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The Study of "The Voice of the Silence"

By James Morgan Pryse.

PRELUDE

These comments on the Voice are for "the few" who study it to learn the true Occult teachings which, put into practice, give the Noetic faculties whilst avoiding the dangers of undisciplined psychism.

Therefore those so-called "students of Theosophy" who look upon H. P. B.'s books as Infallible Scriptures and study them only in the dead-letter, from which they formulate lifeless dogmas, instead of trying to gain a clear and comprehensive view of the Esoteric Philosophy, need read no further.

As H. P. B. says in the Key to Theosophy: "Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been born and bred in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biassed by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led away by it, the result can only be that the

Society will drift on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die." All these evils, and many more, have befallen the Society as a whole and each of its schismatic offshoots. If a majority of its members had with open minds comprehensively studied H. P. B.'s teachings, so as to grasp their true meaning, the Society would not have plunged, as it has, into the abysmal absurdities of Neo-Theosophy.

It is not psychism, really, that has cast the various "leaders" and their fatuous "followers" into the Stygian darkness of Neo-Theosophy and sectarianism; for none of them—not even their "trained clairvoyant," their "Arhats" or their "World-Teachers"—have developed even the lower psychic faculties of clairvoyance and clairaudience. A distempered fancy, coupled with an indisposition to adhere to the truth, is not psychic vision. *No person who has to an appreciable degree developed the psychic faculties could for a moment be deceived by the preposterous fabrications of the Neo-Theosophists and rival sectarians.*

However, there remain in the T. S. a few real students of Esotericism, and to these the Voice is of inestimable value. It is for these few, not for others, that the following brief comments on the Voice are written. Anything like a complete

commentary is, of course, out of the question. All that is attempted here is to loosen some of the knotty points in the text, which presents more difficulties to the student than any other of H. P. B.'s writings. It is usually read only as a devotional book, and as such its great value is that it inspires exalted emotions even in those who read it uncritically and with but a hazy notion of its meaning. But any clear-thinking student who is striving to get at the core of its teaching will not find it easy to do so. Passing over, as unimportant, the many mixed metaphors, hyperboles, and unidiomatic expressions, he will have to distinguish between the genuine teachings and the bogus Buddhistic ones which were injudiciously included, and also separate the purely moral maxims from the Yoga-instructions and arrange the latter in proper sequence. For H. P. B. has—whether purposely or not—placed many of the precepts in what is obviously the wrong order.

To study H. P. B.'s works understandingly it is necessary to take into consideration her peculiar literary methods, or rather lack of method. She wrote offhand, with little planning ahead, so that her work never exhibits the systematic, progressive development of subject-matter characteristic of a school textbook. Even in her commentary on the "Stanzas of Dzyan" she sometimes passes over difficult points which really require elucidation, while writing lengthily about less important ones that may have allured her pen and sometimes lead to actual digressions. The student who recognizes these and other peculiarities in her writings (as he can hardly fail to do if he is passably well-educated), and allows for them, will be able to see far more clearly the essentials of the philosophy than is possible for Theosophists who maintain that H. P. B.'s books are flawless, textually perfect expositions of the Esoteric Doctrine—a claim which she herself undoubtedly would have ridiculed.

H. P. B. states that the Voice is composed of selections ("Chosen Fragments") translated from the "Book of the Golden Precepts." Some of these Pre-

cepts, she says, "are pre-Buddhistic, while others belong to a later date." Certain passages in the Voice are evidently of so late a date that they are not even truly Buddhistic; for they enunciate doctrines that are neither orthodox nor esoteric. As these pessimistic passages, derived from decadent Buddhism, and sharply discordant from the esoteric doctrines, surely were not included in any book of esoteric instructions, there is more than a suspicion that in translating the Golden Precepts H. P. B. did not tie herself down to the text, but exercised the same freedom that Fitzgerald used in translating the quatrains of Omar Khayyam. The English poet added a few quatrains of his own to those he translated but, since these interpolations are in no way inferior to Omar's epigrams, no injustice was done the Tent-Maker, and the world was enriched by so much more good poetry—if an agnostic, hedonistic poem really adds anything to the world's literary wealth. However, after the Voice had been published, H. P. B. wisely directed that the objectionable passages should be expunged from future editions.

WHAT "THE SILENCE" AND "THE VOICE" SIGNIFY

The use of the term "Silence" for the Unmanifested, the Absolute, is very ancient. Thus, Damaskios says, "Like others of the Foreigners, the Babylonians pass over Sige (the Silence), the One Origin of the Whole, and make two—Tauthe and Apason, making Apason the husband of Tauthe, and calling her the Mother of the Gods." In Theosophical terminology, they passed over the Absolute, and began with the Androgynous Logos. Reduced from macrocosmic to microcosmic terms, the Silence is Atma, and the Voice is Manas, the Nous. The true Ego, the Nous (the "Voice"), is the "Silent Watcher" of the "Stanzas of Dzyan" and the "Silent Speaker" (an oxymoron) of the Voice of the Silence. In Samadhi, the final stage of Yoga, the lower mind becomes, for the time, one with the Higher Mind, the Nous; there-

fore it is said in the Voice of the Silence that only at the very end of the Path can the "Voice" be heard. After stating that the "Soul" (lower mind) must be united to the "Silent Speaker," the text continues: "For then the Soul will hear, and will remember. And then to the inner ear will speak the Voice of the Silence, and say"—but what follows is sadly dislocated, being only rudimentary instructions concerning the three "Halls," the Physical, Psychic and Noetic Worlds—instructions which would be familiar to any student before he took the first step in practical Yoga.

In *Light on the Path*, a treatise written in clear and exquisite English, but too mystical and abstruse for all but a very few students, it is said:

"Out of the Silence that is peace a resonant Voice shall arise. And this Voice will say: It is not well. Thou hast reaped; now thou must sow. And, knowing this Voice to be the Silence itself, thou wilt obey.

"Thou who art now a disciple, able to stand, able to hear, able to see, able to speak; who hast conquered desire, and attained to self-knowledge; who hast seen thy soul in its bloom, and recognized it, and heard the Voice of the Silence—go thou to the Hall of Learning, and read what is written there for thee."

And in a footnote is this explanation: "To hear the Voice of the Silence is to understand that from within comes the only true guidance; to go to the Hall of Learning is to enter the state in which learning becomes possible. Then will many words be written there for thee, and written in fiery letters for thee easily to read. For, when the disciple is ready, the Master is ready also." Verily the *Nous* is the True Guide; and in the Hall of that Master the words are indeed "written in fiery letters." In the Voice the disciple who has reached the stage of Samadhi is thus apostrophized:

"Behold! thou hast become the Light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art Thyself, the object of thy search, the Voice unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin

exempt, the Seven Sounds in one, the Voice of the Silence."

The plane of the *Nous* is called the Hall of Learning in *Light on the Path*; and that treatise clearly distinguishes between the "astral" plane and the "divine astral" plane, which is a plane where wisdom, and therefore order, prevails." But H. P. B. makes the Hall of Learning, which she qualifies as "*Probationary Learning*," to be "the astral region," "the world of mediums." That, however, is not the world meant by *Light on the Path*, which says, "This inner world is called Astral by some people, and it is as good a word as any other, though it merely means starry," and elsewhere calls the "divine Soul" the "Starry Spirit." Knowing full well the perils to be encountered on the astral plane, H. P. B. wisely made her warning very emphatic. Yet it is well to bear in mind that, as said in *Light on the Path*, "close to the central heart of life, on any plane, there is knowledge, there order reigns completely; and chaos makes dim and confused the outer margin of the circle." The two manuals on the inner life differ, not in their teaching, but merely in the wording.

A PRELIMINARY GLANCE AT THE THREE "FRAGMENTS"

Of the three "Fragments" into which the Voice is divided, the first, "The Voice of the Silence," is really a short treatise on Yoga-contemplation; but the instructions given are too incomplete and disconnected to constitute a practical manual, and they are copiously interspersed with ethical precepts which pertain, not to Yoga, but to the preparatory purification without which no true Yoga is possible.

The third "Fragment," "The Seven Portals," should come next in order after the first; for it takes up the subject of Yoga at the point where the first "Fragment" leaves off. The latter treats of Yoga up to the stage (Samadhi) where the disciple "enters the state in which learning becomes possible," the Noetic consciousness, and hears "the Voice of the Silence," thus realizing "that from within comes the only true guidance." Thereupon, having found his Teacher, the dis-

principle is entitled to pass on to the occult training (practicable only in a School of Initiation) by which, at the final purification of his whole nature, the "lunar body" (Linga Sharira) is transfigured into the "solar body," that of the Nirmanakaya.

The second "Fragment," "The Two Paths," is merely a sort of interlude. Its title is misleading, and the treatment of the subject, which includes some fallacious teachings, is confusing. I say this boldly and emphatically, inasmuch as the usefulness of the Voice has been greatly impaired by the inclusion in it of erroneous exoteric doctrines borrowed from sectarian Buddhism. Moreover, sectarians in the T.S., whose zeal exceeds their learning, have waxed rancorous because Mrs. Besant, obeying H. P. B.'s direction, attempted to free the text from these spurious doctrines. These sectarians have lately put forth a new edition of the Voice, slavishly reproducing even the paging of the uncorrected first edition, in a misguided effort to establish ineradicably among Theosophical teachings these pessimistic tenets taken from exoteric Buddhism.

FRAGMENT I

The instructions given in the Voice are for all students who aspire to practise Yoga, and not merely "for those ignorant of the dangers of the lower *iddhi*" (psychic faculties and powers). Indeed, in the whole book, from cover to cover, all that is said about those "dangers" is that the Hall of Learning ("the world of mediums") is "dangerous in its perfidious beauty," so that it bewitches the senses and "leaves the unwary an abandoned wreck," and though it contains "the blossoms of life," they are "stupifying," and every blossom has "its serpent coiled around its stem." Save for these vague scraps of information, "those ignorant of the dangers" of astralism will, after reading the book, remain as ignorant as they were before. The dangers are indeed many and terrible; but, since the Voice does not specify any of them, the subject need not be pursued further here. For the real subject of the Voice is the glory of spiritual attainment, which is eloquent-

ly set forth in the following passage:

"Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance. And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom. Unsheltered by the hand of Matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit—the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms. Then will she show thee the means and the way, the first gate and the second, the third, up to the very seventh. And then the goal, beyond which lie, bathed in the sunlight of the Spirit, glories untold, unseen by any save the eye of Soul."

"Nature," here personified in its metonymic sense, stands for the collective powers and forces which bring the universe into existence. All these energies and elements are modifications of the Light of the Logos, which in the Voice is termed Alaya. "Matter" is only a resultant of these forces, and has no entity apart from them; moreover, the material world is one of the "kingdoms" of Nature referred to in the text. To imply that Matter and Spirit are contradistinctive is unphilosophical and therefore misleading. As Laotse says, "The Spiritual and the Material are the same; this sameness is a mystery; the apprehension of this mystery is the beginning of wisdom." Or, in the words of another sage, "If thou wouldst understand the Within, open wide thine eyes upon the Without." In Yoga Vidya the knowledge gained on the higher planes must be brought down to the physical, waking consciousness; and in the Perfective Work the finer elements of the physical body (which compose the Linga Sharira) form the Trikaya, the thrice-transmuted body of the "path of Liberation."

To "help Nature," in the occult way, is to assume "conscious control of the forces of evolution." These forces are primarily the radiations of the Light of the Logos, Daiviprakriti and the six Shaktis, and from them spring all the energies and elements of the various planes of existence.

Of the subtle (astral) elements, the four which are fully manifested are termed Fire, Air, Water and Earth. From these come the gross (physical) elements: the metallic gas hydrogen, atomically the simplest and also the lightest of the elements, and therefore hypothetically the basis of all the others, corresponds to Air, while oxygen, nitrogen and carbon correspond respectively to Fire, Water and Earth. These four elements in combination are the basis of all organic life. The hydrogen-atom is triple, and corresponds to the Monadic Triad. Therefore it is futile to try to draw a sharp line of demarcation between Spirit and Matter. It is through the action of the Shaktis, the Causative Forces of Evolution, that man can become a co-worker with Nature, and upon them all progress in Yoga depends. In man, they are the energies of his Nous, and they can be brought into play only by the Nous, the Divine Ego. Those who attempt to "rouse Kundalini" by concentrating on the Chakras can do no more than stir up the "astral fire"—usually with dire consequences to themselves. The seven "gates" referred to in the text are seven stages of Yoga, and the "goal" is the eighth, Samādhi.

