threshold, before we can enter therein, our vision must rise above the intellectual.

Our self-delusion at this instant of our lives can overwhelm us. Only by clinging to those threads of spirituality within us, and permitting them to illumine our minds, can we win the day. Practically, this means



making the endeavour to live in that "other" aspect of our being in which reside those elements in us which respond to all that is fine and noble in human life. That which gives us the Will and incentive to undertake this task can never be wholly explained in intellectual terms: only those who have actually made an attainment in this endeavour can know it.

One of the most valuable acquisitions for a student is to discover the "hallmark" of spirituality, to be able to discern between the high reaches of intellectuality and the truly spiritual in our literature and teachings; to be able to discern between that which goes to satisfy our intellectual appreciation of the teaching, and that which reveals more to the apperceptive mind than can be expressed in mere words. Unfortunately, much as we understand that things spiritual cannot be conveyed to the level of consciousness customarily employed in everyday living, the urge to raise that level seems still to remain largely wanting.

Those who have taken the step to give their allegiance to that "other" aspect of their lives — finally and without reservations, for there are no half measures accepted — do not necessarily appear different or any better, yet they are not the same. The rules of life for them now act more directly, since this is implied in their dedication. If they err, they want to know about it, and to learn from it — an attitude we do not usually incur. Herein lies the difference: no longer do we stumble blindly through life hopefully balancing our waywardness with the good we do.

It is all very well to say we should live more intelligently, but the "old" ego does not yield up its hold on us so easily, probably for many reasons. Most importantly, however, it is because living intelligently invokes in us the effort to call upon that "other" aspect which gives us the understanding and incentive necessary to resolve these wilful energies which cause us to err.

It is in the task of overcoming these

errant forces that we find the material for our Soul's growth. It is our understanding of these energies within us, born of our attachment to the needs of our physical organism, that we begin to become aware of the purpose for which we live.

Those who need proof before they accept the teaching seldom find it because the Laws of Life are such that the proof lies in their enactment. We can never *really* know anything until it has been subjected to the test of living experience. Only through the "experience in actuo" of that dispassionate faculty of man's "higher mind" can that truth be known. It is the exercise of this faculty which makes us truly Human. Without it, we remain but one remove from the animals.

In order "to tread the path of Spiritual endeavour which springs from the Cosmic Being's urge towards its own fulfilment" each spark wandering in the immensity of that Being must be free to fashion its own individuality. The Soul can only become more of itself as we live through life Self-consciously. In other words, Life must have real meaning for us, not just a passing-through daily events and experiences of life concerned with them only as they affect our personal wellbeing.

While the awakening to the needs of our "Whole" Being is for most of us a slow and demanding process at first, as we begin to open up a window in that realm of obscuration engendered by our self-centred living, a view of that infinite life which lies beyond our limited vision becomes revealed together with a glimpse of the prison house in which we dwell. All this goes to strengthen our Will to free ourselves from our earthbound shell.

"The inner goal to which we are urged to turn is the Goal of the Cosmic Cycle, and the purpose to gain the goal through Man is the purpose of the whole process of evolution. The pursuit of the Spirit is not only the highest but the most natural human activity, for it is in the pursuit of the Spirit that man becomes most truly human."

# THE LION IN THE PATH

JASPER NIEMAND

At a certain era of theosophical study and practice, we reach a point of pause, of silence. The mind appears saturated with the new and wonderful teaching; insensible to fresh impressions, it can take in no more. The heart that once bounded so elately in all the vigor of renewed life and stimulus has resumed its normal beat under the pressure of daily trial, to be met, as it was not heretofore met, with self forgetfulness and altruistic endeavor. Slowly we seem to fall into a deadness, a lethargy of all the nature. We act, we plan, we fill the groove of circumstance, but we do it as though we walked in sleep. A blank wall rises before us seeming to bar further progress, and a pall falls over the inner life.

When this point of pause is reached, students say in their hearts that their progress is stopped, that they can advance no more. They have met a lion in the path, and fall back before its grim aspect.

What causes this stop, this silence? First; we have learned more, intellectually, than we can use up in practical daily life. Head and heart have not kept pace. We know, in large part, what we should be in all relations of life, and why we should be it, but we have not attained the power of acting always and at once upon the lines of altruistic endeavor. And by a law of nature the brain cannot assimilate and digest the mass of knowledge received until it has been used up, to some extent at least, in the experience, any more than the stomach can receive and digest fresh food before the assimilative processes have been undergone with respect to food previously taken in.

All the teachings we receive on the line of natural law (or spiritual law; the terms are one) are based upon the fact that motive determines energy and the value of energy, in a way touched upon by an adept in *The*

*Occult World*. There is "good and evil in every point of the universe", and the motive for which force is evolved, and in which it is used, must then qualify it. "Kundalini" may make or may kill. Apply the same rule to concentration.

