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MERRY CHRISTMAS

**I believe in Life's undying splendor;
I rejoice in her flowering Truth;
Nor am I disposed to surrender
Or doubt her celestial sooth.**

**My glad cycle of coming and going
Unveils Immortality's Span;
A serene exultation of growing
Is my hymn to the Heavenly Man.**

**On Christ's morn, in this Season of Giving,
Amid death, insurrection and strife,
Be yours a Heart-offering that's living!
Give not gold nor frankincense, give — LIFE!**

— Montague A. Machell

RIGHT OCCUPATION

Few in number are they who can support themselves and their families without being gainfully employed. For those who have chosen to point their lives in a spiritual direction, it is not only a question of employment, but of being in the "right" occupation.

In the Buddhist philosophy, "Right Occupation", or "Right Means of Livelihood", is enumerated as one of the steps on the Noble Eightfold Path. To Western Buddhists particularly, this must present a major problem. Even during the brief periods when the economy is buoyant and work is relatively easy to find, the availability of jobs which by any stretch of the imagination qualify as "right" occupations is still negligible.

For the aspirant on the Path, "right" implies an ethical environment in which the results of one's efforts are for the good of the community — with community being broadly defined. It must also preclude situations in which strict ethics are subject to compromise. Nevertheless, "right" will still vary with the individual, depending on talents, interests and perhaps to no small degree on karmic requirements.

When you come right down to it, few job descriptions are applicable as "right" occupations. It makes it difficult to decide where to focus one's training, because occupations that provide opportunities to serve one's fellowmen are not abundant. Rarer still are those which are completely free of competitive imperatives that are bound to hurt someone, somewhere — regardless of desirable qualities that may be inherent in the work.

"Survival of the fittest" takes on a new, and often unpleasant meaning in the business world. Here, competition is taken for granted. Notwithstanding the virtue of the relative efficiency and economy this is supposed to generate, competition often

imposes on the individual some extremely difficult choices.

Some societies have endeavoured to reduce the competitive aspect of their economies, but none, it seems, successfully, and in any case, none completely. They too, though, provide little choice on the job market for those wanting to find the "right means of livelihood".

One area of employment which at first sight seems "right" is that which includes the agencies that provide various social and health services to meet specific needs. Many were originally organized, with the best of motives, on a voluntary basis. As the demand for their services grew, so also did the organizations. Sooner or later in situations like these, it inevitably becomes necessary to employ professionals to run them, and gradually the voluntary aspect is reduced to advisory committees and the like. On the surface, it is logical to assume that employment in agencies like these is of the "right" kind. After all, it appears to be an opportunity to serve one's fellowmen. In a number of instances, however, reality shows some undesirable features. The ideals that went into the formation of these organizations are frequently overlooked in their day-to-day operations. Happily, there are exceptions.

There is much talk today about "service" industries which, it is said, constitute an increasingly larger part of the national economy. In this case, however, the word is somewhat of a misnomer, and one may look in vain in this area for a "right" occupation. Incidentally, "service" applies equally to some parts of manufacturing and processing industries — one might say that in our present society a slaughterer provides a service, of sorts — and few occupations in these sectors are clearly suitable for those who wish to "serve"

without compromising some fairly high standards.

Probably no Theosophist would willingly be a butcher, trapper, weapons maker, etc., but these persons cannot be criticized for their occupation. In most cases, they probably have no alternative. Various circumstances have resulted in their being where they are, and doing what they are doing. The moral consequences of their work are, in general, society's responsibility, not theirs in particular.

Without looking into them too closely, it is tempting to classify *a priori* such professions as teaching, medicine, etc., as being in the "right" category. But the frustrations — not those at a petty, selfish level — can be immense. One gathers that such professional occupations are frequently inhibited by outside pressures, and few give the individual sufficient freedom of decision and/or provide the type of environment in which to practice relatively selflessly.

Happiest, perhaps, are those who are skilled tradespersons, artists and the like. However, it must be conceded that even their circumstances are not nearly the same as those who were similarly occupied in earlier eras. Farmers, especially those whose activities are confined to raising crops or fruit, must be counted among the freest of individuals, and most nearly devoting their time and efforts in the "right" way.

As has been suggested, for any single occupation there are bound to be differing views on its "rightness". Indeed, the question is subject to considerable rationalization! The job which its holder argues is an ethical and useful vocation might be severely criticized by many, for various reasons, because it directly or indirectly affects adversely the quality of life as they see it. And who is to say who is right?

To a student of Theosophy yet another condition of right occupation might be the degree to which it permits the fulfilment of

individual *dharma*. The labourer must be worthy of hire, yes; but also the work should be worthy of the labourer.

There is another aspect of *dharma*, which might roughly be called "duty". Herein lies a great difficulty: in whatever occupation one has it is surely necessary to "do one's duty", but this can create major ethical problems. To take an extreme instance, if one is an executioner, one is instrumental in taking the life of a fellow human being; that is his duty. The judge who sentenced that person to die also performs his duty. And so on. Where is the line drawn between "right" and "undesirable"?

No mention has been made of those occupations for which no monetary remuneration is received. It is assumed these will mostly be "right". Voluntarily chosen and executed, the reward for doing them is intangible, but the doer is sure to benefit from karmic compensation — provided this is not the motive for doing.

For most, "right occupation" presents a dilemma. Those who have one are fortunate far above their wages. Those who find one which has a number of "right" features can only try to minimize those aspects which can result in undesirable effects. The choice is often this or no job.

For this generation, at least, it's a problem.

T.G.D.

"We meet our Karma in our daily duties" is a good saying to bear in mind, and in the performance of these duties comes our tests. We should therefore do what we have to do, simply as duties, regardless of whether that performance brings us praise or blame. All the energy would then be expended in the performance of duties, and there would be nothing left for the personal idea to subsist upon.

— Robert Crosbie.

SEARCH AND DISCOVERY

GARY DOORE

*Slowly drifting on past twenty-four,
A quarter-century now looms in the mist
Of days ahead — an unknown, rocky shore—
No welcome port where anchor might be cast!
But I, without a compass, seem to float
Upon some hidden current, drawing near
The unmapped coast within a fragile boat
That lacks a rudder or a helm to steer.
Yet there I hear the breakers on the rocks
Where many a well-made ship has gone aground—
Where countless stronger hulls, now splintered wrecks,
Are lying with the helpless captain drowned—
And watch the prow in wonder as it glides
Among these ragged reefs and seething tides.*

—Hilo, Hawaii

These lines were written in a mood of despair several years ago, shortly before I returned to San Diego from an abortive search for 'wisdom' in the philosophy departments and libraries at the University of Hawaii and a part-time vagabond-hermit existence in a camper along the wild coasts and tropical forests on the Big Island of Hawaii. I had investigated Zen and Yoga and been in and out of various 'Movements' with eastern philosophical foundations for several years, but there was something missing in all of them and in my own life. They did not deliver the guidance or sense of purpose and direction nor the peace of mind for which I had hoped, nor did studying the academic explanations of eastern philosophies relieve the confusion. Nay, the more I read and studied, the more difficult it became to make sense of the whole picture.

