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HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

August 11, 1831 - May 8, 1891

WHITE LOTUS DAY

The following is from a White Lotus Day lecture by the late Roy Mitchell. It was published in the C.T., May, 1952 issue, and the Editor observed that it had been sent in by a member who had made extensive notes of this talk. Later, it formed part of the Blavatsky Institute publication, Theosophic Study. — Eds.

Whenever we find a Theosophical Society, throughout the centuries — and there has been some such movement in the last quarter of each century — we find certain requirements in connection therewith: to put together the bibles of the world and find out what was common to all of them, and to find out the extent to which one bible would explain another, to make enquiry into so-called supernatural phenomena, and, added to these another requirement, a requirement of great importance; the so-called brotherhood. The Theosophical Society of our day was established on that primary basis, that it should be made to form a nucleus for the universal brotherhood of mankind.

People are inclined to say “this is another of the many isms”, but it possesses this distinct difference; it does not endeavour to be a separate cult but endeavours to be a synthesis of all of the so-called new religions, and endeavours to tie them up to the religions of the past. In this tremendous work, it naturally faces tremendous difficulties, and the diffusion of effort arising out of the work of the Theosophical Society has resulted in a great many divergences and in spreading a great many ideas and sending out a great many students for who it could have no credit. In considering the Society today, you have to consider the things it has achieved, and those who have worked with it at various times. It becomes the most potent influence of our era. Those things arising out of the Society and running collateral with it, and deriving help and benefit from it, have become so widespread that you will find wherever you go a new point of view about life. All the

great liberalizing movements in the various countries have grown from those who have had some link with Theosophy at some time. When you find these people all have something in common, the source of supply is either the present Theosophical movement or one of the many Theosophical societies or groups that have been formed back through the centuries; the establishing of a nucleus for the brotherhood of mankind always the centre.

The trouble with mankind is that it has been living in little valleys surrounded by high hills, and the people of each valley hold to their own belief and say it is the only true faith. We find for instance one group saying that a child is newly created of God, perhaps in health, perhaps in sickness, perhaps in adversity and perhaps in wealth, and he goes on all through life, required to make certain achievements in it, always with a terrible disparity between opportunities. Is it worthy of God that this should be the case? Is it worthy of the God who is the author of this universe that these doctrines should be true? Let us put all the beliefs of all the valleys together side by side and see what all of them have to say.

There are certain things that man knows in his own soul, certain fundamental ideas. It is fundamental that whatever teaching there may be about life, about man's origin and his destiny, must be available equally to all men. There must have been always a revelation of that sort. If it could occur once, it could occur again. Everything issues from a divine centre and no centre of life can ignore any other centre of life. The great fundamental truth which has always been believed by the greatest among mankind and upheld at the cost of

suffering, always has been, first, that there is a fundamental brotherhood between the individuals of the human race, between the human race and the animals, between the animals, the trees and the rocks, and that every atom of manifested life in the universe is indissolubly tied within some central Being. This is not a poetical fiction but a fundamental fact manifested in all the sciences. Whosoever hurts a thing outside himself, as he thinks, inevitably wounds himself. All revelation has been equally for all mankind, and this broken jagged thing we call physical life is eternal, and made up of many physical lives. We come again and again to this earth, return here to the place where causes were set up. What you see broken, unfair, unjust, is really the carrying over from a previous set of actions. Whatever is unrewarded must achieve its reward in another set of conditions on this earth. This life goes on through the human race and goes on to illimitable ranges after that; nothing less would be sufficient for the glory of God. All justice is exactly equal and even. Whatever you do now you can expect inevitably to meet and pay for. Mankind represents a vast stretch of evolution. The pathway from the lowest savage up to the Christ occupies an immense period in time and evolution. There are those who have gone through the stages through which we have gone, and have emerged, have attained to a sufficient understanding of mankind that they can turn and teach; and that is the eternal law of the universe, that each one does it for some other. But away on beyond us, are those who have, as we say, liberated themselves.

There is a more observable phenomenon, where an individual suddenly transcends the mental consciousness and steps into something higher than that. It is a state of increased vision, such a vision as came to Buddha, to Jesus, to Walt Whitman, to Plato; and Dr. Bucke in his book *Cosmic Consciousness* gives numerous instances of a lesser degree of the same thing. It is a

state of direct cognition; the actual union of all created things is known; an acquirement of the understanding of all the things of the earth. There is sufficient indication, I think, to every thinking person, that there is a world just beyond the world in which we live; not a world to which the dead go, but a state of consciousness, a realm of being below which we stand, and which possesses as much greater powers than the powers of mind as mind possesses over the powers of emotion; and the operation of consciousness in that realm would be to ours as ours would be to a dog. You know how a trained dog struggles just on the verge of understanding of human thought.

The great thing about that world is the sudden realization of this essential fact that all mankind is indissolubly linked together. When you have done an evil or a harsh thing to another, you have set up a barrier between that person and yourself which closes off the life that is poured down into you. The tie that links us up is in another world and one excludes himself therefrom by blocking the channel through which he receives that current or that life which is the common life of all mankind. Having hated or excluded someone, having refused to perform the brotherly thing, you have inserted a plug which breaks the current. The ordinary run of mankind do not feel these things, but we come to a place where the doing of something which is not as it should be, blocks certain warm currents in your body. You often see the results in indigestion and headache. You have cut yourself off from a central source of supply by that act. The fact of resenting this or that, of disliking, has actually impaired your own life currents.

If you go into these enquiries without that fundamental recognition that you do this work in service to the rest of mankind, you are going to hurt yourself. You will find ideas which will render you very powerful, will give you possession of knowledge, a system for the understanding of the things of the world, which will give you immense

advantages, a research which will carry you into dangerous slippery places, and if you go into one or the other of these places without this safety which is the knowledge of one's absolute responsibility to everyone about him, the knowledge that one is choked or cut off by an unbrotherly thing, you are walking to your certain disaster. When you hear an occultist talk about brotherhood, no matter how badly he may fall down on his doctrine, you may know he is not talking about a poetic thing, nor about passing around the hat for somebody, he is talking about a fundamental force which is as wonderful as it is terrible. By no possible strain of effort can you escape the human race.

By no effort can any individual in mankind do more than by going on learning more, finding out more, achieving greater responsibility for mankind around about him, all he does is lift himself higher in the chain of teachers that runs like a great series of golden threads down through the universe.