H. P. B. begins her exposition of Yoga with Dharana, the sixth stage, and refers to Dhyana, the seventh, and Samadhi, the eighth. But in other passages she says that "the Dhyana haven" is the sixth, and gives Titiksha as the fifth stage, instead of Pratyahara, and also substitutes Dharsana for Dharana. Presumably these are merely slips of the pen; but they may be a bit puzzling to students who look for exactness. In actuality, Dharana is the first stage; for the five so-called stages preceding it are merely preparatory exercises. The eight stages are: 1, Yama, forbearance; 2, Niyama, observance; 3, Asana, posture; 4, Pranayama, breath-control; 5, Pratyahara, abstraction; 6, Dharana, concentration; 7, Dhyana, meditation; 8, Samadhi, Noetic consciousness. Shankaracharya gives twelve preparatory stages, followed by: 13, Dharana; 14, Atma-dhyana; 15, Samadhi; and adds that "the real samadhi is called Jnana" (know-

ledge). Dharana is defined by H. P. B. as "the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses." And yet she says: "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." The latter statement is extravagantly hyperbolic. The lower, reasoning mind when taking cognizance of the world without is not a "Slayer of the Real;" and the disciple does not "slay" his mind by concentrating it exclusively, during Yoga-meditation, upon the world within.

Again, it is said to the disciple: "Before that path is entered, thou must destroy thy lunar body, cleanse thy mind-body, and make clean thy heart." The "lunar body" is, as the term is usually understood, the Linga Sharira; and its destruction would result in the immediate death of the physical body. But H. P. B. explains in a footnote that by "lunar body" she means "the Kama-rupa, or body of desire"—which, however, is not a body until after death. The mind is not a "body;" but, since each of man's bodies is, on its proper plane, an instrument of the mind, all of them may be called mind-bodies, in the sense that they belong to the mind. In no other sense can any "body"—not even the "imperishable astral," or Augoeides—correctly be called a "mind-body." However, H. P. B. explains in another footnote, though not very clearly, that the Kama pertains to "the astral or personal Self," and the mind to "the reincarnating Ego." The latter is not the Divine Ego, the Nous. The lower mind, when purified, directed toward the Divine Self, and maintained, for the period of meditation, in the blankness of quiet receptivity, becomes the Antahkarana, the "bridge" between the reincarnating Ego and his "Silent Watcher," the Higher Self.

Dharana has five states, marked by the successive awakening of the inner senses, followed by the "sacred Triangle," which marks the final state of Dharana, the sixth stage of Yoga, which is followed by Dhy-

ana. The statement in the Voice that "the sacred Triangle" "precedes Dharana" is obviously either a slip of the pen or a misprint; for it should read "precedes Dhyana," the seventh stage, in which, as said elliptically in the text, "the Three" "become one Star," and this is "Dhyana, the right precursor of Samadhi." The musical sounds heard after passing into the Dharana stage are of course subjective, but they are seemingly objective, the final three being startlingly loud. They are caused by the Sushumna "ray" of the Kundalini-shakti. The seven mystic "Sun-rays," Sushumna, Hariksha, etc., correspond to the Shaktis. The Sushumna, said to be the ray of the Sun reflected from the Moon (hence polarized), is the one that opens the "third eye" and quickens all the inner senses. Nine sounds are correctly enumerated and described in the Dnyaneshvari; but in the Voice, which describes them in similar language, only seven are given. No mention is made of the colours which precede the sounds.

Samadhi is said (in footnotes) to be "the final stage *on this Earth*, unless one becomes a full Mahatma," and is "the state in which the ascetic loses the consciousness of every individuality, including his own. He becomes the All." In Samadhi the ascetic reaches the Noetic consciousness, and is for the time free from "the sense of separateness;" but if he were to lose the consciousness of his own individuality and "become one with the All," he would be annihilated. Of course H. P. B. did not intend that her hyperbolic expressions should be taken literally. For how could an ascetic, after losing his individual consciousness and becoming one with the All, thereafter become a Mahatma, and reach higher stages, on this earth or anywhere else? It is unthinkable that any state could transcend oneness with the All. The real reason why the ascetic, after reaching Samadhi, can go no further *while living in the outer world* (which is probably meant by "*on this Earth*") is that he has touched the plane where esoteric knowledge is accessible, whereupon he must either enter one of the Secret Schools of Initiation or stop short of gaining that knowledge. To

safeguard humanity, the Occult Knowledge is retained in the exclusive possession of the Lodges of Initiates. The ascetic's own Nous, his true Self, who of course is in harmony with all others in the Noetic Hierarchy, would deny him the knowledge which is never communicated to the unpledged and uninitiated; and if he enters any one of the inner Schools he must remain there for life. Therefore no "Schools" or Associations whose members (whether they call themselves Yogacharyas, Rosicrucians or what not) are free to mingle with the worldly people can by any possibility possess the Esoteric Doctrine. At the best, such Associations are but Schools of Philosophy, in no case having any "mysteries" beyond the lesser, psychic ones; and at the worst (as are most of them), they are composed of impostors and their dupes, steeped in various degrees of iniquity and folly. If any organization of mere students mingled with the masses were entrusted with Esotericism, it would soon cease to be esoteric. Hence, all and sundry of the numerous "occult" Societies which have sprung up of late years, and which profess to teach the Mysteries and to "initiate" the profane, are fraudulent; and any person who publicly claims to be a "trained clairvoyant," "teacher of Occultism," "Initiate," "Arhat," or the like, is either a deluded crank or a despicable charlatan. As said by the Master K. H., "No man or woman, unless he be an initiate of the 'fifth circle,' can leave the precincts of *Bod-las* and return back into the world in his integral whole," that is, without first being rendered powerless to divulge any occult teachings which may have been imparted to him.

FRAGMENT II

The first Fragment traces the progress of "the would-be occultist" (to use the words of Light on the Path) to the point where he has pressed "the latch of the gate which admits to knowledge." Having acquired certainty of the existence of the Sacred Science of Life, it becomes his solemn duty to bear witness of that Sacred Science for the encouragement of those of his fellows who as yet walk by faith

and not by sight. As said in *Light on the Path*:

"In claiming the power of speech, as it is called, the Neophyte cries out to the Great One who stands foremost in the ray of knowledge on which he has entered, to give him guidance. When he does this, his voice is hurled back by the Power he has approached, and echoes down to the deep recesses of human ignorance. In some confused and blurred manner the news that there is knowledge and a beneficent Power which teaches is carried to as many men as will listen to it. No disciple can cross the threshold without communicating this news, and placing it on record in some fashion or other."

This is the theme of Fragment II, in which the ascetic who has succeeded in the *Yoga*-meditation is called a "Teacher of Compassion," whose message is for candidates who, desiring wisdom, "await in ignorance and darkness." Yet in this Fragment nothing is accorded the candidates except teachings, some of them baseless, borrowed from exoteric and decadent Buddhism.

There are said to be "two paths," an exoteric or "open path," which is for "the crowd," and an esoteric or "secret path," which is for "the elect," yet these are called "the two paths in one." However, neither of them, as they are mapped out in the *Voice*, is the true path; both are exoteric figments, not paths. The so-called "Open Way" is the mistaken notion that a man can by theoretic study and pious observance selfishly obtain liberation, Nirvana. When he has accomplished this impossible feat he becomes a Pratyeka (individual) Buddha. In her *Theosophical Glossary*, a later work than the *Voice*, H. P. B. says: "The Pratyeka Buddha is a degree which belongs exclusively to the *Yogacharya* school, yet it is only one of high intellectual development with no true spirituality." "Without a teacher and without saving others," this unspiritual sectarian, "by the mere force of will and technical observances, attains to a kind of nominal Buddhahood individually, doing no good to any one, but working selfishly for his own salvation and himself alone."

From this it is vividly clear that the Pratyeka Buddha is no Buddha at all, nor even an Occultist; and he would be incapable of reaching Samadhi; let alone Buddhahood. He is merely a self-deluded wiseacre who stupidly fancies that he has become a Buddha. No Buddha or Arhat is polluted by the vice of selfishness.

The "Secret Way," which "leads to mental woe unspeakable," and dooms him "to live through future Cycles of Ages, unthanked and unperceived by man, wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the Guardian Wall" that is "built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented"—is likewise not a path, but is only a sentimental flight of unbridled fancy. Pardon the mixed metaphor, which confounds the masons with their handiwork, this doctrine must be rejected. For it is unthinkable that the Arhat, who has passed the Seven Portals, including "Viraga, indifference to pleasure and to pain," and "Prajna, the key to which makes of a man a God"—the Arhat who has gained "the boundless Vision," and whose "mind, like a becalmed and boundless ocean, spreads out in shoreless space"—should thereafter be plunged into unspeakable mental woe and suffer wellnigh endless torment. This picture of the woebegone Arhat is even less pleasing than that of the pedantic Buddhist sectarian who stupidly cherishes the delusion that he is a "Pratyeka" Buddha.

As the evils which afflict mankind are only those which men have brought upon themselves, and are therefore karmic, as would be also any "further and far greater misery and sorrow" which the future might hold for them, the doctrine of the "Guardian Wall" nullifies the doctrine of Karma. Indeed, this figment of the Wall is flatly contradicted elsewhere in the *Voice*, according to which the Arhat can only indulge in "helpless pity for the men of karmic sorrow; the fruit of Karma Sages dare not still. For it is written: 'Teach to eschew all causes; the ripple of effect, as the great tidal wave, thou shalt let run its course.'" So the Wall could

serve no useful purpose. The Initiates do indeed "shield mankind invisibly from still worse evils" by withholding from the profane all knowledge of practical Occultism; but this is not interfering with Karma, since the profane are not karmically entitled to that knowledge and are totally unfit to receive it.

Presumably, H. P. B. inserted these baseless sentimental teachings in the Voice for the purpose of discouraging all and sundry who imagine that one can follow the path with selfish ends in view, and inflate the personal self to divine proportions. But the sentimental and implausible doctrine has served only to perplex serious students, and has not prevented the upgrowth in the T. S. of a rank crop of "Pratyekas," who pose as "Arhats," "Initiates," "Chelas," etc., and who by their perversion of Theosophy have done more harm to the cause than its worst enemies ever could do.

FRAGMENT III.

This Fragment, "The Seven Portals," treats briefly of the higher stages of occult progress which follow the eighth stage of Yoga, Samadhi, when the disciple reaches the Noetic plane and may therefore come under the guidance of a Master. This necessitates his entering one of the Schools of Initiation, where he must remain for the rest of his life. For then he has entered upon a path which admits of no turning back; and no partly trained occultist could safely be permitted to associate with the outer crowd of mankind, save in exceptional cases and never without being psychologically incapacitated from betraying any of the forbidden knowledge.

The instructions in this Fragment are for the disciple who has achieved the Noetic perceptivity, and has entered upon the trials of initiation in a School of Wisdom. To others the instructions are, therefore, of theoretic interest only.

