

The Theosophist

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THE THEOSOPHIST

EDITED BY N. SRI RAM

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of good-will whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not to punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

THEOSOPHY is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guide its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the Science of the Spirit, teaching man to know the Spirit as himself and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the Scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and Theosophists endeavor to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true THEOSOPHIST.

APRIL 1957

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THE THEOSOPHIST

Edited by N. SRI RAMAN

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY was formed at New York, November 17, 1875, and incorporated at Madras, April 3, 1905. Its three declared Objects are:

- FIRST.—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
- SECOND.—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
- THIRD.—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 23, 1924

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the civilized world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher or writer, from H. P. Blavatsky downwards, has any authority to impose his teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to attach himself to any teacher or to any school of thought which he may choose, but has no right to force his choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office, nor any voter, can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion he may hold, or because of membership in any school of thought to which he may belong. Opinions or beliefs neither confer privileges nor inflict penalties. The members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

FREEDOM OF THE SOCIETY

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 30, 1950

The Theosophical Society, while co-operating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such co-operation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title, The Theosophical Society.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.



THE THEOSOPHIST ON THE WATCH-TOWER

*The Theosophical Society is responsible only for its
Official Notices appearing in "The Supplement".*

IT is an extraordinary fact that ever since the three Objects of the Society were drawn up and embodied in their present form, they have continually stood the test of time, despite the enormous changes that have come about in the world, and members everywhere still feel that they have in the statement of these Objects just what they need as a basis for their lives as well as an indication of the lines they could most usefully pursue to make their own lives and that of humanity richer and better. This does not mean that the language which is used is incapable of being altered and improved. It has been pointed out, for instance, that whereas the second Object seems to call for the study of "comparative religion," along with philosophy and science, it should ask members first to study religion itself. But then a study of the main concepts of the various religions is implied in any process that seeks to set out the differences as well as the common ground between them. Theosophy even as we know it has thrown light on the tenets of all the world's great religions, and there is nothing to prevent us from pursuing the line followed in *The Secret*

Doctrine by H.P.B. herself. The very name of the Society being the Theosophical Society, our fundamental interest is surely Theosophy or, as it has been translated by H.P.B., the Wisdom Religion, which is not the same as any of the religions as we have them at present, however much elements of that Wisdom might be present in these religions. All the comparisons that she makes not only between the ideas of the different religious systems, including the mythologies of old, but also between the ideas of the religious bodies and those of Science—the Science of her time—were intended to lead the reader to the Truth as it exists independently of man's varying notions. It is possible, in interpreting the phrase "comparative religion, philosophy and science," to give it a broader meaning than what we would envisage if we were attempting a very precise definition meant to serve a limited, legalistic end. If the language used lends itself to a certain freedom of interpretation in no wise detrimental to the central purpose of the Society, that is obviously an advantage rather than otherwise to its work. It may be that at some time in the future we may feel the need to consider whether any of the three Objects—the first at any rate seems to me to be perfectly worded for all present and foreseeable purposes—should be slightly or somewhat altered so as to keep them more accurately aligned with the main direction of human progress, not progress by any conventional standard but progress in an essential sense as it is taking place in Nature. But for the present we might rest content with the fact that the wording of the Objects, as it stands, has not come in the way of any member making his possible contribution to the Society's progress or of any Lodge having its own programme of study and activity.

There has, however, been one suggestion which is made from time to time and which we might consider here. It has been said that though there may be no need

to make any important change in the Objects as described, it is a defect not to have the arts included in the broad scope of the studies we undertake. Dr. J. H. Cousins was one of the protagonists of this view. While touring in South and Central America last year, I came across instances in particular places in which the local Theosophists, in explaining to the public the Objects of the Society, modified the second Object on their own account so as to bring in the arts. This was done not with any view to altering the character of the Society but in order to bespeak for it the sympathetic interest of the audience. Possibly it was thought that so long as nothing was taken away, a little addition of something so approvable as the arts would not really matter. There is a type of temperament which stands firm on matters of rule and law; it maintains its definitions. But there is another which prefers a less tight fit whether of opinion or of responsibility. I came across more than one group of Theosophists on that tour who claimed to be members of the Society by virtue of their being Theosophists at heart and having attended some Theosophical meetings, even though they had not paid their subscription for years.

* * * *

The arts were not included in the Objects of the Society, when these were devised, evidently because they belong to an entirely different category from that of science, philosophy and religion mentioned in the second Object. After all, what is it we seek to know or study? It is Theosophy, a certain Wisdom, transcendental, natural, divine, describe it as you like, the existence of which is postulated in the very acceptance of that term. We are not placing our lasting interest in the ideas of men, which are many and various, but in a Truth which lies for the most part beyond these ideas, of which these ideas are at best but partial reflections. The Truth that is expressed in its pristine

form in all the processes of life and evolution is perceived as Wisdom by the related intelligence, namely ourselves, when we do perceive it; and it is this Wisdom, the expression of the underlying Truth in manifold forms, that we seek to discover along the avenues of Science, Philosophy and Religion. Obviously Science is a knowledge of what takes place, based on observation of the things that exist objectively to us, their appearance and the measurable effects of those things in their relations to one another. When we pass on to Philosophy—not anyone's in particular—we come to a mode of understanding which is broader, more abstract and generalized but supplementary to the particulars and manipulations of Science, a province more concerned with the processes of consciousness and the creation of a framework or order of ideas, which gives to each thing in the field of observed phenomena, each idea formed out of these observations, its appropriate significance. From this standpoint Philosophy is not an invention of man, not a craft whether more useful or less useful for a particular purpose, but a natural synthesis, in which there is a grading and a blend of the psychological with the physical, of which Science studies but the apparent physical details. Religion too, as we may understand it from this angle, becomes not any artificial notion, not sophisticated ignorance, but a play of those reaches or strings of the human consciousness that bring us into harmony with other expressions of the One Life, whether a greater life, a greater individuality—the One Life being the greatest as well as the common denominator of all—or a lesser one, no less endowed with its own different uniqueness. Thus verily Religion is a binding or a communion that has in it the potentiality of an infinite variety of harmonies, the experiencing of the variegated riches of Life. We have only to compare Religion thus understood in its essence with the systems and practices, the mixture of theological ideas, discipline and

loyalties, which has assumed that name, in order to perceive how different is Life itself, in all its grades, actions and varieties, from what man makes of it under various terms and symbols. In Theosophy we are not concerned, except incidentally, with man-made images of the Truth, which are numerous and often bizarre—some are of course very beautiful—but with Truth itself, Truth in the aspects of form and life, or form, intellect and Spirit—the form that is observed, the intellect that reasons and constructs, the depths of absoluteness (to use an H. P. B. phrase) and creative possibilities that lie embedded in what we summarily term the Spirit. If this is what the Divine Wisdom means, the Wisdom that is in the very movement of life, using the word “life” in its most extensive sense, what is the relation of the arts to this Wisdom?

Art, in a general sense, as contra-distinguished from Nature, is something which man contrives or produces, either for his own convenience, in which case it is not a “fine art” so-called, or to create a bespeaking interest, bringing out a certain significance—idea, mood, movement or whatever else—with which the artist has been touched. The arts and crafts are activities, like legislation or engineering, in which Theosophists are of course free to engage and through which they can express their Theosophy, since there is nothing in all life to which the Divine Wisdom is not related, it being the Wisdom of the one all-pervading Spirit. But what is expressed in all such activities are the ideas of the people engaging in them, ideas sometimes crude, unbalanced, sensational and vulgar, but in other instances noble, inspiring and beautiful. Of course an understanding of the process of creation, as well as the reality and deceptions involved in the psychology underlying the diverse activities of the mind, is also within the range of Theosophy. But there is a distinction to be drawn between what we

might attempt to do or create out of our understanding, imperfect as it is, and the search for an increasingly perfect understanding that eventually merges into Truth. So far as art is identified with Beauty, the understanding of that Beauty as well as the experiencing of it must fall within the scope of any attempted comprehension of that totality which Theosophy must inevitably embrace. But art or the arts are a pursuit which is as much a matter of technique in translating ideas as it is a matter of discrimination in evaluating those ideas. If we take music as an example, it includes both music which has a purely spiritual quality—and there is not much of it—and music of other sorts which caters to various elements of the psychic and emotional nature. It may be a most laudable undertaking to encourage the production as well as the appreciation of what is spiritual. But then what is spiritual? Thus we come to the question of individual experience which has to be cleared of many weeds—all the personal aims and wants—before the pure fragrance of true spirituality, which is not just a so-called religious emotion, can be inhaled and identified.

Very many years ago Brother C. Jinarājadāsa wrote an article in the journal of the American Section, entitled "Not Our Work". The main point of it was that though there are many things most admirable being accomplished in different fields, and they all call for our blessing as Theosophists, the Society has its own special work from which it must not be deflected. The nature of this work in broad outline falls within the three Objects and is indicated by the very word "Theosophy". The work of Theosophists, apart from the living of Brotherhood, is the gaining and the spreading of a certain understanding; and out of that understanding there will naturally flow the most diverse activities, all freely cohering to make the pattern of a perfect order which will be man's highest accomplishment on this earth.

To introduce the arts among the objectives of the Society, at this stage at any rate, would be to give it a strong impetus in a direction which to many would be too attractive for them to stay on its main rails, the base from which they have to work outwards. It is easy to be lost in an activity, however excellent, which although some day it may be used to bring out the potentialities of our being, is for the present tangential to that being—in touch with it and moving away from it at one and the same time. In the book, *Commentaries on Living*, by J. Krishnamurti, recently published, there is a startling statement, that music (and beauty) can be an escape, which does not mean of course that it has no value. It all depends on what it is and how it affects us. But as a Society our work is not to produce music or art in the ordinary sense, but to discover that nature in ourselves out of which will flow that divine music and art which will not only make all life beautiful, but also reveal here and now the true significance of each thing that happens to us in life.

* * * *

Among the many changes which have taken place in India since India assumed the reins of government over herself, two very recent ones, not so important perhaps, are the adoption of the centigrade thermometer and the decimal system of coinage. Of more interest in some ways is the adoption by the Government of India of a new calendar, based on the ancient Sāka era, which is to be used for certain purposes, along with the Gregorian calendar in use all over the globe. The first day of the year of the new calendar has been fixed as March 22, 1957, the day following the vernal equinox. A recent article in *The Hindu* by Mr. V. Venkataramana Rao points out that the choosing of March 22 this year is a happy coincidence with an ancient prediction by a South Indian poet, Sri Kaka Bhujandar, that this period

A New Calendar
for India

is about the time when important changes of a planetary nature are to take place. These changes, according to him, will not only bring about a new order, that is to say, happier conditions, but will also be astronomical. The prediction envisages a change in the inclination of the earth's axis, as mentioned in so many places in *The Secret Doctrine* by H.P.B. Mr. Venkataramana Rao mentions also another work, *Sri Umāmahesvara Samvāda*, in which, too, there is the prediction of such a change during the present time when the planet Saturn is moving through the sign of Scorpio.

In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. writes about seven terrestrial pralayas, each occasioned by a change in the inclination of the earth's axis. The change takes place, she says, not blindly, but "at its appointed time, in strict accordance and harmony with karmic law," and it is always followed by climatic vicissitudes. At the time of the big Atlantean deluge, the earth had already inclined its axis, and afterwards conditions astronomical, geological and cosmological were not the same as before. Although in one place H.P.B. speaks of "sudden changes and their accompanying results," she also makes the reassuring statement that a complete change requires several thousands of years. What is of particular interest in the article mentioned above is the reference to this mysterious phenomenon that H.P.B. writes about at some length.

Our members will all be very glad to learn that Dr. E. Lester Smith, who is the chairman of the Science group of the Theosophical Research Centre in England, and a member of the National Council of that Section, has been recently elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. This is a very high scientific honor. Our heartiest congratulations go to Dr. Lester Smith.

Dr. E. Lester
Smith

N. SRI RAM

THE SPIRIT OF INDIAN CULTURE¹

By C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

FRIENDS: Speaking today on "The Spirit of Indian Culture," we cannot afford to forget that, under the stimulus of the Buddhistic faith which was adopted by Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, they were pioneers in the work of interpreting Eastern culture to the West, and in what is perhaps the even more significant and important work of enabling India to appreciate her own heritage. At a time when Indians were rather shame-faced about themselves, when they would by preference wear European clothes, live European lives, and think borrowed thoughts (there was no harm in that save that these were generally accompanied by disparagement of un-European ways, life and thought) two great and unforgettable personalities enabled India to remember herself, to recollect her past, and work for her future. Those two personages were Dr. Annie Besant and Swami Vivekananda. To them we owe India's self-determination, our self-respect, our feeling that it is worth while being Indians, being Asiatics, and also citizens of the world.

In speaking to you about "The Spirit of Indian Culture," I shall have necessarily to refer to various authorities. As far as possible, I will restrict my quotations to the

¹ The Besant Lecture delivered during the 81st International Convention of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, December 1956.

narrowest compass, but I would do no justice to the magnitude, the scope and the ambit of my talk if I were merely to give you a popular exordium.

