

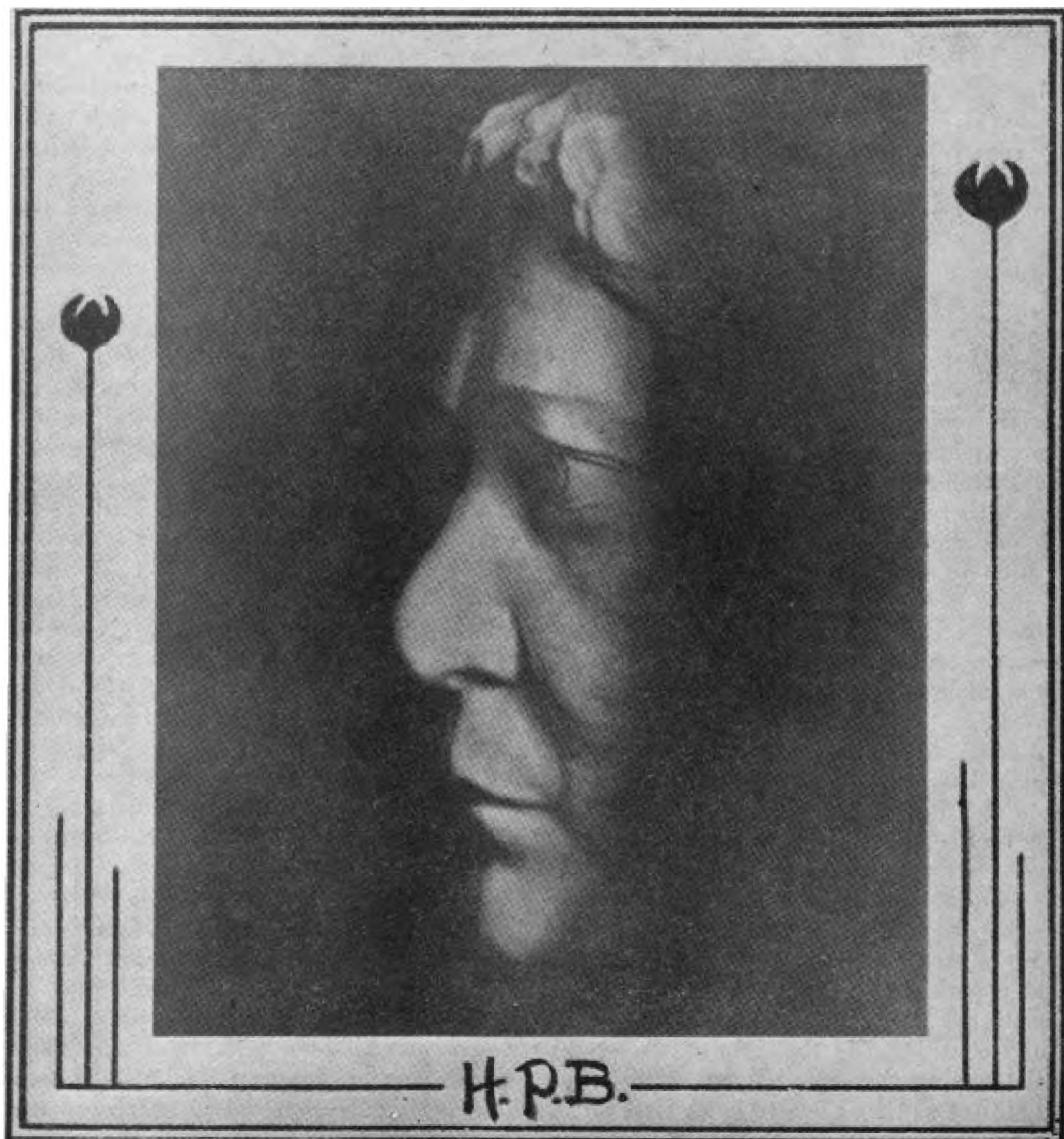
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WORSHIP AND IMMORTALITY

By JAMES MORGAN PRYSE

1. Does Theosophy inculcate worship of Divine Beings?

2. Does Theosophy deny that man is immortal?

3. Does Theosophy teach that the First Principle of the Universe is a Personal God?

Nearly all Theosophists to whom these three questions might be propounded would promptly answer each of them with an emphatic No. (The word "Theosophists" here designates only the steadfast students of the authentic teaching, and not the weaklings who toddle after false guides—the self-styled "trained clairvoyant" and other mountebanks—who by their preposterous teaching and the ridiculous side-shows which they have added to the T. S. have well-nigh wrecked the whole movement, thereby retarding the moral progress of mankind and doing almost incalculable injury to thousands of sincere but unfledged seekers, who have been fed on fakery instead of the bread of life, the esoteric philosophy, of which the Society as a whole has proved to be the unfaithful custodian.) Students who languidly rest satisfied with the dead-letter of Theosophical literature, content with learning by rote the doctrinal formulae and memorizing the technical terms, instead of energetically striving to grasp the living truths underlying the printed words, may jump to the conclusion that the three questions here mooted are so very simple that no one but a person quite ignorant of Theosophy would ask them. But when they are carefully considered in the light of Theosophical teaching they may be found to be not as simple as they seem to be at first blush.

In a conversation with H.P.B., one even-

ing in London, she gave me an account of her first meeting on this physical plane with her Guru, the Master M. Awed by his majestic presence, she was at a loss how to conduct herself before him. Then, remembering her early religious training in the Greek Church, it occurred to her that the proper thing to do was to assume the customary devotional posture. So she kneeled worshipfully at the Master's feet. "You see," she said, laughing as she recalled the incident, "I was pretty green in those days." When she thus fell on her knees before him, the Master promptly told her to get up and not be a "little fool." "Of course," said H.P.B., "he did not call me that in English, but the word he used means 'little fool'." (She repeated the word, but I have forgotten it, nor can I, after the lapse of so many years, reproduce her exact language.) She went on to say that when she had regained her feet, somewhat abashed by the rebuke, the Master admonished her, in his kindly way, against the worship of any personality, and impressed upon her mind that the true object of worship is one's own Higher Self, and that no other being in the Universe should be worshipped.

Thus the only worship sanctioned by the Master is worship of the Self, or, shortening the phrase to its hyphenated form, Self-worship.

Therefore on the authority of the Master the answer to the first question should be Yes, but with the qualification that the only Divine Being a Theosophist should worship is his own Self. But why should a man worship his own Higher Self alone, and not the Higher Selves of others—even the Dhyanis Buddhas and the mighty

Planetary Gods? Deferring consideration of that question until a later stage of the inquiry, and reverting to the second moot question, let us now ask whether Theosophy denies or affirms that man's Self is immortal, eternally conscious.

What is Self?

What is Consciousness?

What is Immortality?

Inasmuch as most persons, Theosophists not excepted, may be misled by their very familiarity with a word into thinking that they know its full meaning, when in fact they have only a vague general notion of it and could not give off-hand a precise definition of the word, it seems advisable, before continuing this inquiry, to look up definitions of these words, Self, Consciousness, and Immortality.

Self is the Ego, metaphysically considered, the man (on every plane) viewed by his own cognition as the subject of all his mental, emotional and spiritual phenomena and sensations, the agent of his own activities in the objective and subjective worlds, and the possessor of faculties and character.

Consciousness is the power or faculty of being aware of one's own existence, sensations and actions; or, as Hamilton defines it, Consciousness is "a comprehensive term for the complement of all our cognitive energies." As said by Locke, Consciousness "is that alone which makes man what we call *self*."

Immortality is endless Selfhood, eternally unbroken Consciousness. Immortality implies that man must forever remain Himself, retaining always the Consciousness which is the basis of his Selfhood. For his Consciousness to be merged into "Cosmic Consciousness," or Theo-consciousness, to suffer Theosis, "absorption into Deity," or the "Divine Essence"—to become, in short, Something or Somebody Else—would be the extinction of his individual Self. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole *kosmos* and lose his own Soul?" And what shall it profit

a man if he gain the whole Godhood and lose his own Self?

It is said by the Vedantins, whose doctrine is echoed and re-echoed in Theosophical writings, that the Absolute is the only Reality, and that the manifested Universe, with all the beings inhabiting it, is an Illusion. Moreover, that "Illusion" lasts only for a Manvantara, or World-period. If, then, man is merely an illusory being whose life-span begins and ends with the World-period, he is not immortal even as an illusion. Says the S.D. (I. 295):

"All that which is, emanates from the Absolute, which, by this qualification alone, stands as the One and Only Reality—hence, everything extraneous to this Absolute, the generative and causative Element, must be an illusion. . . Everything is relative in this Universe, everything is an Illusion. But the experience of any plane is an actuality for the percipient being, whose consciousness is on that plane, though the said experience, regarded from the purely metaphysical standpoint, may be considered to have no objective reality."

That is the theory of the Vedantins. The Absolute is Real, but somehow its emanation is Unreal. God is Good, according to Christian Theology, but somehow the Universe which he created contains a large admixture of Evil. Here we are told that man, an illusory creature on a plane of illusion in an Illusion-Universe, perceives as actualities experiences which metaphysically have no objective reality, because both the perceiver and everything which he perceives are "extraneous to the Absolute" and consequently are nothing but illusions! But how can anything, even an illusion, be "extraneous to the Absolute"? Is the Absolute distinct from the Universe which "emanates" from It, even as the God of Theology is distinct from the World which He "creates"?

In both systems there is a crux; and the use of the words "metaphysical" and

“relative” does not make out a better case for the theory of illusion. “Metaphysical” is a word often resorted to as a covert for inexplicable vagueness or for unsound reasoning. The word “relative” applies to that which is not absolute or existing by itself, but has to be considered in connection with other things. “An illusion,” says Trench, “is an idea which is presented before our bodily or mental vision, and which does not exist in reality.” If the illusions which make up the manifested Universe appear to be realities, actual experiences, to the percipient only on the plane where his consciousness is for the time being, it follows that nothing on the other planes of consciousness can have even an apparent reality, and that objectivity is equivalent to nothingness. If so, the “manifested” Universe is reduced to varying states of abstract consciousness, which has no means wherewith to manifest itself, so that individual self-consciousness is out of the question.

Against this delusive doctrine of Illusion, which leads to a *reductio ad absurdum*, may be set the more acceptable teaching, also given in the S. D. (I. 273), that the Absolute, or “Substance-Principle,” is “the omnipresent Reality,” and “is latent in every atom of the Universe, and is the Universe itself.” However, even in this passage in the S. D. the crux is dragged in by introducing the inconsistent statement that the Universe is an illusion; for it says also that the Absolute “becomes ‘substance’ on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a ‘principle’ in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible Space.” The contradictory expression “an illusion” is jarringly out of place here. It should be noticed that in the above passage the word “substance” is used in its colloquial sense for matter, material. In philosophy it has exactly the opposite meaning, noumenon, the antithesis to phenomenon. As Lewes says, “*Noumenon* means the substratum,

or, to use the Scholastic word, the Substance.”

Thus the dogma that the Universe is unreal, an illusion, is flatly contradicted by the teaching that the “omnipresent Reality” is the Universe itself and is latent in every atom of it. And elsewhere the S. D. maintains that “everything in the Universe is conscious.” Since the omnipresent Reality pervades the whole conscious Universe (and otherwise it would not be omnipresent) the Universe cannot be other than Real; but, as the manifested Universe comprises varying states of consciousness, the beings in it perceive only relative realities and not the unitary Reality. The evolution of each conscious individual is a constant progress toward the One Reality, which, however, he can never reach, because it is infinite and therefore forever beyond him. Thus the Infinite cannot be considered to be a final goal; the evolutionary progress of the immortal Self of man is absolutely endless.