Then, immediately, after arriving back on the mainland, I happened to pick up a volume in the San Diego public library and, opening to the title page, I was met by the penetrating and transfixing gaze of H.P. Blavatsky in her famous 'sphinx' picture. It was like an electric shock! Barely glancing

at the table of contents in several of her works, I checked them out of the library knowing intuitively that she had something important to say to me. And suddenly, there it was! — the 'thread' on which the pearls of eastern wisdom could all be strung — the long-sought unifying vision that would enable me to make sense of the isolated fragments of oriental philosophy and religion I had gathered from here and there, which, without such a key, were only so much useless and unmanageable dross.

But there was more to H.P. Blavatsky's message than merely abstract esoteric philosophy and hints for organizing its various components. In *The Key to Theosophy*, for example, there was the inspiring ethics of the Buddhist *Bodhisattva* teaching interpreted in practical western terms — the ideal of selfless service to humanity. I saw H.P.B.'s lifework as an embodiment of that noble purpose and realized that even though I had spent almost two years on and off seeking 'Enlightenment' in a Zen Buddhist community, a place where I had daily heard the *Bodhisattva* doctrine expounded, I had nevertheless not understood it at all, but had been living and meditating there

from purely selfish motives — seeking only my own Liberation. But *The Key to Theosophy* made it abundantly clear that the thought of one's own salvation must be made subordinate to the higher motive of service to others on the truly spiritual Path — even though it meant postponing one's own final Liberation indefinitely. What a contrast to the popular books on Yoga and other eastern philosophical systems I had been reading! It was a much needed antidote to those subtle appeals to the merely personal instincts.

Then, in *The Voice of the Silence*, I discovered that the Bodhisattva's boundless compassion, his 'enlightened attitude' (*bodhicitta*) is itself the essence of the state of Enlightenment — a state which I had previously thought to be some sort of trance or condition of altered consciousness brought about by meditation and breath control. There too I learned that selfless Compassion is not merely the only way to *begin* treading the spiritual Path, but is the very heart and final goal of the Path itself. It was not necessary, then, to sit for hours in the Lotus Posture, as I had done in the Zen community, in order to get a taste of the enlightened state of mind, and neither was it necessary to travel to India in order to find the perfect *guru* who could impart the liberating *mantra*. As the *Voice of the Silence* made plain, in order to travel on the mystic Path of Enlightenment one must first "become that Path itself" through service and self-sacrifice; and the teaching of The Two Paths also revealed clearly the choice that must be made right at the outset. Either one will strive for one's own illumination, working for oneself alone, or work for the emancipation of the race — nay more — of all future races

during the countless *kalpas* to come in future Rounds.

Thus, Liberation was not at all what I had imagined and vainly sought through various intricate 'methods' of self-culture — not some transcendent, blissful trance where one is isolated in solitary grandeur from the world and the problems of daily life, nor some absorbing vision of "the White Light of the Void in the First *Bardo* Realm," nor yet the attainment of magical and psychic powers. Such things might come later, but they were not what one ought to strive after. No, it was something much simpler — it was an *attitude* — but an attitude that required a radical and complete reversal of the usual self-centered consciousness, a total about-face to the very bottom of one's mind. But, while simpler in some respects, this simplicity, I knew, was not going to be one bit easier to acquire than the *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* sought by the *yogins*. Yet the Path was now at least in plain view, not beginning at the foot of a mango tree in some tropical rain forest or at the feet of a *guru* in a Himalayan cave, but right here in San Diego, in normal daily life.

'Meditation' now took on a completely different meaning. It was no longer necessary to try to kill one's thoughts or enter a trance through altered breathing, for *thought itself* was to be the instrument to bring about the necessary change in attitude and transformation of consciousness, and the body, breath and emotions would thereby follow the intellect naturally, without strain. Hence, this realization brought the sense of direction I had been seeking. The goal of full enlightenment — including the "siddhis of perfection" and ability to enter the trance states — might still be far in the distance, but when the Path is seen to be clearly marked out, then even at the beginning one will be able to set about treading it with the energy and enthusiasm born of confidence. Of course, I realized that there would still be trials and problems (perhaps more than before, although of a different kind); but

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these in themselves do not cause despair, however great they may be, if seen in the proper perspective. For problems are simply part of the Path, and hence, are means by which to become spiritually stronger and more effective in one's service.

Thus I saw that the Bodhisattva Vow (which I had repeated mechanically in the Zen community, without understanding) is not a matter for outer formalism, but of inner conviction and determination. One does not "swear before God" in the presence of others in order to make it actual, but only before one's own Higher Self, the highest Authority one could ever hope to find as a Witness. Yet, once taken with seriousness and determination, this Vow will act as a strong keel and rudder to provide stability through the storms encountered along the Way, while the bright stars of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom will serve to chart one's course for

safe steerage through the troubled waters of this fleeting, earthly existence. This Bodhisattva Ideal, I believe, is the essence of Theosophy — an essence expressed in many religions, but perhaps most concisely in the Zen Buddhist "Four Vows" which I have rendered from the Japanese as the following:

I vow to bring the Spirit's Light
To every being lost in Night,
And vow this day to quench the fire
Of selfish, personal desire;
I vow to master every rule
And law of Nature in her school
That I may use the power gained
To free all beings now enchained;
Thus I vow to tread today
The noble Bodhisattva Way.

Thus is one's ship set aright.

—*The Eclectic Theosophist*, September, 1977

SPIRITUALITY AND LIFE

A. TYRO

Like Eternity, Life and many such other abstract concepts, Spirituality is not easily conceived. Yet as long as we remain human these concepts are firmly imbedded in our consciousness and are not lightly dispelled from our minds. Despite its tenuousness, the presence of Spirituality in our consciousness under certain conditions can be very real. Intuitively we tend to associate it with all that is fine and noble in life.

It is this quality in Mankind that enables it to respond to Spiritual Teachers. According to individual receptiveness, their Teaching has been correspondingly enlightening; just as less fortunately it has been exploited by religious organizations later established in the name of the Teacher. It is interesting to contemplate how this Spiritual element in our makeup

can be used to betray us to that opposite side of our nature, with which we are all too well acquainted.

Seemingly, only as the idea that there are two sides to our nature becomes strong in our consciousness can we begin to unravel the complexity of human behaviour. One of the great tragedies in human life is the way so many of our more highly intellectually endowed people find it necessary to subjugate their finer part in order to meet the demands of their occupation. It will be generally admitted that no normal person can contemplate committing an inimical act without confronting an element within himself which opposes the thought. It is this latter element that elicits our concern. The fact that we are prone to accept the finer manner in which we express our lives is often more an extension

of self-interest than it is inspired by some "Other" aspect of our nature. Far from negating the duality of our nature, this rather emphasizes the predominance of the illusion that the mundane things of life which so obsess us, can satisfy the needs of our existence.

To discover for ourselves where our true interests lie, in the face of our earthly predilections is no easy task. But if the spark exists in us to do so, we have but to give its promptings a place in our lives to become conscious of the "Other" side of our nature. It is this "Other" side that gives us the power to control our lives. We also have to face the fact that in giving allegiance to this "Other" side we challenge much in our lives to which we cling tenaciously. To overcome our reluctance to yield up such things, when the time comes for us to make the decision, marks a great turning point in our lives.