Madame Blavatsky requested that there be a day in each year set aside to recall the Society itself, to think that out of the grossness, out of the chaos of things dark,

in due season grew a very precious flower, something which gave birth to a new movement. May 8th is called White Lotus Day after the East Indian lotus symbol of the flower of perfection, which grows from the waters and the grossness of life. Let us once in the year, see what this Society is about, what it has done and can do. It has been the builder of a far greater pattern than any one person in it knows anything about. It may not be making a great noise, it may not be doing the things that we look at as so important in life, but it is actually by its very preoccupation with ideas, by the people whom it sends out, it is forming a nucleus for the universal brotherhood of mankind. It does actually set something alight on inner planes, and these contacts are the most priceless things in life. Curious initiations go on all the time among such people.

Simply to talk about these things, — the talk spreads from one to another, and it goes out, and disciples who had forgotten their teachers, and teachers who had almost forgotten their disciples remember, and old links are re-established, and we make the world anew.

Her aim was to elevate the race. Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to "the great orphan Humanity," could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom; to found a Society whose efforts — however small itself might be — would inject into the thought of the day, the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom Religion.

- William Q. Judge

THE OTHER SIDE

A. TYRO

The Teaching of Theosophy brings to our attention that the goal towards which Life is ever becoming must find the field for its accomplishment here in our earthly existence, and not in some less earthly realm as some scriptural interpreters would have us believe. From the Teaching we also gather that the fulfilment of Life's purpose follows from the manner in which we direct our lives, here and now, while consciously in control of them. This puts the responsibility for what we are and what we shall eventually become fully and squarely where it belongs. The insidious teaching that man can escape from the effects of his discordant acts by vows of contrition have no place where the Laws of Life are intelligently interpreted.

That we have within our makeup a guiding principle is marked by the fact that we are intelligent beings, or, more truthfully, perhaps, we possess the capability of being intelligent. What does intelligence imply? Surely to see truly without distortions, which in turn implies the ability to respond to the events of life free from personal bias or predilections.

If we think about it, we will realize that in the main, our reactions to the events of life are primarily motivated by concern for our own welfare. While from one side of our nature this may seem a perfectly reasonable reaction, viewed from that "Other" side, which is more interested in the truth of things, such a self-centred attitude to the phenomena of life must place a severe limitation on our perceptions.

So, as we turn to contemplate our lives, it seems that man is impelled more to satisfy his physical and emotional needs than attending to the call of the "Other" side of his nature, that is to say to those things that make him truly Human. To live effectively, he must come to know all those elements established by his desires and which find expression in his inhibitions and compulsions. In addition, he must realize that it is those elements which capture and imprison his intelligence, thus obscuring his ability to see life in the light of Truth.

Awakening, perhaps through some spark of revelation, he becomes conscious of that "Other" side, and realizes his Self-imprisonment. Then it can be understood that no matter how unrelated the different aspects of a personality may seem, they are all part of the One Life. Thus are we brought to face the fact that nothing which occurs in life is unrelated or without purpose.

The fact that we are moved to give expression to that finer part of our nature despite that so much human energy is spent subjugating it, encourages us to believe that life has a discoverable meaning and purpose. This belief is strengthened and becomes more self-evident as we transfer our allegiance to that subtler element and endeavour to master our self concern.

The truth of this ever awaits our decision to take the step in that direction. But we must be reminded that nature does not yield up her powers just for the asking. Before making any attempt we must be assured within ourselves that we are prepared to make sacrifices of those things we have become accustomed to in our personal lives which tend to keep us bound and sustain our separateness. No one is expected to do more than lies within his power to achieve. What is important in this context is the dedication to that "Other" side of our nature.

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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The yielding up of things that tend to keep us bound and egotistical can only come about as we try to dedicate our lives to less personal pursuits. As soon as we begin to release ourselves from the habits and tendencies of our self-centred nature, a whole new world opens up for us. As our self-interest declines we are freed to embrace a wider and more universal concept of life. However, we must ever be reminded that the task of resolving the elements we have established within us from our past is the essence of the regenerative process. In this we have to learn that control is gained more by understanding the cause of our errors and shortcomings than by renouncing them. Only thus can they be brought to a point of balance at the level of intelligence.

To see ourselves as we really are is the true path to freedom. As long as we delude ourselves that we are other than what we really are, in order to enhance our self-esteem, we are not on that path. But we are sure to be finally disillusioned — perhaps with disastrous results. Our weakness in this respect is indicative of our insecurity.

Momentary as these glimpses of real Self may be, it is from the accumulation of such enlightened experiences that our powers grow. Then, through understanding, we develop the strength and courage to evoke the deeper layers of our self-esteem — fear, and other separative elements which seldom come to the surface. Until resolved, they ever tend to influence our decisions.

To perceive the workings of these deep laid influences in our egocentric nature, like those, for example, which cause us to follow after false gods — often with the best of intentions — we have to go to the “Other” side of our nature. The answers are there. It is our attachment to the separative elements in us that prevent us from tearing aside the veils of obscurity which eventually we have to overcome.

To master these seductive elements, we must establish within ourselves a centre in that “Other” side which has, “when the chips are down”, a greater meaning for us

than all the glamour of earthly attractions. It is through the establishment and devotion to that higher centre of consciousness that the Light of our Higher Self can illuminate our lives.

It is hoped that the foregoing will help bring home the importance of the implications of the opening statement. Our life on earth has a Divine purpose. Only here in this earthly realm can the effects of the causes invoked by our desire nature be brought back to us in a manner whereby we can learn from them, and induce our higher powers to master them. It is in bringing together in harmonious relationship the two sides of our nature that we begin to fulfil our Divine purpose.

THEOSOPHICAL CAMPS

The Theosophical Society in America has published a brochure which describes the four camps which form part of the activities of the American Section. Readers interested in receiving information on these camps should write as follows:

Camp Manager
Camp Indralaya
Route 1, Box 86
Eastsound, WA 98245

Pumpkin Hollow Farm
RRD No. 1, Box 135
Craryville, New York 12521

Far Horizons Camp Director
Box WW
Kings Canyon National Park
CA 93633

Mrs. Ruth Mathews
Camp Registrar
Ozark Theosophical Camp
128 Circle Drive
Wichita, KS 67218

A SPIRITUAL MASTERPIECE

GARY DOORE

The following article is taken from the preface to Mr. Doore's verse recension of The Voice of the Silence.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, H.P. Blavatsky presented the western world with a spiritual masterpiece which, despite its merits, seems to be still little-known outside of a relatively small circle of Theosophists and a few other genuine seekers who have recognized its worth. This comparative obscurity is unfortunate, however, for in this short, aphoristic and often cryptic "handbook" of Buddhist mysticism we are given one of the few works in English dealing with the recondite subject of "Nada" or "Sound-Current" *yoga* (Fragment I), probably one of the least understood of all yogic practices, and said by many Indian followers of its methods to be the highest, most direct form of spiritual culture known, but which is usually imparted directly from *guru* to disciple, and therefore, not often written about or even mentioned in works intended for the general public.