The *passive* fixation of the empty mind produces a passive magnetic condition of the physical body, well indicated by the sign —, and facilitates the entrance of adverse lower astral influences and entities; these are helped also by the quickened activity of the inner body under the said concentration.

The *positive* fixation of the mind upon some worthy object, such as a high Ideal, the Higher Self, the image of an Elder Brother if one is known, renders the outer body positive, or magnetically +, and reduces the activity of the inner body by casting it into the mould of the mind occupied with this image. The doors are barred to all lower influences; a vibration far above their own effectually excludes them. In the one case we have lowered our spiritual vitality; in the other, we have raised it.

To the aphorism, "A medium is an open door", might be added this — "The positive idealist is a closed temple." "The image of the Master is the best protection against lower influences; think of the Master as a living man within you," says an MSS. This refers to the mental image of that master, who may be either an adept or the Higher Self. Patanjali says that the mind flows out and moulds itself upon the object seen; mind makes form.

In these brief hints may be found some explanation of our clogged mental processes. Those who participate so actively in theosophical work as to have little, if any, time for study, do, to my

(Continued on page 63)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

On July 1 begins another year for The Theosophical Society in Canada. It also marks the beginning of a new term of office for the General Secretary and Directors.

For me, it means entering a tenth year as General Secretary. Again, I thank the members for their confidence in me, and pledge to carry out the duties of the office to the best of my ability.

Ten years is a relatively long time for an organization to go without changing the equivalent position of President - General Secretary. While a case can be made for continuity, in principle it seems undesirable that one person should repeatedly take on such a responsibility. Some Sections have rules which impose a consecutive time limit on a General Secretary's term of office, but an inflexible approach can be equally undesirable. Perhaps a voluntary system is better. Regardless, I hope that members will give serious thought to this situation, and be prepared to replace me at the appropriate time.

Like most other voluntary organizations, it is not easy to find members who are willing and able to accept responsible positions, and this is as true locally as nationally. It is gratifying, however, to see the number of dedicated workers that keep our Lodges running, and who oversee the affairs of the Society generally.

\* \* \*

In recent weeks I have had the pleasure of welcoming several members from other centres who have passed through Calgary.

Wolfgang Schmitt, a Director of both the Toronto Lodge and the T.S. in Canada, was in the city on business in May. Doris and I spent a pleasant evening with him at our home, and his visit allowed for a more leisurely discussion of T.S. affairs than is usually possible.

Emory Wood and Simon Postma, Section Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer respectively, came to Calgary in April, and in mid-May I again met them both, this time in Edmonton, their home ground. On both occasions, needless to say, the Section's financial affairs came up for discussion. Although ours is a small organization, considerable time and effort is required to run it on a business-like basis. Mr. Postma is very conscientious in carrying out his important responsibilities, and is a valued advisor on investments and other transactions. Mr. Wood also brings to his office a wealth of experience in the accounting profession. I think all will agree the T.S. in Canada is very fortunate to be served in this important area by two such competent and devoted members.

In late June, Doris and I were delighted to renew our friendship with Dr. C. Ton Phan. Shortly before he came to Calgary from Montreal to attend a professional meeting, Ton had been elected Secretary of the Canadian Federation, T.S. Our respective positions require frequent contact, usually by correspondence of course, so it was most helpful to have this early opportunity to exchange views and information concerning our parallel responsibilities.

\* \* \*

At this time it is fitting that I should pay tribute to Mrs. Ida Stephen, who stepped down as Federation Secretary this year after several terms of faithful service in that position. In our various dealings over the years, it has always been a pleasure to work with Ida. She is most understanding and cooperative.

\* \* \*

The 1977 Wizards Bookshelf catalog is at hand. It lists several new titles in the Secret Doctrine Reference Series that will be welcomed by S.D. Students. Two new translations are among the recent additions: *Shan-Hai-King* (Book of Wonders, Land and Sea) and Theon of

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## Smyrna's *Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato.*

Wizards also lists a Selected Booklist, "emphasizing the obscure and valuable works for students of Hermetica, philosophy, orientalia and research." This contains 4,000 odd entries. A list of over 750 titles referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* is also available. I will be pleased to mail copies of this catalog on request.

T.G.D.

## TORONTO LODGE

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

President	Mr. Fleetwood B. Berry
Vice-President	Mr. Stanford L. Treloar
Secretary	Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe
Treasurer	Mr. Philip C. Miller

Directors: Mrs. Vera Berry, Mrs. Emma Obodiac, Miss Amelia Saumur, Mr. Wolfgang Schmitt, Mrs. Barbara Treloar, Miss Elizabeth Wilson.