The fact that we do have these promptings, and that there is that element in us which opposes our discordant acts, confirms that we do have interests other than those to which the lower self is addicted. But the "Other" interests can never be understood without the knowledge that comes from the experience of actually giving these promptings and elements a place in our lives. The insight and power that such incursions make into the fortress of our separative nature makes us aware where our true interests lie. Such awareness is the outcome of individual effort, and while such knowledge is available to all who have the will to acquire it, it is essentially individual because no one can do it for us. It is spiritual because it transcends our sense of separateness. It is the growing awareness of this element in us that gives us the power to overcome our separative, self-centred nature.

Closely associated with our thoughts regarding spirituality is that of life itself, and whether it has any discoverable meaning. Some might think that, in as much as we are able to posit the question, we should be able to find the answer. As

previously intimated, it is through the self-directed power of our thoughts that we come to know where our true interests lie; by using the same power we should find the answers.

In the vastness of the universe, can we conceive a limit to the content of consciousness? The mind is the instrument of our thoughts; it is we, the thinker, who directs it, and it is we who are the cause of our limitations. We have only to start thinking positively about Life and our relationship to all that it embraces to realize how narrow and circumscribed is our concept of this subject.

It is no small achievement to fully realize how our self-concern can limit the scope of our interest in the life that surrounds us, and perhaps more importantly, how it tends to veil the infinite potentialities of Man. For while self-concern may shield us from much of life's unpleasantness, it also blinds us to all that Life holds for us.

To know the extent to which our thoughts are conditioned by our physical and emotional needs, we have but to try and cultivate the ability to stand aside, as it were, and witness the reasons and sources which lie at the root of the way in which we express ourselves. Then we discover not only the power of these lower elements to restrict our thoughts to their needs and desires, but also and more importantly, their ability to distract our thoughts from the needs of that "Other" side of our nature.

While the religious instinct in man may still lie beyond the comprehension of most of us, there is a fire within us that will never let us sink into apathy and cease from seeking the Goal. It should become increasingly clear to us that the "Mystery of Life" must always elude us as long as we misdirect the powers of our mind to the concept of ourselves as separate entities.

To discover that the realm of the Spirit is imminent in our minds, we have but to turn our thoughts towards it, difficult as this may seem to be in the face of our personal inclinations. If we cannot find the will to do

it, then surely we must be prepared to suffer the consequences of the lack of spirituality as a guiding principle in our lives.

Life should be regarded as a great Teacher. If we refuse to learn from it, can it do better than to return to us the effects of our discordancies?

If man was evolved to be no more than a super animal, to live merely to satisfy his mundane needs, wherefore is he possessed with powers and abilities that make him more than an animal? Reason

suggests that they are there to enable him to rise to a nobler estate. To use these powers to enhance the needs of our physical or emotional nature to the neglect of our spiritual counterpart must surely be counter to the purpose of Life, whose laws must inevitably act in ways to restore its balance. Does this not account for many of the woes and problems of the world today?

However much our lower feelings may prompt us to avoid facing the spiritual needs deep within us, we know that ultimately this must be done, because therein lies our true being, our real Self.

LIVE IN THE ETERNAL

W. E. WILKS

The name of Dr. W. E. Wilks (1885-1969) needs no introduction to older readers of this magazine. He was most active in the affairs of the Orpheus Lodge and of The Theosophical Society in Canada. Of his many fine qualities, that of being foremost among those who "stand up and be counted" when serious questions are asked stays clearly in our memories.

The following article was published in The Theosophist, September, 1967. This is the first time it has appeared in The Canadian Theosophist. — Eds.

In rule 4 in *Light on the Path*, the disciple is directed to "Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it". This evil is self-love; egoism. Later it is called the "Giant Weed".

"It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out . . . He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then the heart will bleed and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured."

And then the direction how this may be done:

"Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal. This giant weed cannot flower there; this

blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought."

And then he is directed to "Kill out all sense of separateness" and to "Kill out the hunger for growth". To this is later added:

"Grow as the flower grows unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your Soul to the Eternal. But it must be the Eternal which draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth."

These are directions for disciples and we are but students of Theosophy who are seeking to know how to live wisely, fruitfully; seeking the "Good Life". It is most probable that by seeking to understand, in part at least, the directions

given to disciples we may discover the wise directions for our energies and our efforts. One can see that to attempt to grow by willed effort is to try to raise oneself by the use of personal energies which can lead only to growth of personal stature. It will cause the growth of pride and self-respect, and the desire to stand high in the eyes of our peers; to live respected and die honored.

These forms of self-love which have produced beautiful and even self-sacrificing actions, have brought us to where we are at the "turning point" where we hope we are — mature, civilized individuals. Pride and even self-respect, are now the most subtle, deep-seated and difficult forms of Egoism which are the obstacles we as disciples must eventually overcome. This is the reason why it must be the yearning for the Eternal and not the desire for growth which must draw us onward. So the part of wisdom for us must be to try to stop feeding and swelling our Egoism (something many of us do) and to try to live in the Eternal, which brings us to the core of our enquiry — "How live in the Eternal?"

To us the Eternal means timelessness, changelessness, imperishableness and infinity. Herein is no positive quality which the mind can grasp or which we can even imagine ourselves living in.

What are our impersonal values? They are all those selfless qualities such as Truth, Justice, Compassion, which we desire for all mankind, for all time and also for ourselves. We have to find some stepping stones to the Eternal; some qualities which partake of the Eternal. These are to be found in our spiritual values which being impersonal, yet can be grasped and lived, at least in imagination.

In *The Voice of Silence*, we read,

"To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in *Maya's* realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the

changeless Sat, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions" . . . "Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions; mistrust thy senses, they are false. But within thy body — the shrine of thy sensations — seek in the Impersonal for the 'Eternal Man'."

Here, living in the body, we can seek in the impersonal for the Eternal Man.

Almost every chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* describes one of these impersonal values, one rung of the ladder which leads to the Eternal.

The part of wisdom for the student will be to discover which amongst all the impersonal spiritual values, is above all his — that value into which at the end of his life he will be glad to know that he has put all the free energy he could muster to become an embodiment of it. To decide finally which is his value, may take months, or years, but it will be time well spent. At first he may choose some high and fine thing which does not really draw out his admiration and desire to become it, but eventually he will single out that value or values for which he would be willing to die — if he had the power. This value is his special link with the Eternal. It is that aspect of the infinite Eternal which means most to him and in which he proposes to live to the best of his ability. For here he steps outside the bonds of his Self-love and grows by opening his Soul to the Eternal, to awaken impersonal qualities asleep within him.

To try to hold a value in mind all the time is to attempt the impossible, which leads only to discouragement or self-deception. The scientific way, we are told, is to mark off a time, small or large, during which we hold ourselves responsible for living this value. In time its influence will spread as a background over much of the day.

All spiritual values are aspects of Selflessness. The attempt to live "to give without asking" seems far afield from Self-mastery but both require bringing the

forces of the personality under the control of the Intelligence for the benefit of humanity.

In this way, discovering our value and pledging and committing ourselves to it, come what may, we start to build in ourselves a fixed centre. No longer shall we vacillate and be enthused today and change

to another aim in six months, or six years, or six lives, time; we have a star however far and distant, yet our fixed star, and this fixed centre in ourselves is the start of what shall some day become an Occultist. We are striving — wherever we are in the scale of being — to live for and in what to us is “the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty”.

JASPER NIEMAND

The article, “The Lion in the Path”, by Jasper Niemand, published in the July-August issue, evidently sustained its appeal to a new generation of readers. Interest was also expressed in the author, a biographical note on whom is printed below. This was compiled by Mr. Willem B. Roos, and published together with his commentaries on the text of “The Sleeping Spheres”, another Jasper Niemand article, in The Canadian Theosophist, March, 1953.

