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EDITED BY ALBERT E. S. SMYTHE
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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA

None can feel the difference between himself and his fellow-students, such as "I am the wisest," "I am more holy and pleasing to the teacher, or in my community, than my brother," etc.,—and remain an upasaka. His thoughts must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

TORONTO: THE T.S. IN CANADA
52 ISABELLA STREET

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MRS. ANNIE BESANT

So many ardent admirers of Mrs. Besant all over the world are asking themselves and others—"In view of recent happenings and pronouncements what are we to think of Mrs. Besant?" that it may be well to blow aside the dust of controversy raised by the partizans and try to get a clear view of things.

To get that clear view it is basically necessary to eliminate all bias or prejudice. Not otherwise may truth be known undistorted, pure, of this or any subject. The writer is of those who owe very much to Mrs. Besant for her lucid, coherent presentation of the Ancient Wisdom. If H.P.B. is an exhaustless spring of water of life from which the writer is constantly drawing more and more to satisfy his needs spiritual, mental, ethical, etc., it is due in a very high degree to Mrs. Besant who has made H.P.B. possible for him. Surely, then, ingratitude is in such case unthinkable.

But he has never learned from Mrs. Besant that he should sacrifice his allegiance to his own Higher Self, his own independence of judgement, on the altar of any personality. He has been asked "Why, if in the past you accepted Mrs. Besant's assertions in matters that you could not verify by first hand knowledge should you balk now?" A fair question. It implies that he does balk, at least in some things. And his only answer is that for him, certain recent claims do not ring as true as her earlier teachings.

Is Mrs. Besant deliberately misleading

people? The writer does not think so. It is contrary to her entire career. Knowing her bitter struggles for truth and freedom of thought it is utterly inconceivable that she would deliberately mislead.

There remain only two alternatives: the claims are valid, or, Mrs. Besant is herself the victim of illusion. The analysis of why these claims "do not ring true" will not be undertaken now. Later this may be done if deemed desirable. But we may ask: Is it quite impossible that Mrs. Besant may be, in these matters, under the sway of illusion? All the Wisdom Teaching and Teachers, herself included, agree that the psychic world, the Hall of Learning, is by its very nature deceptive. Is it taking too much upon ourselves to decide whether Mrs. Besant has been caught in the toils or not? Yet we cannot, dare not, shirk the responsibility. It is imperative that we decide for ourselves whom and what we shall believe. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day thou canst not then be false to any man."

Of course this raises the problem of acute and constant discrimination as to which statements we may accept, which reject; but no problem gets solved by shelving it. Intuition does not grow by refusing to use it, it atrophies. Mistakes may be made, but with honesty and sincerity they will soon or late work their own cure. "Truth may lose many battles but no wars."

To conclude, let us all, whatever hy-

pothesis we accept, resolve that under no circumstances shall we permit ourselves to be betrayed into hasty, harsh criticism or exaggeration. For any of us to do so would be to offer a poor tribute to the Masters of Compassion who, through their messengers, have made the Gospel of Brotherhood a living gospel and not only a metaphysical abstraction.

XILEF.

LEADERSHIP

One of the rocks upon which various sections of the Theosophical Movement have wrecked themselves is that of Leadership. It is a difficult subject for a mixed company such as the Theosophical Society consists of, but it must be faced and understood if progress on proper lines is to be accomplished. Leadership in the sense of a human Idol, set up to be worshipped, is no better than any other form of idolatry, for though it may be said the human Idol embodies higher ideals than can be associated with an idol of wood or stone or metal, this is only paltering with the question, for the graven images are always of some human idol which has been worshipped in times past, or is intended to remind one of such an idol of the past. Indeed, this is openly used as a reason or excuse for the idols that we see in Churches and elsewhere. It may shock people to say that a crucifix is an idol, but what else is it? What does the commandment mean given to the Jews and so religiously and devoutly kept by the Moslems—"Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth," meaning by the latter clause, no doubt, the astral light, as we now term it. There is the best of reasons for this prohibition. Any outer form upon which one concentrates takes one away from that inner world of the spirit in which alone we can reach the highest ideals, and in which alone the Divine Self can be revealed. "Of Teachers there are many; the Master Soul is One." It is that Soul we must turn to, and it is this knowledge of that Soul alone that brings us to the world of Wisdom and of Peace.

All the worship bestowed therefore upon human beings, however noble and worthy is a mistaken homage, and has always been put aside by those who are best entitled to the world's recognition. The annals of the great Teachers of the world may be studied with advantage in this connection. Recognition they accepted, but not worship, and those who receive worship in our day and generation are false to the ideals which the True Teachers have given us. The greatest that we know of always have pointed us to those that are higher still, and they have felt that to take to themselves what belonged, if it belonged to any, was due to those far higher than themselves, only weakened the intuition and the discrimination of the aspirant. He who is satisfied to pour out his homage to a lesser human Idol when the Spiritual Ideals of the Universe rest latent in his own heart awaiting the awakening which only himself can bring about by his own ardent and intense contemplation, robs himself of the opportunity to spiritualize the gift he has to give, and robs the Heart of the World of that sacrifice which we all owe to the Eternal and to none other.

Call no man Master, says the Judean Master, and the principle is emphasized in the last chapter of the Apocalypse, when John fell down to worship at the feet of him who is the head of the Christian faith, if the text is to be believed. "And he saith unto me, See thou do it not; I am a fellow servant with thee, and with thy brethren and prophets, and with them which keep the words of this book: Worship God."

Respect and courtesy are never to be withheld from the worthy, but this is an entirely different thing from the personal adulation which has its root in egotism and curiosity—the hope that the worshipper will be singled out for special notice or honour. If all the worshippers would or could analyze their real object in joining the crowds that pour out their adulation before the objects of their admiration, they would be surprised to find how little of what is really worthy was to be found in their homage.

Most of it is intended to be a measure of flattery, whether consciously or unconsciously, and we never flatter for worthy

ends. Most people except those who bestow it know the exact value of flattery, and the price that is expected for it. The wise have no part nor lot in it, and it has no proper place in occultism. It is a signal of falsehood and weakness wherever it is encouraged.

The adepts know their own value, or their own insignificance, and nothing is more enlightening in the Mahatma Letters than the just estimate which each appears to place upon his own worth. There is no such thing as false modesty about them, neither is there any suggestion of a desire to be taken as any more than they actually are. In this there is an excellent test of the difference between psychic and spiritual character. All the psychics literally steep themselves in admiration and sycophancy and blandiloquence. Soft sawder is at a premium with them.

A contrast between Col. Olcott and Madam Blavatsky in this respect may be studied by those who wish to understand this difference in character. She would have none of it. She would not even have any office given her in the way of honour or preference. She took the position of Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society, and when the Esoteric Section was formed she became its head. But these were simply indications of work to be done, and in no sense offices of honour. William Quan Judge was General Secretary, and in the year of his death accepted the empty title of Life president, though under protest, when friends thrust it upon him. But the genius of the Society has always been democratic and a majority rule was regarded as natural and proper. Col. Olcott arrogated to himself arbitrary powers as President, but Mrs. Besant professed to abrogate these claims as soon as she became President. Madam Blavatsky never admitted the absurd claims that Col. Olcott made, and spoke of himself as a flap-doodle. He had many fine qualities, but he was keenly susceptible to flattery, and looked for it almost as his right.

The ideal tacitly set before the Theosophical Society is to be found in the attitude of the Masters themselves, or the Elder Brothers, as they prefer to be known. If they conceived idol-worship

to be good for humanity they would let people have the opportunity of giving them the homage which obviously the majority of the present members of the Society would be pleased to offer. The Masters abhor this sort of thing, if we are to judge by their letters, and have no use for admiration that is merely gush at the best, and falsity for the most part. What they want from people is action. If they and their teachings are admired this can best be shown by conduct and life, not by professions of admiration. Those who understand the law of Karma will follow the Buddhist practice which, while it inculcates the utmost courtesy, never transfers the loyalty which is the due of the Higher Self alone to any outer personage, however distinguished. This it is that has brought disaster to so many in the past who, trusting blindly, have discovered too late that their idols were made of clay, and human clay is no less disappointing than the more enduring models of the ancients.