Not content with making Illusion the offspring of Reality, the Vedantins derive Consciousness from Unconsciousness. Thus T. Subba Row expatiates on “a perfect state of unconsciousness, which is the beginning and end of all conceivable states of consciousness.” Several European philosophers have advanced similar speculations; but they one and all fail to explain the *modus operandi* of extracting something from nothing—a feat of cosmic legerdemain like that of the sleight-of-hand performer who borrows your hat and takes a live rabbit out of it. The theory that consciousness springs from unconsciousness parallels the Theological doctrine that God created the Universe out of nothing. *De nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil posse reverti*, “From nothing nothing is made, and nothing that exists can be reduced to nothing,” is axiomatic.

Notwithstanding their theory of Illusion, the Vedantins concede to man a Sutratma, a Thread-Self, equivalent to the Monad of Greek philosophy. Is this

Thread-Self immortal? Of it the S. D. (I. 17) says: "Our Monad (the Two in One). . . . is the only immortal and eternal Principle in us, being an indivisible part of the integral whole—the Universal Spirit, from which it emanates, and into which it is absorbed at the end of the cycle." Here the Monad (which is called "the Two in One," though in Greek philosophy it is always a Triad) is said in the same sentence to be immortal and eternal, and yet only a temporary Emanation. But the latter bald statement is not to be taken at its face-value; for the words "emanates" and "absorbed" are admittedly inadequate to convey the meanings intended. Man's pre-existing Monad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Dhyān-Chohan, emerges from the Noumenal World and returns thereto after passing through the evolutionary cycle in the Phenomenal World. But never can the Individual Self, the Dhyān-Chohan, "become one with the Absolute," in Parānirvāna or any other state, for that would mean either that the Individual Self perished as such, or that it reached the ultimate bounds of Absoluteness—and the Absolute has no bounds, nor will there ever be a final manifestation of the Universe.

Yet it must be admitted that the sweeping statement that man's only eternal principle is an indivisible part of the Universal Spirit, into which it is ultimately absorbed, amounts to an unqualified and emphatic denial of individual immortality. This Theological doctrine of Theosis, the ultimate absorption of the soul into Deity, is repeatedly asserted in the writings of H. P. B. and K. H. Thus the latter (M.L., p. 129), after correcting a statement made by H. P. B., of whom he says, "She is a fanatic in her way, and is unable to write with anything like system and calmness, or to remember that the general public needs all the lucid explanations that to her may seem superfluous," goes on to say:

"We call 'immortal' but the One Life in its universal collectivity and entire or Absolute Abstraction; that which has

neither beginning nor end, nor any break in its continuity. Does the term apply to anything else? Certainly it does not. Therefore the earliest Chaldeans had several prefixes to the word 'immortality', one of which is the Greek, rarely used term — *pan-aeon* immortality, i.e., beginning with the Manvantara and ending with the Pralaya of our Solar System. It lasts the aeon, or period of our *pan* or 'all nature.' Immortal then is he, in the pan-aeon immortality, whose distinct consciousness and perception of Self — *under whatever form*—undergoes no disjunction at any time, not for one second during the period of his *Ego*ship. . . . A man, an Ego like yours or mine, may be immortal from one to another round."

Thus, though he states, further on, that "the Monad never perishes whatever happens," he apparently refuses Egoity to the Monad, and accords to the Ego only a "period" of immortality. The Ego is immortal only by fits and starts. Is it too much to say that K. H. and H. P. B., chelas of the Master M. and neither of them a "full Adept," but both of them professed Buddhists, were not entirely free from the influence of exoteric Buddhist Theology, with its pessimistic doctrine of Nirvanic "absorption," which many Buddhists hold to be the extinction of Individuality? The Master M. does not thus limit the scope of immortality or even refuse the personality a chance to participate in it. In one of his letters (M.L., p. 78), speaking of "personality and individuality," he says:

"The former hardly survives—the latter, to run successfully its seven-fold and upward course, has to assimilate to itself the eternal-life power residing but in the seventh and then blend the three (fourth, fifth and seventh), into one—the sixth. Those who succeed in doing so become Buddhas, Dhyān Chohans, etc. The chief object of our struggle and *initiations* is to achieve this union while yet on this earth. Those who will be successful have nothing

to fear of during the fifth, sixth and seventh rounds. But this is a mystery."

It is to be noticed that H.P.B. refers to the Monad as "the Two in One." Concerning this "dual" Monad the Master K.H. says (M.L., p. 347): "Pythagoras had a reason for never using the finite, useless figure 2. The *One*, when manifesting, can become only three. The dual Monad (the sixth and seventh principles), has, in order to manifest itself as a Logos, to first become a Triad." So also says Iamblichos, "Every Monad is a Triad." Yet in the earlier Theosophical literature the Monad is frequently termed "dual," for the same reason, probably, that Manas, the third member of the Trinity, was not included in the list of the seven principles, but was kept *in abscondito*. And even when Manas has been accorded its rightful place among "the Three that dwell in glory and in bliss ineffable," and some cautious teaching given out concerning it, the manifested "dual" Monad still survives in the pages of the S.D.

Immortality is timeless. It transcends the past and the future. To say that man will become immortal is as unphilosophical as to say that he once was, but no longer is, immortal. The predication that he is immortal expresses the truth only when the word "is" stands for beginningless and endless duration; for immortality, eternity, cannot be defined in terms of time. Since the Monad is eternal it is beyond and outside of time, and is related to time only during its manifestation in the Phenomenal World.

Taking the authentic Theosophical literature comprehensively, and not laying undue stress on stray discrepant passages that may be found in it, the answer to the second question is that Theosophy, instead of denying that man is immortal, affirms that he is immortal not merely as the feeble being who is all that his true Self now manifests on this earth but as the God of unimaginable glory and power that he really is in the Divine World.

In her Esoteric Instructions H.P.B. speaks of "the indissoluble link connecting men's Higher Selves with the One Universal Self." That says unequivocally that there is a Supreme Selfhood; but it should not be taken as endorsing the crude exoteric conception of a Personal God. If the First Principle is conscious it must be Self. But its Consciousness and Selfhood are utterly beyond the comprehension of finite beings, and it is useless and foolish to speculate on the subject. So the answer to the third question must be an unqualified No. All that a man ever can know of the Universal Self is by way of his own Higher Self. Therefore Theosophy repeats the ancient precept, "Know Thyself." And well may we say with Juvenal, *e caelo descendit* Gnothi Seauton.

GREAT QUESTIONS

(Continued from Page 42.)

XX.

Man Can Make No Progress Save Against Adverse Conditions.

There is among some Reincarnationists a disposition, inspired doubtless by that form of Oriental philosophy in which existence even is held to be an evil, to place too low an estimate upon the life in the flesh. Our duty lies here. In one sense, and a very important sense, the Present is all there is of life. The Past is gone. All the powers in the world cannot change one fact in the Past; it is a book that is closed. In the Present we make our Future. We do not live in the Future. When we reach the Future it will be the Present. We live only Now. Man builds his character only in the Now.

It is doubtless true also that the most important modifications of man's character are made in the flesh, and that the opportunities for progress are infinitely greater under the harsh conditions prevailing on earth, than under the favourable

conditions existing in the Other-world. Men here recur often with pleasure to their days of hardship, toil and trial in this life, recognizing them as the times in which they built up and strengthened their own characters, and fortified themselves against later reverses.

Man can make no progress save against adverse conditions, and all progress of consequence must be against hard and stern resistance. An easy victory is a poor victory. It is in the shock of stern conflict that souls are made and marred.

The earth is the field of conflict in which evil is most strongly entrenched; while the Other-world is the land of peace. The earth, then, is the scene of the greatest battles between good and evil, and we could hardly imagine that great souls would be left out of the issue. The sound of a trumpet in a good cause is as inspiring as are the hymns of peace.

Another and more serious error, borrowed also from the "vast abstractions of Buddhism," is the assumption that the movement of the soul is continually progressive; that it is ascending constantly through definite stages to higher planes, and will ultimately reach perfection. If the individual soul could be carried forward by a vast progressive movement of souls, then the incentive to individual exertion would be lost. It must of necessity be true that some souls are advancing, and others receding; some growing stronger, and others weaker.

XXI.

Annihilation Fits the Moods of Dying Races and Descending Souls.

In these days of light and doubt, men's minds are turning somewhat to the philosophy of the Orient. This is well, for it is good to know and measure and understand. Yet it is not well to discard one authority, and set up in its place another; for the last may be no better than the first. The world grows weary of authority. If a thing be reasonable, authority is useless;

if it be unreasonable, authority cannot save it.

The sacred mysteries of the East probably have no merits over the sacred superstitions of the West. He who veils or hides his truth in obscure and uncertain words, or images, thereby confesses that it is too feeble to stand the light. There is nothing in the Universe more sacred than Truth, and the Truth can always bear exposure to the light. Truth is treated most respectfully and reverently when it is clothed in plain and simple words so combined as to express a clear and definite meaning.

In the vast, complicated and mystical philosophy of the East, a little of which is simple and more beyond comprehension, there is doubtless much of truth, and much also of error. Else why is the neck of the Hindoo under the heel of the Briton? Is it because the Hindoo dwells too much upon the eternal and too little on the temporal, or is it because he is of a dying race? His doctrine of Nirvana would sustain the latter theory. Nirvana, a form of sublimated annihilation, is the goal of supreme happiness to which Hindoo philosophy would lead us.

The thought of annihilation is pleasant only to weary, discouraged and worn-out souls. In the hour of man's defeat, when life has nothing but bitterness, and hope departs from him; when the love of friends and kindred is as nothing, and faith in himself dies, then the thought of lying down in a dreamless sleep which shall have no awakening, is pleasant and alluring to him. This thought may fit into the moods of dying races or of descending souls; but it can never satisfy the aspirations of the brave, the strong, the hopeful or the true-hearted.

XXII.

The Belief in Immortality is the Natural Faith of Mankind.

Herbert Spencer, in discussing the origin and probability of moral and religious be-

liefs, asserts that what great numbers have believed for long periods must have some basis in truth, and adds:

“More especially may we safely assume this in the case of beliefs that have long existed and are widely diffused; and most of all so, in the case of beliefs that are perennial and nearly or quite universal. The presumption that any current opinion is not wholly false, gains in strength according to the number of its adherents. Admitting, as we must, that life is impossible unless through a certain agreement between internal convictions and external circumstances; admitting therefore that the probabilities are always in favour of the truth, or at least the partial truth, of a conviction; we must admit that the convictions entertained by many minds in common are the most likely to have some foundation.”

Abraham. Lincoln, in more homely phrase, said: “You can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time; but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.”

Nearly all men in nearly all times have believed in the immortality of the soul in some form; some believing in the half-truth of after-existence only, and others in both pre-existence and after-existence. Herbert Spencer says also that the conception of immortal existence, “along with the multiplying and complicating ideas arising from it, we find everywhere—alike in the arctic regions and the tropics; in the forests of North America and in the deserts of Arabia; in the valleys of the Himalayas and in African jungles; on the flanks of the Andes and in the Polynesian islands. It is exhibited with equal clearness by races so remote in type from one another that competent judges think they must have diverged before the existing distribution of land and sea was established—among straight haired, curly haired, woolly haired races; among white, fawny, copper coloured, black. And we find it among peoples who have made no

advances in civilization as well as among the semicivilized and the civilized.”

The belief in the immortality of the soul can be traced to no single book, seer or prophet; it has been the natural faith of men in all times and places. The broader, stronger, older, more universal the moral belief of man, the more rational it is. The faith of individual men, or even of great masses of men, may be built on airy fabrics; but the moral belief of mankind is built on more solid foundations. What the race of men hope for, aspire to, believe, can be little short of the actual truth.

It has been said that the almost universal belief in immortality can be explained in man's fear or vanity. If man, through fear of annihilation, had adopted the theory of another life, he would have invented heaven only, or at least a condition not more wretched than his present life; and not hell, which is worse. Men, through fear, do not jump deliberately from bad to worse. Nor if moved by vanity could man have invented hell; vanity could have inspired heaven only.