In addition, however, while Fragment I elaborates points only briefly touched upon in manuals such as Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* (and hence, is of greater value to a western student lacking a personal teacher to supply the details of condensed aphorisms, as Patanjali intended his work to be supplemented), it also presents *yoga* from the distinctively altruistic standpoint of Mahayana Buddhism, primarily in Fragments II and III. Therefore, it is a work that can be appreciated not only as a "theosophical" classic, but also from a purely yogic and Buddhistic standpoint.

It is one of the unfortunate consequences of the modern state of mind that *yoga* is often presented in a way calculated to appeal to the selfish and merely personal instincts. For instance, we hear much about "self-realization" with little explanation of the intended meaning of

"self" in the term, thus leaving it to the imagination or usual conception of "personality", implying a sort of ultimate ego-building exercise; and also much talk of the bliss obtainable for oneself by certain yogic methods, or again, about the "escape from suffering," etc.

The goal of "liberation" (*moksa*) in Indian thought, outside Northern or Mahayana Buddhism has often (although not always) tended to be conceived as a merely personal "escape" from continued rebirth into the unsatisfactory condition of earthly existence — a goal toward which the various "systems" (*Yoga*, *Vedanta*, etc.), bend all their energies. In the Northern schools of Buddhism, however, the emphasis upon personal salvation through *yoga* is shifted to a high altruistic plane where the "Bodhisattva ideal" becomes the central concern; that is, the conception of an illumined *yogin* who chooses to remain in the world even after his own enlightenment (which would enable him to leave earthly existence and its miseries entirely — i.e., not be reborn — if he so desired), in order to work for the spiritual liberation of all unenlightened beings, putting aside his own *nirvana* and its blissful rest by a compassionate act of self-sacrifice to be voluntarily reborn as a spiritual guide and teacher to others.

It is still recognized in these schools, of course, that one must have practiced and succeeded in a spiritual culture such as *yoga* in order to be effective in such a capacity; yet it is never claimed that "one must help oneself first *before* he can help others" as often stated by proponents of traditional Indian *yogas*, since it is realized that this "putting oneself first" is a fundamentally *unspiritual* attitude, and is, in fact, the first obstacle to be overcome

before even setting foot upon the Path — a ready excuse for indefinitely delaying the attempt at such service. For it always appears from this standpoint, that the “final goal” which must be reached before one is “qualified” in spiritual matters lies somewhere in the distant future. The Mahayana, on the other hand, proclaims that the very thought itself of compassionate concern for the welfare of one’s fellow-beings is the *essence* of true spirituality; and that the *bodhisattva’s* “enlightened attitude” (*bodhicitta*) is not only the necessary prerequisite for beginning to tread the Path, but is, in fact, the very heart and goal of the Path itself. Hence, as students of the Buddha’s Doctrine are instructed in Tibetan schools, “If you have understood the teaching of *bodhicitta* you have understood everything,” and thus, *The Voice of the Silence* counsels, “Thou canst not travel on the Path before Thou hast become that Path itself.”

Therefore, since Buddhist *yoga* subordinates the ideal of personal liberation by yogic methods to what is regarded as the higher ideal of the *bodhisattva’s* renunciation of his own absolute and final liberation, we find in *The Voice of the Silence* a harmonious blend of practical yogic instruction, together with the noble altruism of the Northern schools of Buddhism, which advise that even at the beginning of spiritual practice one should endeavour to fulfill the *bodhisattva* vows, even if very imperfectly at first. Hence, this work represents not only a unique contribution to the eastern philosophical literature available in English, but is also an excellent introduction to both *yoga* and Mahayana Buddhist thought for those new to the subjects. In addition, it will serve as a source of daily guidance and inspiration to those already familiar with the teachings and endeavoring to put them into practice in their lives.

It might be objected by some, however, that the yogic-Buddhistic synthesis of *The Voice of the Silence* is misguided. “How,” it

might be asked, “can a transcendental Self of the type of ultimate Spiritual Reality affirmed by Yoga philosophy, be reconciled with the Buddhist doctrine of ‘no-self’ (*anatman*)? After all, did not the Buddha deny a Self of the kind referred to in Yoga philosophy and spoken of by *yogins* as that which is revealed during meditative states of consciousness (*samadhi*)?”

It is true, of course, that the Buddha’s attitude was “empiricist” as opposed to the openly speculative and metaphysical approach of Yoga, in that the Buddha concentrated attention on phenomenal existence and called for an exhaustive analysis of all its aspects. This was in order to realize, first of all, its inherently unsatisfactory character, and second, that in none of the components of the flux of psychomental existence and nowhere among the “five *skandhas*” (the “aggregates” which compose the human personality and seem to constitute an “ego” or “I-ness”) is there any sort of “permanent Entity” of the sort described in Yoga to be found. But, as Edward Conze has pointed out, we should note that:

“the absence of a self is confined to the five *skandhas*, and that nothing is said either way about its existence or non-existence quite apart from them. The Buddha never taught that the self ‘is not,’ but only that ‘it cannot be apprehended.’ ”
(*Buddhist Thought in India*, p. 39.)

If the self cannot be “apprehended” — that is, *conceptualized*, which is our normal mode of “apprehending” empirical facts — then it is obviously idle to attempt to speak of it. Hence, the Buddha often maintained silence when asked metaphysical questions about a transcendental Self, beyond phenomenal experience, and pointed again and again to the empirical world in order to remind his listeners of the pressing “existential” nature of the problem at hand (i.e., the very real, as opposed to a merely theoretical suffering occasioned by ignorance of the true character of conditioned existence in the world), thus

not allowing an easy escape from its solution by withdrawal into a temporarily comfortable but purely speculative "fool's paradise." But from the Buddha's silence or from the "empirical" emphasis of the utterances which were recorded, it should not be thought that Buddhism is incompatible with the recognition of a transcendental aspect of reality — even if this is left theoretically undeveloped. For, since the Buddha claimed to have mastered *yoga* before attaining final, perfect enlightenment, he was undoubtedly well aware of the condition cited by Patanjali as the definition of *yoga*, "the inhibition of the modification of the mind." This is said to be a transempirical, *transconceptual* state which resists a rigid speculative formulation; and, in fact, this is precisely the conclusion of the later Mahayana schools which developed the yogic implications of the earliest *sutras*.