Should we not love the Masters and other teachers who give us advice and instruction? This question indicates a lack of knowledge of what real love is. Those who love know. Most so-called love is merely a selfish desire to monopolize the attention of another, or to reserve the services of the loved one for oneself. The Love that the Masters desire to inspire is not for themselves personally but for the "orphan humanity," and in sacrifice for that consummation to which the race is tending. Let us take this advice from a chela of long standing:

"As a general thing a person of European birth has extreme difficulty to contend with. He has no heredity of psychical development to call upon; no known assembly of Masters or Their chelas within reach. His racial difficulties prevent him from easily seeing within himself; he is not introspective by nature. But even he can do much if he purifies his motive, and either naturally possesses or cultivates an ardent and unshakeable faith and devotion. A faith that keeps him a firm believer in the existence of Masters even through years of non-intercourse. They are generous and honest debtors and always repay. How They repay, and when, is not for us to ask. Men may say that this

THE LIVES OF THE CHRISTS

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

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requires as blind devotion as was ever asked for by any Church. *It does*, but it is blind devotion, to Masters who are Truth itself; to Humanity and to yourself, to your own intuitions and ideals. This devotion to an ideal is also founded upon another thing, and that is that a man is hardly ready to be a chela unless he is able to stand *alone* and uninfluenced by other men or events, *for he must stand alone*, and he might as well know this at the beginning as at the end."

Students will observe that this necessity of being able to stand alone does not enter into the conceptions of occultism which in late years have been placed before the world through the Theosophical Society. Most of our members are following some one or clinging to some one, after the old Church idea of a personal saviour who is to drag one out of perdition. To begin with there is no perdition to be afraid of for ordinarily decent people. As to others, Karma will deal with them, and all we have to do is to be as helpful as such people will permit one to be. Usually they do not wish for help being fully satisfied with their own courses. But those who believe in the Masters and in the Secret Doctrine and in the message that was given to the world by the messenger who founded the Theosophical Society in 1875 will try to make their lives harmonize with the ideals which that messenger set before us. Another quotation from the same pen already drawn upon may close this line of thought:

"There is no room for sorrow in the heart of him who knows and realizes the Unity of all spiritual beings. While people, monuments and governments disappear, the self remains and returns again. The wise are not disturbed; they remain silent, they depend on the Self and seek their refuge in It."

A. E. S. S.

* * *

"The spiritual truths of the past are identically the spiritual truths of the present and the future. Time cannot swallow that which is eternal."

—James Morgan Pryse.

Coming back to the countries adjacent to the Eastern end of the Mediterranean we find many examples of the Immaculate Mother and the Holy Child. Isis and Horus are two Egyptian figures which typify this idea. Horus was born of his virgin mother Isis at the time of the Winter Solstice (December 21st) and shortly after birth was hidden away from persecution at the hands of his elder brother Typhon in a papyrus swamp. One of the titles applied to him was "He of the East to whom the Desert brings Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh." Isis the mother occupied a rather different position from that of Mary as depicted in the early Gospel stories. Isis is a goddess to whom temples were erected and adoration offered. As the Christian Church grew and organized Mary was given such titles as "Queen of Heaven," "Mother of God" etc., but these were not new as exactly the same titles were applied to Isis hundreds of years before. Isis is sometimes depicted as standing on a crescent moon with a crown of twelve stars above her head. This reminds one of the verse in Revelation which speaks of "The woman clothed with the Sun, the Moon under her feet and having about her head twelve stars." The similarity between the mediæval art representations of the figures in the Christian religion and the art forms of the ancient Egyptians is so striking that a follower of Isis, if he could be awakened from his long sleep would have no difficulty in recognizing his divinity in the Italian paintings of the Renaissance. As a matter of fact the pictures of Isis and Horus carved in the Egyptian bas reliefs are so similar to the Christian conventional forms that some early Christians obliterated the carvings by covering them with plaster. This, however, merely served to preserve the sculptures from weathering and now they have been uncovered and give their silent witness to the universality of the eternal story

of the ever-Virgin Mother and her Saviour Son.

Osiris, the Redeemer of Light, of whom Horus is the son, or reincarnation, was also Virgin born from his mother Neith. His father was Seb. Osiris and Horus are really one—one representing the candidate, the other the risen Horus, the initiate and the judge and initiator of those who follow. The opposing figure in the Egyptian story is given various names, Typhon, Set, Apap and Herat the 'Slayer of the Youngling in the egg.'

In Persia, Chaldea and Assyria the ancient tradition again appears. Mithra, also known as Tseur, or Saviour, was born in a cave on December 25th. As all record of Mithraic literature has been lost, the present knowledge of this great movement has been derived from contemporary writers and from the interpretations of rock carvings. Mithra is sometimes called the 'Rock Born' because of the tradition which says he was born from the side of a huge rock but that the idea of a Virgin Birth was present among his followers is shown by Sir J. G. Frazer in the "Golden Bough" where he says "If we may trust the evidence of an obscure scholiast the Greeks (in the worship of Mithra at Rome) used to celebrate the birth of the Luminary by a midnight service, coming out of the inner shrines and crying 'The Virgin has brought forth, the light is waning.'" On Mithraic monuments the figure of the Mother and the Child is not uncommon.

Zoroaster—Zarathustra—was considered by his followers as being born of an immaculate conception by a ray of Divine Reason and from his body shortly after birth there shone a light which illuminated the whole room. "Tradition reports that his mother had alarming dreams of evil spirits seeking to destroy the child to whom she was about to give birth but a good spirit came to rescue him and consoled her saying 'Fear not, god Ormuzd will protect the infant, whom he has sent as a prophet to the people and the world which is awaiting for him.'" Zoroaster was visited at his birth by a group of Magi.

The Greeks perhaps more than any other race seized upon this symbol of the Virgin Birth of the Redeeming One and

made it peculiarly their own. It was not 'unique' to their understanding. It was the unfulfilling lot of an Initiate to be 'born of a virgin' and so many of such figures appear in the Pantheon. Of course the educated Greek did not believe that the gods were persons but that they were the personification of principles whose influence on man and in man was rendered more understandable when told in dramatic form.

Dionysus (the Babylonian Diwuisi), Bacchus, born of the virgin Semele through the fatherhood of Zeus the father of the (mundane) gods, is the great initiatory figure of Grecian mythology. Hermes, Mercury, the Messenger of the gods, took the infant Dionysus to a far country where he would be safe from the wrath of Hera, the immortal consort of Zeus who was jealous of Semele.

Perseus, who was also a son of Zeus by Danae the virgin, who was impregnated in a shower of gold, slew the Gorgons, the powers of darkness and saved Andromeda (the human soul).

In the story of Prometheus, the fore-knower, who sends the divine fire from Heaven to give to man, and is crucified by Zeus to the side of Mount Caucasus for his sacrilege, we meet the elements of the Saviour story. The myths of Prometheus, Heracles and Dionysus should be read together for the three personages are really one—the Ego. The Divine Rebel is freed from his bonds by Heracles, another son of Zeus born from the virgin Alcmena. Heracles was doomed from birth to be the servant of Eurystheus and he too suffered persecution from Hera who tried to kill him in his infancy by sending two serpents to strangle him.

Dudley W. Barr.

* * *

THE USE OF SANSKRIT

A stranger after hearing a theosophical lecture or reading a theosophical book, will sometimes exclaim "Yes, it is all very interesting but why do you make it so difficult by using so many Sanskrit terms?" These teachings seem to be true and should appeal to the world but they will never become popular until you simplify your methods of exposition and render them understandable by the man in the street."

He has raised an interesting problem. Would the eliminating of Sanskrit simplify or would it make necessary long and clumsy explanations of terms which have no exact equivalent in English? What single word in English could be used which would fully express all the ideas conveyed by the word 'Atma'? 'Spirit' is said to be its equivalent but as English is so poverty stricken as yet in philosophical and metaphysical words 'Spirit' may mean the soul, or the intelligence or the spark of Divinity within. It also might mean a drink, a ghost, an ideal, an essence. But 'Atma' means only one thing i.e. the Divinity overshadowing man which is always at one with the One Life of the Universe. For the purpose of discussion it is sometimes considered as having a separate existence in each individual but it has no qualities, it is not subject to birth, decay or death, it is beyond temporal change, it is not affected by Karma. There is no one word in English that conveys its meaning.