The seven stages of transcendent Yoga are termed "portals" giving entrance to Liberation, Nirvana; and the Paramitas (supreme virtues) are given as "keys" to the portals. But in the text the portals

(also termed "gates") are confounded with keys, and are also referred to as "paths;" and, again, the expression "four-fold path" is used. The Yoga set forth in Fragment I is here called "the rugged Path of fourfold Dhyana," thus using the terms as synonyms, though Dhyana is properly "meditation" and Yoga is "union," the uniting of the lower mind with the Nous, in Samadhi. The path is "fourfold" if Pratyahara, the preliminary training, is included. The four paths of Supreme Yoga are the four degrees of initiation, from Sowan (Srotapatti) to Arhat. "The Arhat," it is said in the Theosophical Glossary, "is one who has entered the best and highest path, and is thus emancipated from rebirth." And in the Secret Doctrine it is stated that beyond these "four grades of initiation," which are "the four paths to Nirvana," the Arhat, who "can see the Past, the Present, and the Future," has to conquer "three further higher grades." It is in these three higher degrees of initiation that the "three Vestures of the Path" (Trikaya) are woven. They are the Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya and Dharmakaya, and H. P. B. terms them "Buddhic bodies," since they are formed by the Daiviprakritic (Buddhic) forces in the Perfective Work. The seven bodies, four on the Lunar Path of Bondage, the cycle of generation, and three on the Solar Path of Liberation, the cycle of regeneration, may be thus illustrated diagrammatically:

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---------------------|
| Causal Body | 1 | 7 | Dharmakaya |
| (Devachanic state) | | | (Nirvanic state) |
| Permanent Astral | 2 | 6 | Sambhogakaya |
| (Chhaya) | | | (Perfected Body) |
| Impermanent Astral | 3 | 5 | Nirmanakaya |
| (Linga Sharira) | | | (Transfigured Body) |

4

Physical Body

In the case of the individual who is still in the bondage of material existence, with the dissolution of the physical body, after death in each incarnation, the impermanent astral body (Linga Sharira) likewise perishes, and some time hereafter the imperishable astral body (which is the "shadow" projected by the Dhyani) is merged in the Causal body for the Deva-

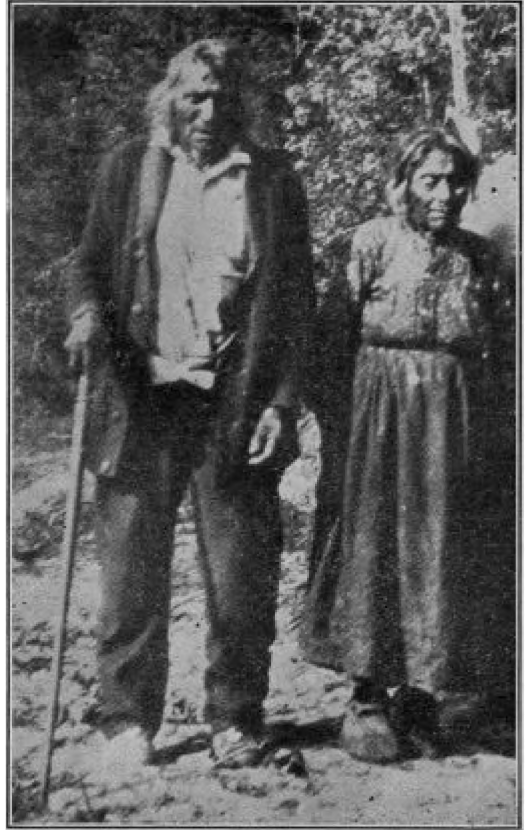
chanic period. At the end of that period a new Linga Sharira is formed, which serves as a pattern for the generation of the new physical body, and as its plasmic basis during life. But during the Perfective Work, which makes for Liberation, this inner body is so purified and strengthened by the action of the "fires" (occult forces) that it gradually displaces the gross outer body; and, when the latter is put off, the inner form, thus transmuted, is the Nirmanakaya, which merges into the Permanent Astral as the Sambhogakaya, and then into the Causal Body as the Dharmakaya, the Arhat thus passing into Nirvana.

The physical body is but an outer layer, so to say, moulded upon the Linga Sharira, the invisible inner body. When the inner body becomes the Nirmanakaya, it retains its invisibility, yet the Adept can at will make it not only visible but also apparently as substantial as the physical body which it has superseded.

In a general way these seven bodies correspond to the seven racial stages of humanity. In the fourth race the physical body was of almost incredible density. The three subtle bodies of the descending scale into "bondage" parallel the three bodies on the ascending scale to Liberation; and the Devachanic state, between incarnations, corresponds to the Nirvanic state, between the racial "rounds." Inasmuch as the ascending fifth race and the fifth stage of corporeal evolution correspond to the descending third race and corporeal stage, it follows that the great majority of the present fifth race, now past its mid-point, in their normal progress should have reached the Nirmanakaya status (as indeed they have, and have passed from view), and that only laggards should still be in the stage that properly belongs only to the later fourth and earlier fifth races. The present laggard humanity cannot immediately develop into a new and superior race. No imaginary "guardian wall" of Nirmanakayas can stay their moral deterioration or preserve them from the corrective measures which their karma is preparing for them. The Theosophical Society, intended

to be an Ark of safety, has been converted into a yacht for deluded joy-riders and is headed for the rocks. Only by the strenuous efforts of its few faithful and sensible members can the Society be brought back to its original purposes and made influential in saving mankind, not from fabled evils from without, but from themselves.

NATIVE CANADIANS



These two venerable Indians were photographed last summer at Whitefish Portage en route to Woman Lake. They are examples of the longevity of these ancient people. The man was 108 when the picture was taken and his wife 105. They belong to the Cree tribe. He is locally known as Skeezics.

Theosophy or Neo-Theosophy

To H. P. B. and W. Q. J.
(Continued from page 106)

These quotations have been made by a British student from the works of Madam Blavatsky and the Mahatma Letters, representing Theosophy as originally presented to the West through the agency of The Theosophical Society; and in contrast with excerpts from the works of later writers since Madam Blavatsky's death, showing the marked divergencies in their views from those of the earlier writers.

The Goal of Evolution—MAN

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of Sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who—whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyān-Chohans or Angels—are “messengers” in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits without any earthly alloy “which time is wont to prey upon” is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either *was* or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). They are *perfected*, when not incipient, men.

In sober truth, as just shown, every “spirit” so-called is either a *disembodied* or a *future man*. From the highest Archangel (Dhyān Chohan) down to the last conscious “Builder” (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are *men*, having lived aeons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other spheres; so the inferior, semi-intelligent, and non-intelligent Elementals—are all future men.—Secret Doctrine 1, pp. 274-5-7.

The nature-spirits constitute an evolution apart, quite distinct at this stage from that of humanity. . . . We know that, after that individuality has been attained, the unfolding of humanity carries us gradually to the steps of the Path, and then onward and upward to Adeptship and to the glorious possibilities which lie beyond. This is our line of development, but we must not make the mistake of thinking of it as the only line. . . . The nature spirits, for example, neither have been nor ever will be members of a humanity such as ours.—C. W. Leadbeater, *The Hidden Side of Things*, 1. pp. 116-7.

There are several parallel streams of evolving life, each mostly independent of the others in its development.

Two of these streams are those of Humanity and of a parallel stream called the evolution of Devas or Angels. As already mentioned, human life has its earlier stages of animal, vegetable, mineral and elemental life. From the same mineral life, however, the life diverges into another channel, through stages of vegetable forms, animal forms, then forms of “nature-spirits,” or the fairies of tradition, into Angels or Devas. . . . One stream builds organisms living in water, while three use forms living on land. Only one of the six streams leads into humanity; the other five pass into the parallel evolution of the Devas.—C. Jinarajadasa, *First Principles of Theosophy*, pp. 17-18.

Teaching on Lower Kingdoms vs “Group Souls.”

Man was the store-house, so to speak, of *all the seeds of life* for this Round, vegetable and animal alike. . . . Having

Thus by their repeated plant-reincarnations the monadic group-souls in the vegetable kingdom evolve, until those that

appeared at the very beginning, and at the head of sentient and conscious life, man (the astral, or the "Soul," for the Zohar, repeating the archaic teaching, distinctly says that "the *real* man is the Soul, and his material frame no part of him") man became the living and animal UNIT, from which the "cast-off clothes" determined the shape of every life and animal in this Round.

Thus, he "created" for ages the insects, reptiles, birds, and animals, unconsciously to himself, from his remains and relics from the Third and Fourth Rounds.—Secret Doctrine II. 290.

The Monad is a drop out of the shoreless Ocean beyond, or, to be correct, *within* the plane of primeval differentiation. It is divine in its higher and *human* in its lower conditions . . . and a monad it remains at all times, save in the Nirvanic state, under whatever conditions, or whatever external forms . . . the MONAD has, during the cycle of its incarnations, to reflect in itself every *root-form* of each kingdom. Therefore, the Kabalists say correctly that "MAN becomes a stone, a plant, an animal, a man, a Spirit, and finally God. . . . But by "MAN" the divine Monad is meant, and not the thinking Entity, much less his physical body. . . . It is correct to say that the man of this Manvantara, i.e., during the three preceding Rounds, has passed through all the kingdoms of nature. That he was "a stone, a plant, an animal." But (a) these stones, plants, and animals were the prototypes, the filmy presentments of those of the Fourth Round; and (b) even those at the beginning of the Fourth Round were the astral shadows of the present, as the Occultists express it.

. . . Thus the astral prototypes of the lower beings of the animal kingdom of the Fourth Round, which *preceded* (the *chhayas* of *Men*, were the consolidated, though still very ethereal sheaths of the still more ethereal forms of models produced at the close of the Third Round on Globe D. "Produced from the residue of the substance matter; from dead bodies of men and (other *extinct*) animals of the wheel before," or the previous *Third*

ensoul the highest members of the kingdom are ready for the next step.

This step carries them into the animal kingdom, and here they slowly evolve in their physical and astral vehicles a very distinct personality. . . . The monadic group-soul incarnates in a decreasing number of forms as it gradually approaches the point at which complete individualization will be reached. . . . At last the decreasing number of forms animated by a monadic group-soul comes down to unity, and it animates a succession of single forms—a condition differing from human reincarnation only by the absence of Manas, with its causal and mental bodies. The mental matter brought down by the monadic group-soul begins to be susceptible to impacts from the mental plane, and the animal is then ready to receive the third great outpouring of the life of the LOGOS—the tabernacle is ready for the reception of the human Monad.

. . . Doubtless, in the course of aeons of evolution, the upwardly evolving Monad of form might have unfolded Manas by progressive growth, but both in the human race in the past, and in the animals of the present, such has not been the course of Nature. When the house was ready the tenant was sent down; from the higher planes of being the atmic life descended, veiling itself in Buddhi, as a golden thread; and its third aspect, Manas, showing itself in the higher levels of the formless world of the mental plane, germinal Manas within the form was fructified, and the embryonic causal body was formed by the union. This is the individualization of the spirit, the incasing of it in form, and this spirit incased in the causal body is the soul, the individual, the real man. . . .

Further, this outpoured life reaches the evolving forms not directly but by intermediaries. The human race having attained the point of receptivity, certain great Ones, called Sons of Mind, cast into men the monadic spark of Atma-Buddhi-Manas. . . . —Annie Besant, *Ancient Wisdom*, 190-4.

Round—as Stanza 24 tells us. Hence, while the nondescript “animals” that preceded the astral man at the beginning of this life-cycle on our Earth were still, so to speak, the progeny of the man of the Third Round, the mammalians of this Round owe their existence, in a great measure, to man again. Moreover, the “ancestor” of the present anthropoid animal, the ape, is the direct production of the yet mindless *Man*, who desecrated his human dignity by putting himself physically on the level of the animal.—Secret Doctrine, II. 186-7.

the *Manasaputras*, the Sons of Wisdom who informed the mindless man, and endowed him with his mind (*manas*).—Secret Doctrine, II. 608.

Conditions During Sleep (“Invisble Helpers.”)

Q.—Is the apparent objectivity in a dream really objective or subjective?

A.—If it is admitted to be apparent, then of course, it is subjective. The question should rather be, to whom or what are the pictures or representations in dreams either objective or subjective? The physical man, *the dreamer*, all he sees with his eyes shut, and in or through his mind is of course subjective. But to the *Seer* within the physical dreamer, that Seer himself being subjective to our material senses, all he sees is as objective as he is himself to himself and others like himself.—Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge, p. 73.

Q.—What is the condition of the *Linga Sarira* (astral body), or plastic body during dreams?

A.—The condition of the Plastic form is to sleep within its body, unless projected by some powerful desire generated in the higher *Manas*. In dreams it plays no active part, but on the contrary is entirely passive, being the involuntary half-sleepy witness of the experience through which the higher principles are passing.—Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge, p. 76.