On the following pages we also present another essay, “Karma”, from the same pen, but this time under the real name of J. Campbell VerPlanck. — Eds.

Jasper Niemand is the *nom-de-plume* of Mrs. Archibald Keightley, also known in the ranks of the Theosophical Society in America under the name of Mrs. Julia Campbell VerPlanck. From “Faces of Friends,” an article in *The Path*, Vol. IX, of April 1894, I quote the following:

“Her maiden name in full was Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell, daughter of the Hon. James H. Campbell, a prominent Pennsylvania lawyer . . . Her mother was Juliet Lewis, daughter of Chief Justice Ellis Lewis of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, a writer of verse possessing great poetical charm and value.”

“Miss Julia . . . married in 1871 Mr. Philip W. VerPlanck of New York; and six years later, in the course of a single year, she lost her husband and both sons suddenly by a most dramatic series of reverses . . .”

One day she heard Mr. Arthur Gebhard speak on Theosophy and the impression

made “was so deep that she joined the T.S. within two weeks, and thenceforward began her unceasing work for Theosophy.”

“Living with her parents at a distance from New York she wrote for *The Path* under the names of ‘Julius,’ ‘August Waldensee,’ ‘J,’ and later on as ‘Jasper Niemand,’ as well as unsigned articles, and also corresponded with T.S. enquirers.”

“Mrs. VerPlanck continued to live with her parents in Pennsylvania until the autumn of 1891, when she married Dr. Archibald Keightley of Old Hall, Westmoreland.” (England).

Her first contribution to *The Path*, called “The Singing Silences,” appeared in August 1886, and is signed ‘Julius.’ She was then an F.T.S. for only a few months, as she first knew about Theosophy through the S.P.R. report and the latter was published on December 31st, 1885. For

(Continued on page 117)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I know all our members will want to join me in sending sympathy to Mr. Emory Wood, President of Edmonton Lodge, whose wife passed away after a lengthy illness on October 3.

* * *

A business trip to the United Kingdom in October presented me with opportunities to make some all too brief Theosophical contacts.

While in London on the eve of an industrial tour which took me to various parts of the country, I called on Miss Ianthe Hoskins, General Secretary of the T.S. in England, at the Section headquarters, 50 Gloucester Place. My visit coincided with the Sunday public lecture, which that evening was given by Miss Hoskins.

A few days later, in Cardiff, Wales, I enjoyed a pleasant evening with Charles James, General Secretary of the T.S. in Wales, and his wife Arda. We had first met at the Centenary Congress in New York. After dinner at their home, my hosts showed me over the Welsh Section headquarters building.

Back in London just before returning to Canada, I visited Rex Dutta, who wishes to be remembered to all the friends he met when lecturing in this country a few years back.

My free time was extremely limited, and other contacts unfortunately had to be limited to telephone chats.

* * *

Another magnificent anthology on reincarnation has been published. Entitled *Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery*, it was compiled and edited by Joseph Head and S.L. Cranston, who also produced the original *Reincarnation: An East-West Anthology* (1961) and *Reincarnation in*

World Thought (1967). A note by the Editors states: "This latest effort, while retaining the best of the earlier books, is a fruitage of extensive additional investigation, particularly in the field of Oriental thought. . . In the decade since the last volume appeared, the interest in reincarnation has grown tremendously. Consequently, there is much new material to draw on."

* * *

Mr. Conn Smythe, the well known sportsman, was the subject of a colourful profile in the October 8 issue of *The Canadian Magazine*. In it he is quoted talking about his father, the late Albert E.S. Smythe, in most appreciative terms, and also of his own interest in Theosophy.

* * *

I am very grateful to Mr. John Mecredy, a veteran member of the Vancouver Lodge, for showing me correspondence and clippings from his old files. Mr. Mecredy was very active in the 1920s, when the Theosophical world was more often in a turmoil than not, and his papers are interesting and instructive.

It is unfortunate that the Section's archives are not as complete as they might be. I would appreciate hearing from older members who possess T.S. correspondence, etc., from earlier decades, and would encourage them, and others, to set down their reminiscences of activities and of the personalities involved in the Society when they first joined.

* * *

When visiting with Rex Dutta, I obtained from him a set of the *Manuals* that have recently been published by Viewpoint Aquarius. These are short (but multum in parvo!) mimeographed publications on the following topics: Unity-Oneness; The Septenary Law; The Cyclic Law; Karma

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

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

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

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Planning a camping holiday in Western Canada next Summer? Mr. and Mrs. H. van Hees, members of Calgary Lodge, cordially invite Canadian and American members and their families to use their acreage at "Hazy Hills". This is located in peaceful, wooded farm country in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, about 90 kilometres northwest of Calgary.

Interested campers should write to the van Hees at P.O. Box 14, Water Valley, Alberta, T0M 2E0.

* * *

Mr. Jose Veulens Castex, a member of the Dharma Lodge, Matanzas City, Cuba, would like to exchange stamps and correspondence on Theosophical subjects. Any readers who are philatelists and are interested may write to Mr. Castex at Apartado No. 31, Jaguey Grande, Mantanzas, Cuba. Correspondence may be in English or French.

* * *

It gives me much pleasure to welcome the following new members into the fellowship of the Society.

Golden Rule Lodge. Ralph Belbin, Deborah Lamont.

Members-at-large. Leon C. Agla, Mary and Michael Williams-McMahon, Polly Newell.

T.G.D.

CALGARY LODGE

Thursday evening, October 26 was a special occasion for the members of Calgary Lodge. The members of the Lotus Lodge, Canadian Federation, also of Calgary, had accepted an invitation to share this evening with us for a meeting of study, at the Davy's place.

With eleven in attendance, we started at 8:00 p.m., with a word of welcome from our President, Stan Elliott, and a friendly

and Reincarnation; Concentric Key Study. Two other manuals on Yoga in Practice are entitled Dynamic Relaxation and Man Know Thyself. The seven are available for one pound sterling (about \$2.00) from Viewpoint Aquarius, c/o Fish Tanks Ltd., 49 Blandford Street, London W1H 3AF, England.

* * *

response from the Lotus Lodge President, Jim Forster, and Secretary Cliff Willmott.

The meeting followed our usual practice, starting with a meditation period and discussion, followed by a short reading from *The Voice of the Silence*. We then continued with our study, now in its third year, of *The Secret Doctrine*. Everyone present participated.

At 9:30 p.m., our hostess served refreshments and we shared a social time. It was pleasant to get to know each other, and to be able to share our common insights. We hope to be able to continue along similar lines on occasion in the future.

Laetitia van Hees
Secretary

TORONTO LODGE

In the fall season of deepening colours and falling leaves, the emphasis was on change and the establishment of a new pattern. For many cultures the harvest symbolises the ending of one cycle of growth and the commencement of a new, depicted in some of the cruder celebrations of sprinkling vivifying water on the burnt images of the old corn god.

Perhaps the most significant step in this direction in the Theosophical endeavours of the Toronto Lodge was the change of our public meeting programme from a Sunday to a Wednesday evening. Though traditionally held on Sundays since years receding in the dim past, the change was urged by those who felt the importance of growing to meet a new cycle. In keeping with the business life in the city and the increase in study courses offered during the week, a Wednesday would seem to be an evening more suitable to meet the availability of those who are seeking a deeper philosophy. Sunday bears generally a predisposition towards country outings or family gatherings.