Man adopted the theory of another life because of the apparent injustice in this one. He perceived that there were wrongs here which were not righted here, and good which was not rewarded here; and with a sublime sense of justice, and with faith in the justice of the Universe, he demanded another world to right the wrongs of this one.

The natural belief in immortality has been inspired by man's sense of justice, and those who would attribute this belief to man's fear or vanity, belittle and insult mankind.

XXIII.

Justice Cannot be Built Upon a Foundation of Injustice, nor Morality Upon a Foundation of Immorality.

The Fatalists—all who accept either Materialism or Theology—assert that man is a thing that has been made. A thing

compounded, manufactured, can be neither moral nor immoral. The lotion that changes agony into peace, the prescription that saves a life, are not moral; nor is a poisonous compound immoral. The responsibility for the good and evil in the thing manufactured rests entirely with its maker. If a man is a thing that has been made, then he can think only such thoughts as his Maker has given him the power to think, and do only the things which his Maker has given him the power to do. His thoughts and acts are therefore not his own; they are the thoughts and acts of his Maker.

It will be said in answer that all men have been given freedom by their Maker to choose between good and evil. Does the Maker grant to the man created deaf, freedom to hear? Or to the one created blind, freedom to see? Or can the one created morally deaf be free to hear, or the one created morally blind be free to see? Can the dumb talk, the deaf hear, the blind see?

Some men, it is true, have the inclination, will or power to improve their moral condition. But if man is a thing that is made, this inclination, will or power is the endowment given to man by his Maker. Other men have an inclination toward evil, and are mentally or morally weak. This tendency and weakness must also have been the gift of man's Maker.

If man has been created, his will, his ambitions, his aspirations, his courage, his fair-mindedness, are all the gifts of his Maker; and his weakness of will, his lack of aspiration or ambition, his cowardice, his mean-spiritedness, are also conferred upon him by his Maker. He can be nothing more or less than what he is made to be.

He who honours any man for his wisdom or goodness, or scorns another for being dull or vile, repudiates both Materialism and Theology. For, if either the theory of Materialism or of Theology be true, no man deserves the least credit or discredit

for what he is. The good man is but as a good engine or machine, reflecting much credit upon his Maker; and the bad man is as an imperfect machine, a dangerous engine, or a poisonous compound, reflecting discredit upon his Maker.

Justice cannot be built upon a foundation of injustice, nor morality upon a foundation of immorality. If God or Nature has created one man good and another bad, then God or Nature has been unjust. If God or Nature has created a vicious, base or depraved creature, then God or Nature has been immoral.

If a Creative Force has made all things as they are, then the truth that man utters is the Creator's truth, and the lie that man utters is the Creator's lie; the honour in man is the Creator's honour, and the crime of man is the Creator's crime. Man, at his worst or best, if he is a thing that has been made, is but the impotent and soulless expression of the Creator's varying moods, and all moral distinctions vanish from the world.

We may now affirm that no system of justice or morality can be built upon any theory other than that of the complete immortality of the soul. He who denies the pre-existence and the after-existence of the soul, must deny justice and morality; he alone who affirms the immortal and eternal nature of the soul can affirm justice and morality.

(To Be Continued.)

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Fairy tales do not exclusively belong to nurseries; all mankind—except those few who in all ages have comprehended their hidden meaning and tried to open the eyes of the superstitious—have listened to such tales in one shape or the other, and, after transforming them into sacred symbols, called the product Religion!—*Isis Unveiled*, II. 406.

THE CRISIS IN THE T. S.

(The following article was written by Dr. van der Leeuw on his being asked to become General Secretary of the Dutch Section).

When I was asked to stand for the office of General Secretary of this Section, I hesitated some time before I could decide. Not only that a possible election would upset my plans of lecturing and writing for the next few years, but during recent years I have asked myself seriously whether in this modern age there was still a task for the T. S. and whether the movement was capable of the transformation needed to fulfil such a task.

What is happening at present in the T. S. is not just a crisis, the like of which we have seen more than once in the history of the movement. This time it is a vital question—either the T. S. must perish or she must conquer the conflict in herself and start work with fresh aims and methods.

The T. S. is in danger of perishing because of an inner conflict which, since the more intensive work of Krishnamurti, has become active. It was, however, inherent in the theosophical movement since its earliest days.

I should like to characterize it as the conflict between revelation and realization. Theosophy, for me, is above all things realization. Where theology can be meditation and argumentation about God, theosophy is experience of the Eternal by man in himself. This Eternal is the reality which the theosophist seeks and which he tries to awaken in others. All the rest is secondary; without this one thing, all is in vain. Here none can help or withhold; for this experience no occult faculties are necessary, nor can they ever reveal the Eternal. Here man himself is the Path, the open door to Reality.

This experience of the self, this realization of the Eternal, the theosophical movement has taught from the beginning, and rightly so, for this is her *raison d'être*, the

source of her inspiration. The first and only binding Object of the T. S. is based on this; only in the experience of the eternal one Life can brotherhood be born, and also the recognition contained in the second Object: that spiritual experience is one throughout the ages, but that religious form are many and various.

There is, however, a third Object: the investigation of unknown forces and laws in man and nature. In essence, this object is purely scientific, it means an extension of scientific investigation in hitherto unexplored regions. Here, as in physics, the purpose is investigation of facts, either through the ordinary senses or otherwise; the method is by patient and exact perception, comparison, testing and proving, thus coming to irrefutable knowledge of facts. From this, by generalization, knowledge of law and control of forces can be achieved.

This last object has nothing whatever to do with man's spiritual life and aims. Purpose and methods are diametrically opposed to those of the other objects. There the experience of the Eternal, the One, in and through the self, here the perception of the phenomenal world in its multiplicity outside us in a physical or other world.

But what has happened in the T. S. from the beginning? The occult has usurped the place of the spiritual; those who by their occult faculties should have conducted the scientific investigations contained in the third Object, were looked upon as channels of spiritual knowledge and worshipped as spiritual leaders, as mediators between man and truth. Since they claimed by their occult faculties to be in conscious communion with perfect beings, Mahatmas, the guardians of an archaic divine wisdom, Theosophy, they were also the channels through which this wisdom from on high could be revealed to less-favoured members not having this communion. From the Masters again they came to know what was wanted in the plan of evolution and made this known to the members at large.

Here theosophy is no longer experience of the Eternal by each one in himself, but a system of occult tradition in the possession of a group of perfect beings, not accessible to ordinary man but known by a few, who consequently become mediators revealing the divine wisdom. The way of wisdom becomes that of discipleship and initiation, which stages of growth must again be acknowledged and communicated by the few recognized occultists. The whole forms a hierarchic system of mediation which is in direct contradiction to Theosophy as experience of the Eternal in ourselves, without mediator, without help from outside.

It is this conflict which, latently present since the earliest days of H. P. B., has now become active, since on the one hand the system of revealed Theosophy has asserted itself in an almost phantastic way and on the other hand Krishnamurti preaches the realization of the Eternal with rejection of all that is unessential to it.

Let those who want to go "back to H. P. B." realize fully that the element of revelation in Theosophy with all its attendant evils dates from the time of H. P. B. and finds its origin in her. The Mahatma letters, both in method of appearance and in contents are the first and completest form of revealed Theosophy.

Later on messages took the place of letters. It was as a result of such messages from on high, that is to say as a result of revelation, that the ceremonial movements were begun and found their following. The majority joined not in a spontaneous urge, but because they were told that the Masters, especially the World Teacher, desired these Movements. And when the latter began his preaching and rejected all ceremonial movements, occult mediators, messages, discipleship and gurus, the results were a confusion and a doubt that still persist. Many felt they had been misled and had sacrificed to false ideals; in disillusion they now leave the theosophical movement, however painful this separation

is to them. If this process of disintegration continues, the Theosophical Society is doomed to perish.

I see only one way out.

First of all, Theosophists must become conscious in themselves of the conflict between the theosophy of revelation and the theosophy of realization; they must realize why they are in confusion, why their faith has been shaken, and they have lost their enthusiasm. Then they must find their certainty in the theosophy of realization and concentrate on that, rejecting entirely the element of revelation.

Let it be clearly understood that this does not mean a rejection of occultism. On the contrary, it means the only possible healthy growth of occultism which, freed from the element of revelation, can then develop in a strictly scientific way with strictly scientific methods.

Neither does it mean denying the existence of the Masters or the possibility of communion with them. But it does mean the unconditional rejection of the system of occult revelation. If you think a Master has spoken to you, first see whether you agree with what is said. If so, consider it henceforth as your own opinion and accept the responsibility for it. If not, say nothing. But never hand it on as a message from on high; that is the beginning of endless misery. For then an occult authority is used which, as the source of your communication, is inaccessible to others.

I see the cause of most theosophical difficulties in the reprehensible system of occult communications. Let everyone speak in his own name, on his own authority, with the courage of his own conviction, or not at all. But do not strengthen your standpoint with the hidden authority of the unseen. And conquer in yourself the craving for revelation which remains insatiable and leads to spiritual degeneration.

In the case of my being elected as General Secretary I want members to realize that for me Theosophy is the realization of the Eternal, and that I reject the

element of revelation as incompatible with it. This does not mean that we cannot learn from someone else; we do that continually. But in this there is no question of revelation. That only arises when an authority is used which lies in the unseen. It will be my endeavour to free occultism of its pseudo-spirituality and to encourage a strictly scientific method of occult investigation.

With regard to our work as Theosophists, I shall encourage a more realistic attitude. The Eternal is not another or higher world, but the reality and meaning of this world; in the *here* and the *now* lies the way to the Eternal. I should like to see theosophists less interested in their principles and abilities in other worlds, in their greatness in past or future, and more in their abilities and creative activity in this world at this moment.

I would therefore aim at a theosophical work and study, not directed at doctrines which are foreign to life and often useless, but at a deep realization of the spirit of our days. The theosophist must be a child of the new age, not a relic of the past. I prefer to see a theosophist read a newspaper with critical understanding than a Gnostic writing. I would rather see him acquainted with Einstein, Freud, Montessori and Le Corbusier, with the League of Nations and with modern architecture, than with the Vishnu Purana, the Book of the Dead, the doctrine of the lunar pitris or the seven principles of man.

I prefer to see in a Theosophical Lodge magazines such as *Imago*, *Nature*, *International Conciliation*, or *The Nation*, than the *Occult Review* or some astrological monthly. I prefer to see study classes about the latest achievements in Science, Art and International Relations, than about the elemental kingdoms or the occult Hierarchy.

In our Society we must be vanguard, not rear-guard as hitherto.

Does this mean becoming exteriorized? No, it means a sense of reality.

Seek your inner strength by meditation, self-discipline and your attitude to life. For this no esoteric teaching is necessary; there are no secrets even in the deepest self-realization. And for the true Mystery secrecy is superfluous, since it cannot be expressed.

It will be one of my aims to work for a psychologically healthy method of spiritual training. The T. S. needs this more than anything else. In the past its spirituality was but too often an ascetic flight from reality.

Without a new and healthier relation to reality, the T. S. cannot do its work in this modern age.

Hitherto, many who essentially belonged to the T. S. and might have become valuable members were but too often deterred by the practice of theosophical thought and work. The classical theosophist who knows exactly how the world is arranged, how it was created and what will become of it, who has an answer to everything and with veritable mental acrobatics manages to reconcile the incompatible is a deterring element that has kept artists, philosophers, and men of science far from the T. S. We must learn that Theosophy has *no* solution to the problems of life, but is a way of experiencing a reality in the light of which those problems prove to be phantasms of thought. The cheap certainty of an all-embracing system that "explains everything so beautifully", must yield to a real reverence for Life which is a mystery and no problem. Then we shall also attract those theosophists outside the T. S.