Mind is a name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will and Feeling. During deep plane, and memory is in abeyance; thus sleep, ideation ceases on the physical for the time-being “Mind is not” because the organ, through which the Ego mani-

While the man is what we call alive and awake on the physical earth he is limited by his physical body, for he uses the astral and mental bodies only as bridges to connect himself with his lowest vehicle. One of the limitations of the physical body is that it quickly becomes fatigued and needs periodical rest. Each night the man leaves it to sleep, and withdraws into his astral vehicle, which does not become fatigued and therefore needs no sleep. During this sleep of the physical body the man is free to move about in the astral world; but the extent to which he does this depends upon his development. . . . The educated man is generally able to travel in his astral vehicle wherever he will, and has much more consciousness in the astral world. . . . —C. W. Leadbeater, Text-book of Theosophy, p. 61. See also Annie Besant, Ancient Wisdom, p. 77.

The vast importance of the work which they are doing, and the enormous amount of it, makes it obviously impossible that they should take up personal work with individuals. In the cases where such work has to be done it is always delegated to pupils. . . . The work of the invisible helpers on the astral plane would simply not be done unless there were pupils at the stage where that is the best work that they can do. . . .

For those who are acting as invisible helpers on the astral plane there are no separate levels; it is all one. *In India the*

feats ideation and memory on the material plane, has temporarily ceased to function."

our "Ego is latent (in us) at the time of *sushupti*, *sleep."—Secret Doctrine, I., pp. 38 and 429.

*The three states of consciousness, which are *Jagrat*, the waking; *Svapna*, the dreaming; and *Sushupti*, the deep sleeping state.—Voice of the Silence, footnote p. 6.

(To be continued.)

An Introduction to PATANJALI

By Edith Fielding
X CONCLUSION

(Concluded from page 108.)

Having come to the end of the four books of Patanjali, we cannot help but wonder at the amount and depth of the teaching contained in these brief Sutras. The original is said to be less than ten pages of large type, yet these pages contain all the necessary instructions for those who would enter the spiritual life. For only such is the book written as the instructions are almost meaningless without practice.

But even with the best intentions the beginner along this path is bound to meet with disappointment and discouragement. One of the chief causes of disappointment is the fact that at first we over-value our capacity for this practice, and so we are unprepared for the unexpected and subtle ways in which Karma will work.

It is only logical to suppose that each one of us has an accumulated load of Karma which, in the ordinary course of life would be worked out during a very long period of incarnations. The one who has decided to quicken his evolution, and by an effort of will reach the goal in a comparatively short space of time, does not lessen his amount of Karma by this resolve, nor has he added to it, but that which might have been spread over hundreds of incarnations, is now concentrated into just a few, and occasionally seems to be overwhelming.

Those who are but beginning these practices, are mostly still engaged outwardly in the ordinary affairs of life, and it is oftentimes very difficult to remember the aspirations which prompted this beginning. The result is that when there comes a sudden precipitation of Karma,

idea of service on the astral plane is not so widely known as in the West.
(Italics ours.)—C. W. Leadbeater, Inner Life, 7. pp. 37-8 and 366.

due to the inner consecration, the outward man is thrown off the balance, and the real cause is, for the moment, forgotten. Unless great care is taken the lower nature will take advantage of this forgetfulness, and draw the Soul from the true Path into a swamp of dependency, or something worse.

This may happen time and time again before the Intuition is sufficiently developed to anticipate such things. If we are warned, we can endeavour to protect ourselves. Never must we forget that our greatest enemy is this lower nature, which will try by every wile which is known to secure the aid of the mind in turning the Soul from its course. This is quite natural. As said before, this deliberate work of liberation is thousands of years ahead of average humanity.

Those who are familiar with the occult teaching on this subject, as given in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, will understand that no more is expected of the race as a whole at present than a well-developed emotional nature, corresponding to the fourth round, and a certain amount of intellect, due to the evolution of the fifth race within that round.

The one who accomplishes the task of Yoga, not only lifts himself beyond his race, but enters the next round. Plato is said to be a fifth rounder, while the Buddha belongs to the sixth.

This question of rounds and races is not nearly so difficult as it sounds to be, and while some people will arrive at a knowledge of things through sheer devotion, there are others who would be greatly assisted by such a study, linking it up with the seven principles of man, of which

the rounds and races are but an aspect.

So, as a matter of fact, the lower nature has a quite legitimate protest to make to this forcing proposition, and the work of subduing it is exceedingly difficult.

Some understanding of the above should prevent us making the foolish mistake of thinking that these things are for everybody, most of us cast pearls before swine in our first enthusiasm.

On the other hand, we must above all things beware of that "holier-than-thou" attitude, one which is of a most crafty and subtle nature. If we are earnestly engaged in the business of self-training, we shall not have time for comparisons, and a continual recollection of the unity of Life, a gradual realization that there is only ONE, will eventually knock all such nonsense out of us.

The following words are attributed to Buddha: "If any man, whether he be learned or not, consider himself so great as to despise other men, he is like a blind man holding a candle—blind himself, he illumines others."

Difficult indeed is the way to holiness, and the only key to the obscurities of the teaching, is continual practice. With dispassion and discrimination must we consider the ordering of our lives, and be very sure we are not attempting; something for which we are not yet fit, something for which we are not yet free, so much discouragement comes as a result of neglecting this. With our limited vision we often fail to see that there is more merit in duty done than in untimely yearning for holiness.

However, the teaching which comprises what is called preparatory Yoga is within reach of all those who are seriously considering these things, and the most important part of this teaching, as Patanjali reiterates over and over again, is that which relates to the power of discerning the Real from the unreal. This, and this only, will change our attitude towards present circumstances, and help us to prevent any further entanglement in those particular things which are restricting us in this incarnation. In this way we avoid making fresh Karma concerning them,

Only by continuous effort can this discrimination become a habit, and through it, as the senses are turned inward, we shall find that control of mind which is said to be the whole mystery of Yoga.

This teaching is not peculiar to Patanjali, but is found in all truly spiritual books, and the student will find it very profitable to take as many of these as he can procure, pondering much on the seeming discrepancies, and rejoicing in the obvious points of contact.

"Mortification, study, and resignation to Ishvara." Here is the gateway to Yoga, and this is true Religion. Not to believe only, not to expect another to do the work, but each one to experiment and experience for himself, there is no other way.

The word Yoga means union, or yoking, the word Religion, to bind back, or to re-bind, and the whole process of Religion lies in the quest of the pilgrim Soul for its true home, the Source of its Being.

This state of consciousness has been given many names, some call it Yoga, some Nirvana (it has even been mistaken for annihilation), another name is Bliss, and it would seem that there could be nothing higher, but even here there is the danger of selfishness, the danger of passing into this state regardless of the rest of mankind. Those who aspire to the highest are bidden "remain unselfish to the endless end." When such a one attains this All Compassionate state, all nature is said to rejoice.

"Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE'S wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

JOY UNTO YE, O MEN OF MYALBA,
A PILGRIM HATH RETURNED BACK
'FROM THE OTHER SHORE.'
A NEW ARHAN IS BORN . . ."

As the Seeker travels along this road, faithful to Duty, his *actual* place and work in the Universe will become clear to him, and while the struggles with the lower man will be long and difficult, always there will be the Vision of the Great Companions to inspire him, the Vision of Those who have left their footprints for his aid.

AN ETERNAL VERITY

(The following is a report, slightly modified, of a dialogue in a study class).

A.—The Key to Theosophy says, on pages 2-3, "The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical school was one of the three objects of its modern successor, the Theosophical Society, namely, to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities." That is an important statement, well worth considering. Let us ascertain at least one of the eternal verities upon which ethics, or, as Annandale's dictionary defines it, "the science of duty" is to be founded.

B.—How shall we do that?

A.—Well, let us get down to first principles. Can a thing be and yet not be at the same time? I mean in the same way, as that chair exists on the physical plane. Can that chair be and yet not be at the same moment?

B.—It is impossible.

A.—Yet it might be said that while the chair exists as a chair, it might be considered not as a chair but as a multitude of atoms. Or while it is a chair it is not a very good chair. Still, those things would not make it any the less a chair?

B.—Of course not.

A.—According to H. P. B. ethics should be based upon truths, that is upon something which exists.

B.—Quite so.

A.—Men create codes of ethics, which they call laws. But these laws differ. In Ontario for instance it is not illegal to drink intoxicants in moderation, while it is illegal to have more than one wife. Among the Mohammedans it is considered wrong to drink intoxicants, while it is not considered wrong to have more than one wife. Would you say then that these laws are based upon eternal truth.

B.—They can't be; or there would be no difference between the laws of the two peoples.

A.—But why are laws made? Are they not an expression of the desire to formulate those rules of conduct by which men

may avoid the doing of injury to others?

B.—I would say so.

A.—There is evidently a general desire that men should deal justly with one another?

B.—Laws are the expression of it.

A.—Is it possible for this desire to be and yet not to be at the same time? Men break laws, you know.

B.—Yes, but because a few do so, the general desire does not cease to be. The imperfect chair is still a chair.

A.—But men do more than make laws. They go out of the way to help others. They found hospitals, sanatoria, create social service organizations, do a thousand kind actions daily. We might call this the expression of love, or charity or brotherhood?

B.—Yes.

A.—But many people do not do these things. They are selfish and inconsiderate. But in spite of this, remembering your argument about the chair, you would still say that love exists?

B.—Who can doubt it?

A.—Certainly not I. But have laws and helpfulness always existed?

B.—I cannot conceive of men living together without them, or, at least, without love. We might abolish laws.

A.—The fact that men have always lived in communities together indicates that love or brotherhood is one of the eternal verities?

B.—I think it demonstrates it.

A.—Ah, but tell me this—did you ever see that before?

B.—No, I did not.

A.—Did I tell you anything you did not know?

B.—No.

A.—I see you are surprised. May I suggest then that this interrogation may reveal to you something of the method of meditation, considered in its lower aspect. Thinking consists of asking questions of, and obtaining answers from, yourself. And be assured you have the ability to frame those questions, and (to speak poetically) within you is the initiator who will lift for you the veil of truth.

Cecil Williams.

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OFFICIAL NOTES

The article "Have I Lived Before?" on page 152, is by Lady Glenconner, and is one of a series published by Weekly Dispatch, London, England, last year.

* * *

All members are in arrears now for the present term, 1928-29, until they send in their dues, \$2.50 for Lodge members; \$5 for members at Large.

* * *

Collectors of Theosophical literature are making up their sets of the Canadian Theosophist, the eight volumes of which can be had for \$16. The \$2 volume is a cheaper and handsomer book than any one can have for the same money expended on binding the loose copies. Only a limited number are on hand.

* * *

The present number of the Canadian Theosophist has been printed in Hamilton. Hamilton is a city of 130,000, and is thoroughly up-to-date in all modern re-

spects. When the General Secretary went to Toronto in 1889 it had just the same number of people. Hamilton should do better in another 39 years.

* * *

Correspondence for the General Secretary can be sent either to his new address, 71 Sanford Avenue South, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, or to 26 Glen Grove Avenue West, Toronto, 12, Canada, but not to 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, which is the address of the Toronto Lodge, and where correspondence may be much delayed.

* * *

Another strong-minded brother writes us from the Philippine Islands to say that our attitude on some questions "is downright disgraceful." All the same he renews his subscription for our "often—but not always—very excellent magazine." That is the right spirit. Like what you like, and detest what you don't, but pay up for having your sentiments identified.

* * *

Dr. Arundale writes urging support for New India, the daily paper which Mrs. Pesant has revived to carry on the agitation for self-government on a wider scale than at present agreed upon. He suggests that each Lodge at least should subscribe, the amount being Forty Rupees for the year. Sample copies are being mailed to the Lodge secretaries.

* * *

One of our Canadian members who has gone to the uttermost East Indies writes to say he has determined to remain a member of the Canadian national society. "I consider it the most logical solution for me to remain in your section which I know stands for straight Theosophy," he says, and adds that his place of abode "is entirely the most beautiful and most interesting spot I ever came across, and I would be quite contented to spend the rest of my life here!"

* * *

Occult Science is a neat little monthly published by Mrs. Canelon at Mobile, Alabama. It has done the Canadian Theosophist the compliment of copying one of our articles, and unlike some of our

contemporaries has actually given us the credit. We certainly wish it well, though the difficulties of supporting a small magazine at the price of much larger ones is too well known to us. Every honest effort for Theosophy will bring forth fruit in due season. There is a condition—if ye faint not.