Of Theosophical impact too is that some of our fellow Lodges in western Canada, and also ULT Lodges meet on the same evening. Perhaps the magnetic threads of sympathy drawn together in spirit and undivided by distance may be a growing mental force in realizing the aim of Theosophy.

The opening Wednesday, a special World Animal Day programme, almost suffered a setback when the speaker had to cancel due to illness. Our Vice-President, Stan Treloar, however, at literally a few hours' notice and in the midst of a full business day, agreed nobly to stand in, and the evening was well attended and appreciated.

A rather delightful introduction into our programme this fall has been to centre one of our seminar evenings, in the cyclic seven, around Dudley Barr's book *Theosophy: an Attitude toward Life*. Dudley Barr was a guiding light over years in the Canadian T.S. and especially so in Toronto Lodge, through personal contact and example. Our first evening was set to the theme of a favourite expression of his: "Love will find a way", and in challenging questions and profound ideas his suggestions were drawn out to found an attitude based on knowledge of a spiritual essentiality in our lives, and through the expression of it in living.

Another important part of our programme is that of classes. It is felt that this endeavour is where study and learning become of more permanence, and Theosophy is transmuted into a living practice, and the Ancient Wisdom is kept alive as a vital, guiding force in the Lodge. A class for newcomers has been underway since the commencement of the fall, and members are working with enthusiasm and in harmony, some already assisting in the physical work of the Lodge maintenance. Another serious group is starting, the participants of which have done some individual study of the teachings and wish to draw a stronger bond with the

Theosophical Society through practising compassion in the sharing of ideas.

The flower that opens its heart to the sun spreads its fragrance in the air, and gives of its beauty and force that others may be refreshed and enriched. In return it receives new life, pollination etc. that it may be of further service still.

These months are bringing several new enquiries, in person or by mail. Often through the reading of related metaphysical works or the company of an occultly inclined acquaintance, a person has come across mention of Theosophy, and wishes to explore further. One of the immediate roles of the Lodge, and indeed of members of the Lodge in their individual daily contacts, seems to be the encouraging and guiding of this dawning interest. It is a responsible task, for subtle indeed is the distinction between enlightening and influencing. Often our Lodge has seen a long afternoon of stimulating, philosophical discussion, steeped in probing questions, between our President and an ardent seeker; and our Lodge correspondence is rich in the exchange of thoughts concerning spiritual matters. In some cases such contacts have led to a deeper Theosophical involvement.

Toronto Lodge operates a Travelling Library for students living out of the town with no easy access to Theosophical literature. For anyone interested, a catalogue of our books will be sent on request.

—Joan Sutcliffe

VICTORIA LODGE

Victoria Lodge had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Iverson L. Harris on September 29, when an afternoon gathering of members and friends was held at the Secretary's home. Mr. Harris gave a talk on the significance of the Autumnal Equinox. Afterwards, he gave quite an extensive account of his life at Point Loma,

first under the direction of Mrs. Katherine Tingley, and later when he worked closely with Dr. de Purucker. Mrs. Harris has also been associated for a long time with Point Loma.

Mr. Harris's close association with the Theosophical Movement from childhood through a long and active life has given him a wisdom and understanding which touched us all very deeply.

Mrs. Dorothy Armstrong, President of Victoria Lodge, thanked both Mr. and Mrs. Harris on behalf of the Lodge for the pleasure of their visit and the opportunity to find out more about life at Point Loma and later at Covina.

D. Gilmour
Secretary

KROTONA

1978 WINTER PROGRAM

The Krotona Institute of Theosophy commences its 1978 Winter Program on January 9. The following courses are offered:

Man, God, and the Universe. Oliver Greene.

Raja-Yoga: Science of Self-Realization. Radha Burnier

The Secret Doctrine: Its Kabbalistic Aspects. Geoffrey Barboroka

The Mahatma Letters: Today's Encounter with the Wisdom of the Ages. Virginia Hanson.

C.J. Jung's Seven Sermons to the Dead. Stephan Hoeller

For further details, write: Krotona Institute, P.O. Box 966, Ojai, California 93023, U.S.A.

People are like circumstances. You cannot make them over. Accept them. The only way in which you can hope to influence them is by what you are.

—Fragments I - Cave.

KARMA

J. CAMPBELL VERPLANCK

The Law of Karma, or Action, is one of the chief teachings of oriental philosophy. It is stated to be a universal Law, having its root or basis in the outbreathing (action) and inbreathing (re-action) of the Brahm, the Great Breath or Unseen Mover, from whose motion in matter (substance) all things are evolved.

There is one thing which we may predicate of Action; that is, Reaction. This fact indicates the method of Karma. Karmic Law manifests on or in various planes of life, and differs with that plane wherein it acts. Newton expressed one mode of Karma upon the physical plane when he formulated his first law of Motion; viz. "Action and Reaction are equal and opposite in direction." Physiologists and psychologists tell us that this rule holds good in Emotion, and in nervous action and reaction also. The Western bible expresses Karma for the moral plane when it says: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. What ye have sown, that shall ye reap." This ethical causation, this moral reaction, this conservation and intercorrelation of mental, moral, and psychic energy, is also Karma.

We can imagine that, when a man does a selfish deed or thinks a selfish thought, it goes forth into the swift and subtle aetheric world as a specific vibration, colored, so to say, with his mental and moral coloring, bearing his stamp, as it were, in that vibratory ratio which is his own. We can fancy it issuing, a tireless energy, into that aether which powerfully responds to the tremor of a thought, and thus affecting, modern Science tells us, the far stars with its dynamic palpitation. On the confines of a system this energy must return, and it does thus react, naturally along the line of least resistance, to the sphere or base from which it emerged and which powerfully attracts it, bringing with

it all that it has gathered to itself in the course of that long journey, and taking effect in manifold ways upon the doer, the creator, to whom it has returned. Nor is this return always made in the same brief human life. Hence we have Reincarnation as the companion or extension of Karma. The soul is drawn back to earth life again and again by the return or re-awakening of its dormant energies, self-engendered and responsive to material planes of being. The one Substance, Akasa, Mulaprakriti, Aether — call it as you will — that from which all things are evolved, is, by virtue of its atomic constitution and magnetic laws, the great Agent of Karma. Through it, all things and beings, in it immersed and by it saturated, become the minor instruments of the Law.

Karma is, in fact, Action and Reaction, as we have said. All that is, has been, or will be done occurs by virtue of this Law of Cause and Effect; all Action is the result of previous Action. Its justice is perfect, its equilibrium unshaken. It provides that all things shall return to their source. Amid myriad tangential causes its delicate adjustments and readjustments are unerring, because every action has its due balance and effect.

Imagine the reverse of the case above stated, and conceive an unselfish man, acting only from a sense of duty, and in accord with the progressive tendency of evolutionary Law. As by its light he sees that mankind are one and inseparable, his acts will have no personal coloring. They create no specific self-condensed and contrary currents or discords in the aetheric medium, but pass out into the harmonious ocean of life about us, in waves as universal as its own. Bearing no personal impress, they have no cause to return to his sphere, which then pulsates

with the surrounding harmony and broadens into the eternal.