When once we renounce the illusion of a system of truth, it will also be possible to encourage in the T. S. a constructive criticism. All criticism on the movement, its activities, doctrines, or leaders, was hitherto always branded as "attacks", "un-brotherliness", or "disloyalty", with, in the background, the phantom of dark Powers. The result of this has been that the T. S. has been without the influence of healthy criticism which, driven under-

ground, often became bitter and hostile.

As a result of the system of revealed Theosophy an institute of divine leadership has been created, in which a few leaders were worshipped with almost divine honours and looked upon as infallible. This is not a healthy appreciation or admiration of their truly great qualities. On the contrary, it is a pandering to our own weakness which desires a divinity to worship. The tragical result has been that a normal criticism of their works or actions was always looked upon as *lese majeste* or even as a form of blasphemy. For me loyalty to a friend does not mean agreeing uncritically with his opinions or actions, but to help him in trouble, to understand his weaknesses, and, if necessary, oppose his mistakes.

I should like to see a truly critical sense develop in the theosophical movement by which, without any bitterness or hostility, criticism could be exercised on the opinions and actions of others in so far as these pertain to the T. S., without, of course, presuming to judge their private lives as individuals. This must be possible without unbrotherliness and is much healthier than the underground gossip which arises otherwise.

The absence of a critical faculty in theosophical life has made it possible for much worthless writing and empty phraseology to be admired indiscriminately. The average theosophist has so successfully repressed his critical faculties that he can not distinguish good writing from bad, empty *cliches* from living thought, hollow rhetorics from real emotion. This can only be remedied by a careful education of the critical sense. Only thus can the "lower mind" be freed of the illusions that keep it in bondage and the higher mind assert itself.

My remarks, of course, do not pertain especially to Holland, but to the theosophical movement throughout the world. It will be my purpose not to confine my work to Holland, but to extend it to the whole

movement. For the difficulties that beset the T. S. are the same in all its national sections.

I have thought it my duty to give you my views somewhat extensively before you decide whether or not you desire to elect me as your General Secretary. Perhaps you find them too heretical. In that case, I hope that you will show this by electing a more orthodox General Secretary who will be assured of my best wishes in his work.

J. J. van der Leeuw.

P. S.—The above is a brief and partial outline of Dr. van der Leeuw's forthcoming book, the probable title of which will be: "Revelation or Realization, the conflict in Theosophy". Those who would like to be notified of its appearance and who are interested in the line of work indicated in the above ideas and their further realization can send in their names and addresses to: Dr. J. J. van der Leeuw, Theosophical Headquarters, Tolstraat 156, Amsterdam, Holland.

A TASK FOR THEOSOPHISTS

By F. B. Housser

The Saturday Review of Literature in New York recently offered a prize for the best essay criticising the recognized shepherds of American culture. The competition was open to readers of the Review who had been born in this century and were therefore under thirty years of age. Nearly one hundred essays were received of which only a few have as yet been published, but these give an interesting indication of the probable trend of American thought in the new decade of the century upon which we are now entering. The comments of this much misunderstood and maligned generation come somewhat as a surprise to the generation in its forties and fifties.

"We are not gripped," says one young writer, "by prohibition, Victorianism nor insanities about sex. We look upon that curious era as objectively as we do upon the age of Elizabeth. We are high hearted

enough to try to see life, not in terms of temporary and distorted patterns which irritate us, but in terms of permanent values which illuminate it. . . . We want to find Beauty and respond to it with passionate recognition. We believe we may discover that the universe with all its shortcomings is still fully as rational as our protests and that enough patient searching may find the lost Apollo."

Commenting on the essays as a whole the editor of the Saturday Review says: "At least two thirds explicitly or implicitly agree upon one demand as of the highest importance to youth. The cult of incoherence, they say, is not their cult. If the world is meaningless to others, it is not meaningless they seek. The aftermath of the war was not their aftermath nor was it their blank disillusionment which followed a conflict they did not make. Those flaunting banners they have been watching 'Down with Order! Up with Instinct! Away with moral codes!' and that language of revolt which sounded so portentous because it was so difficult to understand, the younger generation will have none of this; resents it all as special pleading and personal complaint. And yet this sudden and amusing cry for order among the young. . . may be just what is needed to set under way a new and creative search for standards."

Apparently with the third decade of the 20th century we have entered a new minor cycle, the second in the major cycle which started after the war. For sixteen years the generation which survived that spiritual cataclysm have been busy defaming, debunking and denying the thoughts, beliefs and standards of the old order. The last decade and a half has mortally wounded or permanently maimed most of the entrenched orthodoxies and dogmas which H. P. B. attacked in *Isis Unveiled*. A generation has become articulate which is possibly less hampered by preciousness and sentiment than any generation before it. It was not only the war that did it. The

war was an effect. An even more prolonged and comparatively as great a material upheaval occurred in the first two decades of the 19th century with the Napoleonic wars but it did not shake enthroned orthodoxy as it has been shaken in the twentieth century. We may now make at least a shrewd guess why the guardians of the Secret Doctrine gave out *what they did when they did* through Madame Blavatsky. If Theosophy had not been revived, if its original teachings were not easily available to mankind to-day, the hopelessness of searching for those creative standards spoken of by the editor of the Saturday Review would to most of us seem real indeed.

Mr. Roy Mitchell recently pointed out that a revival of Platonic mysticism has occurred in the western world every six hundred years since the great Greek initiate wrote in Athens and that another cycle of six hundred years has just been concluded since the last revival of Platonism took place in Europe. There are signs to-day in America of another turning back to Plato's ideas though the brand which is being offered is as the spring without its buds. A movement has arisen calling itself The New Humanism which its exponents claim is an attempt to give the younger generation new standards of criticism, literature, art, conduct and morals and repeat the achievement of the humanists of the Renaissance touched on in Zadok's excellent article in last month's Canadian Theosophist.

The New Humanists are headed by a group of eminent American professors who recently made a public proclamation of faith in a book of essays called "Humanism in America" edited by Norman Foerster and published by Farrar and Rinehart Incorporated, New York. Mr. Foerster writes in the preface "Though we have in America the semblance of a new movement, Humanism itself is not new. It was new I conceive, when human wisdom was new. It was comparatively new in Ancient

Greece, Judea, India and China. It was rather old by the time of the Renaissance when the word 'Humanist' came into currency. In one way or another its doctrines and discipline have been clarified by persons as various as Homer, Phideas, Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Buddha, Jesus, Paul, Virgil, Horace, Dante, Shakspeare, Milton, Goethe; more recently by Matthew Arnold in England and Emerson and Lowell in America."

At first blush the New Humanist movement seems to be stealing the thunder of Theosophy. Yet apparently not, for elsewhere in "Humanism and America" in an essay of definition by Professor Irving Babbitt of Harvard University we read "The relation of the humanist to religious traditionalism can scarcely be defined too carefully. Between the *humanist* and *humanitarian* there is a clash of first principles. . . In general the most serious confusion in the word Humanist has arisen from its appropriation by the humanitarians. . . Humanism appears primarily, not in the enlargement of the comprehension and sympathy desirable though this enlargement may be, but in the act of selection. . . Humanism differs from religion in putting as the basis of the human pattern it sets up, not man's divinity but the something in his nature which sets him apart simply as a man from the animals and that Cicero defines as 'a sense of order and decorum and measure in deeds and words.' "

We see then that the Humanists claim Buddha, Jesus and Paul as exponents of their philosophy but at the same time they declare that they, the Humanists, are not humanitarians which Buddha, Jesus and Paul professedly were. The Humanists claim Plato as an ally but set up as a pattern "not man's divinity but the something in his nature which sets him apart as a man from the animals" (presumably intellect). They say it appears at the higher mysticism of the divine archetype which was the essence of Plato's philosophy. They

declare they are in line with the great creative poets yet the Humanist doctrine as explained in their own proclamations would act as a check on the creative spirit for it is opposed to "enthusiasm" and in art, another of its professors says, it demands the standards of "approved traditional ideals in which both the artist and the laity believe." It warns the artist "from any too urgent assertion of his individual taste save in so far as that taste finds sanction in precedent and opinion other than his own."

The New Humanism (so called) is professedly a re-action against post-war excesses in thought, morals and literature. Its key note is restraint and discipline but it is a wet candle which cannot light. There is so far as one can judge from this book, no great ideal save one of intellect and decorum and polite traditional learning. It knows nothing of the point of view of a Mahatma who wrote, "A man may be a Bacon or an Aristotle yet count not a featherweight with us."

There are other movements in America to-day with which Theosophists may work more closely than with Humanism despite its claims of connection with many great Theosophical figures. There is the movement whose silent head is Nicholas Roerich the Thibetan explorer whose book *Altai Himaya* was recently reviewed in *The Canadian Theosophist*. There are the various activities of certain American Theosophical lodges. And last, but not least there is the movement coming forth from the younger generation itself in Canada and the United States demanding permanent values and "The lost Apollo". This latter movement offers a challenge to Theosophy that it give the deepest thinkers and most spiritual minds of the younger generation the basis of the new Mythos which was referred to in a former article.

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We are indebted to Mr. W. H. Griffith, Victoria, for the photograph of H. P. B., from the death-mask and its setting, on page 65.

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OFFICIAL NOTES

A new novel by Leonora Eyles called "Strength of the Spirit" may be recommended to readers who are interested in the occult. The book contains more than most such tales of reliable information and suggestion as to the dangers of mediumistic practices.

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A correspondent writes from England: "We like your magazine very well as we have got more of H.P.B.'s teaching in two years from it than in a dozen years before in Mrs. Besant's Society. We never before understood why we never got any of H. P. B.'s books in our study class and we have come to the conclusion that unless we can verify any doctrine with H. P. B. it is not for us."

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It is almost a year since a number of our friends were terrified out of their common sense by the announcement that some dreadful catastrophe was going to befall

the world on May 29. The catastrophe befell those who believed the False Prophet. There are other predictors of the same order going about. It is well to wait till these things happen before believing in them. The ordinary work of the world, which is the discharge of Karmic debts and the training and discipline arising therefrom, has to go on just the same, so nothing will be lost by ignoring the calamity men, and nothing will be gained by listening to them.

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The T. S. in England reports a net loss of 281 in the annual report. This is very good considering the losses reported everywhere. The advantage from these losses is the awakening that has come to the officials who begin to recognize that something more than mush is necessary to hold the members. The English Section has had a bad time financially, and has sold the Mortimer Halls which were donated, and also 23 Bedford Place was sold. The proceeds of these properties amounted to £35,000 and has been invested to bring in about \$70,000 a year. The Headquarters are now at 45 Lancaster Gate, London, W.C., 2.

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"Light", for nearly fifty years the organ of the London Spiritualist Alliance, has come back into the hands of the original promoters, and extensive improvements are to be made in it. It has generally maintained a high tone, and while its attitude towards Theosophy has not been as *saue* at all times as we might wish, we have no objection to its reasonable criticisms which are welcome and wholesome. Encouragement is to be given to sound and scientific research. Mr. David Gow, who has been the very acceptable editor for the last 16 years, though hampered for the last nine by commercial considerations, will now have a free hand. We wish well to a journal which has as grave a responsibility as any magazine in the world. The address is 16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W., 7.

Already a number of votes have been sent in for the candidates nominated for the General Executive. These votes are quite private as the envelopes are left unopened until the scrutineers open them on the night of the count. Then, when they are certified in good standing, and the label torn off without the vote being inspected, they are unidentifiable as all the ballots are shaken up in a basket and sorted out. Only members in good standing can vote, so if any member has not paid up his dues till June 30 next he should do so at once and get his ballot from the Secretary of his Lodge, or he may send the dues to Headquarters direct and get a ballot by return of post. It is believed that all the Montreal and Hamilton members will vote for their own candidates, in which case these will be elected. No forecast of the others is possible.