These were justified by the doctrine that although the Buddha had not done so in detail, the seeds of such a development were already given in the first discourses, and that later generations of Buddhists could be expected to have somewhat different requirements than Buddha's first listeners. Hence, modifications were introduced which were nevertheless based on the original canon and said to be but the unfoldment and flowering of the teachings with the later "turning of the Wheel of *Dharma*" — much as, in the West, the Neo-platonists developed mystical and transcendental doctrines they found implied in Plato's original dialogues. Therefore, there is little reason to believe the sometimes-heard accusation that H.P. Blavatsky "concocted" the philosophy of *The Voice of the Silence* from her own "mixture" of the various Indian philosophies — unless, of course, one is led to such a conclusion by the mistaken belief that the charges of fraud and deception, as well as the personal accusations against her character circulated during H.P. Blavatsky's lifetime were justified (charges seized upon only too eagerly by

scholars anxious to discredit anyone outside the academic fold presuming to write on eastern thought). In fact, all such accusations have since been shown to be entirely lacking any basis in truth too many times to need repeating here. * However, even if it were true that the work were her own product, she could hardly be called original in the endeavor, for the synthesis of *Yoga* and Buddhism had been carried out long before her time by Northern Buddhist philosophers — particularly by the *Yogacara* school, to which *The Voice of the Silence* is said to belong.

* See, for example, Iverson L. Harris' *Madame Blavatsky Defended* for a summary and decisive refutation of the main charges, as well as an inspired defense of her personal character and integrity.

THE THREE TRUTHS

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

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

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

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

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

Idyll of the White Lotus

LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER

*Come forth into the light of things
Let Nature be your teacher.*

—William Wordsworth, *The Tables Turned*

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 14

Nature and Books belong to the eyes that see them.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays: "Experience"*

Nature does not trouble herself about any single error; she herself can never act otherwise than rightly, nor does she heed the consequences of her action.

— Goethe, *Reflections and Maxims*, trs. W.B. Ronnfeldt

Nature does not proceed by leaps.

— Carl Linneaus, *Philosophia Botanica*

Nature never does her work in a hasty or undue fashion, but, by the sure method of mixture, precipitation, and separation, brings about the greatest perfection.

— Wm. Q. Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 128

Nature may err, and often does, in its details and the external manifestations of its materials, never in its inner causes and results.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 221

Nature always, so to speak, knows where and when to stop. Greater even than the mystery of natural growth is the mystery of the natural cessation of growth. There is a measure in all natural things — in their size, speed or violence. As a result, the

system of nature, of which man is a part, tends to be self-balancing, self-adjusting, self-cleansing.

— E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful*, p. 122

Nature is as dependent as a human being upon conditions before she can work, and her mighty breathing, so to say, can be as easily interfered with, impeded, and arrested, and the correlation of her forces destroyed in a given spot, as though she were a man.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, I, 211

Nature never deceives us; it is always we who deceive ourselves.

— Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, ou de l'Education*

Education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws.

— Thomas Henry Huxley, *A Liberal Education*

...nature exists for no other purpose than the soul's experience.

— Wm. Q. Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 2

After you have exhausted what there is in business, politics, conviviality, and so on — have found that none of these finally satisfy, or permanently wear — what remains? Nature remains.

— Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days*

(Continued on page 40)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death in Edmonton on February 22, 1978, of Mrs. Winifred Darling. She was a member of Edmonton Lodge, having joined the Society in 1944.

To her family and friends we extend our sincere sympathy.

* * *

The sketch of Madame Blavatsky on the front cover is by an unknown artist who evidently used the familiar photographic portrait taken by Enrico Resta in January, 1889 as the model. From a woodcut, it was first used on the cover of the May, 1895 issue of *The Lamp*, the first Theosophical magazine published in Canada. Over the years it has appeared in the C.T. on several occasions.

* * *

As mentioned in the last issue, it is hoped to hold the 1978 Annual Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Canada in Vancouver. At the time of writing, the date has not been set, but it will probably be in the last week of July. As soon as arrangements have been made, a notice will be mailed to members, and I hope that as many as possible will plan to attend.

* * *

His many friends in Canada will be pleased to know that Geoffrey Farthing's latest book, *Exploring the Great Beyond*, is off the press. It was published recently by The Theosophical Publishing House in its Quest series. The price is \$4.25. A review will appear in the next issue.

* * *

It is a pleasure to announce that the famous "Peking" Edition of *The Voice of the Silence*, has just been reprinted. This is a facsimile of the edition first published in 1927 by Mrs. Alice Leighton Cleather and Mr. Basil Crump in Peking. Faithful to the original version of *The Voice*, this volume includes an editorial foreword and some additional notes and comments, as well as an inscription on "The Path of Liberation" by the Tashi Lama.

Copies of this edition may be obtained from the H.P.B. Library, c/o M. Freeman, R.R. No. 1, Springfield Road, Vernon, British Columbia. V1T 6L4, price \$2.50.

* * *

The Krotona Institute continues to offer courses on various subjects of interest to students of Theosophy. The faculty for the Spring program includes Joy Mills, International Vice-President, V. Wallace Slater, former General Secretary of the T.S. in England, Virginia Hanson, former Editor of *The American Theosophist*, Sri M.P. Pandit, Peter Hoffman, and Oliver Greene. Among the subjects covered were *The Mahatma Letters*, *Light on the Path* and *Raja Yoga*.

The Spring semester will have finished by the time these notes are published. If any readers are interested in courses that will be offered later this year, they should write to Krotona Institute, School of Theosophy, P.O. Box 966, Ojai, California 93023, U.S.A.

* * *

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

Members-at-large. Robert C. McCrae, Carolyn Price-Weiland, Reinhard Weiland. *Toronto Lodge.* Shelley A. Demers, John P. Huston, Sheila Mawji.

T.G.D.