Some persons say that Karma is "cruel", because it "punishes those who do evil without knowing of this Karmic Law". But Karma does not punish. That is incorrect and slovenly speech. How can Action punish? Action reacts; that is all. A selfish action cannot react as a good one, any more than an apple seed can bring forth a fig tree. We must expect to receive back our action in kind. When the unconscious child puts its hand into the fire, we do not say fire is cruel because it burns the child. We recognise here the action of a Law of the physical plane. We respect it as such. But Karma is equally a Law of many planes, and cannot be bribed or bought off any more than fire can be so dissuaded. The burnt adult suffers more than the child, for his imagination enters into the matter. So he who knowingly does a selfish deed, defying Karma, suffers, in its reaction, upon moral and mental planes; whereas he who has done evil in ignorance of Karma, probably has only the lower forms of reaction to bear.

All action is Karma and causes new Karma. Deeds of men and of nations; social conditions; mental limitations, joy, sorrow, life, death, health, disease, rapture and pain; all are the effects of previous action, whether of individual men, of nations, or of races. We bear our part in national Karma, and suffer, as units of that nation, for deeds not committed by our individual selves. But Karma — our past actions — brought us into that place and nation, and to such consequences, while also in Devachan there is compensation for the individual for such trials as he has not merited in his single individual capacity.

We hear talk of "interfering with Karma", but this is absurd, impossible. If to one is awarded penance or suffering, to another it may be given to relieve that suffering. It may be your Karma to be menaced by dire consequences, and mine to avert those consequences. Suffering, too, is one means of the souls' expansion and

advance, so that it may be "good" Karma, while a place amid earthly ease and immunity from sorrow is often contractive and disastrous to the soul. More disastrous still is that repression of sympathy and help when chilled by the reasoning faculties, which forbid us to "suffer with all that lives". We cannot swerve Karmic Law. It may be retarded, but returns with compound interest.

The Law is divine. We do not make it. We only set in motion causes which this pre-existent Law of Action and Reaction returns to us as effects. We engender these causes, and, in regard to them, we exercise free will, at least until the innumerable causes, reacting, stultify that will.

In action alone is the registration of all deeds and thoughts; their impress upon the One Substance constitutes the true book of Judgment. Thus Karma is the only rightful Judge. It alone can fitly punish and reward, for in it alone is full discernment. As true Love consists in perfect Justice, *impartial to all alike*, so is this Law one of universal Love. It alone impels the soul, through experience of the misery of Self, to expansion into the Selfless and the Universal.

Yet there is one escape from Karma. That is, by Becoming it. Duty done for its own sake, regardless of results (for Duty alone is ours; the consequences are in the Great Brahm), acting or refraining from action because it is right to do so, we do thus, by our inward devotion, become one with that Law obeyed by us. No longer its unconscious instruments, we are its conscious agents, parts of itself, hearers and doers of its first great injunction.

"Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin". — *Voice of The Silence*.

—*The Path*,
April, 1891

Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed . . .

— Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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. Does *The Secret Doctrine* give the order in which the five senses were brought into use?

Answer. The order in which the five senses were brought into use coincides with the evolutionary development of the five Root-Races. Since the Human Kingdom is now pursuing the evolutionary development of the Fifth Root-Race, the sense that was brought into use is the sense

of Smell. Here is the order of the evolution of the five senses, in connection with the five Root-Races (the figures 1 - 5 represent Root-Races):

“The following order on parallel lines may be found in the evolution of the Elements and the Senses; or in Cosmic terrestrial ‘MAN’ or ‘Spirit,’ and mortal physical man:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|--|
| 1. Ether . . . | Hearing . . . | Sound. |
| 2. Air . . . | Touch . . . | Sound and Touch. |
| 3. Fire, or Light | Sight . . . | Sound, Touch and Colour. |
| 4. Water . . . | Taste . . . | Sound, Touch, Colour and Taste. |
| 5. Earth . . . | Smell . . . | Sound, Touch, Colour, Taste and Smell. |

“As seen, each Element adds to its own characteristics, those of its predecessor; as each Root-Race adds the characterizing sense of the preceding Race. The same is true in the *septenary* creation of man, who evolves gradually in seven stages, and on the same principles.” (S.D. II, 107-8; III, 116 6-vol. ed.; II, 113 3rd. ed.)

Associated with the Element-Principle above enumerated are the Tanmatras — the originant element of the Element-Principles listed as:

- Shabda - Sound
- Sparsha - Touch
- Rupa - Sight
- Rasa - Taste
- Gandha - Smell

Question. Did *The Secret Doctrine* make any reference to the sixth sense?

Answer. In writing in connection with the fifth Element-Principle, Ether (or Akasa), mention was indeed made to the sixth sense. To quote:

“It will only be in the next or fifth, Round that the fifth Element, *Ether* — the gross body of Akasa, if it can be called even that — will, by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, cease to be as at present hypothetical, and also an ‘agent’ for so many things. And only during that Round will those higher senses, the growth and development of which Akasa subserves, be susceptible of a complete expansion. As already indicated, a *partial* familiarity with the characteristic of matter — permeability — which should be developed concurrently with the sixth sense, may be expected to develop at the proper

period in this Round." (S.D. I, 257-8; I, 301-2 6-vol. ed.; I, I, 278 3rd ed.)

This will take place during the sixth developmental stage, in connection with the intellectual-spiritual aspect, when that will come into activity as the evolution of the Sixth Root-Race progresses. This future development is often referred to as the "sixth sense" in man — a sense which will actually become normal and function in future cycles. This sense will be akin to what is now known as clairvoyance.

"The faculties, or what is perhaps the best available term, the characteristics of matter, must clearly bear a direct relation always to the senses of man. Matter has extension, colour, motion (molecular motion), taste and smell, corresponding to the existing senses of man, and by the time that it fully develops the next characteristic — let us call it for the moment PERMEABILITY — this will correspond to the next sense of man — let us call it 'NORMAL CLAIRVOYANCE.'" (S.D. I, 251; I, 296 6-vol. ed.; I, 272 3rd ed.)

The full use of the sixth sense will occur when Manas, the fifth principle, can be consciously merged with the sixth sense. The conscious merging of Manas with the sixth sense may be described as the ability to use Jnanashakti. This power is explained to be:

"JNANASAKTI. . . The power of intellect, of real Wisdom or Knowledge. It has two aspects:

"The following are *some* of its manifestations when placed under the influence or control of material conditions. (a) The power of the mind in interpreting our sensations. (b) Its power in recalling past ideas (memory) and raising future expectation. (c) Its power as exhibited in what are called by modern psychologists 'the laws of association,' which enables it to form *persisting* connections

between various groups of sensations and possibilities of sensations, and thus generate the notion or idea of an external object.

(d) Its power in connecting our ideas together by the mysterious link of memory, and thus generating the notion of self or individuality, *some* of its manifestations when liberated from the bonds of matter are — (a) Clairvoyance, (b) Psychometry." (S.D. I, 292-3; I, 333 6-vol. ed. I, 312 3rd ed.)