## VANCOUVER LODGE

The Annual Meeting of the Vancouver Lodge was held in the Lodge Room on April 28, 1977. The Lodge Room is 413-207 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, and we have occupied these smaller quarters for just over a year.

Perhaps the most important occurrence of the year was the revision of our Constitution and By-Laws. After a lengthy process we are now incorporated under the British Columbia Societies Act, although of course our affiliation with the Canadian Section remains as it always has been.

During the early part of the year we very much enjoyed reading out loud the reports and speeches of the Centenary Congress, but our main study continues to be *The Secret Doctrine*, with *The Light of Asia* being featured as the spiritual reading for the year at the commencement of each Wednesday class.

Members of the Lodge attended the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Section in Victoria. We are planning to make a joint meeting of Victoria, Vancouver and Orpheus Lodges an annual event.

Doreen Chatwin  
President

White Lotus Day was celebrated by members of Victoria Lodge on May 10 with suitable readings and an illustrated talk on the Theosophical Seal by the Vice-President, Dorothy Armstrong. Refreshments and a book sale followed.

Victoria Lodge was invited to participate in a Channel 6 TV interview for the second time on May 21. The subject again was Reincarnation. Several enquiries from Vancouver Island and the mainland were followed up by letters and pamphlets being sent. One particular request was for the pamphlet entitled "The Gateway of Birth", for two young expectant mothers.

During May, each Sunday afternoon an open discussion of Theosophy and Christianity was conducted by David and Helena Makins. This program may be continued in the Fall.

Dorita Gilmour  
President

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## THE FRONT PAGE

The design on the front page of this issue is a copy of that depicted in several issues of this magazine during 1937.

Mr. Albert E.S. Smythe, the Editor, noted (C.T., April, 1937): "We are indebted for the design . . . to the kindness of Mr. William Scott, a member of Hamilton Lodge.

"We hope it will convey to our faraway readers something of the atmosphere of Canada. The totem pole is one of recent design . . . The vignettes suggest the breadth of the Dominion from the Perce Rock in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Niagara Falls in the East, to the Capilano Gorge in the West. The heraldic design is Madame Blavatsky's signet ring seal, and may be interpreted by members according to their study of symbolism. It indicates at least where our sympathies lie in Theosophical matters."

Adyar Newsletter, the quarterly journal published from the International Headquarters in Adyar, enables members of the Theosophical Society to keep themselves informed of events in the Theosophical world.

It publishes news not only of Adyar, but also reports from the Sections, Lodges and members that may be of general interest.

Thus it includes information from various parts of the Theosophical world, including Adyar, of Theosophical events; also of study courses, books and pamphlets, tape or cassette recordings and slide programs. Reports on the work of groups such as The Theosophical Order of Service, Young Theosophists, etc., summer schools and camps, find place in the Newsletter.

Adyar Newsletter is published in February, May, August and November. Subscriptions may be registered with The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, 600020, India. The annual subscription is \$2.00.

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## CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

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

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## A NEW T.S. SERVICE IN WESTERN CANADA

Members and readers in Western Canada requiring T.S. books and literature are invited to write to:

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# IS LIFE JOY?

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

A situation inseparable from life on earth develops out of the fact that the law of life is Growth — out of what we are, into what we are destined to become.

Two reactions are possible to this rule of Growth: 1. A sense of annoyance and frustration at the necessity of change of any kind (the whinings of *Tamas*). 2. An equal sense of frustration in face of the fact that however dedicated and sincere, a man's aspirations and efforts encounter eternal opposition. Whether ours be the burden of rebellion at being required to grow, or rebellion at the perennial obstacles in the way of Growth, either state renders pure "joy" hard to come by, inviting the constant query, "Is Life Joy?"

Anyone desiring to attain a reasonable degree of Growth might just as well acknowledge and accept, temporarily, at least, this state of frustration. Having once honestly accepted it, he is in a position to analyse it as a first step towards eliminating it.

A situation that obtains in any pattern of human growth, though difficult to accept, is what might be termed inadequacy of conviction — of the conviction that Growth is an inescapable objective in living; likewise, that Growth is a joyous possibility in the life of everyone — to the extent that that one is truly "alive". And there is no harm in reminding oneself that there are many different degrees of "aliveness" among mortals; that is to say many degrees of triumph over *Tamas*, the lethargic, indifferent element in you and in me. This being the case, it may be a good idea for each of us to ask himself from time to time, "How serious am I in this pursuit? Is my aspiration to Grow finding its fullest possible expression here and now?"