* * *

Dr. Arundale writes to ask for special support of The Theosophist, Mrs. Besant's own personal magazine. A lecture by the President, Mrs. Besant herself, will appear in each number in future. The "Astral Correspondent" of the magazine, whatever that means, is also announced to record an address delivered by the president to the residents of Adyar. "The Diary of a Hindu Chela" is also to be republished from The Path. We had this in mind to do ourselves. Now we wonder if they know at Adyar who wrote it.

* * *

Montreal is once more the first to send in the dues of all the members complete, as the Constitution calls for them. The registered letter containing the dues with the dues slips, all corrected where necessary where members had changed their addresses, was received by the General Secretary on the morning of June 30. This is what it is to be a model Theosophical Lodge, and all the other Lodges in Canada, and for the matter of that, in any other part of the world, may take off their hats to this record-breaker. We acknowledge with thanks such prompt and helpful service.

* * *

The new edition of The Secret Doctrine in Three Volumes is now for sale. This is the revised edition over which so much controversy has occurred. It includes the valuable index, and in spite of editorial corrections and changes it is better than any other book on Theosophy that the student can procure. The price is Two Guineas, or somewhere around \$12 in Canada. It can be had from the Book Steward of the Toronto Lodge, at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, where the single volume edition of the Two Volume edition can also be had for \$8.50. The

student of this book will at least know what Theosophy is, and will learn to recognize what Theosophy is not.

* * *

Dr. H. N. Stokes has a most poignant and characteristic article on the important question of our "Twentieth Century Inquisition" methods by police officers. The determination to bring-home guilt to an arrested person is wholly foreign to any proper agency of justice, but too frequently men are hanged just to maintain a reputation for efficiency by the police forces. The O. E. Critis also contains a keen analysis by W. Loftus Hare of Mr. Krishnamurti, whom he had heard speak on a number of occasions in London. It is hardly worth while breaking a butterfly, however. Dr. Stokes himself treats the "World Mother" in his usual style of demolition.

* * *



This is 26 Glen Grove Avenue West, Toronto, where The Canadian Theosophist has been edited since 1920. The house is now for sale.

* * *

Miss Winifred E. Miller writes from New Zealand that she has recently been appointed national representative of the Young Theosophists in that Dominion. She wishes to get into touch with federations of Young Theosophists wherever they assemble. Also with any progressive youth movements in Canada "formed with

peace-loving and idealistic aims." We trust all the boy scout, girl guide, junior red cross, brownie, and any and every other young people's organization will write Miss Miller at Waitakaro, Tokomaru Bay, North Island, New Zealand. In Canada, we may say, we favour the entry of our young people into the other organizations rather than segregating our young people away off in corners by themselves. Theosophy, we think, is to influence others, and not to be confined to our own family circles.

* * *

Mr. J. R. Aria writes to say that the Forty-Third National Society has been formed as the Theosophical Society in Greece, the Charter being dated May 21, 1928. Mr. B. D. Krimpas, 20 Homer Street, Athens, Greece, is the General Secretary. We are glad to hear of the extension of the work to the ancient land of Greece, and we trust that Greece will be true to her ancient traditions and seek out the truth from her own shrines and sources without fouling them with the fogs and miasmas which abound among our astral leaders. Greece might make a notable contribution to Theosophy if she took up the real Theosophy of her ancient teachings. Mr. Price in his "Adorers of Dionysius" and "Prometheus Bound" has unveiled some of these mysteries, and they will help our Grecian brethren to take up the work if they have not yet done so. We wish them all joy and speed in the Great Work.

* * *

The publication is announced of "The Evidence of Immortality," by Dr. Jerome Anderson at \$1. This is a reprint from the pages of our magazine, and should have a wide circulation. The edition is limited and as it has been out of print since 1906 it should not take long to exhaust this edition. It is very neatly printed and bound in brown cloth. It may be had from the Book Steward, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto.

* * *

INEXACTITUDES

Some heated remarks have been direct-

ed towards the General Secretary in the course of which, and apparently in order to give point to some of them, certain statements were made which rather shake one's confidence in the speaker. The general trend of the observations is to the effect that the General Secretary is superlatively iniquitous, and that his wickedness recoils on his head and brings about physical disability. The language is not so choice as this, but no matter. It is asserted that at a meeting of the General Executive held in June, 1927, the Executive disciplined the General Secretary regarding an article he had written and forbade its publication. The result was that he was taken ill, presumably of chagrin, and suffered for a considerable period. A member of the committee who was present, it is further alleged, divulged the proceedings. Hence the heated statement. Now as to the facts. There was no meeting of the General Executive in June last year. The General Secretary was seized with illness on May 30, as stated in The Canadian Theosophist for June, and he was confined to bed for over five weeks. The General Executive did not meet till August 6, and a report of the meeting appears in the August magazine. At that meeting the General Secretary submitted as a matter of interest to the Committee the proof slips of a part of his annual report, which he had written but omitted from the report, as already published in the July issue. The Committee approved of the omission on the grounds that it was unwise to give any publicity to the person referred to. Mr. J. B. Wright, who was present, asked for a copy of the proof slip and was given one. What may have happened to it may be judged from the sequel. We have the misstatements as noted above, and the further entirely wrong impression given of the contents of the omitted portion of the report. This portion was intended to precede the final paragraph on page 98, Vol. viii. The type was kept standing until the present, and may be seen by any one interested.

A further misrepresentation of Mr. Kartar Singh was made when it was

stated that Mr. Singh had slandered Mr. G. F. Hobart in stating that he had given addresses of members of the Society to further the Aquarian propaganda. I have to say that Mr. Singh made no misstatement on this point. I have letters from the west written by a Miss Lucas in which she states that it had been suggested to her by Mr. Hobart that she write to the persons addressed.

AMONG THE LODGES

The picnic held by the Hamilton Lodge on Sunday, June 24, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hobbs, in Waterdown, was one of the most enjoyable the members have ever attended. The day was a delightful one, the general secretary and Mrs. Smythe were present, the committees and helpers performed their tasks admirably, and the party was able, through the courtesy of one of the Waterdown residents, to gaze upon what Mr. Smythe justly described as "one of the most beautiful scenes in the world." The Waterdown fall was at the flood after the rain of the days previously, and the glen through which the torrent poured is one of romantic loveliness. The glowing colours of the flowers in the wide-sweeping rock garden of the old mill, and the white statue of Dionysius added tasteful art to sylvan beauty and the glory of the cascade. Following the usual pleasures of a picnic into which young and old entered with zest, Mr. Smythe spoke briefly. As a memento of the happy occasion the president, Mr. H. H. McKinney, presented the host with a copy of "The Key to Theosophy." Returning to the hall that evening, a large gathering heard an inspiring address from Mr. Smythe entitled The Grace of God. Three other lectures were delivered during June. Mr. Leslie Floyd spoke on The Veiled Lamp, Mr. H. H. McKinney on Use Your Soul, and Mr. Dudley Barr on Love, Work and Wisdom.—C. W.

* * *

We closed our Montreal Lodge on June 30 after a season of well attended meetings and shall reopen again on September

15, with renewed energy after a rest during the summer. We ended this season in good financial circumstances, the best we have yet experienced, and have also increased our membership by one, notwithstanding the fact that we lost four members through causes beyond our control, two leaving Canada and two by death. Miss C. Burroughs, although in advanced age, does not believe in dropping Theosophy even in the warmest months and will be conducting a class of her own in the Lodge room on Thursday evenings during vacation time. Theosophy is the most natural thing in the world to her and consequently something she cannot drop in a public way for even a short period. We purpose have a lodge picnic in August as a link to hold our members and friends together until we commence activities again in the Fall, several looking forward to it as a real social event.—J. E. D.

* * *

The Vancouver Lodge has revised its finances and decided to make no further draughts on its reserve fund. Reduction of expenses has been achieved by moving into another Lodge Room at 29 Imperial Block, Pender and Seymour Streets.

* * *

Mr. Roy Mitchell has agreed to give a series of lectures morning and evening on the Sundays of the month of July. The morning talks are on the subject of the Divine Guidance of Hermes, Patanjali, Lao-Tze, Plato, and Whitman; the evening ones on mystical subjects, dealing with practical applications of historical and religious experiences.

* * *

The Toronto Lodge held their annual picnic on Saturday, July 7, in Exhibition Park. There was about the usual annual attendance. The day was a beautiful one, and the choicest corner of the park near the exquisite flower garden was the scene of the games and sports. The ladies provided a generous table in the Motor Car building, and altogether it was one of the pleasantest of the long series held by the Lodge.

STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Year ending June 30th, 1928

| Receipts | Disbursements |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Balance from last year | Per Capita paid Adyar |
| Lodge Fees and Dues | Magazine cost |
| Magazine receipts | Postage |
| Sale of pamphlets | 1240 08 |
| Donations | Printing of Dues' slips, member- |
| Bank interest | ship cards, etc. |
| | Advt. in Occult Review |
| | Typewriter, half cost |
| | Stencils |
| | Travelling Library |
| | Insurance |
| | Ottawa Tour |
| | Petty cash, postage, etc. |
| | Balance forward |
| \$3020 65 | \$ 128 97 |
| | 1141 76 |
| | 98 32 |
| | 103 32 |
| | 29 42 |
| | 37 50 |
| | 7 00 |
| | 100 00 |
| | 9 58 |
| | 262 60 |
| | 46 84 |
| | 1055 34 |
| | \$3020 65 |

THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE

The first meeting of the new General Executive was held at 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, on Sunday afternoon, present Miss Gates, Messrs. George McIntyre, Felix Belcher, Kartar Singh and the General Secretary. The minutes having been read reports were made of various activities, and the financial statement was to be printed in the magazine. The Ottawa situation was discussed and the class work there approved and will be supported. The editor of the magazine was reappointed and the work of the General Secretary and the General Executive last term endorsed. The travelling library work was reported upon and will be further supported. Mr. Belcher said that he would be available for lecture work and arrangements will be made to carry on propaganda. The absent members of the Executive will be written to and requested to make suggestions for methods of work. It was Resolved that the Executive Committee of the Theosophical Society in Canada through their General Secretary, send fraternal greetings to the General Convention of the American Theosophical Society at Chicago." After an exhaustive discussion of various other matters the meeting adjourned at five o'clock to meet again in October.

FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

Miss Brénda Johnson, who acted as secretary of the study class organized by Mr. Smythe in Ottawa last March, has been compelled to leave the capital and return to Timmins as the result of a business engagement. Miss Elfrida Rideway has taken over the secretarial work in the meantime, in Ottawa. Her address is Laurentian View P.O., Ontario. This is outside Ottawa.

* * * *

Mrs. Edith Fielding, whose valuable notes on Patanjali are concluded this month, has promised a further series of articles later on.

* * *

THE CENTRE OF OUR UNIVERSE

Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard Observatory, at a recent meeting of the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, stated that the centre of our Universe is 52,000 light years from the earth, in the southern skies. The New York Times reports him as saying:

"It was surmised that a dense concentration of stars existed at the centre of the universe, but it was found that the dark material, which is scattered through space, obscures this central region and prevents any thorough telescopic study

of it.

"The same researches led to the tracing of the equatorial line of the universe and to new measurements of its dimensions. This Universe (which is the Milky Way or Galaxy, and not to be confounded with other Universes) is shaped like a grindstone or a watch, and is roughly 200,000 light years from rim to rim. It is about 20,000 light years from side to side.

"A study of the stars along the rim indicates, Dr. Shapley said, that the rim is considerably thicker than the central part. In other words, the Universe, while shaped roughly like a watch, seems to be concave on both sides.

"Indications are that the Universe rotates. The nearer to the centre the star is, the more rapidly it moves round and round, while the Universe as a whole turns like a grindstone.

"These conclusions are based partly on a study of the star clusters, or dense concentrations of stars, numbering 104, of which four are known. These are closely related to our Universe, and are distributed in a regular pattern through space, about 50 per cent. of them north and 50 per cent. south of the equator of the Universe. They are thick near the equator, although none falls exactly on the equator.

"The part of the Universe in which our solar system is located is moving in an orbit about the centre of the Universe at the rate of about 200 miles a second.