Unquestionably this will be one of the uses of Manas, the Mind-principle, during the Fifth Round. As to clairvoyance freed "from the bonds of matter," this is described as:

"Real clairvoyance means the faculty of seeing through the densest matter (the latter disappearing at the will and before the spiritual eye of the Seer), and irrespective of time (past, present and future) or distance." (*The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 85)

This describes the use of the Eye of Dangma:

"Alone the Initiate, rich with the lore acquired by numberless generations of his predecessors, directs the 'Eye of Dangma' toward the essence of things in which no Maya can have any influence. It is here that the teachings of esoteric philosophy in relation to the Nidanas and the Four Truths become of the greatest importance, but they are secret." (S.D.I, 45; I, 117-18 6-vol. ed.; I, 77 3rd ed.)

Strange as the statement may appear, nevertheless, at one time the human race possessed the ability of using the Eye of Dangma, and likewise had the power of employing clairvoyant faculties; but it was an unconscious use of the Eye of Dangma. In the Sixth Race it will be used consciously.

"Our present normal physical senses were (from our present

point of view) abnormal in those days (of the Second Root-Race) of slow and progressive downward evolution and fall into matter. And there was a day when all that which in our modern times is regarded as phenomena, so puzzling to the physiologists now compelled to believe in them — such as thought transference, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; in short, all that which is called now 'wonderful and abnormal' — all that and much more belonged to the senses and faculties common to all humanity.

We are, however, cycling back and cycling forward; i.e., having lost in spirituality that which we acquired in physical development until almost the end of the Fourth Race, we (mankind) are as gradually and imperceptibly losing now in the physical all that we regain once more in the spiritual *re*-evolution. This process must go on until the period which will bring the Sixth Root-Race on a parallel line with the spirituality of the Second, long extinct mankind." (S.D. I, 536-7; ii, 260-1 6-vol. ed.; I, 585-6 3rd ed.)

BRAIN, MIND, SPIRIT

Some thoughts on *Second Thoughts* by Wilder Penfield

Some thoughts on *Second Thoughts* by Wilder Penfield

The late Dr. Wilder Penfield was a Rhodes Scholar and a graduate of John Hopkins University. He was the Founder and a Director of the Montreal Neurological Institute, President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and of the American Neurological Association. He was one of the founders and first Director of the Vanier Institute of the Family. He was internationally renowned as a scholar, writer and speaker; and received the first Royal Bank of Canada Award for distinguished service to Canada and to mankind.

Second Thoughts is a book of essays, written in 1970 after his retirement. It is sub-titled "Science, the Arts and the Spirit". In it, Dr. Penfield sought to point out what Science can do, and what it cannot do, for man in "this time of religious and philosophical re-interpretation."

The volume contains twenty chapters, some of which give brief glimpses of his work with "conscious" patients; some are biographical, and the last two are a plea for Canadian unity, the preservation of the University and the Family of Man.

Dr. Penfield was an ardent bilingualist. It was his belief that a child programs his brain at a very early age, so that the learning of a second language in the infant years not only improves the brain, but affords the adult a greater facility in the later acquirement of additional languages.

The underlying theme in *Second Thoughts* is the unsolved mystery "of the relationship of the brain to the mind, the body of man to his spirit." The author refers again and again to what he calls the two great dichotomies: "That between the Arts and the Sciences, and that between the body and the mind."

Science Dr. Penfield defined as knowledge of physical phenomena, and the Arts as all other forms of human knowledge. Spirit he identified as the mind of man. "Whatever the mind is," he wrote, "it is not like the phenomena with which Science deals. It is a frontier to be studied beyond the field of Science — on the other side of the great dichotomy."

Again: "In all our studies of the brain, no mechanism has been discovered that can force the mind to think, or the individual to believe, anything. The mind continues free.

This is a statement I have long considered. I have made every effort to disprove it, without success. The mind, I must conclude, is something more than a mechanism. It is, in a certain sense, above and beyond the brain, although it seems to depend upon brain action for its very existence. Yet it is free . . . The mind controls the brain, at least at times and in part, although how a command is translated into neurone potentials remains a mystery."

In an article which was first published in *Lucifer* in October, 1896, some five years after her death, H.P. Blavatsky wrote she had been unable to find ". . . scientific corroboration as to the question of spirit, and spirit alone (in its septenary aspect) being the cause of consciousness and thought, as taught in esoteric philosophy." ("Psychology, The Science of the Soul", reprinted in *Theosophical Psychology*, Articles by H.P. Blavatsky, published by The Theosophy Company.)

Although Dr. Penfield and his colleagues proved to their own satisfaction that "The Spirit is the man one knows. It looks out through a man's eyes, hears through his ears and speaks with his mouth," there seems to have been no intuition as to the nature of Spirit in its septenary aspect, of the ONE which is all and within all. The reader is left with the impression of a very disjointed Universe, of a distant God, of spirit as a mysterious but loosely focussed force, and of the human body as computer or robot.

Theosophy presents a very different picture. Very briefly put, it teaches:

1. That there is "An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable PRINCIPLE . . . one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being . . . the rootless root of 'all that was, is, or ever shall be.' " It is THAT.
2. The "absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow . . ."
3. The "fundamental identity of all Souls

with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation (or 'Necessity') in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term."

—From The Proem to *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I.

"At the dawn of a new Cycle of Manifestation, from within the One Principle or Element, ATMA, there arises *Buddhi*, the state of pure waking, spiritually and intellectually — the Universal Soul. From *Atma-Buddhi* is unfolded or emanated the Manasic Principle, *Manas*, or Mind. This is the highest principle of intellect which discerns and judges. The Manasic Principle is the centre of the Higher Human Ego, the Individuality. It is part of the essence of the Universal Mind.

"To manifest on the physical plane the Higher Ego reflects and unfolds from within itself the four vehicles which comprise the lower, transient and personal self. The first vehicle is the Principle of *Kama* — desire. *Kama* in turn emanates from itself the vital part of us — the *Vitality*, which is the sustaining, radiating force of ATMA, the ONE LIFE which is all and within all. This *Vitality* (*Prana*) in turn emanates the Astral Body, which is the design body for the Physical Body which it informs cell for cell."

G.de Purucker, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 344

Madame Blavatsky taught that every cell and every organ in the human body has a consciousness and a memory of its own. Each has a keyboard which registers and emits sensations, and is capable of responding both to a physical and a metaphysical touch, producing either harmony or disharmony.

"The 'Higher Ego' cannot operate directly on the physical body because its consciousness belongs to higher planes of ideation . . ." It must work through the lower self, but it is ever present as the

“still, small voice of conscience.” It is the function of the lower self to operate on the physical organs and their cells: “. . .and its action and behaviour depend on its free will and choice as to whether it will gravitate more towards its parent (‘the Father in Heaven’) or the ‘animal’ which it informs, the man of flesh.” (H.P. Blavatsky, “Psychic and Noetic Action”, also reprinted in *Theosophical Psychology*)

Occultism teaches that the liver and spleen cells are the most influenced by the action of the lower mind. The heart is the organ through which the Higher Ego acts through the Lower Self.

William Quan Judge called Theosophy the Science of Ethics: “In this science, spirit and nature, or the pure and the true, or ethics and the law, are one and the same thing. The inner man may be looked upon as a congerie of powers. Every power is ‘the opener of the Door’ to the plane from which it springs in nature. A power of the lower astral, or psycho-physiological, plane opens the door to that plane alone. It does so partly through action and interaction in the cells and molecules of the body. It acts upon its corresponding principle in every cell.” (*Letters That Have Helped Me.*)

In H.P.B.’s *Theosophical Glossary* (or. ed. 1892), there appears under “Theosophia” the following sentence: “In its practical bearing, Theosophia is purely divine ethics.”