Upon the answer to this question may hang our major frustrations; for, to desire Growth sincerely, intelligently, uncompromisingly, spells nothing less than

one's complete surrender to the Source of Growth — the Eternal Spiritual Self. And anyone who has attempted such surrender knows it to be an undertaking of unearthly proportions. Only on the plane of consciousness of the Greater Self is it possible to discover the glorious and wholly joyous pattern of spiritual living, the early approaches to which are calculated to invite immediate rebellion on the part of the personality. Only a steadily increasing Growth can gradually lessen personal frustration, with a sense of being in command of the situation, as one's thinking and striving become less personal, more universal. And it is this reaching for universal values that sounds the death knell of purely personal living.

In this connection, it may not be out of place to note that while concessions to the personality may, under certain circumstances, be rewarded with a temporary "happiness", "Joy" is only attainable by surrender to the Universal Self. For, while happiness might be associated with momentary release from effort — a passing peak of irresponsible well-being — "Joy", that permanent, spiritually-based awareness of being a conscious part of life's basic beauty and beneficence, is only to be experienced by the "whole man" — personality illumined by Spiritual Awareness. The ultimate justification for the claim that "Life is Joy" is to be found in the fact that Life offers the only sphere wherein man can "Grow" into harmonious relationship with the beneficent Pattern of Realization of his universe. Such Growth, representing the fulfilment of a sublime destiny, is the only one capable of opening the door to a deep, enduring Joy. Life Is Joy to the extent that it is lived with fullest understanding.

Such understanding takes pain, disappointment, temporary failures and heart-aches, in its stride, using each as a

stepping-stone to further Growth. Duality, the Law of Cycles, Reincarnation, Karma — all of these provisions create a vista, an arena, a design for fruitful living — steps taken consciously in the direction of the Divine Miracle — the transmutation of the *Maya* of temporary circumstances into an enduring Spiritual Reality — the Will to Growth triumphant.

Joy is ours for a price: perfect understanding and acceptance of the Wholeness of Life. For, to live merely in the life instrument — body, mind and personality — is to occupy the basement of the temple, to live, as it were, in the servants' quarters. Whereas Life, in its fullest meaning is a sacrament partaken of at the altar, in the Holy of Holies. Not to have found one's way to the altar is to have foregone the splendor and sublimity of living — a joyous identity with its Infinite Benediction. Life, that is *whole*, conceals a joy to which the earthly pilgrim is a stranger, obsessed with the raw material of Growth, a primary necessity, no doubt, but of the dimensions of life's most elementary class-room.

The essences of that Joy we are in search of, being the essences of spiritual living, must obviously be unattainable on any but the spiritual plane. It is this fact that makes that Joy the doubtful and inconstant blessing that it is for inconstant man. It is compounded of innumerable, oft-repeated *realizations* of the life purpose. In their entirety, these realizations acquaint us with the dearness, the loveliness, the sheer bliss of being alive. Beyond argument, the bouquet of this Wine of Life awakens in us memories of those Vineyards of the Spirit from whose fruit alone such elysian delight can be distilled. Only to the tireless husbandmen of the vines can become known the undying ecstasies they can release in the heart of him who partakes of their sacramental wine.

Ah, with the Grape my fading life  
provide,  
And wash the Body whence the  
Life has died,

And lay me, shrouded in the  
living Leaf,  
By some not unfrequented  
Garden-side

—*Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

“Shrouded in the living Leaf” is he who, wholly given up to the Ancient Truth, crosses the threshold of earth's twilight into the perfect Dawn of that perception of an infinitely expanded Joy. In the Dawn of that Joy he will make time and circumstances the building blocks of a fairer Temple of the Spirit. And in those desert wastes of Time shall come forth flowers no breath of earth can parch, no desert winds consume. He who yields up self utterly shall witness the blooming of a transcendent Joy. Life — that is life — is  
J O Y !

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## THE LION IN THE PATH

*(Continued from page 58)*

personal knowledge, make greater progress than other more learned F.T.S. Unconsciously (sub-consciously is a better term) they draw upon the Source for whose greater diffusion they work; they empty themselves and are filled, through the unflinching regularity of natural processes. Their motive predetermines the quality of the fresh energetic supply received. I do not pretend to constitute myself a judge of progress, but that must be advance which sweetens, regulates, and clarifies the nature; absence of these and presence of harshness and disturbance must imply some degree of retardation.

Even such workers do not escape the point of pause. The Lion confronts them; upon his forehead is branded the grim name of Doubt. Despair is the lair to which he conveys his victim.

In using the word Doubt, I do not restrict it to its conventional meaning, but apply it to all phases of mind that are in opposition to a wholesome and calm confidence in the reign of Law, to a full assurance that all is

as well, with us and with the world, as it can possibly be at this moment. The evolutionary wheels never stop; we all progress as particles of air are said to do, through advance and recoil; and as sound is propagated along their line by just that motion, so the life wave, with its currents of progress, runs through individuals and through worlds in the same rise and fall. Progress is *always* being made at some point of our greater and of our individual being, so long as we try at all, so long as we do not deliberately retard the methods of nature.