Karma is another such word. It means bringing about under intelligent and beneficent guidance, the natural results of actions performed on all planes of existence. It is fate, it is opportunity, it is nemesis. 'The Law of Cause and Effect' does not fully explain the idea because it is never merely mechanical. The Law operates in such a way as to 'move to righteousness' and the ultimate good.

Theosophy deals with the Science of Life. If we wish to study any physical science we must be prepared to learn its terminology. If a new science comes into being it creates its own words. 'Super hetrodyne' is now a very common word to radio enthusiasts and there is no other that means just that. A knowledge of the device and the theories behind its operation, of course entails some study and some very detailed explanations, but a lecturer on technical radio could not be expected to return to a long explanatory phrase when he has one single word at his command.

Theosophy has its vocabulary which must be learned by students. It never holds out any promise of a royal and easy road to knowledge. It demands effort, study and clear thinking and one of the aids to accurate logical reasoning

is the use of unequivocal terms. When such words cannot be found in English, speakers and writers on theosophy bring in Sanskrit terms which have been used in the ancient philosophical systems in India for ages past and which will ultimately be commonly used by non-theosophical writers in the same manner as they use thousands of other words which have been assimilated into the English language to make it the almost universal tongue of the world today.

English is extremely flexible and if we must either borrow old words or create new ones to express fine distinctions by all means let us take words which have become time-honoured in their usage and not try to make such fearsome combinations as 'spirit body' just to avoid the trouble of acquiring new words.

—D.W.B. in Toronto Theosophical News

* * *

INCARNATIONS OF THE DEITY

No orthodox Brahmans and Buddhists would deny the Christian incarnation; only, they understand it in their own philosophical way, and how could they deny it? The very cornerstone of their religious system is periodical incarnations of the Deity. Whenever humanity is about merging into materialism and moral degradation, a Supreme Spirit incarnates himself in his creatures selected for the purpose. The "Messenger of the Highest" links with the duality of matter and soul, and the triad being thus completed by the union of its Crown, a saviour is born, who helps restore humanity to the path of truth and virtue. The early Christian Church, all imbued with Asiatic philosophy, evidently shared the same belief — otherwise *it would have neither erected into an article of faith the second advent, nor cunningly invented the fable of Anti-Christ as a precaution against possible future incarnations.* Neither could they have imagined that Melchisedek was an avatar of Christ. They had only to turn to the Bhagavad Gita to find Krishna saying to Arjuna: "He who follows me is saved by wisdom and even by works . . . *As often as virtue declines in the world, I make myself manifest to save it.*"

—Isis Unveiled, ii. 535.

LETTERS THAT MAY HELP YOU

Introductory Note

These Letters are the result of an attempt to help a convict in one of our prisons who had expressed a sincere desire for information regarding "Ancient Wisdom." The few books he had read on the subject were too heavy; they "smelled of the lamp" too much for his taste. He wanted a man to man talk from a man who had been "through the mill," something that would give the main thesis with plain, everyday logical arguments. He had been reared in the Christian faith, but had gone to near-atheism, only to find that the answer to life and its problems was as far off as before; now he was "on the fence," and wanted to know if this Ancient "dope"—as he termed it—could give him a good logical reason for living and—suffering.

The Letters seemed to fill at least some of his needs, and to help him to a better understanding of the Teaching; now they are given to a larger audience with the hope that they will help others—perhaps YOU.

I.

Friend . . . This is the first opportunity I have had to answer your letter, which I received safely and read with much interest. Please pardon the delay.

When we arrive at crises or positions where, apparently, there appears to be nothing but a dead wall, sympathy and honeyed phrases may help to sustain our courage and so induce us to try, hesitatingly, to feel blindly for another foothold; but what the soul in distress is most grateful for and what it needs most are *facts*, facts of statement which will enable it to know on what kind of ground it stands; to know whether that ground is slippery, untenable and unsafe, or solid and stable, so that it can with confidence take the next step forward.

Instead of handing you words of sympathy (you have my sympathy anyway) I shall endeavour to give what are to me facts, and also try to make the presentation of those facts such as may enable you to arrive at the position where you, too, will accept them as facts; facts which are

factors to be used in shaping one's destiny. I shall, therefore, cut out the "flub-dub" and get down to "brass tacks."

Briefly, there are two statements regarding the cosmos, one being: that what we call "life" in its various manifestations is the result of "blind working causes"—a "fortuitous concourse of atoms"—and that the universe just "grewed;" the other statement being: that above our limited intelligence are Intelligent Powers Who are *guiding* our evolution (as also other evolutions) onwards to a larger, fuller and higher development than we have, so far, attained.

The first statement is, roughly, the *materialistic statement*; the other is the statement of the Great Teachers of Humanity in various times and ages from the misty distance of antiquity down to our own time.

Let us examine the first statement and see to where it will lead us; but first, to avoid unnecessary argument regarding my presentation of this statement, I shall give you quotations from the recognized leading lights of materialistic philosophy:

"Outside the nerve-centres there is no mind"—Prof. C. B. Bruhl.

"The soul is the brain in action, and nothing more"—Broussais.

"Without phosphorus no thought."—Moleschott.

"If the cerebral hemispheres of a mammal are cut away piecemeal," says Valentin, "the mental activity descends all the deeper, the further the quantitative loss extends. As a rule, when the ventricles are reached, complete unconsciousness supervenes." ("What stronger proof of the connection between mind and brain can there exist, than that of the anatomist's scalpel, cutting the mind away piece by piece"—comment by Buchner.)

"Thought is a motion of matter."—Moleschott.

"The secret of thinking does not lie in the brain materials as such, but in the special form of their combination"—Buchner.

(Please note that the materialist asserts that the power that controls and makes that 'special form of their combinations' is part of the property of 'matter'.)

"No thought is possible without a brain"—Buchner.

"The soul . . . is produced by the development of the brain"—Carl Vogt.

"That the soul of a dead person ceases to exist at the moment of death, cannot be contradicted by sensible people"—Burmeister.

As the materialist asserts that thought is but the result of certain combinations of brain-cells, it follows (as they also assert) that when those cell combinations are dispersed and broken up, thought ceases; there is no more thought, no more thinking, no more thinker. In other words when a man dies, that is his finish; he is gone for ever, blotted off the landscape as if he had never existed. (This is the "glad tidings of great joy" of the materialist!) His life-span depends on his brain-cells keeping together and working together. That again means, that in order to preserve his existence he must think only of *himself* first, last and all the time; a condition known as "selfishness," which, carried to its logical conclusion, would mean the throwing out of all that Humanity call "ideal"—the love of kindred, the mother's sacrificing herself for her children, the father's adhering to his duty of protecting and providing for that mother and those children; the elimination of kindness, charity, and all the "unselfish" activities of mankind, and using all that even the man of average intelligence considers low, viz:—cunning, deceit, hypocrisy, etc., for the selfish end aimed at; which would further result in a world made up of men and women using every means in their power to enrich themselves and conserve for themselves—at the expense of their fellow-humans. (A lovely and ulluring prospect, truly) And——— for *What?*

Let us assume that there is such a man ordering his life according to this mode of procedure, grabbing everything for himself, using every other person merely as a means to add to his particular store of what he considers "valuable;" what becomes of his accumulated wealth? What becomes of this painfully and laboriously acquired treasure? When he dies . . . *He has to leave it behind!*

Put in other words: it means that the selfish man has spent his life accumulat-

ing that which, at his death, will be dissipated and enjoyed by others—for whom he had no regard. The time and energy he spent in the acquisition of his treasure will be thrown away; for those treasures and acquisitions will be enjoyed by the very people from whom he took it. *His selfishness has defeated its own object.* And that, to me, is one of the best arguments against selfishness.

If a man could enjoy the fruits of his selfish labour by existing on this physical plane for ever, it might be difficult to find convincing arguments against selfishness; for such a man could eventually absorb everything on this mud-ball, and be monarch of all he surveyed. Fortunately for the good and progress of his soul (which is the real man), the grim and kindly Power—Death—has a say in the matter, and fools the selfish man by preventing the consummation he so ardently desires.