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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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CALGARY LODGE

Members of the Calgary Lodge were invited to spend an evening with members of the Lotus Lodge on February 25 at the home of Mrs. Hilda Pawson. Other Federation members were present, including their Secretary, Dr. Ton Phan. We shared an evening of group exploration of the question, "What is Theosophy?" under the capable leadership of Dr. Phan. Afterwards, refreshments were served by our hostess and we had a chance for some informal talk together.

At one of our regular meetings in March, Ted Davy gave his project report on the subject of "Cohesion".

We continue with our study of *The Secret Doctrine*.

Laetitia van Hees
Secretary

MONTREAL LODGE

The Annual Meeting of the Montreal Lodge was held in February at the home of Mr. Fred Griffiths. It was a very pleasant evening, and we were pleased that Mrs. Viola Law came down from Ottawa to be with us.

A new Executive was elected as follows:
President Fred Wilkes
Vice-President Phoebe Stone
Treasurer Fred Griffiths
Secretary Jean Low
Librarian Phoebe Stone

Jean Low
Secretary

TORONTO LODGE

Much group effort goes into the planning and performance of Toronto Lodge programs, and the task of leadership of seminars is now being shared by more than one person. The month of March was

inspired by the Spring Equinox on the 21st, earlier programs being suggested with the idea of preparing and building up to a deeper consideration of the mystical occasion. The theme of "balance" was taken for the month and individual seminars explored teachings on cycles, and the dual forces in nature and in man. One evening was devoted to looking at the balance of opposites from the Zoroastrian legend of the "peacock", symbolical bird of pride, created by the negative forces to counterbalance the evolutionary work of the spiritual powers.

The Spring Equinox was celebrated with discussions which pointed towards the idea of a threshold of new beginnings. As in nature we see the springing forth of new life, to sprout and blossom in the sun, the seeker of Truth also awakes and aspires to a greater spirituality while still caught within the circle of matter and form. This seminar focussed chiefly on the responsibility of man to the other kingdoms of nature, the vegetable and plant, and also the animal.

A growing tendency in the pattern of disseminating Theosophy in the Toronto T.S. seems to be towards an individual basis. Every day brings some new enquirer or some new question, and according to circumstances our response has been to follow up with letters or with a personal meeting. Visitors passing through the city are often invited to call in and talk about Theosophy, and many afternoons at the Lodge are devoted to this kind of activity. Such informal conversations often lead to the probing of deep ideas and inspire further thought and searching. Out of town callers are shown our Travelling Library and invited to use this service if it is felt it would be of value to their study, and some have become ardent readers of Theosophical literature. Individual correspondence too is becoming an important part of Lodge work and development, and is a means of keeping in touch with current movements and books. It is also proving to be a wonderful way of

awakening interests and keeping alive the spirit of Theosophy.

The Toronto T. S. is helped tremendously by the positive and powerful thoughts of the members behind the scene. Failing health, or the inconvenience of distance prevent a certain number of our members from taking an active part in the programs and physical work of the Lodge, but it is to the loyalty and spiritual efforts of these that the Lodge owes much of its vitality. The truly esoteric work of the Society is done on the inner planes, in the sincere attempts of each individual member to change his inner nature, to purify the motive and to cultivate spiritual and altruistic thinking. It is the earnest and wise direction of thoughts by the unseen workers which is the "guardian wall" and inspiration for the outer work of the Lodge.

Joan Sutcliffe
Secretary

VICTORIA LODGE

Victoria Lodge held a special Easter meeting on March 28 for members and visitors. The symbols associated with the Spring Equinox and Easter were discussed, with some small artefacts shown as illustrations. Short passages from *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Garden of the Prophet*, by Gibran, were read. Refreshments were served at the close of the meeting.

Dorita Gilmour
Secretary

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

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

CAMPING

Planning a camping holiday in Western Canada this 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. Phone: (403) 637-2414.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

This Committee was established by the General Council of the Theosophical Society in December 1976 with the following terms of reference:

1. To advise the President on matters relating to Science and Technology in relation to Theosophy.
2. To encourage study and research in Science and Technology in relation to Theosophy.
3. To support the work of the International Centre of Theosophical Studies and Research, at Adyar.
4. To correspond as far as possible with like-minded institutions.
5. To collaborate with the Theosophical World Trust for Education and Research in encouraging groups of scientists-technologists in the National Sections of the Theosophical Society to work together on matters pertaining to Science and Technology in relation to Theosophy, and also to encourage them to arrange conferences /lectures on the subjects in these Sections.
6. To report annually to the President.
7. If it is further proposed (a) to advise editors of theosophical journals and other Theosophical Society members

about developments in Science and Technology in relation to Theosophy, after consultation with the President, (b) to establish a register of scientifically qualified members.

The Chairman of the Committee is Mr. John B.S. Coats with Mr. V. Wallace Slater as Vice-Chairman. Dr. A. Kannan is the Secretary, with Mr. K. Visvanathan as Joint Secretary.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The Autumn Term of the International Centre of Theosophical Studies and Research will commence October 2, 1978 and run through to December 1, 1978. All sessions will be held in the Blavatsky Bungalow, at the Society's International Headquarters, Adyar, Madras, India.

The teaching faculty includes Dr.A. Kannan and Dr. B.R. Mullik. A guest teacher for this term is Mrs. Seetha Neelakantan, the Librarian of the Adyar Library and Research Centre.

Five courses will be offered, as follows:
I Man in the Universe.
II Ancient Wisdom in the Modern Science Perspective
III The Upanishadic Way to Liberation
IV Studies in the Divine Plan
V Theosophical Research

For the Winter Term, January 15, 1979-March 16, 1979, Miss Joy Mills, International Vice-President and Director of Studies at the Centre will be back at Adyar and will conduct a series of courses and assist in workshop training.

Further information may be obtained from the General Secretary.

NIGHTLIFE

SOME THOUGHTS ON DREAMS

JENNO

"Remember that man is fundamentally consciousness."

— G. de Purucker, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, P. 576

"We do not remember our birth nor our naming, and if we are but a bundle of material experience, a mere product of brain and recollection, then we should have no identity but constant confusion. The contrary being the case, and continuous personal identity being felt and perceived, the inevitable conclusion is that we are the Hidden Self and that Self is above and beyond both body and brain."

— William Q. Judge, *"Proofs of the Hidden Self"* in *Echoes of the Orient*, P. 428

"We have offered to exhume the primeval strata of man's being, his basic nature, and lay bare the wonderful complications of his inner Self — something never to be achieved by physiology or even psychology in its ultimate expression — and demonstrate it scientifically."