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The Theosophist, Los Angeles, places "A Message to Theosophists" by Mrs. Besant, a reprint of an article in the March Adyar Theosophist, "Wesak" by C. W. L., World Peace by Lincoln Wirt, and Ancient Egypt by Geoffrey Hodson on its front cover Index as the leading articles. Mrs. Besant's reprint is substituted for an article by Claude Bragdon which is promised later. We must wait till we see it before we can decide whether the substitution was warranted.

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One of our readers writes: Please pardon my boldness in daring to criticize the following article, Great Questions, by Orlando J. Smith, on page 6 of The Canadian Theosophist of March 15th. That article, as good as it is, should not be in the Theosophist at all. To my mind Heaven and Hell are states of feeling, not being. Some of the lowest slimiest creatures, as the writer calls them, are absolutely perfect and healthy, far superior in health, and beauty or perfection, than we are. Loathsome, insignificant, what words for us to use who are supposed to understand

and practice universal brotherhood and love. Do please forgive me if I have done wrong." There is no need for forgiveness. We could wish that all our readers would write what they feel. That is what the magazine is for—to give expression to the mind of our readers. The point is well taken. Mr. Smith, who is now, alas, beyond these voices, was an independent thinker who worked out his theories of re-incarnation himself. We are not aware that he ever studied any of our Theosophical literature. It is his independent testimony that is valuable, dug out of his own experience and expressing what it taught him. He was an eminently reasonable man, and no doubt would have agreed with our correspondent.

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The International Psychic Gazette contains much information about the dissatisfaction in the Society for Psychic Research in England since the resignation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as a protest against the "hostile attitude of the Society towards everything which could not be brought within the bounds of Telepathy." A large number of resignations have been sent in. The chief disgust has been registered over the treatment of Professor Ernest Bozzano, a prominent Italian philosopher and scientific investigator. He had become a Positivist-Materialist, he says, until his investigation of mediumistic phenomena. The Secretary is a young man who recalls the cocksureness and sparrow-brained conceptions of the late Richard Hodgson who, at 22, was sent to investigate Madam Blavatsky and never even saw her, but made out a report in accord with his training and prejudices. It appears that Besterman has done pretty much the same thing with Professor Bozzano. A Correspondent writes: . . . "In autumn, 1928, Mr. Besterman was here in Munich, and Baron Schrenck-Notzing and other renowned men agreed that the S. P. R. made a great mistake in sending such a young and inexperienced gentleman abroad, who instead

of increasing the high repute of the Society, only injured it. I myself was struck by the article in the *Journal* regarding the seances at Millesimo Castle, by the insulting manner of its criticism. Certainly criticism must be allowed, but in my judgment it was an impudence to attack Prof. Bozzano in such an offensive way."

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I have been sent two copies of the March issue of *The Theosophical Forum*, published under the authority of The Theosophical Society, Point Loma, California, U. S. A., G. de Purucker, M.A., D.Litt., Leader. The question, No. 22, dealt with in this issue is: "What is the difference between your Theosophical Society and other Theosophical Societies, such as, for instance, the 'Adyar Society' and 'The United Lodge of Theosophists'?" Are they not really all the same?" Mr. J. H. Füssell answers the question at considerable length and we regret that lack of space prevents its publication. We are disposed to agree with very much of it, but it, like the other Societies to which it points as being off the track, falls down on the one essential thing, that there must be no outer authority and no one set up to be extolled and worshipped beyond the courtesy and civility that are due to all. Dr. de Purucker had a great opportunity to do away with this tenet of authority, and to abandon forever the apostolic succession dogma which is rapidly becoming in each Society an obstruction to freedom of thought and action and a barrier of obstruction between the several Societies. In one one has to fall down and worship a whole hierarchy with Mrs. Besant at the head, and C. W. Leadbeater, George Arundale, Krishnamurti, Jinarajadasa, and some others now backsliding, trailing after. The United Lodge of Theosophists changes the personalities but not the principle. There one must worship William Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie. The Temple sets up Dr. Dower and "Blue Star." The Point Loma altars are erected

to Mrs. Tingley and now Dr. de Purucker claims the Apostolic Succession, a theory which Madam Blavatsky ridiculed. Beyond all these in its exclusiveness is the New York Society in which Mrs. Griscom, Charles Johnston, H. B. Mitchell and Ernest Temple Hargrove are the reigning deities. They have just as much authority as any others but they value it more highly, and live in mortal terror of contact with the poor mortals who seek after Truth without any of these sponsors. According to their lights each of these bodies is doing good work. The Adyar Society is perhaps most misleading as far as the teaching of Madam Blavatsky is concerned, and has therefore most need of help from others. This would be a sufficient reason to stand by it and help. The assumption of authority on the part of any of them is entirely gratuitous. Madam Blavatsky never asserted authority. When reason stands behind anything authority is not needed. When anything is unreasonable, all the authority in the world cannot save it. So most of the Societies survive in spite of authority. The little reason they possess making itself felt in the minds of the members. When we have more reason we shall have more brotherhood and more cooperation. Meanwhile we wish them all well, and freedom from the dark forces and from fear of the dark forces. And we extend our best wishes to them, and our desire to co-operate may be depended upon whenever any of them see that all we hope for is to be of service.

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If you are a believer in the Brotherhood of Humanity you should belong to the only Society that makes this the sole basis of membership. The dues are \$2.50 a year, including subscription to the official Magazine. Will you not join?

ARE WE ON THE FENCE?

Editor, Canadian Theosophist: May I ask who is the god in the article entitled "Beware," in our magazine; also, what was your object in putting it in, as all, I imagine, will think it means Krishnaji, and maybe gives a false impression? It appears to me to be dugpa. It is also in the American Theosophist. Probably you copied it. Why? This kind of thing is why people say you are on the fence, and always appears to me to be a compromise. Yours, F. T. S.

This enquiry from a western member no doubt reflects what may be in other minds, and emphasizes the necessity of publishing just such articles as that referred to. The Theosophical Society has no dogmas, no creeds, no orthodoxy, and is supporting no one and following no leader. That was its original programme, and that is the principle on which, as General Secretary, I have interpreted its policy and edited its magazine.

What the real object of the Society is, as I understand it, is to teach people to think for themselves, to develop their discrimination, and to stand on their own feet. If every member will do that by and by we shall have a fool-proof Society. Meanwhile we must expect many members to be willing to be led astray and to follow gods more or less false. If they do wander into the desert they will gain experience and struggle back to the strait and narrow way.

The article "Beware!" was not copied from anywhere but was sent in for publication, and was published as a very fine example of high-falutin. A great many people are tempted to write like this from time to time, and I could publish some similar articles concocted in Canada and sent in to me occasionally with the same inflated phrasing.

When the Great Ones write their style is distinguished by simplicity and substance. Compare, for example, the letter of the

Maha-Chohan, published in "Letters from the Masters of Wisdom" in 1919, with the "Message to the Members of the Theosophical Society from an Elder Brother," published in an Adyar pamphlet and read at the "Jubilee Convention" in 1925. The unctuousness alone of the last composition should have awakened the suspicions of any vigilant reader.

Students must never forget that all claims to inspiration and to infallibility finally centre in themselves. It is they who decide whether anything is inspired or infallible. It is they who put the inspiration and infallibility into any writing and any document, however venerable or however credentialled. The reader must yield the claim of venerability and must certify to the credentials.

It is on this fact that all Churches and all organizations claiming authority exist. Those who recognize the authority create it. It is so obvious a fact that one may well wonder why people do not recognize it. And yet they always think, these deluded ones, when they choose a leader, that the authority exists in the leader.

Propose this view to the followers of any dogmatic Church and watch how they go up in the air! They tremble at the responsibility placed upon themselves. They want some one to lean upon, and are not yet aware of their own weakness.

And now I am told that people think I am on the fence. I have enunciated this view again and again in the pages of The Canadian Theosophist and no one has challenged it. I issued a little pamphlet containing three articles expounding it, entitled "After Forty-Eight Years," still no one challenged it.

It is the base of all Madam Blavatsky's writings, always throwing the student back upon himself, and yet we have such intelligent writers as "W.M.W." trying to dodge the issue, by insisting that we must accept Madam Blavatsky's *ipse dixit* whether we understand what she means or not. Madam Blavatsky always insisted to

the contrary, and those who preach any other doctrine are false to her precepts.

Have our readers ever asked themselves why the Masters keep themselves in concealment and never communicate with any one who boasts of such communications? Are they not aware that the law is rigorous and that if it is broken they who break it must pay the penalty? After Madam Blavatsky's death when it was first announced that communications had been received from the Masters, the law was broken and the penalty is not yet fully exacted.

All our recent professions of messages from the Masters should have been warning enough for any careful student, but the desire to evade responsibility is so strong on the weaklings that they flock to those who profess to be able to tell them what to do. Poor babes! When will they learn to walk? Those who profess to depend upon Madam Blavatsky are only in a degree less infantile than those who profess to depend upon some one else. There is discrimination in recognizing that Madam Blavatsky had a true message, but she was careful to point out herself that there was nothing original in it; that it could be discovered by any one who sought in the records of the past; that what she wrote was not free from error and should be carefully examined in that light.

Now we have some more of our intelligent friends like Stokes of Washington, seriously asserting that James M. Pryse had called Madam Blavatsky a liar because he ventures to do what Madam Blavatsky says we should all do, analyze and criticize until we know, and are not merely the victims of credulity. Mr. Pryse is an old-time student and has not forgotten what we were all taught during Madam Blavatsky's lifetime,—that we had to rely upon ourselves.

Only by "self-devised and self-directed" efforts can we proceed to victory. Our initiations come to us in the daily circumstances and trials of life. As we meet

these and win out we progress and strengthen our inner bodies. There is no other way.

So, forsooth, I am sitting on the fence because I do not follow the example of all the other General Secretaries and proclaim some one to be the true leader to follow. "Alas, alas! that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the World Soul, and yet that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!" Why did Madam Blavatsky write that? Ask yourselves, and recollect in future, when you read any articles, that it is you that have to decide upon its worth and its authenticity, and that the standard of quality is in yourselves, in Alaya, that spark of which in each of us makes us kin to the Masters, our Elder Brethren.

A. E. S. S.

STILL FURTHER STUDY OF THE VOICE OF SILENCE.

By James Morgan Pryse

My article on the study of the *Voice of the Silence*, which appeared in the *Canadian Theosophist*, is neither a criticism of, nor a commentary on the *Voice*. As is plainly indicated by its title, it was written for students who seek to grasp the meaning of the *Voice*, to enter into the very spirit of it, and to make practical use of its teaching by practising Dhyana, the sacred Meditation whereby one may enter the inner worlds and commune with his own Spiritual Self. So I gave a synthetic view of the *Voice*, explained the relation of the three Fragments, showing that they are not disconnected and repetitive (as unfriendly critics have asserted), set forth in much fuller detail the stages of Dhyana, elucidated the Paramitas (which are given rather mystically in the *Voice*), showing their relation to the Lokas, and included in the article bits of information which may prove useful to students who are actually *practising* the sacred Meditation. If any of the critics who have honoured me with

their attention can tell me of any other contribution to Theosophical literature that covers the same ground I would be greatly pleased to hear of it.

But certain Theosophists, instead of taking that article in the spirit in which it was written, as an aid to penetrate the deeper meanings of the *Voice*, and thus to undertake more understandingly the practice of Dhyana (Raja Yoga), have seen fit to attack the article, not with any real arguments but by cavilling and misrepresentative comments, and with more or less vindictive personalities. Let it be said, seriously and even with solemnity, that any student actuated by the spirit so unrestrainedly indulged in by these critics should not attempt occult Meditation; for by so doing he would only probe into the dark depths of his Bhutatma and attract to himself the baleful influences of the "Brothers of the Shadow." It is the same contentious, unbrotherly spirit that at the time of the "Judge row" split wide-open the "aura" of the T. S. and gave entrance to those same malign influences.