It may at the outset be useful to bring to your mind that many of the things for which Colonel Olcott, Madame Blavatsky, Dr. Besant and their colleagues stood, and for which they were derided, are now taken for granted. I may add that some of those ideas were known, apprehended, perceived by Indian thinkers ages ago. What has been sought to be achieved in the West by deductive work, by dialectic, by experimentation, by logical processes, was apprehended and perceived in this country largely by means of intuition centuries, nay, millennia ago. Quite recently there has appeared a book which purports to be a compendium of modern knowledge, synthesized, collated and referring to various scientific developments. That outline of modern knowledge is not produced by a religious person, or any spiritual society, not even by the psychical society, but by the hard-headed British editor of the *London Times Literary Supplement*. One chapter of that book was contributed by Professor Rhine, of the Duke University in the United States. For about twenty-five to thirty years he had been hard at work, along with enthusiastic and efficient colleagues, trying out the problems of super-sensory experiences, experiences beyond the range of our five senses, things, for instance, like clairvoyance, like clairaudience, like what he calls telekinesis, the production of energy by an effort of the will, and the results are there in an absorbing chapter and they testify to a catena of evidence which is of a very convincing nature. Modern science, western science, is tentative, experimental, provisional in its conclusions on these aspects of the matter. But it is worthy of note that this idea of the existence of reservoirs of energy, over and above what are known and can be tested in the laboratory of the scientist as now constituted, was a matter which was, as Patanjali's *Yoga*

Shastra will tell us, appreciated and apprehended millennia ago. The essence is there and it is now nearing the domain of experimental science.

You remember that throughout our ancient books and throughout our Tantra Shastras and Āgamas great stress is laid upon Shakti, energy of various kinds. I am not going into what may be called the Tantric idea of Shakti or energy, but the fact that the universe is in the main the product of energy, and that all things apart from Shakti and the prime mover of Shakti, Parabrahman, are illusion, was one of the cardinal doctrines of the Vedānta system, and we saw at one time western speculators, and philosophers, having a dig at this doctrine and being very sceptical either about the practical result or about the theoretical authenticity of this doctrine. But recently I was reading a book by Bertrand Russell, a hard-boiled philosopher, a man who has been a sceptic, a person who in his *Principia Mathematica* and his philosophical treatises has sought to throw the cold water of dubiety upon many cherished doctrines of his predecessors, and what does he say? "Modern science is tending to prove that there are no such things as things." In other words, what he means to say is that, according to the present state of western science, this great banyan tree, this table, my good friend and myself are merely apparent semblances produced by ever-active and perpetually moving protons, electrons and neutrons, whose vibrations give the appearance of yourself, myself, the table and the tree. That is not Vedānta, but western science, physical science, as it is developing today. In other words, it is very doubtful indeed whether Reality exists excepting in the sense in which the Vedas and the Vedānta conceded it.

Another example: You have heard of the Sushupti and Turiya states of consciousness, and you know what our ancients have declared about them. They, too, were considered rather fantastic doctrines, but within the last twenty-five to

thirty years, beginning with Freud, going on to Adler, and glancing at the mathematical doctrine on the theory of indeterminacy, and coming down to Dr. Jung, happily amongst us today, a new doctrine has developed of what is called the philosophy of the unconscious, of the subconscious. It is now taken for granted, and it seems to be beyond controversy, that human personality is only seen superficially, imperfectly, when you look at the apparent doings of a person. What a person does, what a person thinks, what a person will do on a given occasion or the day after tomorrow, depends not so much on what is apparent in his activities, or even in his motives, but upon the workings of that great body of unconscious, subconscious, and hardly apprehended streams of consciousness, sometimes inherited from past generations, sometimes impinging upon the person from outside, all of which constitute what may be called a submerged personality. Indeed, the proposition has been stated with some apparent authenticity that a human personality is largely like an iceberg, an iceberg which appears above the surface of the water only to the extent of one-sixth or one-fifth, the bulk of it remaining below. So below the known consciousness of the man is this submerged personality. That is exactly what was postulated in the whole of the Yoga philosophy in dealing with the Sushupti and Turiya states in the olden days.

Now all that I am anxious to point out as a kind of an introductory remark is this: That what has been sought to be discovered or demonstrated by experimentation was in a mysterious but nevertheless vivid manner perceived by intuition. The spirit of Indian culture, according to the thesis which I shall present before you, involves three or four fundamentals.

One of these is what in our writings is called *Rta* or *Dharma*, namely, unalterable law, the logic, the concatenation of cause and effect which does not pause for any person and makes no exceptions.

The second is the continuity of existence, beginning from the rock and the protozoa up to man, the angel, and the *Avatāra*. This evolution and continuity of existence is another aspect underlying the idea of Indian culture which permeates the whole of what is today called Indian thought.

Third, the adaptability, the assimilative capacity, of Indian cultural growth.

And finally, and not least of all, courage, *Abhaya*, or fearlessness in facing all phenomena and events.

These to my mind furnish what may be called sign-posts, and keeping those sign-posts in sight we may be able to travel part of our way.

What is culture? Etymologically considered, culture or a cult involves two ideas: first, cultivation, tilling the soil; and second, worship. At one time these two processes were closely assimilated. Culture necessarily involves tilling the mental and the spiritual soils. The soil is composed of several components. And therefore, in considering the kind, the quality, the particular genius, of any culture, you must really consider the quality and the vitality of the separate component organisms which constitute the soil of that culture.

Many people have doubted whether there is any such thing as Indian culture, because they say it is so multifaceted and all-absorbing. I shall indicate the type of questions I have been asked in America, Australia, New Zealand and other places. When I talk about Indian culture, they say: "You are willing to worship a star, a stone, a cow or a plant, but at the same time you say there is an impersonal God and the universe is illusory. How do you reconcile all these contradictory theses?" The whole point is that Indian culture can only be understood if you remember that the underlying spirit of Indian life is that it adapts itself to every grade of evolution. Those who are apt for a certain

doctrine, those who are apt for a certain discipline, are given the doctrine and the discipline that are suitable to them.

If you ask why images are worshipped, the answer is that it is necessary to concentrate a person's mind, it is necessary to focus one's spirit upon something, because the human mind, left to itself, wanders. You know the well-known saying that thoughts are like many deer passing across the field of vision in a valley, and that the main object of philosophy is to choose one of those ideas, one of those fleeting deer, and then to concentrate steadily on it in order to know something about that one entity. This concentration, whether you call it worship, intense study, or experimentation, is essential. That concentration is obtained by some people by means of books, by others by means of images, and by others by means of poetry. That which fixes, that which arrests, that which concentrates your mind and soul is a thing which is your appropriate sādhana. In this connection I very often repeat the great argument of Lord Bacon with regard to idols. On one occasion Lord Bacon, in his great universal treatise, was dealing with the question of idols—idols made of stone, images or pictures. He declared that it is all very well to talk of these idols, but the real idols of mankind are very different. And what are those idols? Those idols are idols of the market-place, idols of the forum, idols of the theatre.

What does he mean by that? If a man insisted on a slogan, if a man had a preconceived opinion, if a man had a prejudice, and could not get rid of that preconception, could not surmount that prejudice, is a slave to a particular thought or dogma, then that dogma, that doctrine, that thought is a real idol more injurious, more cramping than these idols of which people generally speak. That is an aspect which, if you want to understand the spirit of Indian culture, you have constantly to bear in mind; that Indian culture depends for validity and force of conviction upon its

ever-present consciousness that you can only deal with any given person according to his stage of evolution. And how can you possibly controvert that doctrine consistently with that very doctrine of evolution of which the West is such a devotee? If, as a matter of fact, every organism is evolving, then at every stage a particular stimulus is necessary and biologically effective. According to the stage of evolution reached by a person he reacts best to a particular ideal—an image, a painting, a book, a thought, an hypothesis or a coherent philosophy. And some, like Shankara, are great enough to worship an image and to formulate at the same time the Vedantic doctrine—Brahman is the sole truth and sole entity, the universe is illusory, everything is Brahman and there is naught beyond. Every thesis leads to a synthesis.

The spirit of Indian culture can be adequately understood only if you constantly bear in mind that it is an embodiment, first, of the doctrine of Rta, second, of the doctrine of Karma and Samsāra, third, of the necessity for Abhaya and Virya, or courage, in going to the utmost limit of the possibilities of your thought, and lastly of adaptability and tolerance arising from adaptability. I shall now deal with the last point.

The *Mundakopanishad* says:

The Supreme is not attained by the weak, nor can it be attained by excesses of action or penance, but only by one-pointed concentration.

That is why right through our history Indian culture has always stood for the completest freedom of thought along every line of speculation, dogma or doctrine. Thus, for instance, in any compilation of the various Siddhāntas, or of the various books containing speculations on the highest possibilities of mankind, you will find that atheism, the Lokayata philosophy, Buddhism, Jainism, and indeed every religion is comprehended. It is possible for a person to attain the truth, travelling in every way. A modern poet, not many

years ago, wrote a poem addressing the Maker, and he exclaimed: "Grant me, Lord, the courage of unbelief." Even unbelief, if honest, can lead to ultimate attainment.

That kind of assertion of personality, assertion of the right to think, think to the utmost, has been one of the characteristics of Indian thought, and that is why you will find that a person who started, like the Lord Buddha himself, with a deliberate eschewal of ritual and ceremonies to which he devoted many of his reproaches and denunciation, nevertheless at the end of the *Tripitaka* has chapter on chapter upon the quality of the true Brahmana and the manner in which the Gods should be treated. In other words, whoever has functioned in India has given himself the completest liberty of thought, and the result is that even Shankara was called, by his opponents, Pracchanna Buddha or hidden Buddhist, because he went to the extreme of Impersonality in Godhead. But that very Pracchanna Buddha was sufficiently a Hindu, sufficiently imbued with the intrinsic character of Indian culture, to have written some of the most wonderfully pathetic, searching and yearning devotional poems to several aspects of the personal God, to Narasimha, to Annapurni, and to Ganga. That is a characteristic of Indian culture that the same man who could describe the world as an illusion, could yet sing an impassioned poem in praise of personal manifestations of the Supreme. This courage, this latitude of thought, this flexibility of logical process, is an essential spirit of Indian culture.

Following upon that, there is another aspect of Indian culture and Indian religious thought which is perhaps unique. The man who levels any criticism on any religion followed by men has not understood what Hindu culture stands for, for Hindu culture, if it means anything, is the assertion of the equal validity of all revelations. It affirms that there is no point in thinking that there is one chosen race to whom alone a revelation is given.

There is no point in insisting on any special revelation, there is no point in thinking even of a saviour, there are no short-cuts to salvation, you cannot, so to say, buy a fire-insurance policy against hell-fires. If you are true to Indian culture, experience, or realization, is the only ultimate test for the validity and the appeal of religion to your soul. The Lord Buddha was asked by his disciples about the time his Mahā-paranirvāna was to take place: "Lord, Thou art dying. What is Thy message to us?" He said: "I am not going to give you any message. I can only show you the Path. It is for you to tread the Path." What the Buddha said on that occasion the Indian seers and thinkers have said and implied on every occasion, namely, that true religion, the impact of true spiritual messages, comes to you and is realized as a result of experience actual or intuitive. In other words, personal experience, personal realization, is of the essence of the attainment of Truth.

Keeping all these aspects in mind, I will select some extracts from our great scriptures to indicate the development and what you might call the evolution of Indian culture.

One of the most wonderful episodes in our scriptures is the incident in the *Kathopanishad*. On a particular occasion, Yama, the God of Death, had in his custody Nachiketas, and he was so impressed by the spiritual yearning and fervor of Nachiketas and the potentiality of greatness in him that he asked him what he wanted, what worldly advantage, what wealth, what grandeur, what position, he desired. And the answer was:

The only boon that I ask is this: After a person's passage from this life, some hold that the soul persists. Some consider, on the other hand, that everything about him passes away. The real secret of after-life is what I want, not your money, not your wealth, not your position, not pomp or power do I ask.

That was from the beginning the root-idea of Indian endeavor. In other words, what is often called the spirituality

of India is really a feeling that every possession including life is impermanent and is not a thing to be quested after or sought out. The essential spirit of Indian culture is, therefore, the yearning cry of Nachiketas, namely, that he did not want pomp and power and money and status, but he would rather have the secret of what happens to one after this temporary existence.

Similar was the statement of Maitreyi in the *Brihadaranyakopanishad*. The husband on a particular occasion wanted to distribute his wealth amongst his wives. One of the wives was Maitreyi. And he offered to give her all the wealth she required. And the answer came from the wife:

Supposing you give me enough wealth to cover the whole earth, shall I get over the great hurdle of death? And shall I gain immortality thereby?

The husband who was honest had to say: "No, by wealth you can achieve many things but not immortality." And that is a second example proving that from the beginning there is this constant questing for something that is permanent, something that is not fleeting, something that is not passing away.

The next is a realization that the individual soul chooses its own fate, which is a function of past samsāra and karma—and this idea has colored the whole of Indian life. Time after time, wherever people have asked the question: "Why are the people of India without the luxuries, without the appurtenances, without the high standards that people should have, why so passive and patient, why is there so much apathy in India?" The answer is: "It is not apathy. It is a feeling that there is perhaps some justification arising from past experiences, from past births, for the present existence." That does not mean, as most people who criticize Indian culture are likely to think, that it is fatalism, that it is determinism, that it is a thing which people are willing to

abide by, because they are hopeless. No, it means merely that there is an abiding sense of the intrinsic philosophy of the continuity of existence and the inexorable law of compensation, namely, that as you sow, so shall you reap, and there is no getting away from either that obligation or that right. But subject to those influences you can still make your own future. And that is what has been very beautifully abbreviated in some of our scriptures.

There are impacts and influences arising from past births, and impacts and influences arising from one's own present conduct and resolves, which make for the future.