Probably the materialist would say that the man who does "unselfish" acts does them because the doing of them makes him feel better, and that in the last analysis he is doing it from that selfish motive.

There is no doubt that all our actions are tinged with this form of selfishness, but the materialist's argument is only a half-truth; for, by the very statement of his objection, it must be evident that there must be higher as well as lower strata in our makeup, and that that higher is not developed to any noticeable degree by putting what we call "selfishness" into practice.

If the selfish course of procedure is, by the very fact of its defeating its own object, shown to be illogical, it stands to reason that a man would be foolish to work along that line of action, and he would do better to try a course of action that, being more logical and sensible, would promise better results. Unfortunately, the average man, while he may admit the sound logic of all this, is carried away by the immediate temptations of the moment, and allows his emotional and "desire" nature to sway him in opposition to what his reasoning faculties tell him is the right way.

This is the fight between good and evil—which we shall examine more closely later on.

I have found that the materialist does not, as a rule, live according to his own statement of life. Let me give here an example.

Years ago, when I was seeking TRUTH along the lines of materialism, I attended lectures given by various freethinkers, atheists, and agnostics. These lectures were made possible by the audience paying the small sum of six cents as entrance fee. I discovered that a large number of the audience consisted of miners from the adjacent villages and small towns, who, in many cases, walked ten to fifteen miles to the lectures so as to save the train fare, which went into the contribution box for propaganda work. That astonished me. I asked one of those miners his reason for so doing, for, as I said, he believed that as death ended everything, logically self-preservation was the fundamental of his belief and teaching yet here was he actually sacrificing something for the welfare of others. He replied that he was doing it for the sake of those who would follow him—his children and the children of those yet unborn. He couldn't see that his viewpoint was illogical, for—as I pointed out to him—why need he care if his and others' children had better opportunities, better conditions, and more liberty of thought? Why should he worry? Even supposing that they were better off as a result of his propaganda, the result of it all would be that when death overtook them in the due course of nature, all that betterment would be null and void. Those children might possibly live on a higher material plane than he did, but to what end other than the inevitable extinction of that development at death? However well off a man might be, the end—death and the blotting out of them—would be their portion.

Although my friend the miner could not see that his position was untenable and illogical, the incident made a great impression on me, for I saw clearly that, willy nilly, a man could not help being unselfish and altruistic in some of his actions at least. It showed me, too, that evidently there was something innate in man which the materialist had not taken

into consideration, and that nullified his own belief and teaching.

The question was: What was that "something?"

In my next letter we will examine the find the clue to that "something."

other statement to see whether we can

With the best of good wishes.

Aseka.

(To Be Continued)

* * *

GENERAL SECRETARY'S TOUR

It having been agreed by the General Executive that the General Secretary should visit the western Lodges a circular was sent out to the various Secretaries requesting an immediate reply as to the wishes of the Lodges and local members. Immediate replies were received from Edmonton, Vancouver, Orpheus, and Winnipeg Lodges asking for so many days each. Accordingly Edmonton will have three days; Vancouver six or seven; and Winnipeg four days. As Mr. Smythe leaves Toronto on the evening of March 29 and must be back by May 1 it will be seen that arrangements must be speedily concluded, and that there are only a limited number of days to be distributed. As planned at present the westward trip will be by the southern route, returning via Edmonton from Vancouver. This means that Edmonton will be visited about the last week of April. The object of the trip is to visit the Lodges and to give public addresses where possible. Private meetings, that is, meetings in private houses will not be objected to, if more public accommodation is impracticable. Members should realize, however, that what Theosophy needs is publicity. The following subjects for addresses are suggested: The Theosophic Trinity; The Secret Doctrine; The Casting out of Fear; The Gospel of Another Chance; The Ritual of Life; St. Paul and Theosophy; The Call of the Eternal. The first four deal with the four golden links in the chain of Theosophy (see The Key), the others with Cycles, Comparative Religion and Masters.

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OFFICIAL NOTES

On March 1 we had 568 members paid up as compared with 587 on March 1, 1925. Can the local officers remedy this?

* * *

Six bound volumes of The Canadian Theosophist are now available and may be had from the General Secretary's office for \$2 each post free. Title and Index for Volume VI may be had on application with postage.

* * *

"The Secret Doctrine" in one volume, \$8.50; "The Mahatma Letters" \$6; H.P. B.'s Letters to A. P. Sinnett, \$6; "Rational Mysticism," \$4 by William Kingsland; "The Key to Theosophy," by Madam Blavatsky, are available from the Book Steward, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto. Orders for books should not be sent to the General Secretary.

* * *

Once more the local secretaries and treasurers are requested to interview absent and indisposed members and those in arrears of their dues. We desire to know at headquarters what to expect from those still on the roll but now in-

active on account of arrears. A little effort at this time will enable us to show a considerable increase over last year's membership.

* * *

Mr. H. Daines, secretary of Vulcan Lodge writes: It was resolved at a meeting of Vulcan Lodge that we fully agree with the action taken by the General Executive in regard to joining the World Religion. We also wish to state you have our appreciation of the stand you have taken for pure Theosophy.

* * *

It is well to remember that William Quan Judge died at the age of 45 on March 21, 1896, thirty years ago this month. A generation has passed away since then, and those who have joined the Theosophical Society in the meantime have known little of his work or writings. He was one of the Founders of the Society, its first Secretary, and legal Counsel. His writings, especially Letters that have helped Me, and the Ocean of Theosophy, and his magazine The Path, of which there are ten volumes of most valuable Theosophical material, are little known to the present generation through the policy of silence and suspicion engendered by many who had the best right to love and admire him. Madam Blavatsky recognized him as her alter ego, and the only link between the White Lodge and America.

AMONG THE LODGES

The Annual Meeting of the Toronto Theosophical Society took place on February 17 when the yearly reports were presented and officers elected for the ensuing year. With much regret the resignation of Mr. H. R. Tallman, as secretary, was accepted, his residence in Hamilton making this necessary. His nine years' work in this position has been of greatest service to the Lodge. Mr. George F. Hobart was elected to the office. Mr. George Kinman presented statements of the funds, showing that the income for the year had been \$4,240.64 and the ordinary expenditure \$3,364.14 with a special expenditure for legal expenses in the renewal of the mortgages of \$871.13 leaving a balance on hand of

\$5.37. The mortgages amount to \$19,500. Miss Mary Henderson was appointed to the charge of the Lotus Circle, and Mrs. Haines to be convenor of the House Committee in the place of Mrs. Emylyne Wright, whose long services have been highly appreciated. The other officers were re-elected. Mr. Smythe, as president, spoke on the dangers that beset the movement from the setting up of leadership and cults based on leadership, with the consequent cry of disloyalty raised against those who saw things in a different light.

FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

For many years Mrs. Binks, South Shields, England, has been a student of Theosophy and an earnest worker in the Theosophical Society. She corresponded with Toronto in the old days of a generation ago when the Society was split open after its fashion over an earlier controversy. She stood then for independence of judgment and sincerity, and she followed this course throughout her life. This, we regret to hear, came to end on February 2nd.

* * *

Albert E. S. Smythe presided at the Conference of the Social Hygiene Council of Ontario of which he has been president for some years, on February 23. Reports from the 21 provincial committees were made and addresses were given by Dr. D. V. Currey, St. Catharines; Dr. Radford, Galt; Mr. Bowen, Kitchener; Mrs. Greenaway, London; Dr. Boyd, Fort William; Mrs. Todd, Port Arthur; Mrs. Black, Lindsay; Dr. Sutton, Peterboro; Dr. Bates, Dr. Fenwick, Dr. Pequegnat, and Miss Hewson, Toronto. It was agreed that the name of the Society should be changed to Health League. The Health Exhibits which had been sent out throughout the country had attracted many thousands of people. Model programmes for meetings were decided upon. This was pointed out as a necessity by Dr. Hardie.