From behind the shelter of initialled anonymity "W.M.W." valiantly throws mud at me. Because I have, at the earnest request of my old friend the editor of the *Canadian Theosophist*, contributed articles to that magazine to further the study of the writings of my best of friends, H. P. Blavatsky, this anonymous correspondent, out of his Theosophical brotherliness, writes thus of me: "This man is an eruditical prodigy. His writings carry the stamp of bombastic self-sufficiency and confidence, coupled with a smug, complacent invulnerability. He does not hesitate to amend and correct what he regards as the deplorable ignorance of H. P. B." There are more bouquets of the same sort in his flowery contribution. Is this vituperation the "real Theosophy" which he says "has been acquired from the works of H. P. B. and her teachers"?

Mrs. Henderson, who, unlike "W. M. W.", has the courage and proper regard

for journalistic ethics to sign her name, also slings mud at me in a most unlady-like way, but unlike him makes a feeble attempt at argument—merely touching on what she terms my "parody of the ideal of Renunciation" in my reply to Mr. Pease. But if Mrs. Henderson will only take the trouble to read the passages in the *Voice* on the subject of the "Path of Woe" she will find that instead of parodying them I simply restated them in milder terms; I merely repeated softly what H.P.B. says loudly in the *Voice*.

Mr. R. W. Morris, who disagrees with some statements in my article, handles the subject in a most gentlemanly way, and the points raised by him deserve consideration. He is right in saying that I am not to be regarded as "a contemner of H.P.B." because I dissent from some of the things she wrote. Than myself no one has a higher regard for H.P.B. More than that, she treated me as if I were her son, and I loved her as I did my own mother. Now for the objections raised by Mr. Morris:

1. The statement in the Preface to the *Voice* may fairly be understood as a general disclaimer of any originality in the teaching given in the work. The passages quoted by me from translations that appeared in the *Theosophist* are undeniably the sources from which the parallel passages in the *Voice* were taken. However, I did not quote the description of the "mystic sounds" given in the Upanishad as something "startling and likely to upset the minds of students," but simply because it gives all the sounds, whereas the passage in the *Voice* does not. I stated emphatically that H.P.B.'s use of the passage from the Upanishad "does not involve even a suggestion of plagiarism." Could my language be made any plainer? To put a quietus on one of my unfriendly "critics" I later pointed out that another passage in the *Voice* was adapted from an article by Mr. Ratun Chund Bary, which also has appeared in the *Theosophist*. Do you want me to go on and point out other passages,

phrases and expressions taken from other Upanishads, the Jnanishvari, the N. T., and even from Shakspeare and Christina Georgina Rossetti? Am I a "pedant" (as the brotherly anonym, "W.M.W.", calls me) because I am not so uneducated as to fail to see those things? Mr. Morris says my "dilemma is quite unreal." But there is no dilemma, real or unreal. It is all plain sailing.

2. Mrs. Besant has stated distinctly, in print, that H.P.B. charged her to correct the misteaching in the *Voice* concerning the Pratyeka Buddhas. I know that my good friend, Annie Besant, speaks the truth and is too clear-headed to be "mistaken in believing herself to have been charged by H.P.B. to delete the Pratyeka Buddha passages." Also, every clear-headed student ought to be able to see for himself that those passages should be deleted.

3. I have repeatedly called attention to the fact that H.P.B. was handicapped by having to write in an acquired language. She once said to me, "I may not be much of a writer in English, but in Russia I have a literary reputation." When referring to imperfections in her English I have treated them as of no importance.

4. If Mr. Morris has found the doctrine of the Two Paths in the Maha Chohan's letter, I can only say that he has a microscope of greater magnifying power than any I possess. The Two Paths in the *Voice* are merely the two Yanas of exoteric Buddhism. Why do all my critics dodge this question? I quoted in full all that the Maha Chohan wrote, which is simply that certain great Adepts relinquished at their death the attainment of Buddhahood and reincarnated repeatedly "throughout long and dreary centuries" for the benefit of "a handful of men." Yet Mr. Morris soberly maintains that it is the same teaching as this in the *Voice*, that a Buddha should "live through future Kalpas (cycles of ages)," "Kalpas without number, Nirvanas gained and lost," up to Paranirvana, the wind-up of the Universe, meanwhile

suffering "mental woe unspeakable." I rejected that diabolical doctrine the first time I read the *Voice*, and I have never found any reason for changing my mind on the subject. Neither do any of my "critics" really believe in it; they never attempt to meet the arguments against it, but dodge the doctrine and try to hide behind the word "Renunciation."

Now, this I say to my "critics," the friendly and the inimical, the courteous and the abusive: If I have or have not by my humble efforts helped you to understand the writings of my beloved H.P.B., I have at any rate stimulated you to do a bit of independent thinking.

THE MONTREAL LODGE

On the 18th of May of this year the Montreal Lodge will have arrived at the quarter century mark in its history, having received its Charter in the year 1905. In recognizing this twenty-fifth anniversary a short historical sketch has been made from material supplied by Miss Caroline Burroughs, Librarian, the only charter member still in the Lodge, whose assistance in the preparation of this article is hereby gratefully acknowledged. The greatest appreciation is due Miss Burroughs for her constant activity in the cause of Theosophy extending over a quarter of a century, and whose steadfast devotion has withstood all dissension and struggle from the earliest days to the present time.

In 1904 a number of friends who were interested in Theosophy met in the home of Miss Burroughs on the Upper Lachine Road every Sunday afternoon to learn more about the Ancient Teachings and this first study class proved to be a very profitable course and really laid the foundation for the one and only Lodge in Montreal. It was at this time that Miss Burroughs met Mrs. H. W. Weller at the Woman's Club and, hearing she was a Theosophist, invited her to join the study class, Mrs.

Weller later becoming an officer of the Lodge.

In the Spring of 1905 Mr. E. F. Ducasse came from New York, and being a very enthusiastic Theosophist, endeavoured to locate a Lodge in Montreal but found instead the early study class referred to above. He then urged the members to form a Lodge and as a result a Charter, dated the 18th of May, 1905 was secured. The new Lodge, composed of eight Charter members, held its first meeting four days later, the 22nd of May, at the home of Mr. Ducasse, 50 Aylmer Street, as it was more convenient to meet in a central locality and it was at this meeting that the first officers were elected with Mr. E. R. Dally as President; Mrs. H. W. Weller, Vice-President; and Mr. E. F. Ducasse, Secretary. The remaining Charter members included Miss Caroline Burroughs, Mrs. Saxe Holmes, Dr. R. H. Somers, Mr. S. M. Munn and Mr. J. P. Dent.

During the following few months meetings were held every other Monday at 50 Aylmer Street, and every second Sunday at the home of Miss Caroline Burroughs, Upper Lachine Road.

On September 1, 1905 Miss Burroughs moved into the city, occupying a house at 65 Bishop Street, and it was there that the meetings were held until May, 1907. By this time the membership had increased to 18, which provided sufficient encouragement to rent at Hall at 468 St. Catherine Street West, the Tuesday meetings being reserved for Lodge members and the Sunday evening meetings for the public. When these first public meetings were announced some enthusiastic members, including Mr. Thomasson from South Africa and the President, anticipated such a crowd that room could not be found for them. Although the public did not respond to these enthusiasms in the manner expected, such disappointments did not dampen the ardour of these early workers.

In 1908 a change was made to Ligget's Hall, St. Catherine Street West, where

members' meetings were held on Sunday afternoons. In 1909 the Lodge had its first lecturer from outside, Mr. Irving S. Cooper, the meetings being so well attended that the Fraser Hall was rented for this special occasion. Then came Mr. A. E. S. Smythe (now General Secretary) to give three public lectures in the same Hall, and as a result of these lectures public interest was awakened and the members encouraged. During the next few years the Lodge rented special Halls to provide accommodation for those outside lecturers they could secure from time to time.

From 1912 to 1915 a Hall large enough to accommodate all public meetings was secured at 16 McGill College Avenue and it was there that the Lodge was fortunate in having in those days such lecturers as Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, Mr. Irving S. Cooper and Mr. L. W. Rogers.

On October 5, 1915 new premises, Room 12, Tooke Building, corner St. Catherine and Peel Streets, were occupied for nearly eight years, many things occurring during this period of considerable value to the Lodge. It was during this period that Channing Hall on Sherbrooke Street was engaged to receive the out-of-town lecturers, these being Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, Mr. L. W. Rogers and Mr. A. P. Warrington, then General Secretary of the American Section. In 1917 Mr. Howard Edie and Mr. Van Tilbury gave a number of lectures on Theosophy at the Ritz Carlton Hotel and at the Edinburgh Cafe, which created considerable interest and were well attended but did not add to the membership. On February 12, 1919 Mr. A. P. Warrington again gave a theosophical lecture in the Ritz Carlton Hotel, and Mr. L. W. Rogers also delivered another series of lectures at this place in November. On November 28, 1920, the Lodge was visited by Mrs. Lambert Taylor of New York, who gave a series of public lectures and talks to the members, and the Lodge was again favoured with another visit by Mr. A. E. S. Smythe a little later.

Following the visits of these out-of-town lecturers the Lodge commenced the year 1921 with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. It was at this period that Mr. J. C. Moore, an attendant at the study class, became a member of the Lodge and proved to be a very efficient lecturer.

The year 1922 was unique in that the Lodge was fortunate enough to secure a Charter of Incorporation from the Provincial Government of Quebec, which placed the Lodge on a legal basis as a responsible body. During this year Professor Ernest Wood and Mr. B. P. Wadia gave a series of lectures. It was also the year that Montreal Lodge had its first nominee, Mr. A. L. Crampton Chalk, elected to the Canadian Executive. By this time Montreal Lodge had become the third largest Lodge in the Canadian Section and had developed a sufficient number of local speakers to fill the program for each session when necessary.

In April, 1924 the Lodge moved to Kings Hall, St. Catherine Street West, and it was there that meetings were held for over two and a half years. While at this Hall Mr. Roy Mitchell visited the Lodge in November, 1925 to give a series of lectures, which drew capacity audiences, reaching many people who were not in the habit of attending such meetings, and these lectures were the means of making Theosophy much more widely known. This engagement was followed by a visit from Mr. Dudley W. Barr (now Vice-President of Toronto Lodge) and by Professor Marcil Andre of Paris, France. By this time Montreal Lodge had attained the position of being the second largest Lodge in the Canadian Section, which it still maintains.

It was in October, 1926 that the Lodge moved to Coronation Hall, 1405 Bishop Street, premises which it still occupies. By this time local talent was so developed that one-fourth of the membership was on the lecturing list, public meetings being now held on Saturday evenings, and a members' study class on Tuesday evenings. At the

White Lotus meeting on May 8, 1927 the Lodge was greatly pleased to have Mr. John W. Lovell (a former Montrealer and now of New York) present on that occasion to address the members, giving many interesting reminiscences regarding the first members and founders of the parent Theosophical Society of 1875, which he joined at its inception. It was Mr. Lovell's good fortune to know personally, in some cases intimately, a number of the first members and he spoke in a very interesting way of these early Theosophical pioneers.

During the Spring of 1928 Mr. A. E. S. Smythe visited the Lodge over a week end and drew an over-flow audience at the public meeting, as well as addressing the members on the Sunday afternoon. This was followed by a lecture from Mr. Dudley W. Barr later in the season.