That is the doctrine which has colored the whole of Indian life. It is at the background of all our epics and Puranas. It is at the background of our philosophy of life. It is at the background of Kautilya's *Artha-Shastra*. It is at the background of Shānti Parva of the *Mahabharata*. All these, moral maxims, ethical maxims, maxims of conduct, depend upon this fundamental axiom of Indian culture that existence in the past, in the present, in the future, is a continuing current, that there is no such thing as a sudden break, there is no such thing as believing that if you do 99 good things and 100 evil things you must be damned for ever, or if you do 101 good things and 100 evil things you are saved for ever. That kind of what you might call automatic spiritual book-keeping and double-entry is negatived. You must suffer for each evil deed, you must enjoy the results of every good deed, but you must get beyond both the good deeds and the evil deeds in order to get beyond this trouble of existence. The idea of the continuity of life, of a stream of consciousness proceeding from eternity unto eternity, is the bedrock on which is built Indian culture. Along with that, there is a feeling of the tolerance of the Indian mind. In dealing with culture or anything else you must not equate it to what is happening today. What I am referring to is the possibility,

the potentiality, the background of our culture. We may not have been always tolerant or just. It may be that we have fallen short, but my point is that it is this feeling of eternity, of unalterable law, this feeling of the stream of consciousness, that makes us realize that there is no difference between one individual and another. The *Gītā* says:

When you see all souls as part of yourself and as part of the Over-soul, then there is no fear.

From this it follows that there can be no fanaticism and no partisanship nor cruelty. The whole doctrine of the Vedanta and of the allied doctrines is Abhaya, freedom from fear. This freedom from fear—what present-day politicians call “freedom from apprehension”—is what is now sought for under the various pacts, (NATO, Bagdad, Moscow and other pacts). Spiritual Abhaya can only be attained if you see that there is no difference between individual and individual, between soul and soul. From that realization it follows that there is no separate entity whom you regard as a God separate from yourself and the universe—the idea of God immanent.

That One Universal Soul which is perceived differently and takes many forms and names.

Our ancients have gone to this extent that the man who seeks difference between individual and individual, soul and soul, and country and country, is a person who goes from *mṛtyu* to *mṛtyu* (from death to death).

From that follows the great wonderful saying of Shri Krishna:

He who worships anybody, or any Entity, with faith, with devotion, one-pointedly, serves me.

It has been stated that all this is abstract, airy, fantastic thinking with no base, with no resultant reaction upon daily life. The message given by the exponents of our culture is as follows:

So long as you have this body, you are definitely bound to the chain of causation, and the chain of causation demands acts, certain duties, certain obligations. Certain inescapable causes and effects are there, and there is no point in trying to get away from these things. Merely by saying I will not do anything, or by neglecting your duty, whatever your duty is, you do not get that objectivity, that detachment, that passionlessness which is a condition precedent to emancipation.

Whatever work you have before you, to do it well is true Yoga. And, therefore, those who consider that these abstract doctrines of our philosophy and the fundamental notions of our culture lead to inaction, are doing injustice to the sum total of our own teachings. Here is another idea which is particularly useful:

Those actions are to be followed which lead to tangible and worthwhile results. Inaction is fatal to progress towards the Supreme Ideal.

In other words, efficiency, thoroughness, expertness in action are necessary to be accomplished even by the yogi or the man tending towards Yoga. And you will find that, not only in the *Gītā*, but as early as the Upanishads, in the great convocation address which is contained in the *Taittiriyaopaniṣad*, the teacher tells the student:

Do not swerve from the Truth.

Do not swerve from Dharma.

Do not swerve from that which will give you prosperity.

Do not swerve from the path which will give you financial and worldly status.

Do not forget that ultimately your self-enlightenment and the enlightenment of your neighbor is an equal duty as well as the duty to be constantly learning and teaching.

How can persons say that the spirit of Indian culture is intolerant, is apt to compartmentalize itself, is apt to elevate one particular section of the community and to degrade another section of the community? I am not going into the whole *raison d'être* at one period of the caste system or any untoward developments of the caste system, but let us remember that, at the time when the castes came into existence,

they were formulated, they were created, according to *guna*, according to disposition, according to potentiality, according to a due but not an undue prominence given to heredity and the possibility of inheriting hereditary characteristics. Caste as originally devised was not a cast-iron division. And in order to make that perfectly clear, let me tell you something which most of you may be aware of, and that is, that the great Vasishtha was born of a courtesan, and yet he became a Brahmarshi. It is said:

He became a Brahman by tapas. Self-perfection was thus his secret.

It is thus not correct to say that our culture is a narrowing or disintegrating culture.

Ultimately the thing that matters to man is not so much what he *does* with this world, what he does with his career, what he achieves for himself, but, as a great philosopher said, what he does with his solitude. How is he going to answer himself when he questions himself? It is from that point of view that Indian culture has been of the greatest possible value and significance. And that significance is best brought out by the tremendous and all-embracing tolerance which was originally enunciated and has been consistently followed:

He whom the Shaiva worshippers worship as Shiva, He whom the Vedantins worship as Brahman, He whom the Buddhists worship as Buddha, He whom the Jainas worship as the Arhat, He whom the logicians describe as the Prime Cause, He whom everybody worships in different ways, let Him bless us.

That is the way in which we approached the proximate and final problems, and that is why throughout our history we have not had as many religious wars or persecutions as some other countries. Indian culture, if it stands for anything, stands for the widest possible tolerance—a tolerance indistinguishable or inescapable from the fact that we regard the whole of the universe as knit together. Ultimately there is one path of salvation for which many different methods have

been prescribed. A Christian mystic of the thirteenth century described his experience, affirming that after all God is not an object, God is an experience, and that is the spirit in which Indian culture has regarded the doctrine of Moksha or the doctrine of absolute unification.

To summarize, the spirit of Indian culture is a spirit based on courage, it is a spirit with a vision of an eternal, immutable law governing all the processes of the universe, from the nebula down to the worm and the rock. It is a culture which postulates continuity of existence and of experience as of the essence of the universal law. And finally, it exhorts everyone to pursue unflinchingly the truth as he sees it. Ultimately, by means of that apperception of the truth, will come also the realization of the other basic idea—that there are no distinctions between you and me and Brahman.

That consciousness can only come as a result of the full comprehension of all the intermediate processes through which Indian culture has progressed in the evolutionary process from epoch to epoch. The final consummation is achieved by a synthesis of beliefs, actions and ideals, by Abhaya, Ahimsa, and the composite Yoga of deeds, knowledge and faith.

C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

TODAY

How small seems today in the vast span of Time,
Mere drop in the ocean of Life,
Yet its value how great—'tis Time's bridge from the past
To the future, and none can turn back,
Not one pass it by. Pause, then, each dawn,
Raise a prayer, then cross with a tread
Brisk and firm, yet with thought for the maimed and the sad,
Pilgrims all to the City of God.

W. M. SLACK

THE RELIGION OF COMPASSION¹

By RUKMINI DEVI

I AM glad to take part in the proceedings of the Convention and particularly to speak on this subject, because I think that all of us who are deeply interested in religious, philosophical and other studies perhaps study a great deal and so forget that there is something that is more than study, namely, the source of study, which is Feeling.

The human being is really made up more of emotion than of mind, although the human kingdom appears intelligent, is able to think, and to produce so many remarkable things as a result of the mind. The mind may produce many things, but it is only the feeling that knows *what* to produce and *how* to produce; and therefore I think the most important subject for our consideration is feeling. Our minds are crammed with ideas and facts because we want to display the skill, not only of the mind but of the tongue as well. It is a great pity that so much of our philosophy is dependent upon talking. I wish we could convey ideas to each other by action without speaking much, or by sensitiveness understand each other. If it were possible for us to keep more silent than we are, I am sure there would be far more friendship in the world than there is today.

How many wars and how many quarrels could be stopped if only the rest of the world would listen and heed exactly what *I* say! So we all think more or less; and our world

¹ Public Lecture during the 81st International Convention of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, December 1956.

revolves around ourselves. And so the Lord Buddha, because of His great desire to solve the problems of the world, because of His great desire to help people, discovered that, after all, if we are all suffering, it is only because we make ourselves suffer, because we want so much, because there is so much *I*. We are always ready to give advice and tell others how they must take suffering and how brave they must be. But as regards ourselves, our attitude is: "Oh, you do not know how *I* feel . . . my difficulty is far greater than yours." We are all really bound up in such emotions and ideas.

How wonderfully the Lord Buddha went to the root-cause of all the suffering in the world, because He knew that that was the one and only way in which each individual can create a new happiness and a new life for himself. He also knew that it was not enough for Him to give His teaching and then for you to say: "I have accepted it and therefore I am happy." Accepting a teaching does not make us happy. It is *living* the teaching that makes us happy. Even more, understanding the teaching, experiencing the teaching, and finally letting it come as from somebody else, not even from a great individual, like the Lord Buddha, but through ourselves, our own hearts and our own minds. And what *we* give is more important than what is even given to us. That is why He made the final statement which is the most beautiful of all: "Be ye lamps unto yourselves." That is, do not accept things, simply because *He* says so, but only because you know them to be so, because you understand.

Now, if you study the lives of the great Teachers, you will find that each Teacher was not exactly a religious leader, was not a founder of a religion, but each Teacher was just telling people to be true, to be themselves, to be sincere, real and genuine individuals, and that was all.

The religious spirit is obviously a spirit which I would call a spirit of growth. It is the spirit of creativeness. It is

the spirit of deep feeling. It is the spirit of great aspiration. It is the spirit of a tremendous sense of unity and oneness, not because we think unity is such a beautiful thing, but because we cannot help feeling it. And we can see that every religion is born not out of a philosophy, but the philosophy came as a result of the life. Sometimes we think that life comes as a result of the philosophy, and so we merely study the teachings and forget the living. We think of the science of a religion, but we forget the spirit and the heart of the religion. But ever the most important is the heart of the religion.

What is the heart of a religion? It is really the heart of the individual. It is the individual with a great heart who has opened out our vision, who has given us a true feeling, who has stimulated what is already there, because even a great Teacher cannot put into our hearts what is not there. But he can stimulate, he can surround us with a great atmosphere, he can surround us with a great inspiration by which we become uplifted, ennobled, and, shall I say, creative in our daily lives.

Now science is a word that is much liked by everybody everyone thinks science is a marvellous thing, because scientists have produced all sorts of things that you and I cannot produce, but, frankly speaking, I am not at all for this scientific age. I prefer an age where people are just human beings, and I feel that, when people think too much about science, they are not so human as they might otherwise be; that does not mean that all scientists are not human. I know that those who are very great are both mind and heart and particularly heart. But the majority of the people are more mind than heart. And so we have today a great worship of science—it is the new religion, I might say, of the modern age. But in reality true religion is not merely science, but first and foremost it is feeling.

If we really want to bring the religions together, if we really want to build up Brotherhood, then there is only one thing to do. I would say that every single one of us has to be re-educated. We all have to start right from the beginning, and learn the foundation of spirituality, which is right feeling. We must learn to feel, for what is lacking in the modern age, including modern education, is right feeling.

In the religions, but with particular emphasis in the Hindu religion, it is said: "There is no religion higher than Truth." Many people have said that the Hindu religion represents Truth, but the Buddhist religion goes beyond Truth—it represents Feeling, it represents Compassion. Of course; but I say to them: "Are Hindus more truthful or are Buddhists more compassionate? What does it matter what a religion emphasizes, but do we understand what is compassion, and what is truth?" Obviously the emphasis on Truth is no different from the emphasis on Compassion. Every religious teacher has emphasized compassion as the greatest of all teachings, and I personally think that there is no religion which is above compassion. If we have compassion, automatically Brotherhood is born, and Truth is born, because Brotherhood is Truth, Compassion is Truth, because you are real, you are natural, your heart goes out to all creatures and to all people, and your sympathy is real sympathy.

One of the things about which I want to speak today, is in connection with animal welfare. It is really surprising to me how so many of us go on in life; we can talk, we can write, we can earn our living, we can live comfortably, but the sad part of it all is that we close our eyes and we close our ears to the suffering around us. We listen to people who can speak, but we will not listen to those who cannot speak. How few people realize that the problem of our happiness is dependent upon our consciousness of the suffering that goes on around us. A large number of people do not care to know

about suffering, and think that so long as they do not see it, or hear about it, they need not feel troubled. But I would ask each one of you to give your attention to this and become conscious of the amount of silent and horrible suffering around us.

If we start looking into these things, we shall discover a very great and wonderful field of new activity to which we can give our whole heart and, if I may say so, the Brotherhood spirit in each one of us will become far greater. I think it is not possible for us to be true friends to one another unless we know how to be friends with everybody else.

Again, the Lord Buddha named two things as the most important: friendship and compassion. Why friendship and compassion? I feel that it is because there can be no compassion without friendship, they have to go together, because friendship comes out of affection, out of warmth—I mean true friendship. True friendship comes from within, and once it is there, it will automatically be given to all, it being the result of true feeling and sympathy and understanding. Therefore He emphasized friendship. It is not only friendship between human beings, between races, between nations, but friendship towards the animal too. And this emphasis which He gave is obviously the most important aspect, according to me, of religion; without it there is no religion, without it there is no Brotherhood movement, without it there is no philosophical movement, without it there can be no spiritual movement whatsoever. I would like each one of you, whether young or grown-up, to think a little more about it.

We all know that from our country tens of thousands of monkeys are continually exported. Everybody says: "What a pity." In the West there may be few people who are working for animal protection but the few are so strong, so self-sacrificing, and they are fighting almost single-handed. If in the western countries there were many people who believed in Ahimsa as we do here in India, vivisection and all animal

cruelties would have been abolished in the West long ago. Here we have more people believing, but less effect given to that feeling. There the people temperamentally are more tenacious, and can fight more for causes, and so the few are brave, and they are slowly beginning to bring their point of view before people to such an extent that they are disliked. Here, we are not even disliked, because we do not do anything, we do not inconvenience anybody by our belief in Ahimsa. Our consciousness has to be awakened, because only if we awaken ourselves to action, happiness will come both to India and to the rest of the world. In order to have a truly religious revival, I say, let there be a revival of right feeling.

All young children naturally love animals, and they also love Nature. Unfortunately, the grown-ups educate them out of all that feeling, and I find our young people are more and more beginning to eat meat, not because they want it or because they like it, but because it is fashionable, because otherwise people make fun of them. And so in this country meat-eating is growing, when in other countries vegetarianism is growing!