"Dr. Shapley pointed out that he was referring to the local Universe. Off in the distance are the spiral nebulae, apparently other Universes, which are millions of light years away. The measurements relating to the local Universe are made largely with the help of the variable stars, whose nature and behaviour are now so well known that their distance can be measured."—The Literary Digest.

KARMA AND REINCARNATION

"We have something better to do than to fiddle the outworn tunes of Reincarnation and Karma." That is the view of one of the new self-professed teachers. How different the message of the Messenger of the present cycle. Here is one of the first

expressions of it as it appeared in Lucifer, May 15, 1889:

"If Theosophy prevailing in the struggle, its all-embracing philosophy strikes deep in the minds and hearts of men, if its doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, in other words, of Hope and Responsibility, find a home in the lives of new generations, then, indeed, will dawn the day of joy and gladness for all who now suffer and are outcast. For real Theosophy is ALTRUISM, and we cannot repeat it too often. It is brotherly love, mutual help, unswerving devotion to Truth. If once men do but realize that in these alone can true happiness be found, and never in wealth, possessions, or any selfish gratification, then the dark clouds will roll away, and a new humanity will be born upon earth. Then the GOLDEN AGE will be there, indeed. But if not, then the storm will burst, and our boasted western civilization and enlightenment will sink in such a sea of horror that its parallel history has never yet recorded."

THE SPIRAL STAIRWAY

There has been a great deal written and spoken about the Path, and much has been told of the evolution of consciousness, and the development and unfolding of the human soul, but details of any such Path or Road to Perfection are usually lacking. What it is, where it is, and how it is, seems to be hard to explain, and the efforts of symbolism in general are weak, because so few really understand the meaning of the symbols, and the mind of man is still so material that concrete symbols of spiritual facts, unless exceedingly clear, or simply elemental, are outside the comprehension of most of us.

Yet the symbology exists of all the truths of the Universe of God, of man and his relation to God and to the Universe. Indeed, there is placed brightly in the heavens above us the Path, laid out for our inspection, blazoned across the sky, where no hand of man will be able to mar or to obscure it.

The whole journey of the Wanderer of the Ages is given for us to study, to moralize on, and to trace out our own des-

tiny, for each one of us must follow it to the end. It is the Zodiac.

In so many ways has this mighty symbol been presented to us that it seems almost incredible we should be so slow in grasping it. The Twelve great creative Gods. The Twelve labours of Herakles. King Arthur and his Round Table. Orpheus surrounded by his Creative Gods. The Iliad of Homer. These are only some of the presentations of this great symbol, and we are so materialistic and narrow-minded that we give these cosmic truths a local habitation and a name, applying them to legendary historical incidents and personages of a time long past.

When the creative force first burst out into the ocean of space, it rushed forth, hissing, from twelve holes, taking a serpentine or spiral course; hence we have the symbol of the serpent so common in all occult tradition. In its broadest aspect it is the spiral of the Zodiac which we must follow, first on the lower levels or rounds, then going on to the higher levels until the whole wonderful machine is learned, conquered, and becomes part of us with all the attainments of power and expanded consciousness, which it contains within its endless circle.

To trace the progress of the human race from the time when cosmic Force rushed out of Aries in the form of two serpents, through the intricate windings of the Zodiacal Path up to the present is a task of superhuman effort. In this short article it is only possible to make some notations of the present situation of this force as shown in certain classes of humanity, making a brief statement of those phases of consciousness already attained, both good and evil; to suggest the encouragement of good building, and to point out where evil may be converted or transmuted into that which is helpful.

Not one individual of the race can escape the tremendous forces which pour down from each of the Zodiacal signs. All must come under the domain of the powerful God which rules the sign into which Karmic law has led them. Some have the influence complete and unalloyed, to others is given the task of harmonizing

and unifying the forces of two signs, and others again are in process of passing from one sign to another, and so partake of the influences of both, while always the seven lamps before the throne (the planets) move about distributing and directing the forces as the awakening consciousness of the native is fitted to receive them.

Most important from the viewpoint of the Individual is the position of the Sun at birth, but so often the spirituality suggested by this position is so weak as to be insignificant. Our earthly life is more important to us at our present stage than even the development of spirituality, spread over countless ages as it is. Therefore the rising sign is now, and will be for most, the most important feature of any horoscope.

Disregarding for the present any other forces or influences, let us look at what we find to be present-day effects of each rising sign, in character, disposition and trend of mental objective.

Aries, the Ram, is the first sign, and generally speaking governs the head of man. This sign has been given other names in other ages and by other races, names often highly significant, such as The Lamb, The Sacrifice, Messenger of Light. It is quite evident that it represents the descent of spiritual force into matter, the force pouring out and spreading like a fountain. Persons born under this sign are very energetic and are most assuredly setting up Karma which may be either good or evil. They are generally constructive in their energies, and do not as a rule encroach on the rights of others. This feeling of not opposing any one is likely to cause the Aries subject to give up his project if he experiences any opposition. The sign has great force and energy, but is not steady or reliable, and even in certain cases will rush heedlessly into all sorts of enterprises which come to nothing. He is evidently a young soul filled with primordial energy and unless he has steady influences, he will expend his force uselessly. He should never try to curb the energy, but to steady and direct it. Direct it into useful channels

and hold it there until something worthy is accomplished. The infinite and Godlike power of the will must be called into play in this sign; indeed, every sign requires it to balance and to harmonize. Samples: Oliver Cromwell, Annie Besant.

Next we have the sign Taurus, the Bull. Here the force takes on a serpentine form shown by the symbol. Earth and spirit meet here. The sign governing the throat indicates the Word spoken, which vivifies latent Karmic conditions, and compels experience. The manifested universe must be overcome and slain as by Mithra.

The Taurus subject is positive, conservative and often stubborn. He is quiet, steadfast, and unimaginative, entirely satisfied with earthly things, and likes to work and achieve, but nearly all along materialistic lines. They are not able to initiate very much, but once set going are great plodders. The Taurus is developing that selfish and sensual nature which is necessary to finally establish the Individuality, so he needs to be carefully handled by more developed souls. His entire atmosphere is material and physical, and even this may be easily disturbed, and he becomes terribly enraged and upset. Given good guidance he may accomplish prodigies of labour, but it is necessary to have the Individuality firmly established (this later is accomplished in Scorpio) before he is able to go on into higher planes. The Moon is exalted in Taurus, showing the start of the Personality. Samples: George Washington, U. S. Grant.

Gemini follows Taurus, a sign in which Mercury appears, indicating the first awakening of mind. This sign governs the two arms, the two lungs, etc. The symbol of two pillars would indicate that, mind now beginning to develop, the series of initiations necessary to extend consciousness will begin. These two pillars are the entrance to the temple of Wisdom, which must be passed through many times before the schooling is finished. Gemini subjects must beware of allowing their minds to become warped, or twisted, or even too shrewd and keen. As the mind develops it must be trained to useful and unselfish work. Initiation will enlighten the darkest recesses and tend to seership.

Otherwise the mind tends to meanness and selfishness.

Samples: Tennyson, Richard Wagner, Dante.

Cancer follows Gemini, a sign ruled over by the Moon, which has the power to create Personality, and Personality would seem to be the character of this sign. An ancient symbol of Cancer is an ark, with a man, a woman and animals, making it to appear that there are many evolutions within one sheath. A great occult truth is indicated here. The Personality is made up of many combinations which now begin to be in evidence, but the Individuality is greatest and must control. The Cancer subject is very sensitive and shy, sensitive to outside impressions, therefore very changeable and vacillating. He appears to be disturbed by the many influences about him, which follow the development of a Personality among many personalities, waves of emotion and feeling which sway him in all directions, from over-eating to mediumship. The Cancer native must try to control his emotions and his impulses, and to meet his fellows on a more social plane. Jupiter is exalted in the sign, showing that a more sociable type of life, with a broader and friendlier attitude towards mankind, will bring out the best of the sign.

Samples: H. P. Blavatsky, Leo Tolstoy.

The sign Leo governs the heart, the seat of the feelings or senses. The Soul now begins to develop senses or means to contact the Universe about it. The Symbol has been sometime used here of a house, empty, but with windows to look out upon the world. The Temple of the soul is now being built. Another title given to this sign is The Flaming One.

The native of Leo is essentially royal and tragic. He has a subconscious idea that he comes for a great purpose, and that every one should follow and applaud him. He is therefore bold and confident, noble and idealistic, yet is terribly hurt if his arguments for justice and humanity fall before more materialistic considerations. He will lack patience and the ability to plod, and will be at times over-confident and even arrogant. He will expect to rule by virtue of his royalty, but

the Divine right of Kings has suffered severely in recent times.

The Leo subject should learn that his royalty is not of the outward but of the inward worlds, that as his kingdom is not of this world, so he must allow the sacrificial and priestly side of his character to govern. Let him be as royal as he wishes, he must realize that in essence all men are as royal as he.

Examples: Bismarck, Patti, Pierpont Morgan.

The sign Virgo follows Leo, and here the senses begin to form groups which constitute the astral nature. These are now being weighed against the lower mind, represented by Mercury, which appeared in Gemini, and the gradual development of the human soul has commenced. The sign Virgo has always been associated with food—corn and oil—so the soul feeds on experiences as a body on corn.

This earthly and agricultural quality is presented strongly in the Virgo subjects of to-day. They like to serve, particularly in all that deals with earth products. You will therefore find them in a sphere which has to do with the buying, selling, or serving of food stuffs, such as the grocery, provision and restaurant businesses. They will also be found serving as nurses or dietitians helping to feed and care for the sick or afflicted, but without any great expenditure of feeling or sympathy.

They are practical, careful of detail, which detail is extended to the care of their own health, limited in outlook, and on the whole, narrow and conservative. Yet they seek eagerly experiences, found mostly in extending help and sustenance to their afflicted fellow creatures.

Fault may not be found with Virgo subjects for their shortcomings, yet if they wish to avoid much sorrow in future, they will endeavour to widen their horizon, to develop a real love for and sympathy with humanity, and to encourage the love of the beautiful for its own sake without any petty considerations.

Sample: Charles Dickens.
Toronto. George C. McIntyre.

HAVE I LIVED BEFORE?

St. Augustine was walking along the

shore, and he found a child on the sands weeping. "What is your trouble?" asked the Saint. "I want to put the sea into my bucket," said the child, "and it holds only this!"

The Saint smiled and took his way again. "How like that child am I," he thought, "when with my finite mind I try to understand Infinity!"

What does this old legend lead to? I suggest there may be sublimated beings about us who in scale to our mentality stand in the same relation to us as did the Saint to the child in the story.

In ordinary life we know this is so. We meet intelligences superior to our own, more advanced than we are, not only more instructed but more dowered: those who in soul-stature far transcend the common. To what can we ascribe the difference? Ancient Wisdom answers: to soul-experience. Let us see what it has to teach along this line of thought.

It tells of the journey of the Spirit, and sees Man as the pilgrim of Eternity. And the goal of this journey is the evolution of the individual soul. Evolution means liberation from ignorance and petty aims and paltry motives. It is to be free from mental slavery, discordances, and fear.

This freedom, Ancient Wisdom tells us, is not easily achieved. It may take thousands of years. As many deaths and births as there are sleepings and wakings in a single lifetime. Lives as many as leaves not on a tree but in a forest, and forest leaves not of a summer but of thousands of summers. And the object of this journey is that the wayfarer may reach home.

Ancient Wisdom gives the matter three headings. It tells of the unevolved multitude that comes back because it knows no better, and incarnates again and again, as inevitably as water flows downhill.

Then of a smaller number, differentiated by individual effort, to a higher degree of consciousness. These come back because they have some specific work to do, some injury to redress, some love to fulfil, or some ideal to strive for.

Thirdly, it tells of that little band of Higher Ones, the Masters of Life, rare lives, exponents of the Christ-Spirit, who

deliberately leave the Father's Mansions to help in the Lower Worlds.

When such as these revisit the Earth, and move among the sons of men, we can say: "What a piece of work is Man!—how noble in reason, how infinite in faculty; in form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God!"

But, if we have lived before, why do we not remember? Ancient Wisdom tells us it is not lost, though not consciously remembered. It says we hold the Past essentially, just as one drinks wine without the pips and skins.