Why, then, should we yield to this despondency? If I have anything to say upon the subject at all, it is because I have passed along that road; I have reached the point of pause and confronted the Lion. At first there seems no escape. We can only close the mind, throw ourselves into a vortex of practical altruistic work, and hold on, with stern determination, to the ideal now behind the clouds. We cannot lift our hearts to it; we are too dead-tired for that; but we can insist that it still shines behind the darkness and will reappear. Habit is the parent of Doubt. We have some special failing, some specific trial, some rock closing our path. That is what we think, laboring desperately to remove it, squandering all our strength upon the one obstacle. We mistake. No one thing has power to bar advance in all our being, on all its many planes. There are other causes, operative as obstacles, of which we are unconscious.

Let us, then, accept ourselves just as we are, and work on, trusting to work for others and to the influx of light which that brings for better comprehension of the lower self. To use up all our thoughts and most of our strength upon some personal failing is a fatal mistake. We do not kill our faults. We outgrow them. This growth can only be had by a study of spiritual law through the inner nature of things, and by its application to all the issues of life, above all, to the tendencies of the lower self. A clearer idea of philosophy and more

theosophical work are what we most need.

It is not to be supposed that our faults are to be wholly ignored. But they are to be viewed without emotion, calmly, as an excrescence upon a tree, a blight in the midst of nature. No student should ever forget to look at things in that aspect which they wear on the plane of force. Anxiety, there, is an explosive; fear contracts, hope expands. The affection which trembles for its object, however legitimately to the outward sense, acts there as a disintegrating force. The thinker may increase the list for himself. Consequently, the agonizing repentance of the sinner is a deterrent if it continues longer than is necessary to the first stirring up of the inner nature.

What we should do is more scientific. We should practice the substitution of mental images. Make deliberately in the mind an image opposed to the habit, or the desire, or the too influential person, whenever the idea which you desire to expel shall arise. You do not even need to *feel* this new form at first; just bring it up and consider it; hold it as long as you can. You will come to feel it. You will react to it.

In the very hour of defeat is the germ of victory. All things go on to a climax; then reaction sets in. We are generally exhausted when this natural impulse arises; we fail to grasp it, to encourage and increase it. We can bring it about more speedily by increasing the momentum of any given feeling or course, so that the climax shall be more speedily reached, but such is not often the action of the wise. They await the proper hour. A caterpillar's nest caused ravages in my garden. The wind was high, the vermin active and spread abroad. I could do nothing then. I cultivated other parts of my garden. When night came, and the wind fell, and the vermin collected in the nest, I burned it. He who waits quietly, patiently, studiously, working for others where he can and substituting higher mental images for low ones in every idle hour, consciously making these etheric forms and clothing them with



ever increasing energy; he who calmly waits the crisis and then vigorously, promptly takes the reactionary current, — he will know what is meant when *The Voice of the Silence* enjoins us:

“Chase all your foes away . . . when even you have failed.”

Create your own reactions. It is done by thought. “If thou wouldst not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm around humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils.” You have stamped those thoughts upon energetic centres in the astral light until they have become your habits; they inform, propel, and nourish the Lion in the path. Efface the old impressions; bathe the sensitized centres in the biting acid of Will; create

new thoughts daily, automatically if you cannot do it with love at first; love will follow; all things follow Will.

Ruskin says: “Do justice to your brother — you can do that whether you love him or not — and you will come to love him. But do injustice to him — because you don’t love him, and you will come to hate him.” Justice primarily demands that we cease to poison the *milieu* in which men live, which souls exhale and respire, with our personal fears, desires, and all the haunting shapes of self.

Man legislates against poisoning of the air, but nature prohibits the infection of the soul atmosphere, the ether. “Doubt is Self,” she cries. “Thou art the Lion in thy brother’s path; destroy it, and it will not bar thine own.”

*The Path*, September, 1890.

## THE POOL THAT LOST ITSELF

H. PERCY LEONARD

A little pool among the boulders on the beach lay warming itself in the sunshine. A gentle breeze rippled its surface, and tiny wavelets softly lapped upon the margin of the basin where it lay. “Here is my little kingdom,” thought the pool every time one of its wavelets broke upon its boundary line. Other pools lay in sight and it was pleasant to compare its ample size, its graceful contour, and its flashing surface, with the lesser attractions of the neighboring pools. Far down the beach lay the ocean, a vast pool which seemed to have no boundaries and whose immeasurable range terrified the timid little pool lying in its petty isolation, behind the guardian ramparts which protected it from all association with its kind. “Here in solitary splendor I shall lie for ever,” it mused, “shielded from all contamination with inferior pools and widely separated by

a sloping stretch of sand from that appalling ocean whose rhythmic murmurs sound so faint and far away.”