There are two kinds of vegetarians, one is a vegetarian by habit, or tradition, as in India. Even our meat-eaters know that to be a really spiritual individual, you must give up meat-eating, that vegetarianism is a better way of living—because of this great tradition of compassion which has been deeply instilled into the people. The other is a convinced vegetarian. What we have to do is to be both. If we are vegetarians by habit or tradition, we must also inquire and become convinced that it is right. I suggest a visit to the slaughter-house. But let me repeat a story. Once a minister went with his chaprasi¹ to the slaughter-house, and he came back and enjoyed his non-vegetarian dinner, but the chaprasi became a vegetarian from that day! He was more deeply

¹ A peon or an orderly.

affected than the minister, because he was simple, he had no arguments, he just felt, and that was sufficient for him.

It has come to me as an appalling reality, that we are living at the cost of millions and millions, not only of their lives, but of their torture. Even when I drink milk I wonder which calf has been starved in order that I may have this milk. We cannot help, of course, exploiting animals, but surely we can think about it, we can do something about it. I am sure that helping those creatures, if it is purely out of a deep feeling, is really helping ourselves—because it makes us more real people, it makes us people of feeling. On the other hand, I believe that with cruelty to animals going on, day after day, year after year, it is not possible for humanity to be without war.

It is said about the life of the Buddha, that He never spoke one harsh word or one unkind word in all His life, and His was a teaching, a religion, that came entirely out of one thought—pity. Pity was the root-cause of that religion. Out of pity was the search. Out of that search came knowledge. If knowledge does not come as a result of feeling, as a result of pity, as a result of compassion, then what use is that knowledge, what good does it do to anybody? People say with regard to animals why should we worry about them, that they have no souls. In other words, pity is dependent upon the discovery of the soul. In the religion of Islam, which is sometimes considered to be without compassion, one of the most remarkable things I have discovered is that kindness to animals was the chief point in the mind of the Lord Muhammad, and He tried to give as much as was possible under the circumstances of those days. But instead of following the spirit, people follow the letter. That is why I say, it is the spirit of a religion, it is the life in it that is the most important, and, for me, there is no religion higher than compassion. From compassion alone can come every aspect of expression—religion, philosophy, art, or anything else.

I am participating in organizing a Vegetarian Congress at the end of next year, and I hope that everyone who really believes in the unity of all life, in reverence for all life, will understand that it is not merely an activity, but something fundamental, something that is the beginning of a real religion which means pity, which means kindness, which means practical compassion, an Ahimsa that is positive and dynamic, an Ahimsa that is practised with a full heart. We need it for India. We need it for the world. For what human beings need is only one thing—to be *human* beings, just to be human. Thus, I believe, we shall have put our ideals of universal love into practice, our ideals of universality into practice, our ideals of unity into practice. Then surely we would be working far more in a constructive way towards peace, because I cannot see how there can be peace amongst human beings who go on exploiting the helpless and dumb creatures. And those who do nothing are not harmless, but guilty of doing nothing to remove suffering.

To a small extent, in a little way, if our pity could become constructive, as the Lord Buddha's did in a great way, then we should become true followers of that great and compassionate Teacher who came to the earth, not only to teach, not only to live, but for ever to inspire all humanity to live in the noblest and most beautiful way possible. This, to me, is religion. This, to me, is Theosophy. Let us start giving ourselves to this wonderful and great cause—not because I say so, but because we feel together for those that cannot speak—and let us together become one voice for the animal and the bird kingdom. This, I believe, would be one great expression of true understanding of the teaching of the Buddha.

RUKMINI DEVI

have an immense responsibility in seeing that God's Plan is helped by them with their active co-operation, and not hindered by their selfishness or by their moral and intellectual laziness.

The more the statements of Theosophy are studied, applying them to the facts of the world, the more we find them excluding other theories. One by one, the Theosophical truths are found more satisfactory, because they answer more questions. This at least we can always claim for Theosophy, that it gives more satisfactory answers to a larger number of questions than any other existing philosophy.

I have used the phrase "more satisfactory answers". But in what way "more satisfactory" than the answers, for instance, of Materialism? Because the Theosophical solution appeals not only to our analytical minds, but also to deep intuitions within us. When a Theosophical truth is carefully examined, in the light of all objections, and at last the mind is satisfied, something deeper than the mind endorses our acceptance; our intuitions show us that the truth is part of our own inmost nature. It is this fact, that Theosophy becomes a part of our deepest Self, which is one of the most satisfying qualities about the Theosophical philosophy. At first, when we come to Theosophy, it is a theory from outside; little by little and as we critically examine it, the theory given to us from outside begins to live inside, and soon cannot be separated from ourselves. A great scientific writer, Herbert Spencer, once said that the ultimate criterion of a truth is our inability to think of it as otherwise. So too is the proof of Theosophy; there comes a time when life is a confusion unless you think of it in terms of reincarnation, and the world becomes the creation of a cruel Creator unless you see that all men are travelling to the goal of becoming as God Himself. When Theosophy is so interwoven with all your thoughts, then there is not only a mental proof but also one given by the intuition.

Not all among you will be ready to say that you believe everything taught to you as Theosophy; you accept some truths, but you are doubtful about others. You do quite right to doubt, in your search for truth. Never accept the statement of another, however full of authority he may be, unless your mind or your intuition supports the statement. Never force yourself to believe, you will only harm yourself, and your forced belief in a truth will not enable you to give that truth to another. If you are really in earnest, and if you will go on helping others with what heart and mind you have, the truth you cannot believe will in its own time prove itself to you. There is nothing lost in honest waiting, but much lost in self-deception. Each of us has enough truth in him already for our daily duties. If we perform our duties well, God will send us the larger truth, when that new truth will help us to co-operate better with His Plan.

Theosophy is not a creed to believe in blindly, but a science and a philosophy to examine closely, and to accept only when nothing else, except Theosophy, is so acceptable.

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

The beloved of the Almighty are the rich who have the humility of the poor, and the poor who have the magnanimity of the rich.

SA'ADI

EVOLUTION OR THE LAW OF BECOMING

By ROHIT MEHTA

TWENTY-FIVE centuries ago, the Lord Buddha declared: "Impermanent are all component things." This statement implies that everything in the manifested universe is in a state of flux. A never-ceasing movement is the very nature of the world. Time does not stop; its flow is incessant and so quick that the human mind is not able to grasp the exact moment of its impact upon life. The "present" is like a mathematical point having position but no magnitude, so that, before the mind can comprehend it, it has already slipped into the past. This constant movement, described as the flow of time, seems to be the characteristic of all created things.

What is the nature of this movement and whither is it going? Is it a planned movement, or is it devoid of all meaning and significance? Physical science speaks to us of the order that pervades the entire scheme of the universe. Some scientific thinkers tell us of a "great design" in Nature. That there is a "reign of law" in the microscopic as well as macroscopic expressions of the universe is a recognized fact of modern science. The entire research of physical science is in the direction of discovering a unity behind the diversity of world phenomena. Dr. Albert Einstein believed in a fundamental simplicity at the core of the physical universe; therefore his life-long work was to bring the various laws of Nature into a

framework of simple unity. The entire movement of Nature, with its myriads of forms, seems to be an expression of one fundamental law. It is the Law of Evolution or the Law of Becoming.

Evolution is one of the established postulates of modern science. Herbert Spencer described evolution as a progressive change in any form from a "state of incoherent homogeneity to one of coherent heterogeneity of structure and function". This movement towards greater complexity of structure, but at the same time towards increasing coherence between the parts, is to be seen at all levels of existence—in vegetable, animal and human life. In other words, this movement seems to be universal in Nature. It may be described as the process of Becoming. From the seed to the flower and fruit, from the infant to the adult and the old, are but parts of this process of Becoming. Nothing stands still, everything is moving—seemingly to become something.

Thus the Law of Becoming—described by science as the Law of Evolution—is most fundamental in Nature. It is no exaggeration to say that it is the one law and the only law which exists in the universe. All other laws are but principles describing the working of this one law. Evolution is the central theme in the story of the universe. This is indeed the simple unity which lies at the core of all the processes of Nature.

The Law of Evolution is the field of study and research in modern physical science. Ever since its first enunciation by Charles Darwin, it has become the central point round which later scientific discoveries have grown. Today it supplies a connecting thread to the erstwhile scattered data of physical science. This Law of Evolution is also the principal theme of modern Theosophy. All its postulates derive their validity from this fundamental fact of evolution. It is true that modern Theosophy talks of the laws of Reincarnation and

Karma, but then they are more in the nature of descriptions of the working of the fundamental Law of Evolution than independent laws by themselves. In fact Reincarnation and Karma have no meaning or significance by themselves—they become meaningful only in terms of evolution. In other words, it is evolution that gives meaning and significance to them. Without the background of evolution, Reincarnation would seem to be a mere repetition or reproduction of the same or similar forms. Karma, too, would appear a purposeless activity. Evolution is indeed the imperceptible flow behind the incidents and patterns of behavior which Reincarnation and Karma represent. If Reincarnation represents objective conditions of life, Karma is concerned with subjective reaction to those conditions; and the line of evolution is the interaction between the subject and the object. When this interaction is in accord with the trends of Nature, evolution proceeds evenly; when it is out of accord, the evolutionary march is full of trials and tribulations causing sorrow and suffering. How can one know that the interaction between the subject and the object is correct? What is meant by the interaction being in accord with Nature? It is here that the need arises for us to understand the meaning and significance of the Law of Evolution or the process of Becoming.

In order to find out the significance of anything we have to bear in mind two factors. They are the projected significance and the real or intrinsic significance. The famous illustration in Hindu philosophy of the rope being mistaken for a snake is a case of projected significance. This projected significance is a mental construct, a theory or interpretation evolved by the mind. The human mind has fundamentally two characteristics—analysis and synthesis. The analytical aspect of the mind is concerned with a detailed examination of the parts—the study of objects and incidents in isolation. The synthetical aspect of the mind deals with the putting

together of the parts to make a pattern or framework. It is an attempt of the mind to keep the isolated parts together. By this process the mind is, as it were, creating a synthetic product—a mechanical whole where parts have been brought together. Having done this, the mind seeks to give a significance to the parts in terms of this whole which it has created. This indeed is the projected significance of a thing or an incident. A projected significance is only a theory or an interpretation of the mind. It has to be forcibly maintained for again and again it breaks down, representing as it does only a mechanical whole.

There is a great deal of difference between a theory and a law. A law is a description of the fact, while a theory is a construct of the mind. And so, a law enables us to anticipate the movement of facts, while a theory leads us to expect the future to happen only in terms of our own mental projections. In other words, a theory makes us see that which we want to see; but a law is a result of "right perception of things objective" and therefore based on the facts of life. And the real or intrinsic significance of a thing, or an event, can be comprehended only when it is seen as a fact. It is only out of the perception of facts that real significance can be discovered. In the perception of facts, parts are integrated; they have not to be brought together in a pattern of artificial unity.

Is evolution a law or a theory? Is it a mental construct in terms of which life is sought to be artificially interpreted? Or is it an anticipation of life's movement arising out of the perception of facts? If the latter, how is one to discover the real significance of evolution?

If evolution is a process of Becoming, there are two aspects of it which need to be noted. They are commonly known as the evolution of forms and the evolution of consciousness—the first deals with the structural and the second with the functional aspect of evolution. In the structural

study of evolution, the special emphasis is on the differentiation and specialization of organs, while in the functional study the main theme is the integration of functions. In the former, the attention is turned towards the observation and examination of the parts, while in the latter the unit of life is perceived as a *whole*. In the structural study the process of Becoming is observed with reference to physical as well as superphysical forms. In the functional study the process of Becoming is observed or examined at the psychological or spiritual levels. Thus, structure and Spirit are the two aspects of evolutionary study—structure dealing with forms and Spirit with their psychological content.

In any serious study of evolution, it is necessary to take into account the findings of modern science. On the subject of evolution, modern science is today broadly divided into two groups—Darwinism and neo-Darwinism. To Darwin, the key to the understanding of evolution was variation. As we look at the world, we see innumerable types of plant and animal life. In the course of their growth and development they are guided by two factors—heredity and variation. Heredity represents established and well-adapted factors in evolution which are passed on from generation to generation. If heredity were the only factor guiding and moulding the evolutionary stream, there would be no change in the evolving forms. Evolution would show forth only a repetition and a reproduction of the same forms. But we see change and variety everywhere, in the plant, the animal and the human forms. From where do these changes and varieties come? As noted above, heredity represents an adaptation or adjustment of a unit of life to a particular environment. If the environment remains unchanged, the continuity of adapted forms also remains undisturbed. But the external environment constantly changes due to earthquakes, tidal waves, climatic alterations or conditions created by human agencies. When there are

changes in environment the unit of life, which was till now well-adapted, becomes disturbed. There begins for it a struggle for existence. It must discover a new point of adaptation or else be ready to be wiped out of existence. In this struggle for existence, Nature keeps a close watch over the units of life that are battling against the changed environment. It is here that the factor of natural selection, so prominent in the theories of Darwinism, comes in. In the struggle for existence, Nature makes a selection of those units of life that have shown adaptability with reference to the new environment. It is these units of life that survive, being fittest in the new sphere of adaptation. The other units of life slowly die out under the impact of new environmental conditions. Their function is over, for they cannot continue further the stream of evolution. The newly adapted units of life constitute variation, caused by the struggle for existence, and natural selection.