During the early part of 1929 Mr. William C. Clark visited Montreal Lodge while on tour of the various T. S. centres throughout the Section and his lectures and talks over a period of three days were a great stimulus to the membership. Many important problems were discussed in a very searching manner and the minds of many clarified regarding the function of a T.S. Lodge. During December last the Lodge was also favoured by the visit of Mr. Kartar Singh, a member of the Canadian Executive from Vancouver, and this first visit of his proved very interesting and valuable to the members whom he addressed at the regular weekly class. It was also during this year that considerable improvements were made to the Lodge room, owing to generous donations made by members and friends of the Lodge. Covering the period from 1922 to and including 1929 the nominees of Montreal Lodge elected to the Canadian Executive of the Theosophical Society in Canada were: Mr. D. B. Thomas, Mr. E. E. Bridgen, Mr. Fletcher Ruark.

It may be noted in closing that we are to have a visit from Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, General Secretary, on the very day that

Montreal Lodge celebrates its twenty-fifth birthday as a chartered Lodge and surely there could be no better way of recognizing this event than by having the responsible head of the Canadian Section with us on such an occasion.

J. E. Dobbs.

MR. MITCHELL'S BOOK

The Theatre Arts Monthly affords us an opportunity to give an appreciation of Mr. Roy Mitchell's book "Creative Theatre" which is described by the reviewer Edith J. R. Isaacs, as "Roy Mitchell's extraordinarily vivid Creative Theatre, probably the most invigorating and vitalizing iconoclasm the subject affords."

She says it is "in intention, in form, exactly the opposite of Mr. Cheney's *The Theatre*. It is not a record at all. It is a highly argumentative, stimulating, clarifying analysis of the whole theatre idea. It is a profound study in theatre esthetics, made gay and exciting by good writing and clear thinking. Mr. Mitchell uses the historic, economic, technical facts of the theatre simply as pegs on which to hang the essential truths of the theatre. He is interested in the theatre as it has been and as it is only in so far as it helps him to find what the theatre would be like if it were all it might, if its workers were all artists and its artists all free. Readers of "Theatre Arts" who have read his articles on *The Miraculous Theatre and Motion*, the *Essential Art of the Theatre* will have some indication of his unique and illuminating style and of the heart of his argument. Perhaps if single sentences could indicate its summing up, these would be along the way.

"Whatever we have achieved these last few years towards a finer ideal and better unified practice has been exactly in the measure of our recognition of the director as nearest the Theatre's heart. He can be

master of things a thousand playwrights have never troubled themselves to learn, and a hundred thousand actors have despised. When an actor goes to the theatre, he slips into the parts he likes and plays them. When the playwright goes, he sits well forward and listens. When the designer goes, he sits well back and looks. Every man to his trade. But none of these is exclusively the director's trade. His function in the theatre is that of creative spectator in advance of the fact. He posts himself, therefore, at that mysterious passage between actor and spectator where he can quicken his powers by meditation upon the effect of the play on the recipients whom it is his trade to anticipate. This new director is an ordainer of volumes, of massive shapes, of spatial relation, of the cumulative power of motion, of swirl, of interlude, of farandole. He found the theatre doing appropriate things; already he has made it do vital things. I fancy him making it do divine things." There is another quotation:

"Perhaps you have come in the course of years to wonder if the theatre is worth all the trouble we take with it. Whenever I have such a moment of doubt I seem to see two theatres, the extremes of all we have had.

"One is the theatre of a barrel-organ and a monkey whose master knows only enough to yank the rope when he sees a penny somewhere else.

"The other is older. It is a dim, distant theatre in a village at the end of the Sacred Road outside of Athens. It was called the Theatre of the Advent of the Earth Mother. One did not say of that theatre, 'I think I'll run out to Eleusis tonight and see what they are doing.' One said, 'If I am patient and worthy, please God, I shall one day be admitted to that theatre.' Emperors, kings, poets, philosophers and soldiers came to it from all over the known world. It ran on this policy for eight hundred years. There is a mark for Anne Nichols to shoot at!"

LETTERS OF H. P. B.

"Some Unpublished Letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky" with an introduction and commentary by Eugene Rollin Corson, B.s., M.I. Rider & Co. 10/6.

The persistent increase in the vogue of Madame Blavatsky, in spite of the reams of abuse that have been launched at her, must be gall and wormwood to those who have so loudly proclaimed themselves her successors while innately conscious of their utter inability to ever take her place. Professor Corson of Cornell University, provides the latest, and not the least valuable addition to what might now be justly called Blavatskyana. The volume is arranged in three sections consisting of an introduction and commentary by Dr. Corson and seventeen letters, written to his father, Professor Hiram Corson, by H.P.B.

From one aspect, the introduction and commentary, written as they are, by a man untutored in Theosophy and who never came really under the strong influence of H.P.B., are of even more importance than the actual letters. Dr. Corson, with his transparent sincerity, sympathy and understanding, and his vigorous style actually seems to make H.P.B. live for us. And there has never been written of H.P.B. a more generous and convincing defense nor on the whole, a more reliable analysis of her actions and character. Dr. Corson's lowest estimate of H.P.B. is that she was a "genius and great genius," and his highest estimate of her places her on a pedestal so high as to be out of reach of the greatest of her detractors. Dr. Corson excels the vigor of his defence in his scathing denunciation of her enemies, of the Madras Christin Mission, and the low hirelings of the S.P.R. In his chapter dealing with her enemies, he remarks of the Hodgson Report:—"Had this case been tried in the court, every witness on which Hodgson based his reports would have been discredited by opposing counsel either on the ground of bad character or incompetence."

Referring to Solovioff, Dr. Corson writes:—"We have one more enemy to deal with, another hireling of the S.P.R., and this the most vicious one of all, and unless he had the S.P.R. at his back he might have remained the half-fawning hypocrite he was, innocuous except for his spittle, but he had (Professor) Henry Sidgwick to support him and Walter Leaf to try to cover up his mistakes." Of Sidgwick he, Corson says:—" . . . he is the brazen inquisitor when he comes to judge psychics. He has no business with psychical research, no sympathy with the subject, and (is) hardly even a grubber in that field of mystery; and his ignorance has made him vicious." Of Leaf he remarks ". . . He too, has the S. P. R. at the back of him, and he is evidently, too, one of its hirelings. . . He does not hesitate to call H. P. B. a liar, and a discriminating reader will have no difficulty in calling him one; it helps to even up the scales."

The letters themselves are rich in Blavatskyan vigour, profundity and imagery, yet outside the fact that they clear away the charge that she treacherously deserted Spiritualism, there are but two really important counts dealt with. These are the vile accusations of her cousin, Count Witte, and her apparent denunciation of the principle of Reincarnation. On both these points the references of Dr. Corson are singularly inadequate.

The first count deals with the slanderous assertion of Count Witte, in his Memoirs, after H.P.B. had died, in which he accuses her of having had a lengthy youthful liaison with an opera singer named Metrovitch. Dr. Corson quotes this slander, then lightly dismisses it with the remark:—"So far as I know she has freely admitted this story of her youth and that's an end of it." Now in a writer so sincere and understanding this method of dealing with the accusation is indefensible. Dr. Corson must surely have had within reach *H. P. Blavatsky's Letters to Sinnett*, and on pages 143/189 these contain ample evi-

dence of the utter falsity of Count Witte's charge. And a further refutation was to be found in the very reputation and character, apparently known to Dr. Corson, of the notorious Count himself.

As Mr. Charles Johnston very aptly remarks of Count Witte, in the *Theosophical Quarterly*, New York, : "There is first the credibility of the witness. (to be considered) *I knew Count Witte and have published several sketches of his life.* He had quite exceptional ability, but the cardinal defect of his character was, that he distrusted everyone, and was, as a consequence, *trusted by no one.*" (Madame Blavatsky travelled widely; sometimes in male attire and often in company of men without a chaperone. This, in her case, was quite natural. But an unclean imagination might colour and distort situations that were unconventional. . . yet blameless. *I regret to say that the life and character of Count Witte were not such as to make of him a fair interpreter.*" Further, Dr. Corson has no justification for affirming that H.P.B. "admitted" the charge, for she has, in point of fact, denied it in the above-mentioned Letters, and explained it in a way that is as much to her credit as Witte's slander is to his discredit. I recount it in the fewest possible words.

In 1850, H.P.B. was in Para, near Constantinople. Returning late one night to her hotel, some men fled at her approach and she stumbled over the inanimate body of a man. On examination she discovered him to have been stabbed thrice in the back, and he was so spent that a strolling Turkish policeman discreetly suggested that she might be wiser to tumble the body into the gutter and forget about him. But H.P.B. persisted and had the wounded man taken to a hotel and cared for till he recovered. At his request she got into communication with his wife and child and quite friendly relations ensued, which extended to H. P. B.'s family, *including her cousin, Count Witte.* The man's name was Metrovitch, and being a singer of some eminence, he was encountered frequently during H. P.

B.'s travels, and she found that under the cloak of an opera singer he was a notorious revolutionary and Carbonaro who was continually on the move to evade being arrested or slain by the agents of the Governments to whose peace he was a constant menace.

Further convincing evidence of the mendaciousness of Witte's accusation can be found in the certificate of a most eminent European Gynaecologist (Letters, page 177) to the effect that H.P.B. was physically incapable of any propagational function. She was, in short, an androgyne.

In the second count we have to deal with the oft-repeated assertion of ill-informed persons that H.P.B., in her younger days, denounced and refused to accept the principle of reincarnation. Conclusive proof of the incorrectness of this is to be found in the *Key to Theosophy*, page 129, Besant Edition, and page 191 Original Edition:—

*"Enquirer—*But does not the author of *Isis Unveiled* stand accused of having preached against reincarnation?

*Theosophist (H.P.B.)—*Those who have misunderstood what was said, yes. At the time the work (*Isis*) was written, reincarnation was not believed in by any Spiritualists, English or American, and what was said there of reincarnation was directed against the French Spiritists, whose theory (of reincarnation) is as unphilosophical and absurd as the Eastern teaching is logical and self-evident in its truth. *The reincarnationists of the Allan Kardec school believe in an arbitrary and immediate reincarnation.* With them the dead father can incarnate in his own unborn daughter and so on. They have neither Devachan, Karma, nor any philosophical theory that would warrant or prove the necessity of consecutive re-births. But how can (*could?*) the author of *Isis Unveiled* argue against Karmic reincarnation at long intervals varying between 1,000 and 1,500 years, when it is the fundamental belief of both Buddhists and Hindus?" How, indeed! Italics mine.

Hugh R. Gillespie.

"Æ"

It is bad news for Ireland that the "Irish Statesman" is to go down; in times of tumult it has given a sounding-board to the quiet and considered voice. It has bridged the sea and reminded an eager people, in its fire and flush of nationhood recovered, that to be an island may be good, that to be insular is small, and that a Free State, however resolute for freedom, must be a unit in a comity of cultures. It is bad news, too, that "Æ" must abandon his editorial chair. But the loss to journalism will be poetry's gain. "Never lay thy rapture down," ends one of his loveliest lyrics. Last of all men will he commit that surrender. Nor shall the tobacco-bowl be broken, and the chair of converse be laid aside. George Russell, "Æ" to the world as much as to the world of letters, is, as many a visitor to Dublin gratefully remembers, the grandest of talkers. Was it Mr. George Moore who described the Celtic mythology foaming like porter on his beard? It is just ten years since I last talked with "Æ". But the memory of one in aspects like a major prophet immensely brooding and yet in freshness, eagerness, and humour possessed with the vitality of a dæmonic undergraduate, is never to be dimmed.

A little later I reported an address which he read in London. Reported! That was impossible. He crammed a volume of musings upon Ireland into an hour; the best of summaries could only be a travesty. And the reporter might have been pardoned for sinking, with idle hand, into a delighted trance as the wisdom flowed in the gentlest stream of utterance. His voice has the quality of candle-light. When I was in Dublin the "Statesman" was in other hands and he was editing the "Irish Homestead," a paper which gave the best advice on creameries and pig-sties to the agricultural co-operators. He sat in noble disarray in a room in Merrion-square. The mural drawings were of his own flowing draughtsmanship. I felt that, whenever a

correspondent had him challenged or overthrown in farmyard doctrine, he leapt up and drew another leprechaun on the wall-paper. He appeared to love an interruption, would fling aside his proofs, and swim out into a discourse like a glad swimmer back in his darling waters. At any rate, he gave generously of his time. I tried, I remember, to put a commonsense view of Irish romanticism. Nobody could have more splendidly convinced me that the world has sometimes to be saved from commonsense.