Madame Blavatsky also declared that the human body “. . .is the temple of the Holy Grail, the *Adytum* of the grandest, nay, of all, the mysteries of nature in our solar universe.” (“Psychic and Noetic Action”).
—Jenno

The brain is only the focus through which the forces and thoughts are centralised that are continually coming in through the solar plexus of the heart. Many such thoughts are lost, just as millions of seeds in nature are lost. It behoves us to study them and to guard them when there.

— W. Q. Judge

more details see *Luc.* VII-382, though there is a printer’s error in the first line, as the year must have been 1886 instead of 1885. In this *Lucifer* article she writes about H.P.B.: “I never met her . . .” This statement and that referring to the S.P.R. pamphlet induces me to identify Jasper Niemand with R.S., the author of a letter to Countess Wachtmeister and which was reproduced on page 121 of “Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky and ‘The Secret Doctrine’ ” by the Countess Constance Wachtmeister. R.S. also writes: “Living some thousand of miles from England, I never met Madame Blavatsky in person. It is now seven years since first I heard her name and the word ‘Theosophy’ . . .by coming across the S.P.R. pamphlet . . .” (p. 121). And again: “. . .Thus I was enabled to prove that I really hear her (H.P.B.’s) wish overseas . . .” (p. 124) showing that R.S. lived in the U.S.A. Other internal evidences are supplied by R.S.’ letter, leaving no doubt of the latter’s identity with Jasper Niemand. From this letter it appears that she was taught astrally by H.P.B., visiting the latter during sleep in her home in England, and that she soon learned to use her astral senses at will: “After a short time, I was able to see and to hear at will, without training or effort, as simply and as easily as one breathes. I could see a distant place or person or hear a reply to a question at will . . . But I never did any of these things for idle curiosity, but only for the work of Theosophy . . .” (p.125).

About her articles Mrs. Keightley writes: “When I began to write articles along these lines, H.P.B. sent me a pen which I always used. The articles were and are always written in full objective consciousness, but at these times there is a feeling of inspiration, of greater mental freedom. The *Letters That Have Helped Me* were received at my Pennsylvania home. They

were written for me and for Dr. Keightley — and for the use of others later on — by Mr. W.Q. Judge, at the express wish of H.P. Blavatsky” (*The Path*, IX - 15-16). The above mentioned letters to JN started in 1886, as stated by her and her husband in a letter to the Editor of *The Irish Theosophist* dated Jane. 13th, 1895 (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, 1946 edition, p. 271).

— Willem B. Roos

BOOK REVIEWS

Sanskrit Essentials of Grammar and Language by Dr. Kurt F. Leidecker. Published by The Adyar Library and Research Centre, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras, 600 020, India. 1976 (1st. ed. 1934). 133 pp. Price rupees 15.

In his search for wisdom through the philosophical teachings of Theosophy the student encounters many Sanskrit terms, which at first prove quite puzzling to him. However, familiarity leads him to the awareness of a subtlety of meaning beyond the power of translation. The Sanskrit language has been the outer embodiment of the spiritual teachings passed down from Master to pupil through countless centuries, and imbedded into the sound and script is a mystery revelation available through the intuition. Therefore, the use of certain metaphysical Sanskrit expressions has been retained in Theosophy, and consequently Theosophists often feel the need to become a little better acquainted with the language.

This book by Dr. Leidecker stands as an introduction in general to Sanskrit. By no means is it intended as an exhaustive grammar, in anticipation of leading the student to become proficient in speaking the language, but rather as key to an understanding of the development of word meanings. It is reasonably complete in that most aspects of language are touched upon, though in several cases it is felt that the explanations are too brief.

After a preliminary investigation in etymology, and a beautiful outlay of the devanagari symbols, an important section lists almost up to three hundred Sanskrit roots. These are the primal base of a word, and convey the initial idea, and though there are some two thousand of such roots, those listed are among the most commonly used. The particular mode of teaching attempted here is that of demonstrating the recognition of the underlying root of a word and its basic idea, and building up the meaning therefrom.

In succeeding chapters Dr. Leidecker elaborates on various changes and augmentations which occur to the root, such as the strengthening of vowels, modifications which must be made for euphonic purposes, and verbal additives in order to form a stem suitable to take the inflected endings. Similarly mentioned are rules of formation for nominal and adjectival stems, the suffixes patterned according to the particular function in relationship to the idea expressed in the root. For example: “kr” a root meaning “do”, with the vowel strengthened becomes “kar”, plus the ending denoting an agentive noun becomes “kartr” translated as one who performs an action. Among such changes we are also given a substantial list of prepositional prefixes which add a sense of direction to the primary idea. A good example is from the root “sad” meaning “sit”; with the prefixed of “upa” (suggesting “near”) and “ni” (suggesting “down”) we have the word “upanisad”, which is usually translated as the knowledge one is taught who sits down near the feet of his teacher.

Sanskrit is a highly inflected language with a rich verbal system, and this book introduces, though of necessity only cursorily, all verbal formations, through mood, tense, voice participles etc. This is extremely helpful, as also is the excellent coverage given to the nominal declension system, where examples of every class of noun are rendered in detail. From this and from the last chapter, which

includes short, selected passages for translation in devanagari from the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanisads, one becomes sensitive to the beauty and orderliness of the Sanskrit language. Sentences which are awkwardly complex in English are seen as smooth, flowing words, perfect in conveying grammatical sense and mystically deep in conception.

Joan Sutcliffe

* * *

Experiencing Reincarnation, by James S. Perkins. A Quest Book, published 1977 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. x+ 192 pp. Price \$3.95.

Western students of Theosophy in earlier generations were used to being a very small minority in regard to the question of "believing in" reincarnation. The past twenty years have seen the proportions alter appreciably: today, this concept is accepted by an increasingly larger number of people.

The range of understanding the nature and purpose of reincarnation varies, however, from the sublime to the jocular. Serious study of this subject remains largely within the Theosophical Movement, and even there it is not consistent. But it is an important study for mankind, and it is a perennial problem how to present the deeper aspects to a wider public. "Popular" treatments often do more harm than good. *Experiencing Reincarnation* must be labelled "popular", and it is to be hoped that it will be beneficial. If it but awakens the interest of its readers in the real nature of man, and what it is that reincarnates, its publishing will have been well worth while.

Experiencing Reincarnation is an account of a personal understanding of the cyclic evolution of the human soul. It is told in simple language and with sufficient commentary on such essential related concepts as karma and the human principles. As a whole, this book does put the

whole question in some sort of perspective, which is more than can be said for the vast majority of books of this type.

The incidents in Mr. Perkins' life in which the veil of immortality was lifted for him, and spurred his interest in the doctrine of reincarnation are related frankly, and in an interesting manner. After all, the concept of spiritual evolution has to be experienced intuitively, else the intellectual study of it is of doubtful usefulness; and the author's personal moments of awakening can be shared to the advantage of others.

From a Theosophical viewpoint, not all students will agree with the way Mr. Perkins explains the doctrine. At one point he complains of "contradictory versions" of reincarnation found in Theosophy. Contradictions, however, are no problem if one adheres to the original teachings. Nevertheless, I am sure all will agree with him that "one must arrive at one's own understanding of these matters".

— Ted G. Davy

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