It should, however, be noted here that this variation takes place within the sphere of evolutionary continuity. It is not a fundamental change in the species but only a modification in the preceding state. In bringing about a new adaptation to changed environment, the unit of life deviates as little as possible from its established habits. And so, if heredity represents continuity in evolution, variation denotes modified continuity. Variation is indeed the product of "acquired characters". It is more or less recognized today by physical science that acquired characters are not transmitted from generation to generation. In other words, variation does not affect heredity—it brings practically no alteration in the composition of hereditary factors. Julian Huxley, writing on the subject, says:

The main result, enormously important not only for animal and plant breeding, but also in its applications to human heredity, is that so-called "acquired characters," in other words, modifications caused by environment, and those resulting from use and disuse of organs, are either not inherited at all, or else to such a slight degree as not to be of any great importance in heredity and evolution.

Thus, variations, which result from environmental changes, causing use or disuse of organs, are mere modifications within the hereditary continuity of a unit of life. They constitute merely slight alterations in the habits of an organism and therefore are not of fundamental importance in evolution. Variation does not produce new heritable characteristics. It represents modified continuity in the realm of evolution.

But, if new heritable factors are not created, how is evolution to proceed? No fundamental changes would occur in evolution, and so the arrival of an entirely new species must be completely ruled out. Variation functioning at the level of modification would bring about only surface-alterations in any particular type of life. If variation were the only course open there would not be the emergence of a new type of life. For the new type of life implies a change in the very constituent factors of heredity. G. N. Ridley, in his book, *Man Studies Life*, states:

Natural selection, acting on the so-called continuous variations to be found in any population of a single species, can only bring out particular characteristics within the limits of the heritable material available, after which its influence is at an end. This means that there must be from time to time new heritable properties or characteristics arising in some way in the members of the species if there is to be any evolution at all.

Here we come into the sphere of neo-Darwinism, which does not regard natural selection and therefore variation as a fundamental factor of evolution. We find that in the course of millions of years new types of life have come into existence developing new heritable properties which are transmitted from generation to generation. It is quite obvious that the key to the understanding of evolution lies in this factor by which new types of life come into existence. In other words, it is necessary to explore the phenomenon of heritable variations if we are to understand the meaning of evolution. It is in the alteration of hereditary factors that we must seek out the emergence of new types of life. Such an alteration in the

hereditary constitution is called "sports" or "mutations" in the language of modern biology. According to G. N. Ridley, "the modern biologist sees in mutations the raw materials of evolutionary progress".

What is a mutation and how does it take place? Mutation has been described as a discontinuous variation. In other words, the element of discontinuity is one of the most important factors constituting a mutation. Julian Huxley says:

We can now theoretically, and in many cases actually, distinguish definitely between "mutations" which are due to changes in the constitution of the animal—in the hereditary factors themselves—and "modifications" (or variations) which are due to changes in the environment, and cause the same constitution to develop in a different way from the normal.

And so, while variation is only a modification, a mere fluctuation operating in the realm of hereditary continuity, mutation is a fundamental change affecting the very constitution of the unit of life and thus forming a discontinuity in variation. A mutation is no doubt a variation, but of a discontinuous type, because of an alteration in the hereditary factors.

It is needless to say that mutation is not the product of a gradual adaptation to new environment. Such gradual adaptation is the characteristic of variation. Mutation is described as "a sudden and a spontaneous arrival of a new species". Thus suddenness and spontaneity are important factors to be noted in mutation. While in variation Nature moves along a line of continuity, in mutation it takes jumps—and it is in these jumps that fundamental changes in evolution are possible. George Gamow, in his book, *One, Two, Three . . . Infinity*, mentions that "spontaneous hereditary changes in living organisms always take place in the form of discontinuous jumps known as mutations". It is these jumps or "gaps between species" which hold the key to the understanding of evolution, for it is in these gaps that new lines of growth are initiated. In other

words, not continuity but discontinuity is the secret of evolution. Julian Huxley says:

... spontaneous change or mutation of single factors has been and still is probably the most important source of the new departures without which evolution could not take place.

The new departures we see in evolution at all stages of plant and animal life are obviously due to mutations or discontinuous variations. It is a recognized fact that Nature takes jumps in its evolutionary march, and it is in these jumps—and there alone—that one can discover the origin of species. It may be stated here that while variations deal with quantitative changes in evolution, mutations deal with qualitative transformations in species. In the modifications caused by variation differences are merely of degree. In mutations, however, the differences are of a kind that give birth to new types of life.

In Nature there are minor as well as major mutations. Minor mutations are those that occur within the same kingdom of Nature—for example, the emergence of birds and mammals from reptilian creatures—while major mutations are those that cause such evolutionary movements as the emergence of animal life from the vegetable kingdom or the arrival of humanity from the animal forms of life. Both these are indeed jumps or discontinuous variations with fundamental changes in their hereditary constitutions.

The question that must interest us here is, how do mutations take place? Since in mutations there is an alteration in the hereditary constitution of an organism, modern science is concerned with the problem of how to alter this hereditary constitution at will. Julian Huxley, however, says that “at present we do not know how to produce mutations”. George Gamow describes mutation as a “mysterious phenomenon of life”. While it is true that mutations cannot be produced at will, according to the present scientific position, the mutant

organisms can certainly be studied. The scientific studies into these mutant organisms have revealed some very interesting facts.

First of all, mutations are sudden and spontaneous. There is no gradualness about them so that there cannot be a conscious preparation for their arrival. In fact, conscious effort of man plays no part in the happening of this mysterious phenomenon. Second, a non-variable mutation is just a freak of Nature having no significance at all with reference to evolutionary movement. A variable mutation is indeed the starting-point of a new line of evolutionary progress because of its capacity to transmit mutant factors from generation to generation. It is a discontinuous variation—discontinuous, because it affects hereditary continuity; and variation, because it produces new heritable property to be passed on from generation to generation. A variation which results from environmental changes, and therefore by a gradual process, does not affect heredity. Its acquired characteristics are not heritable. Thus, a mutation is not only sudden and spontaneous, but is the spearhead of a new evolutionary movement—the creator of a new species.

There is another factor about mutations which is most interesting to note, it is that they arise in inconspicuous organisms. It is a recognized fact that mutations do not appear among well-adapted and stable organisms. They do not emerge out of what may be called successful units of life. In fact they arise in organisms that are, as it were, rejected by the builders and yet become ultimately the headstones of the corner, because it is only the mutant organisms that carry further a particular evolutionary stream. The successful units of life, being well-adapted to environment, bring that evolutionary line to a close. They continue up to a point and then stagnate. During their line of continuity they dominate the evolutionary scene. But, as they cannot produce new heritable properties,

they become merely the memories of a vanished past. While an inconspicuous organism, below the notice of these well-adapted and successful creatures, carries on the stream of evolution because of its readiness to receive mutations, the masterpieces of adaptation become, in course of time, only the "left-overs" of evolution. It is through the inconspicuous units of life that there arise great transformations required for the birth of a new species and, therefore, for an evolutionary advance.

Here a question may arise: Is perfect and successful adaptation to environment a handicap for the emergence of mutations? Le Comte du Nouy in his book *Human Destiny* says:

It is not the being best-adapted to his environment who contributes to evolution. He survives, but his better adaptation eliminates him from the ascendant progression, and only contributes to increase the number of more or less stagnant species that people the earth. That smoothness of adaptation may be a hindrance to further advance is illustrated by the pre-Cambrian sandworms, who achieved a very successful adaptation to their environment and then, having no reason to transform themselves further, they subsisted almost without a change for hundreds of millions of years. One of these worms, however, continued to evolve because it was less well-adapted than the others and, probably, possessed a kind of instability which did not constitute an advantage at the time, but which was conducive to still greater changes and could be called "creative instability". This worm, less perfect as a worm, may have been our ancestor.

The same author says elsewhere that "evolution can only continue through unstable systems or organisms". This is the most important factor to be noticed with regard to mutation—that it arises in unstable organisms. Because they are unstable, they are less well-adapted, and therefore unsuccessful and inconspicuous. It is quite obvious that an unstable organism would prove an obstacle to the line of evolutionary continuity from moving further. It is because of this that the line of continuity leaves an unstable organism all alone. For the time being it is regarded as Nature's failure. It struggles in utter loneliness. It is this loneliness which, from one

standpoint, is an advantage given to the unstable organism, for man interferes the least with this unsuccessful unit of life. His experiments are centred on successful organisms. The unstable organism is uncultivated by man, and so Nature is free and unfettered to express itself through it. Thus, it is true that Nature's design can be perceived in an undistorted manner only through mutations. Nature can carve out new lines of growth in a free manner through the medium of unstable organisms.

If mutations are not the product of environment, then what is the agency that is responsible for bringing about fundamental transformations? This is one of the mysteries which science is not in a position to unravel. Since environment is being moulded by so many factors—not the least being the human effort—it is in mutation that the will of Nature is clearly reflected. If variation arises in the atmosphere of hereditary continuity, mutation takes place in the background of discontinuity, where Nature is free to take a jump. This is the unconditioned movement of Nature—not conditioned by the factors of hereditary continuity.

And so, the meaning and significance of evolution can be discovered only in discontinuity—in the free and unfettered jumps of Nature through mutation. Nature's line of Becoming can be seen in its purest form only in mutation.

This element of discontinuity is both in the sphere of form or structure and in that of consciousness. For physical science, mutation is only in the realm of structural discontinuity, for it studies mainly the plant and animal life where only physical heredity has to be taken into account. But, in the field of evolution, there is to be seen also continuity of structure with discontinuity of consciousness. Physical science takes no notice of this, as it is not concerned with the problems of psychological heredity or with jumps in consciousness. This is the field of human evolution,

But the evolution of forms, as studied by modern science, reveals to us one fundamental fact, and that is discontinuous variation, altering the hereditary constitution of an organism, being the motive force of evolutionary movement. It is not in structural continuity, but in discontinuity, that we can discover the secret of evolution. It is not variation, but mutation, appearing suddenly and spontaneously through unstable and therefore inconspicuous organisms, that holds the key to the understanding of the Law of Evolution. The stream of evolution moves on in an uninterrupted manner because of the new heritable properties brought by mutation.

How does this principle of mutation help us in expediting the movement of Nature? Or is man to remain content with merely moving at the slow pace of Nature? Julian Huxley says:

Evolution seems to have depended mainly on the random occurrence of all sorts of mutations and the selection and survival of such organisms as possessed mutations which were favourable in the struggle for existence. Man must aim at replacing this slow-working machinery by one more rapid, this blind and accidental process by one inspired with conscious purpose.

If mutations are sudden and spontaneous, what can the conscious human effort do to hasten their arrival? Will not man's conscious effort interfere with Nature's ways, and thereby completely prevent the arrival of mutations? Or is it possible for man to anticipate Nature's will, enabling him to speed up the evolutionary stream?

We shall discuss these questions in Part II of this article where our chief concern will be to study psychological mutations arising in the course of man's evolution.

ROHIT MEHTA

OUR EDUCATION

By B. G. HARRIS

MANY and varied are the definitions given to the word "education"; but underlying them all is the conception that it denotes an attempt on the part of the adult members of a race to shape the development of the younger generation in accordance with their ideals.

The instruction received in our schools is designed to supply the literary foundation to our learning, achieved through first arousing into activity, and then raising to a prescribed level, our powers of observation, reason and judgment, and our ability to memorize—in the field of scholastic attainments. Following this basic schooling comes our vocational training, which results in the acquiring of various skills in any of the trades or professions.

One aim of education should be to promote the welfare of the human race, by eliminating ignorance and superstition; arousing man out of his exclusiveness, enabling him to gain freedom through overcoming the fulfilment of ambition and the gratification of desires.

The purpose of all education should be to teach man the art of resourceful living: by enlightening him with all necessary knowledge needed to assist him successfully to complete his mission on earth; by awakening him to the existence of natural laws that govern all growth and progress, and the ultimate purpose of all life, which is evolution; by acquainting him with the truth concerning his true self—the spiritual being who

animates the physical body, whence he came and whither his destination, and the path to travel for the highest attainment; by placing before him the work of the philosophers, sages and scientists of all ages, so that he may find for himself the knowledge he seeks.

Man's earliest education was received from Mother Nature, as when our distant ancestors first experienced the sensations produced in the body by contact of the senses with heat and cold, rain and storm; and man sought to counteract the discomfort each caused him by seeking shelter, by discovering the warmth of fire and the wearing of clothes. Thus Nature taught him the lesson of association of ideas, the relation of one thing or event to another. Then he experienced pain and suffering, as when enduring privations; and during times of illness he was taught the lesson of humility. The existence of law was first discovered after associating one thing with another, as cause and effect, as when one condition was present, a certain result would follow.

Then there followed self-expression. He experienced the pleasure that accompanies attainment; by trial and error he learnt; his patience was tested, often to the limit of endurance. Tolerance is learnt in this way. Method, organization and the co-ordination of mind and body is thus gained, resulting in acquiring the powers of management—a prerequisite to self-government. All this shows that, to a large extent, man is educated by force of circumstance, environment, desire and effort; that is, by Nature.

Hence environment and opportunity play a major role in providing the condition which largely determines *what we learn*, and it is one of the many factors that decide *what we ultimately become*; this is studied under the headings of family, social, racial, religious and vocational environments. The development of our perceptive faculties, which self-expression tends to produce, leads to a general capacity for adapting

ourselves to any new environment in which we are placed, and of subconsciously apprehending its laws and properties.

The universal method of educating man along these lines is through sense-perception. Throughout his many incarnations man has been developing his physical senses for the attainment of consciousness in relation to the material universe around him, storing the resultant knowledge gained, which he now displays as instinct and intuition. Today we find that the mental processes involving the use of instinct are by far the most important features in the structure of the mind, for they form the basis upon which are built up all the complex elaborations which characterize the manifold activities of man.

Man instinctively seeks an outlet for his talent, ability and energy; he seeks to satisfy his curiosity, to gratify every longing and appease every desire; all this is displayed as a natural impulse, by which he is guided independent of reason or experience. The behavior of man towards the world in which he lives is often unaccountable, and considered unreasonable by others; restlessness and discontent are everywhere apparent. This is the result of his seeking knowledge which he is not receiving in the discharge of his occupational and domestic duties. The need for adult education is now recognized as being necessary to correct this psychological condition.