Small fish and gray shrimps darted to and fro about its shallows, and it was pleasant to feel itself the patron and protector of these small fry, and to reign as a monarch without a rival in its little kingdom. The sun grew hotter, and mounted the blue arch overhead, while the murmur of the distant waves grew louder as the time went by. “What would become of me if the waves should ever flood the beach?” thought the little pool. “My beautiful, clear water would be mixed with the other pools, and one and all would be engulfed in that vast ocean whose waves sound louder and louder.”

The tide was surely creeping up the beach. The long, blue breakers glided to the front and broke in thunder thereon. The

liquid ruins were drawn back over the rattling pebbles; but always rose again with added volume and a louder roar. The pool trembled at the thought of its approaching destruction, until at last one towering billow breaking loose from the tossing multitude fell headlong with a sounding roar, poured its white cataract of boiling foam into the pool, and floated it away to mingle with the mighty deep.

No longer capable of thinking as a pool, an exultant surge of feeling soon drowned

all sense of separated life. Its outlines melted in immensity. It had become the boundless sea itself. The petty throbbing of its individual life took on the grander rhythm of the ocean's giant heart. The breaking up of the limits of personal existence was the moment of its triumphant entry into the larger life, just as the man who loses himself in serving his fellows, grows suddenly great, and finds himself one with the Heart of the Universe.

— *Messiah*, April-May 1976.

## 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.** Is there any mention made in *The Secret Doctrine* to a force or energy comparable to nuclear energy?

**Answer.** There is of course Fohat, which is termed the divine energy (S.D.V, 209) and also described as "the universal propelling Vital Force, at once the propeller and the resultant." (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 121) Then in *The Secret Doctrine*:

"Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life." (I, 16; I, 81 6-vol.ed.; I, 44 3rd ed.)

"Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the 'Thought Divine' transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyān Chohans, the Architects of the visible World." (*Ibid.*)

Thus Fohat may be regarded as a cosmic energy or power, whereas nuclear energy may be said to be a "man-made power" produced by human ingenuity. However, reference may now be made to a power or a force which was utilized by human beings. It was referred to in the first *Mahatma Letter* received by A.P. Siinnett in this manner:

"The *vril* of the 'Coming Race' was the common property of races now extinct." (p.2)

Here is the explanation of *Vril* and "The Coming Race." *Vril* is a term which was created by the novelist Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873) and used by him in his novel published in 1871 entitled *The Coming Race*. One wonders how the idea of this remarkable force which he describes so vividly came to him. The *Mahatma's* statement that *vril* "was the common property of races now extinct," signifies that once there were races who were able to use such a force. Here is Bulwer-Lytton's description of *vril*:

"Philosophers assert that by one operation of vril . . . they can influence the variations of temperature — in plain words, the weather; that by other operations, akin to those ascribed to mesmerism, electrobiology, odic force, etc., but applied scientifically through vril conductors, they can exercise influence over minds, and bodies animal and vegetable, to an extent not surpassed in the romances of our mystics. To all such agencies they give the common name of vril.

" . . . this fluid is capable of being raised and disciplined into the mightiest agency over all forms of matter, animate or inanimate. It can destroy like the flash of lightning; yet, differently applied, it can replenish or invigorate life, heal, and preserve; and on it they chiefly rely for the cure of disease, or rather for enabling the physical organization to re-establish the due equilibrium of its natural powers, and thereby to cure itself. By this agency they rend way through the most solid substances, and open valleys for culture . . . From it they extract the light which supplies their lamps.

" . . . they brought the art of destruction to such perfection as to annul all superiority in numbers, discipline, or military skill. The fire lodged in the hollow of a rod directed by the hand of a child could shatter the strongest fortress, or cleave its burning way from the van to the rear of an embattled host. If army met army, and both had command of this agency, it could be but to the annihilation of each. The age of war was therefore gone." (*The Coming Race*, ch. ix)

Then there is a force described by H.P. Blavatsky under the name of Mash-Mak:

"By tradition an Atlantean word

of the fourth Race, to denote a mysterious Cosmic fire, or rather Force, which was said to be able to pulverize in a second whole cities and disintegrate the world." (*The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 208.)

**Question.** What is the significance of the "axial disturbances" which are mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*?