* * *

Toronto Theosophical News reports that Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman, recently installed in succession to Rabbi Brickner in the Holy Blossom Synagogue, lectured in The Theosophical Hall on Sunday eve-

ning, January 17, on the subject of the contribution of the Jewish People to World Religion. Rabbi Isserman is a young man of about 28, but a man of mature thought and spiritual power. His fluent and earnest speech was pregnant with the influence of character. He displayed a breadth and tolerance which astonished some who have been thinking of the Jewish people in terms of the Christian pulpits. The only elders of Zion he recognized, he declared, were Isaiah and Amos, Hosea and Micah, Jeremiah and Jesus. His quotations from the Old Testament were sweeter than honeycomb, and he pledged his audience to a larger faith.

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor "Canadian Theosophist":—In the January issue of the "Canadian Theosophist" "W.M.W." quotes the following in his Article "Deplorable Publicity." "The Secret Doctrine distinctly proclaims that no Saviour of humanity can appear in the Kali Yuga or Black Age, the present period, according to Occult Teaching, through which the earth and its humanity are now passing. This period extends, we are informed, for 432,000 years, of which the first cycle of 5,000 years expired in the year 1897."

Would you kindly ask him to say as near as he can when the Lord Christ last visited earth, also the Lord Gautama? The "Key to Theosophy" says the latter was born in the 7th Century B.C. and is now called the "Saviour of the World verily greater than any god."

Sophia Fraser,
Nelson, B.C.

* * *

Editor Canadian Theosophist: On page 178, W. M. W. quotes the Secret Doctrine as Saying that no Avatar or Saviour of humanity can descend to earth during the Kali Yug. This began 3103 B.C., and continues till 427,000 A.D. according to the reckonings given. In that case who came 1929 years ago, and spoke in Palestine around 27 to 30 A.D. and established Christianity? He cannot have been a Saviour of Humanity, according to the Secret Doctrine. That is obvious! Therefore Christianity is not a religion founded by an Avatar. Personally, I believe

that Avatars do not 'incarnate' at intervals of two or three thousand years, but tens of thousands. However, the previous Avatars of Krishna spoke through specially trained disciples several times at intervals after their incarnation on earth, and that is what happened in Palestine, 27 to 30 A.D., and will probably happen several times during the Kali Yug, especially during the earlier part, while the impulse which they sent out by the last Avatar, Krishna, who died 3103 B.C., persists in a strong enough form. Mrs. Besant is not proclaiming the descent or reincarnation of an Avatar or Saviour of humanity, but only a message from such Saviour through a trained disciple, just as happened many times after the appearances of other Avatars, before Krishna. Yours cordially, Alice Warren Hamaker, Los Angeles, Calif.

* * *

H.P.B AND REINCARNATION

Dear Friend—It was very kind of you to publish the report of my speech at the National Council of Oct 3: (not a letter to the General Secretary) in your December issue, and to devote a short article on the same in your January number.

You have, no doubt unintentionally, misrepresented the meaning of some of my words and I crave the permission to correct you. The last paragraph in p. 194 opens with the words: "The idea that Madam Blavatsky knew nothing about reincarnation dies hard. It is a pity that Mr. Hare gives it another lease of life." I was not until now aware of the existence of this "idea" which I do not share and the passage in my speech does not convey or refute the "idea" which seems to be an absurdity. Madam Blavatsky wrote Isis Unveiled just after the Theosophical Society was founded and the Mahatmas Letters were written soon afterwards. Madam's knowledge of Reincarnation—I mean detailed knowledge of the Indian doctrine—was acquired after these Letters had been penned. Chronology must be respected here or we shall get into a state of chaos.

The passages on reincarnation "as correctly stated in Isis" (M.L. p. 46) go to prove that Madam Blavatsky in 1877 and the Mahatmas in 1881 (July 8th) held

much the same views on reincarnation which they both, at first, explicitly denied. See Index to Isis "Reincarnation, its cause I. 346, its possibility and impossibility, I. 351."

On p. 345 H.P.B. says "Reincarnationists quote Apuleius in corroboration of their theory that man passes through a succession of physical human births upon the planet until he is purged from the dross of his nature. But Apuleius distinctly says that we came upon earth from another one." On p. 346 she says ". . . Hindus dread above all things—transmigration and reincarnation; on other planets, never on this one" and on p. 347 "the former life believed in by the Buddhists, is not a life on this planet." On p. 351 she writes: "Reincarnation, i.e. the appearance of the same individual, or rather his astral monad, twice on the same planet, is not a rule in nature, it is an exception. . . ."

I was not aware of the article in which the word "planet"—three times repeated—was changed into plane, and I cannot see what difference it makes. Indeed, I regret to say the explanation is unacceptable to me. I read the passage quoted by you from the M. L. pp. 46, 100 and 117 etc. as showing that the Mahatmas after all did not think Isis quite correct on this matter and are moving towards reincarnation more definitely. In the S. D. and her late writings H.P.B. came to it finally.

The purpose of my speech was to show that "in the beginning" the idea was not required; that it is not in all the religions; and should not be (morally) nor can't be (logically) forced on us as one of the basic truths. I say nothing about its ultimate validity.

Yours sincerely,
William Loftus Hare.

IS THERE SOME SPECIAL BOOK YOU WANT?

But you are not sure of the title, or the author, or even if there is such a book to be had—

JUST WRITE ME—I AM IN

A POSITION TO HELP YOU.

N. W. J. HAYDON, 564 Pape Ave., Toronto.

MRS. BESANT AND THE L.C.C.

"I read in *The Canadian Theosophist*," says Mrs. Besant in *The Theosophist* for January, "a statement so inaccurate that I must enter a gentle correction. In the 'Official Notes' it is stated that I have obviously changed my mind regarding the Liberal Catholic Church since I wrote the letter to the T. S. on it, published in *The Theosophist* for March 1920. Here is the letter, so that Canadian members of the T. S. can read it—if they will. That the words quoted hardly convey the sense they had in the original may be seen in one case, where an apparently independent sentence is given as though following the preceding sentence in inverted commas: 'She adds: "We must not let it grow into the idea that all Theosophists are Liberal Catholic Christians." 'The sentence as to 'the idea that the Liberal Catholic Church had become a barrier, keeping out the ordinary public and prejudicing them against Theosophy,' as will be seen by reading the letter, referred to Scotland only and is on page xiv. That following 'she adds' is only half a sentence, and is on page xvi: 'The public has grown out of the idea that all Theosophists are Buddhists; we must not let it grow into the idea that all Theosophists are Liberal Catholic Christians.' Further on it is said that: 'Three activities have been established by this Convention, the Liberal Catholic Church, now to be known as the World Religion, into which the Theosophical Society is directed to enter by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Jinarajadasa.' There is no suggestion in my letter to the General Council that the World Religion is the Liberal Catholic Church; on the contrary, after reciting 'The Basic Truths of Religion,' the next paragraph runs: 'These are the basic truths of the World Religion. of which all religions are specialized branches; to proclaim and teach these the Theosophical Society was founded and exists.' Further, in saying this, the liberty of members of the T. S. was guarded by the specific statement as to the T.S.: 'It admits to membership all who desire to enter it, whether or not they hold any of these basic truths, or belong to any religion or to none, since all belong to the Univer-

sal Brotherhood of Humanity, of which it is a nucleus.' The letter runs:" etc.

I regret that our space does not permit publication of the letter, as it runs to nearly 3000 words. When I extracted the pregnant sentences in 1920 which were then quoted in the *Canadian Theosophist* it was not then, nor since, until the present time suggested that I had misrepresented Mrs. Besant. I hope all who can will avail themselves of the opportunity of reading her letter and judging if my quotations, which were taken from my previous article, are misleading, or simply an honest inference from what Mrs. Besant said. If I have betrayed her meaning I sincerely regret the misunderstanding that has kept us for six years in darkness as to her true meaning. I must confess that I am more in the dark than ever. Are we to understand that outside Scotland it does not matter whether the idea grows or not that all Theosophists are Liberal Catholic Christians? Or that it is only in Scotland that people are kept out of the Theosophical Society by association with the Liberal Catholic Church? In either case Mrs. Besant has had a different experience from us in Canada. And from what I hear from other countries I imagine she could find material to warrant a change in mind. It is news to me also that the World Religion is not the Liberal Catholic Church. The Only Official on Earth of the World Religion is a "Bishop" of the Liberal Catholic Church, and this undoubtedly misled me. Mrs. Besant will please kindly explain to us the difference between the World Religion and the Liberal Catholic Church. Mr. Loftus Hare has sufficiently demonstrated that the "Basic Truths" are far from basic, and are quite unacceptable to many of other religious creeds. I should think myself that a little ingenuity would have been able to devise a basis upon which a majority at least of the existing religions could have agreed. The failure to do this touches our confidence in the authority alleged to be behind the World Religion. And the liberty, which Mrs. Besant declared remains to members of the Theosophical Society after plunging the Society into integral union with the World Religion, seems to me very much like the liberty permit-

ted to prisoners in a jail to roam about the prison yard during the term of their incarceration. At the risk of giving further cause of misunderstanding I quote more fully a few sentences from Mrs. Besant's letter which I have been accused of misrepresenting. If Mrs. Besant has not changed her mind since 1920, she has wonderfully concealed her meaning.