Then one's reading materially assists in the direction of arousing interest, as from the study of what has been accomplished or experienced by another, arises the desire within us for similar attainments. The possibilities present themselves to us, and we become eager to grasp them and to achieve success in some particular field of activity.

The truth is that reciprocal action is ever going on between the faculties that acquire knowledge and those which apply it; action which makes for a rapid growth of the mind, ever tending to strengthen one's capacity for thinking and to raise the plane of one's activity. Thus the purpose of incarnation

is to further the growth of the true self, education being the means to this end. All the events and experiences of one's life are carefully calculated to provide us with opportunities for developing our faculties, for displaying the qualities we have acquired, and for further evolving them. The one task which no one may ever delegate to another is this business of growing, physically, mentally and spiritually.

If life on earth has no educational value, we live to no purpose; man is on earth to learn, while the experiences of life are the lessons which will ultimately teach him, and for which there is no substitute.

If we are incapable of learning and profiting from our past experiences, the future holds little hope for advancement; experience educates and is the way of all learning. We live and we learn; live to experience and learn by the experience. To seek to evade an experience, or to regret those we receive, is to arrest our development; as every experience has an abiding significance and adds to the sum total of our wisdom.

It follows that the most important phase of all education lies in teaching man to gain knowledge of his own being. "Man, know thyself."

Men often waste their time learning much that is of little value, with no desire to know the truth. In the majority, learning is not the real aim of the student, the real motive being the attainment of wealth, power, position and fame, or the gratification of personal desires; learning being the means to this end. The true wealth of a nation or of an individual does not rest in intellectual acquirements, but in moral and spiritual possessions, such as a good name and accomplishments which claim respect—that which we would have remain with us permanently. Annie Besant sums up the position admirably in the following text:

The total value of all knowledge is tested by its power to assist man to live his life. If it teaches him how to live, determines for him the best

path to travel for the highest attainments, and the conduct inductive for good character-building, then it becomes beneficial to him; if not, then it is of little use or service to him.

The wisdom embodied in this philosophy is without equal. Such an improvement can only come about when man revises his estimates of the relative value of material possessions, earthly aims and ambitions, and seeks to cultivate his spiritual nature. His advancement to the higher life is dependent upon his exertions in this direction after he has liberated his mind from earthly bondage and material desires. His education is not complete until he becomes acquainted with his physical destiny, his passing from this earth plane and the future life that awaits him. His education should assist him with knowledge in readiness for the coming of the event called "death," that all fear may be removed and grief dispensed with. The nature of life generally should be a subject in his curriculum, with the distinction made between death of the physical body and the true self who survives this event, as Spirit, essence, life eternal.

The time eventually arrives when man begins to advance to direct knowledge, by developing his own faculty of spiritual perception, which enables him to perceive the truth of things without reasoning or analysis, as immediate knowledge; received independently of all external sources of information, such as the testimony of the physical senses. This power of the mind which enables the Self to perceive, grasp and understand truth at first hand, gives the perceiver a direct insight into the character, nature and purpose of the universe. For all inspired teaching and spiritual revelations are subject to the evolution of this spiritual faculty, and from its functioning the truth is revealed by direct illumination of consciousness; and to those who have developed the power to receive and appropriate it, it comes as a grand awakening.

To receive a good education is recognized to be of paramount importance, but in what direction? Is the learned man

he who acquires academic distinction, and yet remains on the mundane level of consciousness, ignorant of his spiritual evolution and the factors responsible for his growth? Or is it he who sees the significance of life, realizes the importance of living, and seeks to qualify for advancement in his evolution, by earning merit through service rendered, through removal of causes of his present position, and through love of humanity?

It is commonly acknowledged that in our schools man is taught almost everything under the sun, except that which is most important to him—knowledge of himself, his being, the living of his life and the factors responsible for his growth, mental and spiritual, and the building of character; his purpose on earth and the eternal nature of his being.

From this study of the manner in which man receives his education on earth, can be judged the magnitude of the task confronting him, from which assessment emerges the reason why countless incarnations are necessary to develop the powers of the mind, and to acquire quickness of perception and intellectual responsiveness, and finally the mastery of the self.

We may hope, then, that in the not too distant future man's secondary education will teach him the meaning of life, and the art of complete living; how to adapt himself to his environment and to co-operate with Nature; how to awaken in himself the powers of spiritual perception; and how to make the richest use of the knowledge thus gained. For when his education teaches him how to apply this knowledge, wisdom will result.

Finally, it will be readily agreed that, in expounding its teaching, Theosophy is playing no inconsiderable part in furthering the education of man, and fulfilling its intended purpose by its splendid contributions to human enlightenment.

B. G. HARRIS

LIFE ON OTHER PLANES

By FRED MORGAN

A STUMBLING-BLOCK to clearer conception of life beyond these solid spheres is our inability to imagine consciousness unsupported by dense vehicles. Nor is it easy to see ourselves free of this dressed-up personality. Most certainly it would alarm some of us to find ourselves without a name and all the other vanities that make for identity. In astral spheres the alarm would increase as we are further stripped of that which makes us tangible and weighty citizens.

So, to make it easier, life in the hereafter has been made by some authorities a place with furnishings: a harp for each with angels all around, a throne, footstools, and an accommodating cloud. Meagre, but still a place to fold one's wings. Yet there are problems. Where would one find secluded spots or a place to lay one's astral head? How could one escape the uninvited ones, or be "not at home" to friends?

All the above and similar fancies do a grave injustice to things as they really are; for in the wise ordering of life upon all planes of Nature there is a divine purpose, and when we see the wisdom and love behind the evolutionary processes on this lower plane we may take comfort in the thought that it cannot be otherwise on higher planes. There may be some discomfort and alarm in the transition period, but we soon adjust ourselves to the fact that we are astral entities upon an astral plane, as the infant here becomes gradually accustomed to the powers and patterns of this life. We are attracted here

or there as our desires prompt us, but being unimpeded by the flesh the scope of experience is vastly widened and accelerated. In astral life wishes *are* horses and beggars *do* ride. But even so, life can be quite frustrating—gross desire we may have but nothing wherewith to consummate.

In considering the transition from one plane to the other it will allay fear to bear in mind that our new environment is natural to our vehicles of consciousness. We are where we should be with what we should have—nothing is really bizarre or alien, although at first it may seem so to be. Nor should it seem strange that we have no physical body, any more than it is strange here to be unconscious of an astral body. But happier is he who on this physical plane gave no sustenance to gross desire, for speedily will he move on to higher planes.

Again, considering the relationship of planes, the tendency is to think of distance; and “where is heaven?” is a question the orthodox choose to avoid. The accurate and precise answer to that was given by Jesus: “The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.” We go to no other place when we die to this plane, although having arrived by going nowhere one is possessed of a built-in magic carpet that makes space meaningless. The other planes are all around us, separated only by the density of the matter of which they are composed. A good analogy is the television. In the studio the picture is solid—people and things. The image is transmitted invisibly through space to reappear through the receiver less solid but close enough in vibration to be apprehended by our senses. Analogies to illustrate the interpenetrative character of varying densities in matter are abundant, simply because each plane is a denser or finer reflection of the other planes.

The significance of these truths is fairly obvious. To be conscious on the finer planes of Nature our vehicles of consciousness must be gradually refined. The physical body must be nourished with unadulterated foods as Nature provides them.

More important are our thoughts and feelings; these must be directed along cultural and spiritual channels. For thought and feeling, constantly in play, are composed of matter that changes the vibratory rate of our emotional and mental bodies, making them dull or responsive to the source of life. As we live we build into these vehicles of consciousness matters of a high or low degree. Obviously, selfishness in all its open or obscure phases is the lowest—the most undesirable. Love may be warped by selfish motive, yet so, it is still desirable, for upon this we build. The test is in the effort to subdue, or rather understand, the self. We can drift along complacent in our cultural pursuits, happy with our loved ones all around us, but let some major or trivial disturbance upset the serenity of the scene and we hold the measuring-rod of our maturity. Progress is made not in security but in jeopardy, for whatever sustains us, even our spiritual aspiration, is a hindrance to what we all seek in so many strange ways. Thus it follows that a smooth course of events is least desirable. It has been said that every seventh incarnation is one of rest—everything runs smoothly. Perhaps this is a method of getting rid of a lot of good karma—but let us rest while we may, it will not last! It is when things get rough that the opportunity for real progress arrives. No sailor learns his trade in harbor or on quiet seas. He learns it when clinging desperately to a ship's rigging in the teeth of a gale. So when the bitter winds eat into the bones, the chance is ours to transmute the baser metals into gold.

Actually, opportunities are always with us. Never a moment passes but we may engage the seemingly insignificant circumstance and secure from it something of value. Even in boredom there is opportunity—the opportunity to understand it instead of trying to escape from it. Being constantly aware of the play of forces around and within us can be a rewarding experience, and is not subject to morbidity if an attitude of

affection and a proper perspective of life are held. So let us seize upon the little things in life and make them serve the greater purpose. One excellent practice is to refrain from giving utterance to an unworthy thought, or any thought, and to observe the motive that prompted the thought. The amount of energy consumed in idle talk in the course of a year, or even a day, is fantastic. But consider the difference if all that energy were used in creative contemplation! And consider farther the type of matter which we are attracting to our emotional and mental bodies.

However, being somewhat familiar with the purpose of life, the planes of Nature, and man's supreme part in the mighty scheme, shall we not in a way forget it—except where the chance occurs and the soil is fertile to pass on the knowledge? For consciously pursuing the perfection of the self may of itself defeat the purpose. In the final analysis there is no perfected self—only perfection. For self indicates separateness and identity. Having through long ages of many lives at last brought perfection to our vehicles of consciousness, we face the final task of transcending them. The river, mighty and inspiring as it may be, ultimately loses its identity in the mightier sea.

Life is not easy to understand. The cynic would say that we are damned if we do and damned if we do not. The Ancient Wisdom teaches us to move forward to perfection through many lives, and so, burdened with knowledge and saturated with saintly ardor, we arrive at the home-stretch to learn that all that went before was but a means to an end. At the end we move from the accumulation of all to the elimination of all, from saturation to nakedness. The mind now abdicates its throne of power and direction, becomes quiescent that it may reflect Reality, and self-identity is lost in the full realization of the Oneness of Life.

FRED MORGAN

REVIEWS

Brahma Vidya—The Adyar Library Bulletin, Vol. XX, parts 3-4, December 1956; Buddha Jayanti Issue, pp. 373, price Rs. 5.

This is a special illustrated issue of the Bulletin to commemorate the 2500th anniversary of the Enlightenment of the Buddha. The articles are all on Buddhist subjects, and among the contributors are eminent scholars from different parts of the world.

Dr. Ernst Waldschmidt, Professor of Indology in the Gottingen University, gives a valuable reconstruction of a Buddhist Sanskrit fragment found in Chinese Turkestan. Professor H. W. Bailey of Cambridge University, a specialist in Central Asian textual and linguistic studies, has contributed a short article on a title of Kanishka, a Buddhist Emperor of India. Dr. G. Coedès, for many years Director of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient and now its Honorary Director, has edited with an introduction a very interesting Pali text which summarizes Buddhist doctrines of the Yogavacara school. Marcelle Lalou, Managing Editor of the *Journal Asiatique* and connected with the

Sorbonne and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, has made a valuable study of the evolution of the conception of Vajrapani, an important personage in Buddhism. Dr. O. H. de A. Wijesekera of the University of Ceylon, discusses references in early Buddhist literature to different schools of Indian philosophy. Dr. P. H. Pott, Director of the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, Holland, has contributed an article on some of the beautiful sculptures in their museum. Among the Indian writers is Dr. V. Raghavan, Adviser to the Library, an outstanding Sanskrit scholar, to whose aid and interest the Library owes the collection of the articles. Members of the Society will undoubtedly be interested in a short note by N. Yagnesvara Sastry presenting three beautiful Buddhist images in the Adyar museum hitherto unknown to archaeologists, scholars and the general public.

The Editorial Board of the Bulletin consisting of Mr. N. Sri Ram, Miss Ann Kerr, Dr. V. Raghavan and Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja, also a contributor to the issue, may be felicitated on this valuable

and beautiful volume. It is edited with great care, the appearance is pleasing, the printing good and the articles of an excellent standard.

S. R.

Asya Vamasya Hymn (The Riddle of the Universe) by Dr. C. Kunhan Raja; Ganesh, Madras, India, 1956, pp. 87, price Rs. 12.

The hymn presented by Dr. Kunhan Raja in the book under review is the last of a group of twenty-five hymns in the First Mandala of the *Rigveda* which has ten Mandalas. The whole Veda contains nearly 10,500 verses grouped into 1,017 hymns. The author of the group of hymns to which this particular hymn belongs is a poet named Dirghatamas. The name is rather suggestive. It implies that the poet had long been in the darkness searching for the light of Truth and then attained illumination and mystic realization. It is primarily these experiences that are sought to be expressed in these hymns.

The hymns are not merely prayers or invocations, they are expressions of experiences of a supra-mental kind. It has always been a matter of great difficulty to find adequate expression for them down here in terms of our ordinary experience. Truly was it said that "mind and speech recoil, baffled by the impossibility of getting any intelligible expression". The great seers have

adopted the only available way of communicating such transcendental experiences; they have used symbols and imageries to express what they have realized. Looking at them merely from the verbal level, some of these hymns may be very abstruse, some may appear to be even absurdly fantastic, "to be babblings of an infant humanity". But if one approaches the hymns in a spirit of reverence, prompted by a genuine desire to get at Truth at all costs, and equipped with the necessary preliminary knowledge of ancient symbology, one will see great truths hidden behind such symbols and imagery.