**Answer.** The axial disturbances are referred to in connection with the shifting of the Earth's axis. The shifting of the axis causes considerable changes to the Earth, such as the rise and fall of lands and waters. The Esoteric Philosophy

" . . . teaches distinctly that after the first geological disturbance in the Earth's axis which ended in the sweeping down to the bottom of the Seas of the whole second Continent, with its primeval races — of which successive 'Earths' or Continents Atlantis was the fourth — there came another disturbance by the axis resuming as rapidly its previous degree of inclination; when the Earth was indeed *raised once more* out of the Waters." (S.D. I, 369; II, 85 6-vol. ed.; I, 396 3rd ed.)

"Thus, since Vaivasvata Manu's Humanity ( the First Root-Race ) appeared on this Earth, there have already been four such axial disturbances; when the old continents — save the first one — were sucked in by the oceans, other lands appeared, and huge mountain chains arose where there had been none before. The face of the Globe was completely changed each time; the *survival of the fittest* nations and races was secured through timely help; and the unfit ones — the failures — were disposed of by being swept off the earth. Such sorting and shifting does not happen between sunset and sunrise, as one may think, but requires several thousands of years before the new house is set in order.

“The Sub-races are subject to the same cleansing process, as also the side-branchlets (the family-Races). Let one, well acquainted with astronomy and mathematics, throw a retrospective glance into the twilight and shadows of the Past. Let him observe, take notes of what he knows of the history of peoples and nations, and collate their respective rises and falls with what is known of astronomical cycles — especially with the *Sidereal year*, equal to 25,868 of our solar years. There are other cycles, of course, *cycles within cycles* — and this is just that which creates such a difficulty in the calculations of racial events. The circuit of the ecliptic is completed in 25,868 years. And with regard to our Earth, it is calculated that the equinoctial point falls back 50 minutes 10 seconds annually . . . If the observer is gifted with the faintest intuition, then will he find how the weal and woe of nations is intimately connected with the beginning and close of this sidereal cycle. True, the non-occultist has the disadvantage that he has no such far distant times to rely upon. He knows nothing, through exact Science, of what took place nearly 10,000 years ago; yet he may find consolation in the knowledge or — if he so prefers — speculation on the fate of every one of the modern nations he knows of — about 16,000 years hence. Our

meaning is very clear. Every sidereal year the tropics recede from the pole *four degrees* in each revolution from the equinoctial points, as the equator rounds through the Zodiacal constellations. Now, as every astronomer knows, at present the tropic is only twenty-three degrees and a fraction less than half a degree from the equator. Hence it has still  $2\frac{1}{2}$  degrees to run

before the end of the Sidereal year; which gives humanity in general, and our civilized races in *particular*, a reprieve of about 16,000 years.”  
(S .D. II, 330-1, III, 329-30; II, 334-5 3rd ed.)

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom Religion*, by Judith Tyberg. Published by Point Loma Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 9966, San Diego, California 92109. 1976 (1st. Ed. 1940). 163 pp. Price \$4.00.

By the re-publication of this book the student is truly given a golden key for unlocking the chest of secrecy and mystic expression, which has protected the Ancient Wisdom from profane misuse since the awakening of the mind principle led man gradually further into materialistic concepts, culminating in the sorcery of the Fourth Root Race. From the commencing pages, which concern its history, we learn that Sanskrit, the anglicized form of the word “sanskrita” meaning polished, is the language which was spoken by the ancient Aryans, who made their home in India and were taught the Vedas, even before the fall of Atlantis. In the sacred sanctuaries of the Initiates of the Fifth Root Race this language was “polished”, and perfected into a sensitive vehicle for conveying the subtle philosophies of the spiritual planes. In Sanskrit has been preserved the wisdom garnered from the heart of nature, and passed down from Master to chela through the ages, engendering the power of spirituality.

On page 7 one reads that the true form of Sanskrit spoken by the Initiated Brahmans was called “Vach, the mystic speech, signifying the pulsating or vibratory tones that lie latent in its syllables and words. These tones, arranged in a Mantra, are a power in the hands of one who is familiar with the correlations of sounds, numbers, colours, and hierarchies in the Cosmos.”

The second chapter, without going into the grammatical complexities, introduces some aspects of the language, such as pronunciation, vowels and their changes, prefixes and some case endings, in order to help the reader with an intelligent understanding of word derivations. e.g. "Svasamvedana" translated as "full self knowledge" is compounded from "sva" — self, "vedana" from "vid" — to know, and "sam" implying the idea of "thoroughly".

Then follows the main and theosophically most important section, which gives the meanings and deeper teachings implied in Sanskrit terms from four major sources in occult literature: *The Ocean of Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*. In all the ancient cultures which achieved heights of learning and spiritual insight, it is said the language held an exoteric and an esoteric meaning, and here we have a glimpse of the spirituality inherent in the Sanskrit words, and realize perhaps some of the beauty and power in retaining their use.