"That our Christian brethren have caused some friction in Great Britain, Australasia and America is not the fault of the Church but of the unwise zeal, 'not according to knowledge,' of some of its members. I found in Britain that, in the Lodges, there was sometimes shown a disposition to regard non-Christian members, or even Christian members holding to the Protestant tradition, in whose very blood ran a dislike of ceremonial and a distinct dislike of Roman Catholicism and of Catholicism in general, as less good Theosophists than those who joined the Liberal Catholic Church, and the Lodges were made less congenial to them because of their dissidence, so that some even left the T.S. as having become sectarian. In Scotland, where Puritanism fought and died to break the Papal yoke and win religious freedom, the anti-Catholic feeling is strong, and the idea that the Liberal Catholic Church was the Theosophical Church had become a barrier keeping out the ordinary public, and prejudicing them against Theosophy. "American feeling runs high, because of certain Roman Catholic attempts to dominate American politics and thus to undermine the Republic. Unthinking people regard the word 'Catholic' as equivalent to Papalism, and as indicating the Roman Obedience only, forgetting that the Anglican Church is also Catholic, as is shown by its creeds. Hence the very name of 'Old Catholic' or 'Liberal Catholic' aroused angry antagonism among the ignorant. The fact that I have not myself joined that Church has, I fear, been unfairly used against it by some. I do not belong to any religious denomination, for the one which, by my past, is my natural expression, is closed against me by my birth in the West. But I regard the Liberal Catholic Church with the same loving and reverent sympathy as that with which I regard all sub-divis-

ions of the great religions." Again, "Lectures on religions come within our Second Object: proselytism breeds antagonism and is against our principles. The public has grown out of the idea that all Theosophists are Buddhists; we must not let it grow into the idea that all Theosophists are Liberal Catholic Christians."

I trust that we will not be found fault with for following this advice and pointing out when necessary that Theosophists are no more Liberal Catholic Christians than they are Mormons or Russellites or Christian Scientists or Holy Rollers or any other of the thousand and one new sects that continually spring up. If Mrs. Besant and her friends have made the identification with the Liberal Catholic Church a little easier for the "ordinary public" or the "ignorant" she will pardon us if more stress has sometimes to be laid upon the non-identity with the Theosophical Society of our neo-episcopal friends. Let it be said also that Liberal Catholics have had the same liberty in The Theosophical Society in Canada that has been guaranteed to all others. That they have used this liberty for proselytism is a matter of evidence. A.E.S.S.

MRS. BESANT'S LECTURES

One hears occasionally that the critical faculty should not be exercised in the Theosophical Society. This is probably the result in the main of not being aware of the difference between Lower Manas and Buddhi. Carping criticism never does much good, but discrimination and judgment are other things entirely. When Jesus says "Judge not, that ye be not judged" he is not contradicting himself when he says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Suppression of the truth is just as much of error as misstatement, particularly when it misleads others and sets them on wrong paths. If we do as we would be done by we shall not allow others to be misguided if we can prevent it, and especially when we have a duty laid upon us to guide aright as seems reasonable and according to our experience. Nor is this attitude incompatible with permitting perfect liberty to all who listen to take their own course, and without any feeling of disappointment or

chagrin over refusal to accept the guidance offered. Karma arranges for all that and all one can do is to advise according to the best of one's knowledge and belief and let it rest at that. Wisdom does not force itself on any one. One does not feel, either, under such circumstances, that it is necessary to tell all one knows in any particular case. If others do not care to accept a hint, a suggestion, a direction, given in good faith, and with due knowledge, then they can go ahead on their own responsibility and get their own experience. We are not in the denunciation business. I believe that many—the great majority—of our Theosophical membership throughout the world are being misled at the present time, but it would be foolish to be disturbed over this or vexed or indignant. Certain people require certain experience, and they won't be happy till they get it. They probably won't be happy then either, but they will at least know that they have only themselves to thank, and they have gained some independence of character by taking their own way. Another point of view has to do with the taint and soilure one may receive by associating with those who are taking a wrong course. "Light on the Path" gives the answer. "Shun not the soiled garment. Tomorrow you may wear it." None are safe from the snares of Mara but those who have attained. None are in more danger than those who are perfectly sure they are right and incapable of being mistaken.

In this respect it would be wise for some of our good friends to bethink themselves, after the manner that Oliver Cromwell suggested. "In God's name, my friends, can you not think you might be mistaken," he asked once, or something like it. And all of us should ask this question. Is it not possible that either those who expect a Messiah, or that those who do not expect one, may be mistaken? All I can say to any one is that on the evidence, as it appears to me, those who expect a Messiah under the conditions announced to us, are more likely to be mistaken than those who reject such a possibility. I have just been reading Mrs. Besant's lecture on "The Coming of the World-Teacher," and I found that she

seemed to be trying to persuade herself that a World-Teacher must be coming, but her arguments all seemed rather wide of the mark. And on page 21 she is honest enough to say: "I should be acting unjustly to you, should be untruthful to myself, if I pretend that my belief in the Coming of the Christ rested on all the arguments that may be put forward to convince those who know it not." It is from the Teacher Himself that she claims to have this conviction, and this being the case, one can have nothing more to say. It is out of no disrespect that one takes the ground that Mrs. Besant may be mistaken. She has admitted being misaken and having changed her opinion on previous occasions. Time is the only witness in such contingencies. We can all afford to wait. Without going to the addresses which were delivered at Omman and Adyar where the atmosphere is unquestionably liable to induce overstatement, one may take this lecture, prepared for public delivery in Queen's Hall, London, as a considered statement of the position affirmed. Personally, I find it wanting, but I recommend all students to read it, as the best that can be said for the cause it advocates. If they are convinced, well and good. If they are not, no harm is done. We want the truth.

I have also been reading Mrs. Besant's lectures on "World Problems of Today." Here we are on other ground entirely. Mrs. Besant has no apologies to make in these addresses and needs none. All the things we admire her for are fully evidenced here, just as all her amiable weaknesses are obvious in the later utterance. How can the same mind contain such a difference of thought? It has been the habit of the west for centuries to do this very thing, keeping religious ideas in a water-tight compartment quite separate and distinct from secular ideas. Mrs. Besant is still a clear-thinking secularist in one compartment of her mind. In another she deals with so-called religious problems in the style of her earliest Church education, and would lead us back to the Church acceptance of authority from which we have mostly been able to break away. These lectures on "A Survey of World Conditions," "The Problem of Colour," "The Problem of Nationality."

"The Problem of Education," "The Problem of Capital and Labour," and "The Problem of Government," sound like Mrs. Besant, the Mrs. Besant we used to follow. "The Coming of the World-Teacher" sounds like Mr. Jinarajadsa, Mr. Leadbeater and the seance room, the medium and the speaking trumpet. If standards be required, read "The Mahatma Letters" and note the virile and manifold difference. We get the truer note in Mrs. Besant's six lectures. "The true Evolution is not that kind of Unity which would abolish the gains that are obtained by the diversity." This is either true or not. I believe it is true. But the religious side of Mrs. Besant's mind would have us all bow down to one conception, and her followers in Canada have left the T. S. in Canada because they cannot have the unity which she here proclaims as inadvisable. "The most absolute Indian monarch was regarded as the administrator, not the creator, of Law; and, if he disregarded it, the Shastras, the scriptures, taught, the Law he disregarded would sweep him away and his House with him." She proceeds: "Many a civilization has fallen by disregard of this Law, which is perfect justice between man and man, class and class." All who transgress the Law will be swept away. This generalization cannot be too strongly realized. It is the basis of all social development. Taken in connection with the principle which she lays down, the real basis of democracy, "The Land belongs to the Nation," in the third lecture, we may readily find the origin of all national decline. The lecture on Education is particularly valuable. She upholds the principle that "Education should be fitted to the child, and not the child fitted to the Education that his elders have made a system for him." In dealing with Capital and Labour she sees clearly that the autocracy established by the great capitalists in Europe and America is a far more dangerous autocracy for the welfare of the nations than the autocracy of any single king. Pages 105-9 of this lecture are well worth reading as a picture of what civilization has done for our town-dwellers. If our civilization depends upon this it too will be swept away. After reading these lectures one cannot help regretting that Mrs. Besant

has lent herself to the sacerdotal schemes of those to whom she has committed the charge of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society. A. E. S. S.