— The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, P. 51

In her book *Night Life — Explorations in Dreaming*, Dr. Rosalind Cartwright discusses the progress so far achieved by scientists in their research into dreaming as a psychological process, its uses, and the relations between nighttime and daytime mental activity.

For more than a decade, Dr. Cartwright has been conducting experimental research into dreaming in the Sleep Laboratory at the University of Chicago, where she is Professor of Psychology.

In this experimental method, the brainwaves and eye movements of sleeping subjects are recorded and monitored from the surface of the head. Subjects are wakened frequently throughout the night and required to recall their dream experiences.

Two different states of sleep have been observed, dreaming and deep sleep. The state of dreaming is associated with rapid eye movements; low amplitude; fast, random brain waves; irregular breathing, pulse and heart rate. Subjects wakened at these times can give detailed and specific reports on their dreams, which seem to follow a consistent pattern throughout the

night. Deep sleep, on the other hand, is characterized by high amplitude; regular, slow brain waves; slow and regular breathing, pulse and heart rate. Subjects wakened from this state report thoughts rather than dreams. These two states alternate at approximately ninety minute intervals throughout the night.

Theosophy postulates three states of consciousness for the average human being, three planes of human life, namely: Jagrat (waking state); Svapna (dreaming state); and Sushupti (dreamless sleep). William Q. Judge wrote of Sushupti as being dreamless, but also as being a state in which all commune, through the higher Ego, with spiritual beings and enter into the spiritual plane. He referred to it as "... the great spiritual reservoir by means of which the tremendous momentum toward evil living is held in check." (*Echoes of the Orient*, P. 74).

Dr. de Purucker described Sushupti as "the state of becoming at one with the essential 'Droplet' of Cosmic Mind within us." (*The Esoteric Tradition*) Vol. II, P. 836).

It is taught in Theosophy that when one

falls asleep, the senses remain active, but the physical brain, the instrument and "engine" of the lower personality, is tuned out, and the inner man, the permanent Ego, is free to live its own life on the higher planes. To it, the past and the future are as the present. At the moment of waking, the physical brain catches a glimpse of the activities of the higher Ego, but as a reflection.

Madame H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

"There is a sort of conscious telegraphic communication going on incessantly, day and night, between the physical brain and the inner man. The brain is such a complex thing, both physically and metaphysically, that it is like a tree whose bark you can remove layer by layer, each layer being different from all the others, and each having its own special work, function, and properties." — "Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge of the T.S.", in *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. X, P. 250.

Dr. Cartwright and her researchers have found that dreams are an important part of human psychology: that they are a function of the brain separate from the conscious, rational process of the waking mind; that they appear to regulate the subjective world of feelings and help us to adapt to, and handle stressful experiences; that they come from recent and long-time memory sources in creative new aspects; and that waking experiences affect the dream life.

As Mr. Judge put it:

"Jagrat (waking life) acts on Svapna (dream life), producing dreams and suggestions, and either disturbs the instructions that come down from the higher state or aids the person through waking calmness and concentration, which tend to lessen the distortions of the mental experiences of dream life."

— *Echoes of the Orient*, P. 74

He also points out the importance of

learning to translate the language of the higher Self, and of living and thinking in such a manner as to "bring about the aim of the soul".

"...our waking state is the one in which we must be regenerated; where we must come to a full consciousness of the Self within, for in no other is salvation possible." — *ibid.*

In her concluding paragraphs, Dr. Cartwright wrote:

"If youngsters grew up differently, not divorced from their subjective world of inner responses as too many are now, but gaining the ability to translate from the imagistic language to the conceptual, to refine the way their feelings and fantasies are organized to form the self, they might live more wholly, in better touch with themselves."

— *Night Life, Explorations in Dreaming*, by Rosaline D. Cartwright. Published 1977 by Prentice-Hall Inc. 148 pp. with extensive bibliography and index.

LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER

(Continued from page 34)

Man asks much, and Nature answers but very little, and that often in a way that is hard to understand. She shows herself most freely to those who, without asking or reasoning but with silence and patience are capable of making her disclose her meaning. In due course they make the discovery that no two things on earth are not somewhere and somehow interrelated; and that through innumerable peripheral forms and appearances a great central Being speaks.

To learn to understand this with logic and our senses is our final task.

— Hans. Cloos, *Einführung in die Geologie*, trs. H. van Hees

Nature teaches more than she preaches.
— John Burroughs, *Time and Change*,
The Gospel of Nature

Nature which governs the whole will soon change all things which thou seest, and out of their substance will make other things, and again other things from the substance of them, in order that the world may be ever new.

— Marcus Aurelius Antoninus,
Meditations, VII, 25

Nature never leaves her work unfinished; if baffled at the first attempt, she tries again.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, I, 345-6

Nature never did betray/The heart that loved her.

— William Wordsworth, *Lines Composed A Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey*

Accuse not Nature! she hath done her part; /Do thou but thine!

— John Milton. *Paradise Lost*

Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy, and, there is a mutual correlation even between a star and a man.
—*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, p. 267

Nature follows the same groove from the "creation" of a universe down to that of a mosquito.

— *ibid*, p. 70

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

— William Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, III, iii, 175

All knowledge, all arts are to be found in nature, if we question her *properly* she will reveal to us the truths that pertain to each of these and to ourselves.

— Hippocrates, quoted in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 424-5

All art is but imitation of nature.

— Seneca, *Epistles*, trs. W.H.D. Rouse

I go to books and to nature as a bee goes to the flower, for a nectar that I can make into my own honey.

— John Burroughs, *The Summit of the Years*

The root of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, is, was, and ever will be one absolute essence, from which all starts, and into which everything returns.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 43

Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; she better understands her own affairs than we.

— Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*: "Of Experience"

All are but parts of one stupendous whole/
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.

— Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*

Nature has perfections, in order to show that she is the image of God; and defects, in order to show that she is *only* his image.

— Pascal, quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 412

The unexplained mysteries of nature are many and of those presumably explained hardly one may be said to have become absolutely intelligible.

— H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, I, 466

Nature has an antidote for every poison and her laws a reward for every suffering.

— *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, pp. 56-7

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd,
Their thoughts I cannot measure —
But the least motion which they made
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

William Wordsworth

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. SHISHTAS: Could these "remainders" be regarded as degrees of consciousness containing the sum total of experience gathered on the globe or globes which it is now leaving?