In our intuitions, our propensities, and inherited instincts, we are the result of our past lives. Those we call "gifted" have earned their power of excelling. Those whose characters we admire have worked for their superiority to the common run of men. They are those "who have had the Lord before their eyes," for the Lord is Spirit, our better part within us, which shows us the Way. It tells us of those regions from which, in the dense body, we are for a time exiled.

The Arts, as we know them here, are the homing instincts of the soul. Splinters, fragments in the Actual world to what we shall find them to be in the Real.

"Then tell me, what is the supreme delight?" asks George Herbert. And an echo from his inner consciousness says "Light." "Light to the mind," he says again, "what shall the will enjoy?" And the answer comes "Joy." "But are there cares and business with the pleasure?" he says; and Echo replies "Leisure." The poet can hardly believe these shining words. "Light, Joy, and Leisure!" he repeats, "but shall these persevere?" and the voice in his heart says, "Ever."

We should listen more. We should say, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," but we are so busy saying, "Hear, Lord, for Thy servant speaketh," that we lose a great deal. Strange, lovely things unfold sometimes within us, old echoes of infinite beauty, voices from far yet infinitely near, if we are still.

But let no one regret that the facts and acts of our past lives are forgotten. The

omissions and commissions of one life weigh heavily enough. Were we burdened further, could we go forward at all?

Then Ancient Wisdom tells us of those periods spent in Paradise, in the subtle body, between our lives. Sessions of rest and illumination, when with eyes washed clear by the tribulations of earthly life, and with minds undimmed by the cloud of the flesh, we read the book of ourselves. We see all that we did and all that we might have done. We recognize the little we were, and this with a truer sense of values than is possible in the dense body here.

It is then, also, that we read the scroll of the Future and plan our own further life. We see the lines along which our own evolution, and that of those we love, can best be furthered, and it is then that we ourselves choose those very trials and adverse circumstances that later, blinded once more by the flesh, we shall shrink from.

A fine thought this that we choose our own destiny:

Soul, that in some high world hath made
Pre-natal, unbewailing choice.

Thus the Soul of Man proceeds. But there are some who call their own halting places, who become spiritually cretinated. They have so atrophied their spiritual welfare that they become incapable of initiative or endurance, and during the periods of rest in Paradise must lie in chrysalid condition, the Stream of Life arrested for the time.

Yet even here, "Dieu ecrit droit sur les lignes de travers"; the Arm of the Lord is not shortened. In the inspired writings of the present day you may read how these are cared for, reawoken to life, and educated. But they lose step with their spiritual generation and form one kind of what we know as "a lost soul."

The Waters of Lethe figure our rebirth and our forgetting. All drink of oblivion in their descent. Not, as the Greeks taught, just after Death but just before a new span of earthly existence.

There is anything but forgetfulness on the farther side of Death. A flaming vision of self-imperfection, a hypersense of lost

opportunity, and a scorching capacity for remorse—Purgatory—according to our need. But just as the degree of progress attained by the soul governs the conditions of the new incarnation, so, in its turn, the quality of the life lived on Earth orders that which we reach in Paradise.

Another form of "lost soul" is one too profoundly sunk in matter. The sluttish or the gluttonous soul is one deeply immersed. So are sharp-witted self-seeking natures; for the characteristics that limit Spirit equally, though from different angles, are sensuality or intellect alone.

"But if we are to have so many lives," it may be asked, "how are we to preserve individuality?" Ancient Wisdom, in reply, reminds us we are each one several personalities, already in this life alone.

The seven stages are enacted by us all: the infant, the child, the youth, the lover, the man, the elder, the ancient; from Babe to Pantaloon! Many persons, but the same individuality. It takes many petals to make the rose. And this Individuality is our Larger Self, it belongs to the world of our Larger Consciousness. Each man is the crumb of his own loaf. And this core, this centre of our being, never incarnates in totality. It dispenses and receives.

But these are deep matters. Our "bucket" cannot contain this Sea; even were it not limited to a few hundred words. Are Wordsworth's lines too hackneyed to quote here? They hold, after all, the core of the matter.

Our birth is but a sleep, and a forgetting.
The Soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

THE SLEEPING SPHERES

One came to me, calling me out of the form in which I dwelt, and showed me the sleeping Spheres.

Now the object of the Messenger who had come to me was to make clear to me

some of the hidden things: things hidden, I mean, from the eye of flesh, yet not lying so remote from our ken if we only make some mental effort toward seeing. And the further idea appeared to be that if I were to see them, as it were objectively, though with the astral organ of sight; I might be able to make this, the Devachanic State, clearer to the sight of some of my fellows. For the sleeping Spheres are Devachanic entities. In Devachan we are not yet united with the UNKNOWN SOURCE. Hence the need, on the part of the Ego, of form—or container—of some kind. I have chosen here, arbitrarily perhaps, the name of "Sphere" for this Devachanic form.

These Spheres, than which there are none more beautiful, do not lie in any given place; they are self-contained; they have condition, but no place. When I asked my Companion how this could really be so, he pointed out to me that they interpenetrated many other states of matter, cohering by means of their own vibration, just as do all other forms, of whatever kind and however ethereal, throughout the whole of Nature.

I had passed from my body into the air and the airy form, and thence into the ether. All about me lay the sleeping Spheres, delicate milky films on the golden ocean of light. Ever and anon a thrill of faintest colour trembled across their deeps, and I trembled too, for it was given me to know that these colour-motions were, in reality, Thoughts of profound delight. Yes, these palpitating Spheres had pure joy in their own opalescent motions; joy as they throbbed in the living ether, and a joy which had great meaning. This was plain even to my understanding, which at the moment was that of the airy body only. (I presuppose my readers to know even better than myself, that the consciousness of one body differs greatly from that of another. This is true whether the different bodies are all contained together in their own outer shell, or are at the time separate from that temporary covering.)

Imagine, then, that I saw these radiant shapes, now silvery, with a bluish frost

upon them, now blooming into tints so translucent that the eye of the soul alone could perceive them, and that every tint was a Thought, an experience. These fair Thoughts were the dreams of the souls disengaged from earth. Dreaming thus, the Spheres slept. How blissful the dreams! For these colours were both living Light and Intelligence; each colour was Thought; Thought of the most exalted order known to the human Mind. Thought quivered through the Spheres, changing their Consciousness; fusing them anew; quickening their higher Life; illumining their purer Light; in a world-plane whereon Light, Life and Thought are one magnificent act of Being, and not the trivial things known to most men in this every-day world. Each Sphere thus became more and more incandescent with this three-fold LIFE, and I saw them blooming and growing, through this sweet iris-hued ebb and flow, as a flower unfolds towards greater perfection by means of assimilated sunlight. The unfoldment was divine, the peace profound. Silence, like a brooding mother, covered them over; it was only enhanced by an occasional soft semi-tone, the harmonious breathing of the sleeping Spheres.

Would that I need say no more!

Yet even while I watched their gracious Being, it became plain that, like flowers, they must fade. Although they were composed of atoms of living Light, Light that was itself a grand Consciousness, yet I soon observed a marked change to take place and to become prevalent in all of them. This change was at first exceeding beautiful, and consisted of a slight rhythmic motion in the atoms of a Sphere. The atoms danced; living opals shot through with tenderest Light. Seeing this, I could but ask myself, "What new Thoughts are in the dreams of the Spheres?" This motion was soon imparted to the Spheres themselves. They trembled into coruscations of Light and grandly awoke. From them, thus swaying, issued glories that no tongue may name, nor do words contain them. Each Sphere thus joining the choral dance emitted a choral song; music whose ordained

instrument is the naked soul; music that is visible flame of sweetest intensest desire. All my being awoke into delicious longings in which reverence had no place. I said to my Companion: "What is the burden of this bewitching song?" Very gravely he replied: "It sings of the Life of the World." I wondered to hear him speak so solemnly of what gave me so great delight, but when I turned again to the Spheres I felt a new perplexity. The accelerated motion had produced colours more vivid, more of the gross and solid nature of earthly pigment; the music now shrilled across the etheric spaces; there was in it the strident note of crass emerald, the bugle blare of blazing crimson. The Spheres would sleep no more. Yet I saddened now at their brilliant awakening; in my inner heart a deep voice said: "This is the end of all desire."

The music augmented in volume; the aerial dance became a mad whirl to madder—yet harmonic—sound. This sound marshalled the turbulent atoms at the spheric centres, where they set up tentative efforts towards crystallization—form. These efforts impeded the spheric motion. Laboured, troubled movements, indicative of troubled Consciousness, set in. The fair Thought of the Spheres was disturbed. Streams of red fire, strange contractive motions, throes whose every convulsion made the Spheres less ethereal, sound whose every note made the atoms more gross, until suddenly the formative nucleus at the centre shuddered forth into form—a form which caught only a dim reflection of the original Light, a form which could not exist at all on the original plane of the Spheres. Must the awakened Spheres hereafter bear that grotesque burden? Suspended there, fringed only with the gracious spheric hues, gross cause of the dispersal of beauteous Being, still I recognized it, still I wept as I said: "Comes the earth-child thus forth? Surely this is Death that I have witnessed, and not Life."

My Companion answered: "That is in truth what thou hast witnessed. A death to Devachanic existence, a birth into the material Life which thou and thy blinded

fellows call "the world." The form whose birth thou hast seen is but the model of the earthly one which it informs. It is thy lot to know more of this matter of so-called Life and Death. Another time I will again meet thee; thou shalt then undergo some experience of Devachanic Life." He disappeared, leaving me in my ethereal body adrift upon the night.—Jasper Niemand in *The Path*, July, 1893.

REVIEWS

"BUDDHISM IN ENGLAND"

That excellent magazine, *Buddhism in England*, has reached the beginning of its third annual volume. This speaks well, not only for the widening circle of interest in the oldest of the evangelical religions, but also for the skill and sympathy with which the magazine has been edited and conducted. The time is fast approaching when more and more clearly will be understood the intimate relation that exists between Christianity and its elder brother. No student of comparative religion can ignore this relation, and it will be the eventual means, in its full realization, of bringing about the union of faiths over which there has been so much mere sentiment, when what is really needed is a common sense exposition of the identity of aims and teachings of the two religions. It is not a matter of preferring one over the other, much less of boasting of the merits of one beyond the other, but of seriously studying the likenesses and the differences, and of judging the two systems, not as standards of literary or theological criticism, but by their effects on individuals. Individuals, not masses, because it is on individual and not on masses that religion operates. Mass religion is not religion at all, but either emotion or convention. But individuals, with all their differences of temperament, experience, aspirations and intellectual outlook, are moved from within by religion and are moved by one or another religion as it harmonizes with their necessities. When we have understanding priests they will send a man or woman to the religion that they know will do him the most good, be-

cause they will have studied them all and understood them all and will have no end in view but the benefit of the man, and they will have no more feeling about what religion he needs than a physician has about the particular medicine that his patient requires. Priests, clergymen and the like, now are carried away by the idea of doing good to their church or sect, and the individual is only a means to the glory of the church. The man ought to be the end and not the means, but as long as men continue to make a living out of churches and religions it will be the other way round. Of course, this has ruined the Theosophical Society. The officials have got it into their heads that it is more important than the members, and they drive them out, expel them, cancel their diplomas and so forth, with regard only to their conception of the dignity and welfare of the Society and with no regard to the people in it. It will always be so where the true ideal of democracy is lost. Buddhism in England may do great good, and so might Islam in England and Parsism in England if there were enthusiasts enough to do all that might and should be done in religious education. Meanwhile it is pleasant to see the Buddhist effort prospering, and surely it is a good omen to see an article by one who bears the dear and honoured name of Charles Dickens, on "The Quest for Happiness." The "Exposition of Buddhism from the Western Standpoint" is a serial feature of great value.