He has loved the Irish heritage. He sings of "meeting mighty days" whenever he walks the beloved shores of Donegal. The Hound of Ulla walks by his side; Lir is his Oceanus and Lugh his far-darting Apollo. To see a peasant-girl in Connemara is to remember that she "follows the proud and golden races after." Yet it is his genius to look before as well as behind and to imagine a national being which is practical poetry. If he sees Etain once more in the maid that milks he is also most diligent in planning that she should sell it at a profit through a clean, co-operative creamery. His lines "On Some Irishmen not Followers of Tradition" should be graven on the hearts of his fellow-countrymen whose worship of the dead may be a passion too strong for healthy living:—

"We would no Irish sign efface,
But yet our lips would gladlier hail
The firstborn of the Coming Race
Than the last splendour of the Gael.
No blazoned banner we unfold—
One charge alone we give to youth,
Against the sceptred myth to hold
The golden heresy of truth."

To dream with romance and to work with reality is not within the powers of many. But "Æ" has nobly done it.

So, if more leisure there must be, we claim more poetry. "Mystic" is a word so bullied and badgered and over-worked that one hesitates to use it. If we here employ the term, it is with the reservation that it implies no self-indulgence of a moody or

mawkish withdrawal from the common round. "Æ's" mysticism is the capacity for total immersion not into himself, but of self into scene. No need to say of his heart that it with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils; it becomes the very flower itself. Ireland is happy to have so genial a son; what he had she gave him again. And he has been stubbornly stay-at-home; this great man of Ulster might have gone anywhere as a lion, but he remains the Dubliner. This at any rate we know, that whether he is leading the wits in some tranquil symposium of the home or walking with Etain and Angus in the hills, he will not lay his rapture down. He tells us that whoever partook of the druidic Feast of Age become immortal. To that high banqueting of the spirit he stepped long ago by reason of his quenchless loyalty to Beauty.

I. B., in Observer (London, Eng.) April 6, 1930.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE KRISHNAMURTI PROBLEM

Editor, Canadian Theosophist:—It being good practice in dealing with problems to exhaust the known possibilities of solution before dragging in the unknown and therefore uncertain, let us forget, temporarily, all about Lord Maitreyas, World Teachers, etc., and we may find the problem not nearly so refractory as it has proved hitherto.

And first let us formulate the problem clearly, for there has been such a mist of emotion, loyalty, prejudice, that its outlines, really simple, have been sadly obscured.

Here was a young Hindu lad for whom great claims had been made as to a unique position that he would hold later on. In view of these claims many preparations had been made that to the growing youth became embarrassing. But also much loving

care, energy and money had been spent on his education and nurture. With a keen sense of gratitude, and also a steadily increasing revolt against the deprivation of his liberty that the gilded and complex cage threatened, he found himself in an exceedingly difficult position.

He was expected to step on the world stage and declare himself and his mission, and in terms of the claims and preparations made. This, in spite of his natural shrinking from outraging his sense of gratitude, he found he could not and would not do. After long and painful consideration he decided that at any cost he must be free. He bursts his cage, gains his freedom, but somewhat compromises that freedom by continuing to remain under an obligation to his friends for his maintenance.

No wonder he so persistently dwells on the iniquity of cages, the necessity of revolt, the refusal to commit himself to any philosophical scheme of things, whether valid or not, that can in any sense be used as material to build other cages, for other people. The Theosophical Society is under a heavy debt of gratitude to him for his really heroic stand. Now, free he is, free at all costs he will remain; and the further problem that remains of reconciling his teaching, so utterly simple that its very simplicity confuses many with the pretentious claims and absurd preparations he leaves to those who made them. And he is right to leave it to them.

But it would seem that a top heavy structure has been reared on a sandy foundation with the usual result. Great wisdom and courage will be necessary to repair the damage; let each of us help, forgetting our personal sores and bruises, and work for a brighter, better day.

Felix A. Belcher.

250 Lisgar Street,
Toronto, Ont.
April 20, 1930.

MAN'S DEEPER POWERS

Editor Canadian Theosophist: — The following is not entirely my own, but is the result of notes taken by a fellow student.

We in the West were doomed to become a materialistic race. Christianity, as it is taught, having no spiritual basis for its teachings, is materialistic and therefore has given rise to a materialistic science. When the West was skilfully taught that the redemptive power is without (the God idea), from then it was doomed. Why should people holding such views feel responsible for the mess they make, such as wars and the like? The only hope for the future is a spiritual philosophy to teach man that the only power that can redeem him is asleep in his own being, is there potentially but dormant, and that it is up to him to take off his coat and get to work to unfold these potentialities.

We should have a verifiable hypothesis which we can try out and prove whether or not it is adequate. It is a tragedy to deceive people into pursuing empty and baseless pursuits, and this is what religion does.

There are two ways of approaching the problem, directly and basically, which is the problem of the mystery of existence. The first way is to study the universe. We should try to discover whether we are living in a universe of chance and caprice or whether it is governed by law and order. The second way is to study man. We must decide whether we are super-apes (the paragon of animals), or whether we have deeper spiritual powers which enable us to transcend material living. The student would do well to follow both these ways but should specialize on the latter. The first method would involve us in wading through all the sciences, covering a vast field, and in this there is the danger of becoming lost in endless details and perplexities. Whereas the second and the best because it is the readiest and most direct way, for in it there is less chance of getting off the rails and of deceiving ourselves. It is

within the reach of every sincere student.

How then can the student proceed to discover whether he is a material being or a spiritual entity? One has finally to settle this question for one's self for it will not be settled by books or arguments. Those who claim that man is more than an animal say look deep within one's own being by turning the conscious process inwards, and impinge upon and awaken deeper powers and perceptions, turn the conscious process back upon itself and examine what is going on within. This is done by reining in the outgoing energies. When one ceases to let his life's energies go and waste themselves in the void, by holding them in check they turn inwards and awaken slumbering potentialities. One of the first things this inward-turned consciousness will show us is the extent to which we are swayed by our moods, our hopes and fears, our prejudices and preconceived ideas. We cannot see clearly or deeply while these can distort our perceptions, therefore they must be dealt with in every part of our being.

It is comparatively easy to detect prejudices which are near the surface but we ought to dig down in order to find the unconscious ones which are likely to be very deep-seated, it is only by the inward-turned consciousness that they will be at any time brought to light. As the surface of a lake can only reflect truly when it is free from disturbances, so also with the mind. When the mind is free from all disturbing influences it can reflect Truth without distortion. This method, called by many names is meditation in one or other of its forms, it is the direct way to get first hand knowledge of man's essential nature. Who are the people who have done this? They have been honoured by every civilization. They are the great geniuses, poets, sages and philosophers. They all have claimed that man is more than an animal and this is strong evidence.

The answer to this problem is not to be found where the men of science are working. The typical man of science reduces

life to a series of physiological reactions and psychological reactions and is dealing with phenomena, and when he gets beyond this he is expressing his personal opinion which is not of any great value in such matters. He is unfitted to throw light on the deeper mysteries until he has by discipline and training awakened within himself deeper perceptions. Most scientists are willing to admit that the problem is out of their province. If this were understood a great amount of harm would be avoided, for it is entrenched in people's minds that the scientist's opinion is of the highest value. The scientists have contributed little to this problem compared to a man like Emerson, and many men at different times in history, who have awakened their deeper inner perceptions. This does not belittle the efforts made by scientists to unravel the mystery of existence, but it must be admitted that little has been done in this direction up to the present. Cordially yours.

Stanley Pratt.

Golden Gate Lodge,
San Francisco.

MAN'S PRINCIPLES AND BODIES

Editor, Canadian Theosophist:—In the article published in the March number, Mr. Pryse inquires, on p. 3, col. 1, par. 2. "How can the true *Ego* (the manasic self) the immortal Individuality of a man, be a "*Body*", an external Form in the Astral World or *any other World*?" On p. 5, col. 2, he summarizes his own conclusions reached by comparing the diverse teachings, and states under No. 2:—"Augoeides, the Daiviprakritic *Body* of the Dhyani, who is the Divine *Self*, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Higher Triad. This is *in the Manasic World*." I have italicized the words in these citations, and it appears that the query is answered in the second sentence. "The conscious *thinking Ego*" (H.P.B.'s phrase) is surely such only in association with a *substance of thought*, a

"body" that is causal because thought is causal. Self-consciousness requires, as does all subjectivity, a contrasting objectivity, however impalpable and intangible for our sense perceptions, when functioning as *I am I*.

We are all in danger at times of being drowned in a sea of words, and a clear definition of terms might prevent such catastrophies, especially if allowance be made, at the same time, for the relativity of subjective and objective states; what is subjective in one state becomes objective in another. Many of Mr. Pryse's difficulties might be obviated by a consideration of the characteristics of Space. Alice in the Looking Glass found "forms" and "external appearances" which, relative to a 'normal' state of consciousness, seem absurd and impossible! Even scientific research has made almost familiar the idea of the permeability of matter and its states of relative tenuity, so that we have no longer an excuse for thinking of the human principles as bodies or forms "encased" one inside the other.

The wireless pictures (or illusionary appearances) of the Chhayas or Shadows, projected etherically by the intelligent scientific adepts, give us some idea of the power of kamic matter when mixed with mental matter. Such a combination in a human form can produce plenty of illusions whether we term the combination *astral*, *manasic*, *kamic*, *mayavic* or just plain *chhayavic*! The productions may be merely "artificial" but if a man had not the lower reflections of "chhaya" in his own constitution how could he produce these illusions? Like produces like.

To-day, too, we have science airing its knowledge of photosynthesis—organisms functioning and having their physical being in ether, absorbing Life from invisible "rays", amongst others the Sushumna Sun-Ray, no doubt. But, behold Mr. Pryse deleting Prana from his list of principles! Now, how *on earth* do we manage to live without a "body" in our constitution

that can interact with the ether? One doubts whether even the *Permanent Psychic Body* (No. 3) would compensate for being deprived of the means of terrestrial existence and experience; and one wonders whether such a fundamental change in Man's Principles and Bodies would facilitate "the spiritual advancement of humanity". Would not those terrible "Dugpas" be rather pleased to have us removed permanently to the "psychic plane" and at their mercy?

W. Wilson Leisenring.

P.S.—Since writing this letter it has occurred to me that the difficulties of terminology with regard to "astral" might be considered as follows:—If "astral" be equivalent to "siderial", any of the seven states of ether (synthesized in Akasha) may be designated by the term "astral"; and the *critical* state between the densest state of ether and physical matter (perceived by our senses) would be also properly described as astral matter, e.g., the *Linga Sharira*. Its principle or "element" being the vehicle of life-energy in every state of the ether, this astral body is necessarily the critical body in any physical organism. The researches in colloids, organic nitrogenous substances and infra-red states are highly significant in connection with statements in the S. D. regarding *viscous* astral matter. It is, then obvious that only one "umbilical cord" is required to connect the physical form with the siderial constituents, for *Linga Sharira* concentrates, and is interpenetrated by, *Prana* and *Kama*, the former enabling the latter to "burn". Hence *Kama-rupa* is no doubt a true astral "body"; but its self-consciousness and power of mayavic propagation as *Kamanas* in living human beings, render it necessary to distinguish it from other astral states. In a word, *Linga Sharira* is the synthetic astral body in the "lower spheres."

London, April 3.

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.*

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