Answer. Although this question is provocative, the idea of applying the term *Shishtas* to "degrees of consciousness" is not correct, because the Sanskrit term has a totally different meaning in the Esoteric Philosophy. And this is so even though the questioner is correct in stating that the Sanskrit term signifies "remainders" — because the word *Shishtas* is derived from the verbal root *shish* meaning to leave, to remain.

Here is the explanation. In the Esoteric Philosophy the *Shishtas* represent those beings who are the most advanced individuals, evolutionally speaking, of each and every one of the ten kingdoms that are undergoing evolutionary development on the seven Globes of the Earth planetary system. These most advanced entities instead of continuing their respective cycle of evolution by pursuing the evolutionary trend of passing to the next Globe in the series of the seven Globes — which takes place when seven stages of evolutionary development have been concluded (this is usually referred to as seven Root-Races when referring to the Human Kingdom) — these most advanced beings remain behind, on the same Globe in which the seven stages of evolution have been accomplished, and are therefore termed *Shishtas*, because they are "Remainders" from the evolutionary stream.

In further explanation. Consider the present stage of evolution which is being

followed by the Human Kingdom on Globe D of the Earth planetary chain. The evolutionary stream or current represents the Fourth Round of the Seven Rounds required for completion of the human stage of evolution. This signifies that the fourth principle, *Kama* (termed the Desire Principle) is predominant and is being stressed and will continue to be predominant (evolutionally speaking) on Globes E, F, and G. However, there are advanced individuals who are termed Fifth Rounders — signifying that they have already completed their Fourth Round stage of development. Consequently, when the transference of the Human Kingdom from Globe D to Globe E is to be undertaken, the Fifth Rounders (who have already fulfilled the required Fourth Round evolutionary experiences on Globe E) remain behind on this Globe D, and are termed *Shishtas*.

The Fifth Rounders "retain consciousness" of their evolutionary experiences on the present Globe.

Directing attention to the words of the question with reference to the "degrees of consciousness containing the sum total of experience". Yes, indeed, the "degrees of consciousness" are retained in the immortal portion of a human being — *Atman*, *Buddhi*, *Buddhi-Manas*. And the total reviewal is available to those individuals who have completed the Seven Rounds of required human evolutionary attainment. To quote the words of a Mahatma, in replying to a query made by A.P. Sinnett:

"Yes; the 'full' remembrance of our lives (*collective lives*) will

return back at the end of *all the seven Rounds*, at the threshold of the long, long Nirvana that awaits us after we leave Globe Z. At the end of isolated Rounds, we remember but the sum total of our last impressions, those we have selected, or that have rather *forced* themselves upon us and followed us in *Deva chan.*" (*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, p. 171; 3rd ed. pp. 167-8)

Question. Does this degree of consciousness rest in the auric egg of each globe after its departure and is a portion of this "consciousness" left latent in the auric egg of each entity that has evolved during the Round?

Answer. A distinction should be made between (a) the degree of consciousness of each Globe, and (b) the degree of consciousness of each individual entity. The consciousness of the Globe remains with each Globe: the consciousness of each individual entity remains with the entity, as just explained in the quotation. Moreover, it should be remembered that the auric egg is present even during earth-life and does retain the consciousness of the lives (plural) lived by an individual entity on Earth. This remembrance may be associated with the term *Skandhas* — attributes. Perhaps the questioner intended to use the word *Skandhas* instead of *Shishtas*?

As there is a slight difference between the *Shishtas* (a) during the evolutionary cycle on Earth, and (b) at the conclusion of the Seven Rounds cycle of existence, a quotation from the writings of H.P. Blavatsky which deals with this latter aspect is applicable.

"Raghunath Rao, of Madras, says: 'At the end of each *Manvantara*, annihilation of the world takes place; but one warrior, seven *Rishis*, and the seeds are saved from destruction These eight persons are called *Sishtas*, or remnants, because they alone

remain after the destruction of all the others. Their acts and precepts are, therefore, known as *Sishtachara*. They are also designated '*Sadachara*' because such acts and precepts are only what always existed.'

"This is the orthodox version. The secret one speaks of seven Initiates having attained *Dhyanchohanship* toward the end of the seventh Race on this earth, who are left on earth during its 'obscuration,' with the seed of every mineral, plant, and animal that had not time to evolve into man for the next Round or world-period." (*H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VII, 44)

BOOK REVIEWS

The Occultism of Ancient Egypt, by S. Lancri. The 1977 Blavatsky Lecture, published by The Theosophical Society in England. 17 pp. Price 70p.

Referring to *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Theosophical Glossary* and the *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, the Lecturer explains how the Ancient Egyptians mastered the mystery of Death. Their magnificent Book of the Dead is a testimony of their aspirations toward a more intense life on all the planes of being.

It is mentioned that Egypt was the centre of scientific knowledge and illumination. Many aspirants came to Egypt and studied in the Egyptian Temples and became world famous philosophers and scholars, e.g., Pythagoras, Iamblichus, Plato, Eudoxus, Democritus, Thales, Strabo, Lycurgus, Solon, etc.

Mr. Lancri provides information about initiation ceremonies in the great temples of Ancient Egypt: the studies, as well as the hardships and trials involved in each

Degree, until the neophyte reached the Seventh, or the last Degree of Initiation, and thence became known as a Prophet. Relating to the initiation ceremonies are clear explanations of the esoteric meanings of the names of the Egyptian Deities, e.g., Osiris, Isis, Hathor, Horus, Seth, Toth, Nephthys, Anubis, Maat, etc.

This lecture is a valuable source of information for all those who seek knowledge of the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries of Initiations, as well as of the occultism of that era.

Gerard Pederian

* * *

The Virgin of the World, of Hermes Trismegistus, trans. Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. Photographic reproduction of the 1884 edition, published 1977 by Wizards Bookshelf. xxxii + 154 pp. Cloth bound. Price \$7.95.

Once again, students of the Hermetic Wisdom are in debt to Wizards Bookshelf, this time for making available a new facsimile edition of *The Virgin of the World* in the Kingsford-Maitland translation. This was the first rendering into English of this material, and as far as I know G.R.S. Mead's version is the only other available to English readers — and it is probably now out of print.

The instructions given in the various books of Hermes provide much valuable information as to the esoteric nature of the ancient Mystery religions. Although these writings are heavily veiled, much can be discovered in them by those willing to make the effort.