The description of the God (Fire) as one who carries the pot of ghee on his back in verse 1, the imagery of two birds, "comrades united to each other, resorting to a common tree" in verse 20, the reference to the year of 360 days divided into twelve months in verses 11 and 14, are highly poetic and suggestive. In verses 31, 32 and 37 are described mystic experiences which will appear to be meaningless and fantastic unless one seeks the hidden meaning with the help of spiritual intuition. As the author aptly puts it, the book deals really with the riddle of the universe.

A scholar who takes up the study of the hymns as mere literature, or from the linguistic standpoint, is doomed to be bewildered and lost,

Generally self-complacent scholars brush them aside as abstruse. Even Sayana, the great commentator, is silent on many of the points dealt with.

There are frequent references in the hymn to the cow and to the cow and the calf, (verses 26, 27, 28, 29 and 41); obviously they are symbolic. So also there are some striking references to birds, (singular and plural). It is rather notable that the phrase "asya vamasya," with which the hymn begins, is also used for the bird in verse 7. Also the hymn closes with a reference to the Divine Bird, *divyam suparnam*. The wheel and its spokes of varying numbers find frequent mention in the hymn (verses 2, 11, 13, 14, 48). References are also found in several places to Father and Mother, evidently as some basic principles, (verses 8, 9, 10, 12, 18); in verse 10 reference is made to three mothers and three fathers, and in verse 33 the poet says: "The sky is my father." Certainly these are not meaningless jumbles. With a little intuition one can sense a plan behind. It is the ultimate principles of cosmogony that are sought to be revealed here through the medium of allegory, symbols and poetic imagery.

With all these difficulties before him, the author has undertaken this stupendous task, and he has done it ably, and impersonally, without any

bias. Wherever there was any doubt he has taken the most rational stand. His translations and notes are very clear and precise; and above all he has kept the atmosphere of the hymns untarnished. The two appendices add much to the usefulness of the book.

The author also incidentally deals with the relative age of this hymn. Opinions have generally been divided as regards the dates of the various portions of the Vedas. Many have said that this particular hymn must have been composed at a later period, because of the philosophic element dominating the religious aspect. The author refutes this position and proves from internal as well as external evidence that the date must be much earlier. He also observes that in Vedic lore there was never any clear-cut demarcation between the religious and philosophic aspects and that these two aspects had been given due consideration.

It is gratifying that the author's "original contribution of my own to Vedic Exegesis," to use his own words, has been a success.

R. SRINIVASAN

Kulacudamani Nigama, edited by Arthur Avalon; Ganesh, Madras, India, 1956, pp. 60, price Rs. 3.

In the Hindu religion every God has his Devi or Consort. The first aspect of the Trinity, Shiva, has Parvati; the second, Vishnu, has

Lakshmi; and the third, Brahmā, has Sarasvati, the Goddess of Wisdom. Both manifestations (masculine and feminine) being regarded as essential for creation, they have equal status.

The worship of Shakti (feminine aspect of God) is dealt with in the Tantras, essentially for the attainment of Liberation. The methods of Shakti-worship are often misunderstood and misused. But as C. Jinarājādāsa says on the subject of sex, "this is a problem which begins in mud but which will end like the lotus up above".

The book under review, the shortest Tantra and one of the chief treatises on Shakti-worship, deals with rites for the development of powers to attract any deva, lower spirit or human being towards the devotee, but emphasizes that the devotee must be "large-minded, patient of ill said of him, and one who does good to others".

Rightly understood, there is no room for base motives in Devi-worship. In this Tantra, the Devi is addressed in the various hymns as Brahmā, Kumāri (virgin), Vishnu, Mahālakshmi, the Father and Mother of all, and so on. The Devi is an impersonal cosmic principle indicating the two modes of worship, outer and inner, the outer consisting of offerings and asking for material

gains, the inner consisting of identification of worshipper with the Devi.

No complicated ritual is prescribed in this book. Insistence is on purification of knowledge. Salutations to certain trees must be done each morning. One is reminded of C. W. Leadbeater's experience regarding the health-giving properties of the pine and the eucalyptus.

Three states or stages of Shakti are mentioned: "The first is the primordial or quiescent, static state where the Shakti is one with Shiva in blissful union without attributes . . . the Anandamayakosha of the Advaita School. The second state or stage is when the Devi, veiling herself with her own māyā, becomes intent on creation . . . the Vijnanamayakosha. The third stage is that of cosmic ideation." Nothing is said as regards the technique for developing these bodies or states of consciousness of man.

The introduction in English of 31 pages is by A. K. Maitra and gives a summary of the seven chapters of this Tantra, and a translation of the last chapter (in English verse-form). Then follows the text of the Tantra in Sanskrit, edited by Arthur Avalon—Sir John Woodroff, well-known for his works in English on the *Tantra Shastra*.

S. G. VENKATARAMANAM

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEOSOPHIST

APRIL 1957

THEOSOPHISTS AT WORK AROUND THE WORLD

By the Recording Secretary

The School of the Wisdom

The School of the Wisdom has just completed its eighth session. The second term opened on January 7th, after the December holiday during which the students had the opportunity of attending the 81st International Convention of the Theosophical Society held at Adyar from 26th to 31st December.

The studies of the second term were directed mainly to the application of Theosophical principles in the departments of philosophy, religion, science, education and the arts. The School was especially fortunate in having outstanding speakers to lecture on the religious. Representatives of the main faiths came from the universities and colleges in Madras, or were drawn from among members remaining

after Convention and the residents of Adyar.

Philosophy was studied with a view to understanding the basic problems in this field of thought; psychology was related to the various laws of the universe, especially in regard to the very important "psychology of adjustment" so much needed in the world today. Emphasis was placed on education, modern, Theosophical and in relation to the future race; and on the arts as factors in human evolution. Indian art took a foremost position in these latter studies, with special lectures by persons notable in the fields of dance, literature and sculpture. In connection with these subjects, visits were made to Kalakshetra and to the Madras Museum, as well as to the Besant Theosophical High School and

the Arundale Montessori Training Centre.

The latter portion of the term was devoted to the study of *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, and *At the Feet of the Master*, in relation to the living of spiritual laws, and to the history, constitution, Headquarters departments, objects and the future of the Theosophical Society.

Afternoon classes continued with a few changes. The speaker's course was given two afternoons each week, and a course on the study of man as an indivisible being was instituted.

At the closing of the session of the School on the 8th March the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, said: "I hope you have all enjoyed the classes and your stay at Adyar. A visit to Adyar for a Theosophist is, I know, a memorable experience. I remember my first coming to this Estate in April 1923 to live and work. I had been here before, but in a more casual way. I was put up in the Fuller Bungalow near Headquarters. For some days it seemed to me that I was living in a bit of heaven dropped down upon earth. The very trees around seemed to be 'apparelled in celestial light,' but gradually that light faded into the light of common day. But surely it still pervades and mantles this place; at least that is my faith. We lose our ability to see things freshly, with an innocent eye. Each one who

comes here and goes back carries to his Section and Lodge something of Adyar, that spirit which is here, so imperfectly translated by those who live and work here. That has necessarily to be so. But it is a spirit which acts as the leaven that leavens the bread. I cherish the hope that in years to come it will be possible for a goodly number of members in each Section to come here and give something of what is in their capacity to give."

Diplomas were then presented to the students by the President.

It was felt by all who had participated in the work of the School in the session now closed that it had been valuable in deepening the understanding of universal laws, in increasing the appreciation of beauty and harmony in human relationships, and in learning how to search for Truth. The Class of 1957 thus disperses carrying with it the inspiration which can so easily be found in the graceful and beautiful setting of Adyar, but in dispersing bequeaths to its successor, the Class of 1957-58, the joy of discovering for itself "Wisdom in the Work".

Canadian Federation

The Canadian Federation Secretary, Miss Joan Morris, in her annual Report shows that despite the fact that there has been no great increase in membership during the

year, steady progress has been made in the Lodges, of which there are 8 with a membership of 230.

One of the encouraging events during the year under review was the reconstitution of Wayfarers Lodge in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The members there are doing their best to rebuild themselves into a strong, active group. On the other hand, it was found necessary to close the Lodge in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, owing to there being but one active member left amongst the group.

Several study groups have been formed in various parts of the Federation, and it is hoped that these will eventually become strong enough to be formed into Lodges.

During the year the members were fortunate in having a visit from Mr. Geoffrey Hodson, whose lectures in Vancouver and Victoria drew good audiences.

The Federation Quarterly, the official journal of the Federation, edited by Mr. John P. Barnes, is a fine little publication; it sets a good standard in its editorials and articles, and, with extracts from the Watch-Tower, keeps the members in touch with the thought of our International President, Mr. N. Sri Ram. In the section, "News and Notes from the Lodges," the reader gains a good idea of the activities and interests of the members.

Miss Morris says: "At the time of writing this Report we are work-

ing towards a new venture for this Federation, a Convention of our Lodges to be held in Vancouver at the Easter week-end of 1957. Tentative plans have already been laid, and it is hoped that this venture will be a great success and the forerunner of regular Conventions to be held in future years."

East Africa

The East African Section covers a very wide area; it consists of Zanzibar, Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. There are many difficulties in regard to transport and communication, and the General Secretary, Mr. Vallabhdas H. Kapadia, and his Executive have to face these in their attempt to spread the message of Theosophy and strengthen the work generally. The Section has a total membership of 656, with 20 Lodges. All take a keen interest in spreading the truths of the Ancient Wisdom. The Lodges meet regularly and the Society's special festivals are commemorated.

The seventh annual Convention of the Section was held in the city of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya Colony, under the auspices of the Nairobi Lodge, from the 23rd to the 25th December 1956. Miss Clara M. Codd, who was the guest of honor, gave three Convention Lectures. Other speakers were Brothers A. F. Kanga, Harkishandas Shah,

Hirabhai S. Patel, Ramanlal Shah and Rajanikant Patel, all of whom gave instructive and enlightening addresses. The Prayers of the Religions were recited each morning to open the proceedings of the day. The National President, Mr. V. H. Kapadia, presided over the business sessions, all of which met in a very cordial atmosphere. Mr. A. F. Kanga, National Secretary, was elected also to the position of National Lecturer. Evening entertainments added to the pleasure of the delegates and made friendly relations throughout the whole Convention proceedings.

Following the Convention, Miss Codd made a two months' tour of the Lodges. Her description of her tour and of the nature of the country and people she visited will be of interest to our readers. It is given as an additional item in this Supplement following this report.

*A Visit to the East African
Section*

Miss Clara Codd writes:

I have just come back from a most interesting tour. The East African Theosophical Society, which had just completed seven years of life, invited me to be the guest-speaker at Convention in Nairobi, and to tour their Lodges in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Pemba and Zanzibar for nearly two months afterwards. I arrived a week be-

fore the Convention which was held at Christmas time. The ten days I was in Nairobi I had two lectures a day, one to the public and one to the members.

Nairobi is a pleasant city and I found the climate mild and cool. Indeed, the whole of Kenya impressed me as a fertile and beautiful land. We could house half Europe in it. It is a land of vast distances and tremendous views. In the plane, flying up to Convention we passed very near the great mountain Kilimanjaro. The snow-capped extinct crater was most impressive.

In addition to the Convention programme there were meetings in private houses. It is quite wonderful how many faiths and nationalities gather in the Theosophical Society. Besides the predominating Hindu, there were Sikhs, Moslems—mostly Arabs—and a few natives. The prevailing language is Gujarati, for most of the Indian community come from the neighborhood of Bombay.

When the ten days at Nairobi came to an end, Mr. A. F. Kanga, the National Secretary, who accompanied me throughout the greater part of the tour, and Mrs. Baria, a Parsee lady, who sang sacred songs in Gujarati before and after every lecture, started off with me for our first port of call, Kericho, the little mountain town where there are large tea plantations.

Then we went to Kisumu which is on the shores of the great Victoria Nyanza. Every evening we went down to the lake to watch for hippos and crocodiles, but we never saw any. At the last meeting in Kisumu only two people came, a Hindu doctor and a Sikh policeman. From Kisumu we motored to Eldoret, where we had good meetings and met a charming lady who has done wonderful work with a mothers' clinic. Then came Kitale and Jinja, where again we had excellent meetings.

Then on to Kampala, the beautiful capital city of Uganda, where we met the daughter of Mr. Mitford-Barberton and her husband and brother. The President of the Kampala Lodge was very kind to us, taking us all in. With him we saw the palace of the native Ruler and the quite wonderful Parliament house of his chiefs.

From Kampala we took train to Nakuru, where our host took us up to a wide extinct crater which none may enter, as deadly fumes kill one on the spot. Then again for two days to Nairobi, from where we flew to Mombasa, a town I knew from an early journey to India some years ago. The great Theosophical figure of Mr. P. D. Master has now passed on, but his wife still works faithfully in the Lodge which has acquired a beautiful room. There I stayed with a very kind Hindu

host who is not a member but very interested. Mombasa was getting very hot, but we were to be hotter still, for soon we went on to Tanga where I found an Englishman who was an unattached member but who joined the Lodge whilst I was there.

From Tanga we flew to the island of Pemba where for the first time we had an audience of Arabs, and my host was a young Moslem doctor in the hospital. The Arabs all seem to wear a kind of long, white gown, hand-embroidered, with an embroidered white cap. On this occasion my lecture was translated into Swahili. Two English people were in the audience. They were Quaker missionaries who had a brother interested in Theosophy. I spent the last night with them and saw little brown monkeys running up and down trees.