By way of example: - to the secular student the dictionary translation of "akasa" is sky, but for the aspirant to higher knowledge "akasa" means: "the fifth Kosmic Element . . . primordial spacial substance . . . the vehicle of Divine Thought . . . said to have one attribute, that of sound . . . the medium of the higher thoughts of men . . . by which they can communicate with the Gods . . . occult electricity . . . used in the carrying out of any magical or spiritual performance . . . the tablet of memory of the Hierarchy of Dhyān-Chohans as well of every spiritual Ego . . . When a man loves all things, as did the Buddha, he surrounds himself with Akasic substance which becomes a protective shield which no malevolent influences can penetrate."

This section is well indexed, and also includes Readings, which make superlative use of the Sanskrit terms. This is where one realizes that one has not learnt as much as one thought, and that understanding

spiritual concepts takes more than intellect. However, looking back and repeated concentration expand the consciousness.

The final section teaches the writing of the Devanagari script, the very holy and beautiful characters derived from the Senzar. This is the Mystery Speech, which H.P.B. calls the "language of the sun" and once the secret communicating tongue of all Adepts. We are told of the mysterious Kounboun tree, described in *Isis Unveiled*, which grows only in Tibet and whose bark and leaves reveal unfathomable layers of writings in the sacred script.

What a wondrous heritage lies in the Sanskrit language for him who would plant the seed of study in his mind. Perhaps more than anything though, the writer of this book shows us that Sanskrit is a key, but the turning in the lock is the striving to awaken the intuitions and to seek the Path of Compassion. For the self liberating Buddha "nirmanakaya" implies merely the creating of a form body (of astral matter) inferior to the more ethereal states of bliss detached from the world, whereas to the soul who would sacrifice the fullness of his own flowering to feed the root of the tree of life, the "nirmanakaya" vesture is a nobler Mystery.

—Joan Sutcliffe

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*Legends of the Sufis*, translated by James W. Redhouse, preface by Idries Shah. Third and Revised Edition published 1976 by The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England. xii + 125 pp. Price £ 3.25 cloth, £ 2.25 paper.

There has been a surge of interest in classical Sufi writings in recent years. Their appeal is hardly surprising: at the superficial level they are often highly entertaining; while for the serious student of religion their depths reveal much useful insight.

*Legends of the Sufis*, Selected anecdotes from the work entitled *The Acts of the*

*Adepts*, was first published in 1881, and is a worthwhile addition to a student's library on this subject. It contains selections from eight Sufi sages who lived in the 13th century (our calendar). Principal among these is Jalaluddin Rumi.

Although the setting of the legends belongs to a society that is so unlike ours, the message contained in them is as unmistakable as if it were meant for our day and age. The reader must make allowances, of course, for the difference in customs, and in ways of living, but after a few pages this hardly requires a conscious effort.

The anecdotes, which include some colourful exploits of the sages, or record their wise sayings, are probably many of them apocryphal; nevertheless, most are instructive and thought-provoking. Evidently, some Sufi adepts possessed unusual powers, and needless to say it seems their contemporaries were intrigued

by phenomena, but few were interested in following the path pointed out to them by the adepts.

Commenting on the statement that "the Sufi has no religion", H.P.B. remarked:

"That is to say, no external, ritualistic, and dogmatic religion. The same may be said of every Mahatma, or any one who seriously strives to become one. He is a Theosophist and must strive after 'divine', not human wisdom." — H.P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, Vol. IV, p. 162.

This translation leaves the impression that the Sufi originators were indeed religiously inspired in the highest sense. However, the usual trappings of religion appear to be foreign to the Sufic quest.

One of the foremost modern exponents of the Sufic philosophy, Idries Shah, contributes a helpful Preface.

Ted. G. Davy

## GIVING THE MANTRA

Now, when the moon is full, the time has come;  
The Seeker who is ready for the Word,  
Perhaps not consciously, and yet by some  
Great hidden need, calls forth what must be heard.  
This is the seed of freedom from the round  
Of birth and death, the liberating key:  
Not charged with power only by the sound,  
But by the thought and spiritual will of he  
Who, planting it within the other's mind,  
Transmits an energy by tone and look —  
A force and meaning one can never find  
Upon the lifeless page of any book.  
And thus, what seems a simple explanation  
May sometimes be a great Initiation.

— Gary Doore

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York in 1875. It has three objects:

1. *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*
2. *To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*
3. *To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.*

The Society affords a meeting place for students who have three aims in common, *first*, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood; *second*, the search for Truth, and *third*, a desire to associate and work with other men and women having similar aims and ideals. The acceptance of the First Object is required of all those who desire to become members; whether or not a member engages actively in the work contemplated in the Second and Third Objects is left to his or her discretion.

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