"FIRST BOOK OF THEOSOPHY"

It would have seemed incredible in 1890 if anyone had predicted that The Theosophical Society, then wholly devoted to the teachings brought to the western world by Madam Blavatsky, expounded in *The* to Theosophy and in innumerable articles, *Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, *The Key* accepted by Annie Besant as the last word in religion, philosophy and science, and recognized by all professing Theosophists of that day as the message of the Masters of Wisdom to the nineteenth century, should in a generation have abandoned these teachings and adopted an entirely

different system of thought, directly in contradiction of the expressly formulated doctrines of the Masters as may now be read in their letters, and subversive of the leading principles of the Blavatsky literature. Yet such is the case. No better evidence can be found of the fact that in the latest volume by Mr. P. Pavri, B.Sc., L.C.E., entitled "First Book of Theosophy (in Questions and Answers)." Mr. Pavri wrote a similar book a number of years ago. More recently he expanded that book into a large volume. The present volume is a condensation of the larger book, and is written in the same clear and readable style, well printed, and with a few of the Leadbeater coloured diagrams which will amuse the instructed. We have to face this fact, that there are now two distinct systems each professing to be Theosophical: The later one has the greater number of adherents, since it has been endorsed by Mrs. Besant, and the later members of the Theosophical Society rarely know anything of the previous system, and appear to be willing to accept what they are told in the usual style of Church orthodoxy. Some people are very much annoyed over this situation, but it is merely the working out of Karma, and must be met without disturbance by all who understand the workings of the law. For one thing, it provides the valuable alternative by which it is impossible for anyone to assert an orthodoxy for the Society as a whole. There will always be those who follow the living dog rather than seek honey, like Samson, in the dead lion. There will always be those, the sun-born, like Samson again, who will strive with the beasts as Paul did, and wrench from them the secrets of life. They, and they only will be able to determine for themselves which system is the true one. Those who depend upon authority, either of the living or the dead, can have little influence upon the world. In the T. S. in Canada, we have always cultivated the broadest outlook upon the Theosophical world. "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." It has been held as little short of a crime to suggest that Mrs. Besant might be in error in following Mr. Leadbeater, or to commend

the perusal of The Secret Doctrine and others of Madam Blavatsky's works to the student before he makes up his mind on the subject generally. The Theosophical Society has no dogma, no creed, no system which it declares to be the absolute and only to be accepted truth. Its motto is, "There is no religion Higher than Truth." With that point of view the student can read anything and everything, and by putting his mind into the matter and remembering the distinction between the real and the unreal, the permanent and the ephemeral, that which has stood the test of the ages and that which has grown up over-night, he will find his own way to the Path on which there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Of course there is a great deal that is true and good in books which contain much error, else they would make no appeal at all to any mind with the slightest degree of intelligence. In Mr. Pavri's books there is much that is exceedingly well said, lucid and inspiring, and in the chapters on Reincarnation and Karma, but when he comes to speak of "Life After Death" or "Our Younger and Elder Brothers" it is impossible not to observe the marked divergences from the Mahatmic doctrines. The wise person will take care to inform himself on both sides of the discussion; perhaps the very wise person will not need to do so. But for the sake of being able to deal intelligently with enquirers who find themselves "stymied" by some of the statements that obstruct students, we commend the broader view to all. The Mahatmas have stated that they have never put into circulation any views that have not been tested and endorsed through thousands of years by generations of adepts. It would be of interest if Mr. Pavri would show why he has preferred the differing views which have not had, apparently, any such tests or approval. Meantime, students should read both sides so as to be in a position to judge. It does not do to say, as so many do, "I just accept what So-and-so tells me." This merely postpones the responsibility of making a decision to a later incarnation.

"THE LAND OF SINGING WATERS"

We venture to make some selections from Dr. Lionel Stevenson's fine review of Mr. A. M. Stephen's new book of poetry, "The Land of Singing Waters," which was reprinted from *The British Columbia Monthly* in the *Ontario Library Review* for May. We have intended to have a review for several months past of this book, but see now that the delay has been a benefit inasmuch as it gives the opportunity to draw upon Dr. Stevenson. After remarking upon the notable advance which Mr. Stephen's present volume shows over his previous one, and dwelling upon the variety of verse forms which he has adopted, Dr. Stevenson proceeds:

Another of Mr. Stephen's undertakings has been the testing of stanzaic forms not hitherto employed in English poetry; the possibility of variation in line-length and rhyme-arrangement are practically limitless, as compared to the few simple types that poets revert to again and again, and some of Mr. Stephen's experiments result in new and pleasing harmonies, although a few prove too complicated, losing the rhythm in jerky complications. . . .

. . . But these are very trivial and infrequent blemishes, and captious criticism has no further voice. To offset them, one is almost baffled in attempting to select examples from the wealth of notable merit. In the group of narrative poems on British Columbia themes, which gives the book its felicitous title, Mr. Stephen fulfils another of my conditions of "modernity" by realizing the value of the untouched material close to his hand; and he avoids monotony in these longer poems by symphonic changes in material form in accord with mood and theme, after the manner initiated by Alfred Noyes. These are not mere ballads or versified tales; they are epic fragments, of a dignity appropriate to the setting they depict.

The other poems in the collection, however, which have no novelty of topic to distinguish them, must be the final criterion of their author's achievement, for here he handles the universal poetic themes, which are only justified when something fresh and unprecedented in vision or

imagery is contributed to them, when the poet's individuality of emotion and experience is strong enough to impress itself in competition with all predecessors. And there is no question of Mr. Stephen's success in giving this touch of personality to what he writes. Like all true poets, he has a central core of definite and consistent philosophy, and, inevitably, his is akin to many other contemporary discussions. In concentrating his attention upon the quest for ideal beauty he is allied with Masfield, Brooke, Yeats, Noyes, all the poets who are attempting a mystical interpretation of our new universe, but his own theory of sublimated physical love as the key to the mystery is distinctive and well presented. Furthermore, his wide range of allusions, his use of the whole cultural heritage of the race as a source of imagery and symbolism, unites him with the best poets of our time.

Beyond a doubt Mr. Stephen is endowed with the singing sense. The lyric quality can be felt throughout his work, and the two crucial parts of a poem—the first line and the last—are always satisfactory, the first establishing the music of the poem with certainty and the last giving a cadenced climax to thought and melody alike. . . .

Finally, what are the outstanding poems of the collection? This is a question that every reader must answer for himself, since tastes differ and there is enough variety in this volume to appeal to many. My own preference, however, goes to some half-dozen for widely differing reasons. Of the mystical poems my prime favourite is "Life," for its clear and vigorous statement of a noble philosophy and for the skilful contrast achieved by drab imagery and melancholy sound in the first half, suddenly changing to ringing, vigorous defiance. In the same category I want to mention "Retrospect," "Resurgam," and "Dream's End." Perhaps the greatest poem in the book is "Mary," with its tender simplicity and splendid thought; it has the beauty of "The Blessed Damosel," with a glowing humanity replacing Rossetti's chilly artificiality. A powerful and original presentation of heredity is "The Blossom and the

Fruit," in which the difficulty of transferring a theme from modern psycho-pathology into vivid dramatic poetry is achieved with honesty and restraint. Another most impressive poem is "Gold," which should rank high in the anthology of social protest. The poems of Canadian nationalism are admirable, and that on Vancouver the best I have encountered on the subject. "The Golden Helen," which is Mr. Stephen's version of the pageant of fair women already written by Villon, Chaucer, Tennyson, Browning, and other poets, is unequal, but in its best passages gorgeous.

Rarely, indeed, does a single volume so notably exemplify the two aspects of Canadian poetry; on the one hand displaying the beauty and romance of the distinctively Canadian material, on the other hand approaching the universal themes of poetry and the whole accumulation of human culture with an outlook illuminated and clarified by the vigorous mysticism of the new land.

THE INTELLIGENT WOMAN'S GUIDE

George Bernard Shaw has written a book which comes as near being a Bible as anything that has been produced in a hundred years. A Bible is supposed to contain the wisdom, the experience, the character, the ethics and morals of the age which has produced it. This book of Shaw's gives the essence of the life of the last hundred years, and goes so far ahead of present times, that it may easily be accepted for prophecy. Comparatively few ever believe the prophets and there are lots of sceptics out already among the critics and others proclaiming their infidelity and even profanity on the subject of Shaw. The wiser of the people will read, mark, learn and inwardly digest and they will be able to receive from these pages a wealth of information and a clarity of understanding regarding the events and policies of the day which should make them able to foresee in society and in their own lives the outworkings of the deeds and the desires of their own and preceding generations. The book is addressed to women, possibly as being the more reasonable and certainly the more receptive

sex. But it is meant for any sort of reasonable people. I would suggest that a chapter be read mornings after the manner in which family worship used to be conducted. Great good would result from a familiarity with these pages and there is no doubt that it will become popular in the degree in which it falls into the hands of intelligent people. Mr. Shaw is too good a Theosophist to expect that the world is going to be conquered with these new ideas in a few years or so. Many generations must go past, many centuries, and perhaps milleniums, before there are enough people seized with the sense of justice sufficient to establish such a system as he so clearly outlines in this book. There are many Theosophists who cannot be satisfied with Theosophy in their own lives and think that it is useless if it be not applied to the social condition. These things can never be brought about by force, but only when people are ready to yield to moral suasion. It is the business of the Theosophical Movement to prepare them by the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation, the solidarity of the race and the universal unity and causation that binds us all together, so that in times to come we shall enter naturally upon a state of society for which we are prepared by thought-adjusted temperament.

DOMINION DAY

Last year we had the wonderful celebration of that sixtieth year of the life of the Dominion that enabled us to realize in some degree what our nationhood meant to us. We had learned to serve, not only on the harvest field but on the field of battle; we had gathered some of the produce in both; we had learned our strength, and as we were entitled, we indulged in self-gratulation over our brimming cup. It may not be amiss for us to consider the other side of the picture, for we are still human. We have done what we should not, and left undone what we should. We have still much to learn, and much to earn, for nothing can be ours that we do not gain in labour. We are too much inclined to rest in the consciousness that we

have a great heritage and take pride in the possession, rather than in the opportunity. We may forget that rocks and mountains, lakes and prairies do not constitute a nation, but the people that dwell among these and put them to use. The Dominion is formed from the individual and personal contribution of every unit of its population in character, in accomplishment, in life. Personal greed becomes a national crime, and our resources stumbling-blocks if they mean nothing to us but selfish aggrandizement. We must grow in true gentleness, the kindness of the strong for the weak, the care of the wise for the simple. Our rule of life will teach us to help and not to hinder, and to judge whether the occasions of life come to us as opportunities or temptations. The British Empire is more nearly a theocracy than any other political aggregation in modern history. We do not, perhaps, embody all that Queen Victoria meant when she presented the Madagascar potentate with a Bible and told him that it was the secret of England's greatness. We do not consult the prophets in the way that Samuel and Elijah were consulted. But in the Tennysonian sense we do feel that "the King shall follow Christ and we the King." Yet we are prone to follow idols rather than ideals, and each new idol not only carries us farther away from the ideal, but deadens our ability to recognize the ideal when it is presented to us. We need a day of humiliation as well as of thanksgiving, and it can do no harm if we tinge a few moments of the national birthday with something of the spirit of humility. Since the war there has been an inclination to cast away discretion and prudence and shamefastness. Our sons are tempted by the prevailing haste to be rich. Our daughters are drawn by the meretricious superficialities of fashion, and leave themselves open to the stinging words of the great Irish writer who lately visited us. "It is rare," he says, "to see a woman who offends the artist's sense in colour and form. I wish I could commend the art with which so many redden their lips with fierce colour. Even lovely girls yield to this hideous fashion. It is the

mass mood of youth for the moment. It will probably vanish in another year or two. The girls are so naturally charming that they do not need the arts of the demimondaine, who must conceal the withering of her freshness." We, young and old alike, must remember the substantial graces that carry love, joy, peace, patience, cordiality, trust, modesty and moderation into the prime and down through the evening years of our lives. We repeat what our Prayer Book commends to us of a "godly, righteous and sober life," but mayhap forget that godly means godlike, that righteous means just and square-dealing, that sobriety is not to be confined to one habit alone. Our contribution to Canada must be a personal one, or all our patriotism is but empty words. We cannot leave it to others to build up the nation. The essence of any civilization is the spirit in which every unit of the body politic exists for the whole, and no man lives or dies to himself but for the common good. Greatly blessed and endowed as we have been with the hid treasures and the kindly fruits of the earth, our acknowledgement of these gifts should be in dedicated lives so that the name of Canadians shall come to be honoured through the whole earth.—Hamilton Herald.

THE THREE TRUTHS

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

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have 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.