MUTILATION OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

With regard to the statement by Mr. Jinarajadsa on the "Mutilation of the Secret Doctrine" in the January magazine and his hope that there will be no more mendacious statements about it, a hope in which we all join, the statement leaves many things to be cleared up. Granted that the gentlemen who, with Mrs. Besant's approbation and consent, altered the Secret Doctrine and other books had authority to do so, where is there any record of such authority and its extent. There must have been limits to such alterations. That they were confined to typographical corrections is the first natural assumption. That in fact they extended far beyond typographical corrections is obvious. It is fairly well known that the bona fides of Madam Blavatsky have been slighted if not entirely abandoned by both Messrs. Mead and B. Keightley. In his new edition of the "Pistis Sophia," for instance, a book which was first translated from the French by him in Lucifer, with notes by Madam Blavatsky, Mr. Mead omits all her notes and as far as his edition is concerned she might never have existed so far as any credit is given her. Yet Mr. Mead owes all his occultism to Madam Blavatsky.

Mr. Keightley is still a chela of G. N. Chakravarti, recognized by Mrs. Besant as an adept before she fell under the spell of C. W. Leadbeater. It was Mr. Chakravarti who first headed Mrs. Besant off the Blavatsky trail. Mr. Leadbeater has increased the speed and deflection of that stampede, which is now directed towards the Roman Catholic fold. In this it has followed exactly the lines on which Mrs. Tingley accomplished the downfall of the Theosophical Society in America, absorbed by the Universal Brotherhood whose performances at Point Loma have been paralleled at Krotona and Sydney. New methods were not needed when old ones were so destructively successful, and occultism,

black or white, is always economic of its forces. It is to the credit of the Point Loma people that they did not mutilate the Secret Doctrine.

The Adyar editions of *The Key to Theosophy* are also curtailed, and in this the Judge edition of 1896 followed the London one. The Voice of the Silence has some important omissions also in the notes, and anyone who cares to compare Mrs. Besant's manuals, notably "The Seven Principles," will be surprised at the alterations from the first edition.

A third and fourth volumes of the Secret Doctrine were not only promised, but it was stated that the third was ready and the fourth almost ready. What H. P. B. says on this point is very apposite to the present crisis, and what she says has been eliminated from the Adyar editions. This it is:

"Until the rubbish of the ages is cleared away from the minds of the Theosophists to whom these volumes are dedicated, it is impossible that the more practical teaching contained in the Third Volume should be understood. Consequently, it entirely depends upon the reception which Volumes I. and II. will meet at the hands of Theosophists and Mystics, whether these last two volumes will ever be published, though they are *almost completed*." The italics are in the original, page 798, volume ii.

James Pryse has stated that there was a pile of Mss. several feet high and this was corroborated by Claude Falls Wright, who was present when Madam Blavatsky died. He sealed up the rooms, and when Mrs. Besant returned from America and the rooms were opened there was no manuscript to be found, such as this promise indicated. It has been stated that Mrs. Besant's book, "A Study in Consciousness," was based on manuscripts left by Madam Blavatsky, but nothing official is available in regard to this. This is one of her ablest and most inspiring books and there is no need to try to rob her of credit for it, but it shows divergence from *The Secret Doctrine*. This divergence has been growing until now we have a complete return to "the rubbish of the ages" which Madam Blavatsky sought to have cleared away from the minds of Theosophists,

so that more practical teaching might be given them. The sacerdotalism, the ritual, the priestly humbug which she detested in common with all genuine occultists are being set up like the "abomination of desolation in the holy places," and "the people loving to have it so," we may be sure that the Mrs. Besant of 1891 is no longer present with us. She would have fared better at the hands of Mr. Chakravarti. She could not possibly have fared worse than at the hands of the regional bishop who has spread his net so luringly.

A. E. S. S.

THE BUDDHIST LODGE

IN LONDON

One of the most significant things in recent Theosophical developments is the institution of the Buddhist Lodge under the Theosophical Society in the British Isles. A charter has also been granted to a Lodge which is expressly devoted to the study of the original Theosophical teachings, as stated in the works of H. P. Blavatsky and William Quan Judge. The Lodge is named the "Judge" Lodge. These Lodges are an indication of what is possible under the Constitution of the Theosophical Society, and there is no limit to the possibilities in this direction. If all those who have turned "quitters" at various stages of its history had remained in the ranks there would have been no facile majority now to succumb to the temptations of Mara. The Buddhist Lodge has issued a Monthly Bulletin, of which the third and fourth numbers have come to hand and these prove to be the most valuable contribution to Theosophical literature which we have seen lately.

A discussion in the issue for January is opened by a letter taking objection to the Buddha being "described as being perfect in knowledge and conduct." "Although our Lord of Compassion is justly revered as the best and wisest of men, permit me to remind your readers that *perfect* knowledge is applicable to the Absolute, and to the Absolute only. As the Buddha repeatedly affirmed that He was only a teacher, it would be wrong practically to deify him in opposition to his teachings."

Another letter is quoted in part, as follows: "I venture to suggest that the Lodge is taking a wrong line altogether in endeavouring to synchronize Theosophy and Buddhism, as the two systems of thought are totally different in their very foundations Three main points emerge when Theosophy is discussed, namely, (1) The existence of the Masters of Wisdom. (2) The existence of the eternal Triad (Atma, Buddhi, Manas), the immortal Ego which reincarnates life after life in its progress to perfection. And (3) Karma and Reincarnation. Buddhism has no use for the Masters of Wisdom. Buddhism denies absolutely the existence of any ego or self in any shape or form; in fact, this particular tenet is the *keynote* of Buddhism. Buddhism does not teach Karma in the Theosophic sense, neither does it teach reincarnation. It would be absurd to do so since there is nothing to reincarnate. The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth is something totally different from the Theosophic doctrine of reincarnation All the silly twaddle about "precipitated letters," "fairies," "fourth rounders," "world chains," and (funniest of all) "world teachers," only indicate that certain people have to pass through the stage on their way to the Buddha-Dharma. One precipitated letter would be sufficient to get the "precipitator" kicked out of the Sangha. All such psychic childishness was forbidden by the Buddha. Let the Buddhist Lodge stand for Buddhism unadulterated."

The first observation we have to make, says the editor of The Bulletin, regarding this out-spoken criticism is that the attitude of the writer implies that he considers his interpretation of Buddhism is the only right one, and that any other is unworthy of any consideration whatever. To us, this attitude savours of egoistic intolerance; a decidedly anti-Buddhistic attitude, especially as the great majority of Buddhists are against his particular interpretation. The Theosophic interpretations of Buddhism is, of course, that of the Mahayana, and the adherents of the Mahayana Schools considerably outnumber those of the Theravada. Again, apart from the counting of heads, admittedly not a satisfactory meth-

od of deciding for or against a Truth, all the greatest philosophers and saints of Buddhism have belonged to the Mahayana School. Does our dogmatic friend suggest that all these schools and their profound thinkers are wrong? With regard to the "Masters," we do not see why a Buddhist should take so strong an exception to them. Buddhism believes in perfected men under a variety of names: Arhats, Bodhisattvas, Buddhas. Surely the Buddha himself was a Master! We are not bound to believe in any particular Master or Masters, but that is another matter. You are not bound to believe in any particular Master or Masters in the T. S.