It is a pity that T. Subba Row's review of the original edition of *The Virgin of the World*, and his subsequent correspondence on this subject with the translators,

published in *The Theosophist* in 1885, is not more easily accessible. That exchange of views contained much food for thought for serious readers following this line of study, and pointed up even in controversy the value of Hermetic literature.

This book, which is most attractively bound, is a companion volume to *The Divine Pymander* (C.T. Jan-Feb, 1976), also published by Wizard's.

Ted G. Davy

* * *

The Cathars and Reincarnation, by Arthur Guirdham. A Quest Book, published 1978 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 208 pp. Price \$3.75.

The Cathars of the title are otherwise known as Albigensians, a sect of Manichaeism. They lived and practised their religious beliefs in southern France in the 12th and 13th centuries until their brutal persecution and virtual extinction by the Roman Catholic Inquisition.

An English lady, Mrs. Smith, "remembers" her former life as a Cathar. This book records some of the correlations between her dreams and visions of that life, including experiences of terror in the Inquisition, seven centuries ago, and what is actually known about the incidents and personalities she describes.

The author is a psychiatrist, one of whose patients was Mrs. Smith. For both personal and professional reasons he investigated the history of the Cathars, more than superficial knowledge of which is necessary to understand some of the puzzling features of Mrs. Smith's strange memories.

It appears that certain information supplied by Mrs. Smith to Dr. Guirdham could not possibly have been known through conventional sources available to her in this century. Indeed, some matters were only verified by leading scholars in the field of Catharism *after* she had revealed them.

There can be few other similar cases that are as well documented as this one. It is a remarkable story, fascinating and thought-provoking. The author is convinced that it is explained by reincarnation, and probably most students of Theosophy would agree with him. Those in disagreement might find it exceedingly difficult to come up with a credible alternative.

A number of features of this case are of particular interest to those who make a special study of reincarnation. Seldom does an individual recall with such detail and clarity a supposed former life; Mrs. Smith's "far memory" contains some surprising particulars, which of course make verification of them all the more impressive. Another interesting factor is the number of Mrs. Smith's relatives and acquaintances who were apparently also involved in the 13th century persecutions.

It is a pity that Dr. Guirdham did not go to more trouble in organizing his material. This, and frequent repetitions are annoying flaws in an otherwise excellent history of a case that seems to contain a genuine reincarnation element.

Ted G. Davy

* * *

Caterfly, by Don de Paul. A Quest Book, published 1977 by The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A. 124 pp. Price \$4.25.

The immemorial search of the Soul for its true identity is the basic theme of this book. It is presented as an allegory, which, while universal in concept, is perhaps more especially appealing in this form to children of ages 8 to 12.

A young person's questions about the Soul, God, Purpose, etc. are symbolised in the dilemma of Caterfly, a freak creature, mixture of butterfly and caterpillar; a possessor of wings but, unable to fly, a sad unfulfilled creature left to crawling in the dirt. Intimations of the Higher Self come to Caterfly as a mysterious light beyond the pale of his garden, which strangely stirs an inner voice. Though only dimly perceived by his peers, to Caterfly the light glows with deepening power through the dark hours of the night, drawing out of him the courage and the conviction, the "know himself".

The response to the immemorial cry of the Soul is explored in Caterfly's mystical quest for self discovery, a great and dangerous journey which takes him through all the kingdoms of nature, guided by the wondrous light, always just beyond his reach.

The Path of the light is not easy for Caterfly, struggling painfully slowly the long distance to merely escape the confines of the garden, and to protect himself from the attack of birds and other natural enemies. This stage might be compared to the probationary learning of the beginning student of higher wisdom, who must continue to serve his duties in physical life while seeking spiritual experience and to loosen his dependence on mundane sensation. It is also a period of intense learning, as Caterfly becomes aware of the order and beauty of the universe, and the interdependent working of the different insects and creatures of nature's kingdom, the smaller cycles within the larger ones.

Perhaps one of the most important lessons demonstrated here, through the means of Caterfly's persecution by the ants, is that the growing Soul must have the will to discard experiences when their purpose has been served; that ideas and experiences are not an end in themselves, but a step on the Way. The giving-up of old duties and old predispositions is fraught with suffering, for the old masters are inexorably possessive.

A broader view comes to Caterfly, much as in the neophyte stage the guidance of a teacher or fellow pupil may suddenly illuminate a problem, and a startling clarity of perception ensues. A spider comrade makes for him, from leaves, a balloon which carries him airbound in the continuing pursuit of the sacred light. From the new higher vantage point, now seeing above and beyond the narrow limits of his garden, Caterfly remolds his thinking. His motive is studied, and he ponders on the worthiness of his quest. The attainment of one small insect! What benefit will it have for the rest of the insect world? Perhaps it would be better that he continue to crawl and find useful work on the ground?

From this point, the quest becomes a spiritual journey. New situations allegorically hint at soul development, interpretable to the subjective mind of the reader. As Caterfly learns to fly on his own instigation, and then to come to terms with his own inner self, his dawning intuition brings to review his early question, and "What am I?" deepens into "What do I become?"

It is a charming story, easily read and enjoyed by the sensitive child. There is a deeper message, which draws one sympathetically towards an understanding of insect life, and then correspondingly to the one analagous law which governs the Soul's journey.

Joan Sutcliffe

STRENGTH

The Theosophical Society is not intended for weak-minded people, but for people who can believe in and practise Universal Brotherhood. It takes a mind of some development to grasp the idea of brotherhood, and to accept the sinner (minus his sin) equally with the saint. Churches, creeds, dogmas, opinions, views, beliefs, race, caste, colour, sex, previous condition of servitude, hostility, enmity, black magicians and white, immature or advanced, lofty or lowly, all alike are part of the infinite Unity. Weaker brethren cannot grasp such an outlook. They want a brotherhood of those like minded with themselves, a survival of "orthodox" ideals. But to love their enemies, to do good to those that hate them, to bless those that curse them, and to pray for those that despitefully use them is only given to those who are strong in the love of the Master, and know that in Him there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither bond nor free. Hence it is that the Theosophical Society sets up the highest ideal upon earth to-day. It favours no personality, no sect, no clique. These come and go, but the great world movement, like a wave of the sea, rolls on through the centuries, bearing the wise ones on its crest, while those who fail fall into the trough to wait the coming of the next mighty tide.

Albert E.S. Smythe

— *The Canadian Theosophist*
December, 1921

The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being.

— *H.P. Blavatsky*

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