As to the Theosophical doctrine of the Ego being different from that of Buddhism, the Bulletin continues, this again is a debateable point. As to there being no Ego to reincarnate, the Buddha never denied the Ego. A careful study of the Scriptures will confirm this. Remember the story of Vacchigotta, and the heresy of Yamaka. He did very definitely say (Samyutta Nikaya iii. 33): "Even so, put aside what is not you: what is not of you, your body, your mental faculties."

The reason the Buddha did not attempt to explain the Ego, or the nature of Nirvana, is not because they *are not*, but because they cannot be mentally discerned, they are not mental concepts, they are transcendental verities. Buddhism is not a rationalistic system, its verities cannot be discerned by ratiocinative processes: it is supreme Law, founded on the Wisdom acquired through transcendental experiences by a Master of Wisdom, who in that state of supreme enlightenment was omniscient and infallible. This leads us to the questions raised elsewhere concerning the omniscience of the Buddha. We suggest that our questioners are not differentiating between the Buddha and Gautama. Gautama was not omniscient, nor was he divine in a special sense: but the Buddha was omniscient concerning this Universe, and he had attained Supreme Divinity. We have not time, this article concludes, to lengthen this discussion now, but must content ourselves by saying that B.L. M.B. is intended to be a Bond of Union between Buddhists of all schools of

thought, not an exponent of the very limited ideas of one school only.

Christmas Humphreys in an article on "Buddhism and the Mahatmas" accepts the statements of Madam Blavatsky on this subject only "where they accord with reason and common sense," in which he says, "we are but following the strict injunctions of the Buddha, *as emphasized and reiterated by H. P. B.*" (S. D. Introduction xix.) Therefore, he continues, "if we deny the existence of the Masters we can only do so by claiming that the hypothesis of their existence is unreasonable, and that all those who testify to their existence are mistaken or deliberately lying." Continuing his essay, he says, "Is the Blessed One then a Master? He is more. 'Rare indeed is a Buddha.' There is but one Buddha for every Root Race of Man. The present Aryan Race is the Fifth of this World Cycle, and in every race the flower of the preceding race takes Buddhahood. Thus was Gautama the Buddha of the Fourth Root Race, even as the Bodhisattva or 'Buddha-to-be' will be the Buddha of the Fifth Root Race in countless years to come. Therefore is the Buddha described by one of the Masters as 'The Patron of all the Adepts,' and again, referring to the work of his previous life, as 'the Reformer and Codifier of the Occult system.' (M.L. p. 43). In another letter, the Master K. H., in pointing out the absurdity of the God idea, refers to the Buddhist Temples thus:—'In our temples there is neither a god nor gods worshipped, only the thrice sacred memory of the greatest as of the holiest man that ever lived.' (M.L. 53) And here it might be pointed out for the benefit of those who still imagine that Theosophy knows a personal God, that the above quotation is taken from a letter written by one of the true founders of the T. S. If further proof be wanted, study section 5 of the Key to Theosophy by H. P. B. The Ancient Wisdom knows only 'an Omnipotent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception, and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similtude' (Secret Doctrine, p. 14, 3rd Ed. 42.) Hence the 'wise and noble silence' of the Buddha on the nature

of the Real." There follows the assertion that the Buddha is with men yet although passed from sight into Nirwan. "What is more, once a year, on the full moon of May, so the esoteric tradition runs, the shadow of the Blessed One falls across the earth, and before the eyes of the real Buddhist Sangha, the Great White Lodge, assembled in a valley in the Eastern Himalayas, He appears once more to those who strive to follow Him."

"So does the teacher live on in what he taught, even as the Teacher of the 19th century, Mme. Blavatsky, lives on in the 'S.D.' that, under the dictation of her Masters, she gave to the world. Writing to Mr. Sinnett in 1886, she describes the gloomy outlook for spiritual truth in Europe, but adds: 'If we remain ten persons in the Society united strongly it *cannot* die and my Secret Doctrine is there.' (Blavatsky Letters, p. 178) But whereas the Blessed One has passed from this world, only returning on the full moon of May, those Masters whose Agent and amanuensis H. P. B. was, are still in the world, and willing to teach the Ancient Wisdom to all who are willing to tread the self-same Path they trod in lives gone by."

Another valuable article in the Bulletin is by Kay Brittlund on "The Use and Abuse of the Personal God." In it he says: "With one exception all religions include among their dogmas belief in a personal god. That exception is Buddhism, which ever urges its devotees to think for themselves and depend on no crystallized dogmas. Mahatma K. H. says that the idea of god is an acquired notion, and further remarks that humanity must be relieved of this 'nightmare.' This sentence alone should encourage all Buddhists and true Theosophists to play their part in helping to wake those sons of humanity whose souls are asleep and whose personal impermanent selves are blinded by the 'Great Heresy.' Mr. Brittlund points the arguments in favour of the personal view of God, and distinguishes between the Materialists who not only deny the existence of the personal God, but further admit no spirituality or underlying noumenon whatsoever, and those who believe the immortal Self which is the SELF of everything. "When man realizes the perniciousness of his anthropo-

morphic religion he must abandon this false god outside himself and proceed to turn inwards. He must tread the Path that leads to the Oneness. He must learn to stand alone, to rely on no one and nothing but his own innate powers which so long have lain dormant and must be aroused."

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

We must once more return to that greatest of all the Patristic frauds; the one that has undeniably helped the Roman Catholic Church to its unmerited supremacy, viz.; the bare-faced assertion in the teeth of historical evidence, that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome. It is but too natural that Latin clergy should cling to it, for, with the exposure of the fraudulent nature of this pretext, the dogma of apostolic succession must fall to the ground.

There have been many able works of late, in refutation of this preposterous claim. Among others we note Mr. G. Reber's, *The Christ of Paul*, which overthrows it quite ingeniously. The author proves, 1, that there was no church established at Rome, until the reign of Antoninus Pius; 2, that as Eusebius and Irenæus both agree that Linus was the second Bishop of Rome, into whose hands "the blessed apostles" Peter and Paul committed the church after building it, it could not have been at any other time than between A.D. 64 and 68; 3, that this interval of years happens during the reign of Nero, for Eusebius states that Linus held this office twelve years (*Ecclesiastical History*, book iii. c. 13), entering upon it A.D. 69, one year after the death of Nero, and dying himself in '81. After that the author maintains, on very solid grounds, that Peter could not be in Rome A.D. 64, for he was then in Babylon; wherefrom he wrote his first Epistle, the date of which is fixed by Dr. Lardner and other critics at precisely this year. But we believe that his best argument is in proving that it was not in the character of the cowardly Peter to risk himself in such close neighbourhood with Nero, who "was feeding the wild beasts of the Amphitheatre with the flesh and bones of Christians" at that time.

—Isis Unveiled, ii. 124-5

COL. OLCOTT'S

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

Issued July 27, 1891.

As he survivor of the two principal Founders of the Theosophical Society, I am called upon to state officially the lines upon which its work will be prosecuted. I therefore give notice—

1. That there will be no change in the general policy, the three declared objects of the Society being strictly followed out, and nothing permitted which would conflict with the same in any respect.

2. The Society, as such, will be kept as neutral as heretofore, and as the Constitution provides, with respect to religious dogmas and sectarian ideas; helping all who ask our aid to understand and live up to their best religious ideals, and pledging itself to no one more than another.

3. The untrammelled right of private judgment and the absolute equality of members in the Society, regardless of their differences in sex, race, colour, or creed, is reaffirmed and guaranteed as before.

4. No pledges will be exacted as a condition of acquiring or retaining fellowship, save as provided in the Constitution.

5. A policy of open frankness, integrity, and altruism will be scrupulously followed in all the Society's dealings with its members and the public.

6. Every reasonable effort will be made to encourage members to practically prove by their private lives and conversation the sincerity of their Theosophical profession.

7. The principle of autonomous government in Sections and Branches, within the lines of the Constitution, and non-interference by Headquarters, save extreme cases, will be loyally observed.

To these seven paragraphs Col. Olcott added these remarks: "Any officer of a Branch, or other person concerned in the management of any portion of the Society's activity, who will keep strictly within the lines placed in the above Notice, will not go far wrong nor compromise the Society in the eyes of the public.