From Pemba we flew to Zanzibar, the famous old slave-trading centre. It is a most picturesque place with streets so narrow that a motor-car can only just squeeze along them. You could shake hands across the streets. The island is really a coral island. The soil is only a few feet deep, but it is very green and fertile, full of clove trees and coconut palms. A beautiful Anglican Cathedral now stands on the site of the old slave-market and nearby live a community of Anglican nuns. The Lodge there has its own

rooms. Here we said good-bye to the National Secretary, Mr. Kanga, as Zanzibar is his home. Mr. Kanga was such a help to me. He organized and arranged everything and, as I cannot speak Gujarati, this was highly necessary. I would like here to record my deep sense of gratitude to him.

I flew to my last stopping-place, Dar-es-Salaam, which name means the abode of peace. I was welcomed into the home of a young English lady who is the Vice-President of the Lodge there. The President is young Mr. Shah. The last evening I was there the ladies asked me to tell them how to meditate, so going sentence by sentence, Mr. Shah translating, I did my best to tell them very simply what it meant.

Whilst in Dar-es-Salaam we drove for the day to a beautiful spot, much cooler than the big town, called Morogoro. There I had the District Collector in the chair, and many Sikhs in the audience. I thought the Sikhs most picturesque. They were such fine, big men. They

are a fighting race like the Rajputs. I noticed many wore a curved dagger in their belts, but one young Sikh told me this was symbolic of the old days when they were given a dagger to protect women and children.

Then came the flight back to the Union which took two days. We spent the night on the way in the Portuguese town of Beira, in the most wonderful and luxurious hotel I have ever seen. It was like staying in a marble palace.

I arrived in Durban a little tired, but very glad that I had been privileged to do this work. I wish to record here my deep sense of gratitude for all the kindness and hospitality I received on tour. I feel I had a wonderful opportunity of seeing the differences between the East and the West. The East has a much deeper sense of religion and worship than we have. Reverence for the Guru is deep in their nature. The West has very much more organizing and executive skill. There should be a brotherly exchange of what each has to offer.

It is reported that the Lord Buddha once said that the first step on the road to Nirvāna is perfect physical health.

C. W. LEADBRATER

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Founded in the City of New York, November 17, 1875

President: N. Sri Ram. Vice-President: Sidney A. Cook. Recording Secretary: Miss Emma Hunt. Treasurer: Edwin N. Lord.

Headquarters of the Society: ADYAR, MADRAS 20, INDIA

Official Organ of the President: *The Theosophist*, founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY, 1879

Date of Formation	Name of Section	General Secretary	Address	Magazines
1886	United States	Mr. James S. Perkins	P.O. Box 270, Wheaton, Illinois	<i>The American Theosophist.</i>
1888	England	Mrs. A. L. Berry	50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1891	India	Sri Rohit Mehta	Theosophical Society, Varanasi 1	<i>The Theosophical Review.</i>
1895	Australia	Mr. J. L. Davidge	29 Bligh Street, Sydney, N.S.W.	<i>Theosophy in Australia.</i>
1895	Sweden	Herr Gösta Lindström	Ostermalmsgatan 12, Stockholm	<i>Theosophist Tidsskrift.</i>
1896	New Zealand	Miss Sandra Chase	10 Belvedere St., Epsom, Auckland, S.E.3	<i>Theosophy in New Zealand.</i>
1897	Netherlands	Mr. B. Wouters	Amsteldijk 76, Amsterdam Z.	<i>Theosophia.</i>
1899	France	Monsieur Francis Brunel	4 Square Rapp, Paris VII	<i>Le Lotus Bleu.</i>
1902	Italy	Dr. Giuseppe Filipponio	Corso Trieste 88, Rome	<i>Alba Spirituale.</i>
1902	Germany	Direktor Martin Boyken	Hagenau 15, Hamburg 23	<i>Adyar.</i>
1905	Cuba	Señor Armando Alfonso León	P.O. Box 365, Habana	<i>Revista Teosofica Cubana.</i>
1907	Hungary	Miss Signe Rosvall	Vironkatu 7C, Helsinki	<i>Teosofi.</i>
1907	Finland	..	..	..
1908	Russia	..	..	..
1909	Czechoslovakia	..	..	..
1909	Southern Africa	Mr. I. G. Mitford-Barberton	P.O. Box 2284, Cape Town	<i>The Link.</i>
1910	Scotland	Mrs. Jean Allan	17 Queen's Crescent, Glasgow, C.4	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1910	Switzerland	Madame Claire Wysz	Bruderholzstrasse 88, Basle	<i>Clarid.</i>
1911	Belgium	Monsieur Th. Chapellier	334 Rue Vanderkindere, Uccle-Bruxelles	<i>Clarid.</i>
1912	Indonesia	Mr. Soemardjo	Blavatky Park 5, Merdeka-Barat 17, Djakarta	<i>P. T. T. I.</i>
1912	Burma	U Po Lat	No. 102, 49th Street, Rangoon	..
1912	Austria	Herr F. Schleifer	Paracelsusgasse 4, T. 6, Vienna III/40	<i>Adyar.</i>
1913	Norway	Herr Erling Havrevold	Bjornstettv. 2b, Lilleaker, Oslo	<i>Norsk Teosofisk Tidsskrift.</i>
1918	Egypt *	Mr. Zaki Awad	(President, "Hikmet El Kadima" Lodge), 18 Emad El Din Street, Cairo	..
1918	Denmark	Herr J. H. Möller	Strandvejen 130a, Aarhus	<i>Theosophia.</i>
1919	Ireland	Mrs. Evelyn O. Hornidge	31 Pembroke Road, Dublin	<i>Theosophy in Ireland.</i>
1919	Mexico	Señor Adolfo de la Peña Gil	Iturbide 28, Mexico D. F.	<i>Boletín Mexicano; Dharma.</i>

* No Section; Lodge only.

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1919	Canada	1919	Mr. N. K. Choksy, Q. C.	1919	52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.	1919	<i>The Canadian Theosophist.</i>
1920	Argentina	1920	Mr. Timos Vratsanos	1920	Casilla Correo No. 238, Rosario (Pcia. Santa Fe)	1920	<i>Teosofia en Argentina.</i>
1920	Chile	1920	Señor Ricardo Michel A.-P.	1920	Casilla 3603, Santiago	1920	<i>Fraternidad.</i>
1920	Brazil	1920	Teniente Armando Sales	1920	Rua Anita Garibaldi 29, 11° andar, Sao Paulo.	1920	<i>O Teosofista.</i>
1921	Bulgaria	1921	Mr. Sigvaldi Hjálmarsson	1921	Ingolfstr. 22, Reykjavik	1921	<i>Gangleri.</i>
1921	Iceland	1921	Mr. Felix Bernudes	1921	Rua Passos Manoel 20, Lisbon	1921	<i>Oisir.</i>
1921	Spain	1921	Miss E. Claudia Owen	1921	10 Park Place, Cardiff	1921	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1922	Portugal	1922	Señor Mario Radaelli	1922	Palacio Diaz, 18 de Julio 1333, Montevideo	1922	<i>Revista Teosofica Uruguaya.</i>
1923	Wales	1923	Señora Esperanza C. Hopgood	1923	Box 8774, Fernandez Junco, Santurce	1923	<i>Heraldo Teosofico.</i>
1923	Poland	1923	Mr. N. K. Choksy, Q. C.	1923	Roshanara, 20 Clifford Road,	1923	<i>The Plenum.</i>
1925	Uruguay	1925	Mr. Miguel Monge Echandi	1925	Green Path, Colpetry, Colombo 3	1925	<i>Theosophical Delia.</i>
1925	Puerto Rico	1925	Dr. Benito F. Reyes	1925	Patission 204, Athens (8)	1925	<i>The Lotus.</i>
1925	Rumania	1925	Señorita Corina Martinez Sanders	1925	P.O. Box 797, San José, Costa Rica	1925	<i>Revista Teosofica; Boletín.</i>
1925	Yugoslavia	1925	Mr. Vallabhdas H. Kapadia	1925	Noonan Road, Karachi 3	1925	<i>Savabh.</i>
1926	Ceylon	1926	Mrs. Gool K. Minwalla	1926	88 China St., Penang	1926	<i>Theosophy in Pakistan.</i>
1928	Greece	1928	Dr. C. H. Yeang	1928	18 Brookhill Ave., Belfast	1928	<i>Theosophical News.</i>
1929	Central America	1929	Dr. Hugh Shearman	1929	P.O. Box 1264, Jerusalem	1929	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1929	Paraguay	1929	Mr. Hans Zeuger	1929	Directeur de l'Ecole des Filles, Chaudoc, Sud Viet-Nam	1929	<i>Mitteilungsblatt.</i>
1933	Philippines	1933	Mr. Pham-Ngoc-Da	1933	Apartment 2907, Caracas	1933	<i>Das Hoc.</i>
1937	Colombia	1937	Señor Pablo Bonilla T.	1937	P.O. Box 720, Accra, Ghana	1937	
1947	East Africa	1947	Mr. K. Brakatu Ateko	1947	† Federation.	1947	
1948	Pakistan *	1948		1948		1948	
1948	Malaya and Singapore †	1948		1948		1948	
1949	Northern Ireland †	1949		1949		1949	
1950	State of Israel *	1950		1950		1950	
1951	Japan	1951		1951		1951	
1952	Viet-Nam	1952		1952		1952	
1953	Venezuela	1953		1953		1953	
1956	West Africa †	1956		1956		1956	
	Presidential Agency.						

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• The Theosophical Society in Europe (Federation of National Societies): General Secretary: Mr. J. E. van Dassel, Dirk Bouteaan 18, Eindhoven, Netherlands. *Theosophy in Action; Claret; Agha.*
 Canadian Federation (attached to Headquarters): Miss Joan S. Morris .. 1786 Broadway West, Vancouver, B.C. .. *The Federation Quarterly.*

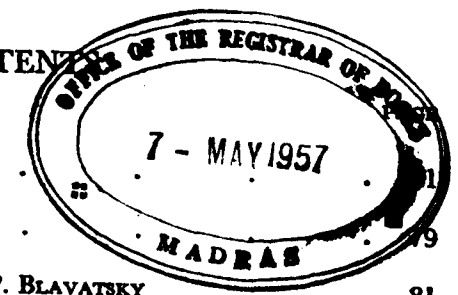
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THE THEOSOPHIST

Edited by N. SRI RAM

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

ADYAR, MADRAS 20, INDIA

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY was formed at New York, November 17, 1875, and incorporated at Madras, April 3, 1905. Its three declared Objects are:

- FIRST.—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
- SECOND.—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
- THIRD.—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 23, 1924

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the civilized world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher or writer, from H. P. Blavatsky downwards, has any authority to impose his teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to attach himself to any teacher or to any school of thought which he may choose, but has no right to force his choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office, nor any voter, can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion he may hold, or because of membership in any school of thought to which he may belong. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties. The members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

FREEDOM OF THE SOCIETY

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 30, 1950

The Theosophical Society, while co-operating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such co-operation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title, The Theosophical Society.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.



THE THEOSOPHIST ON THE WATCH-TOWER

*The Theosophical Society is responsible only for its
Official Notices appearing in "The Supplement".*

WE have just had at Adyar during the Easter week-end the annual South Indian Conference, to which delegates come usually from all the Indian Federations in the south. It has been the custom now for thirty-five years to hold such a Conference synchronizing, incidentally, with a number of Theosophical Conventions in different parts of the world, which are held at this time because of Easter being a holiday season in those parts, as well as climatically a pleasant time of the year.

The Easter
Conference

The gathering at Adyar is usually not very large, but those who come from outside enjoy being here for two or three days, not only meeting one another and listening to the addresses but also discussing business connected with the Theosophical work in their areas. Those who live and work at Adyar equally enjoy the visits of the members from outside as well as, of course, the change in the usual routine due to the Conference. It is good for all of us to have a break now and then, and ask ourselves what is the whole purpose of the work in which we are engaged, and how far the spirit in

which we do it expresses that purpose. It is only as we stop acting mechanically in a stream of unconscious continuity that we begin to be aware of the nature of our action, and there is the possibility of determining anew—which is self-determination—our goal and the best means thereto.

* * * *

Easter is a very special time for the Christian world and, synchronizing as it does in the northern climates with the coming of spring and summer, it is obviously a time of change and renewal. At Adyar the seasons are not so sharply marked off one from another as in the farther latitudes. Here the shedding of the old and the emergence of new leaves on the trees seem to take place almost simultaneously within a very few days at about this time of the year.

Watching the falling of the leaves it might strike us that an analogous phenomenon has to take place in ourselves at the psychological level. How wonderful it would be if all that constitutes ourselves, as we find ourselves, could be similarly shed, and we could make an absolutely fresh beginning, renewing ourselves like the trees in spring. Every one of us needs a renovation, not in a new body after death—that will take place by itself—but in that nature of ourselves where there can be a complete change that takes place from within.

The Brahmins in the old days in India were termed “twice-born,” because they were supposed to be born again in spirit when they went through a particular ceremony performed while they were quite young. But that is only a supposition in these days. A new birth from within is something more radical and more difficult to achieve. It would be new in the sense that it is not a mere modification of the old.

Obviously the whole world as it is needs to be born again, because it is in a state of disintegration at present. The old ways of thought, the old moulds and dispositions, are breaking

up. We see this nowhere better than in India. The institutions that had served her for centuries, the old relationships and ways are all quickly disintegrating. There has been and there still is a radical uprooting of the old order in so many departments—in the social organization, the political set-up, the economic conditions, and even the religious ideas and practices. But all this is part of a wider change throughout the world, due to fundamental causes, which spells the passing of the old and the beginning of a new world-order.

* * * *

There is so much being said about the United Nations which is increasingly in the centre of the world-picture these days. It is an organization which is obviously meant to develop into a bone-frame for a new body of humanity. The whole of humanity

*A Framework for
Humanity*

has to be organized in such a way that it can function as one body, though divided into different States, and this new body has to be upheld by a structure which will express its common will and purpose. The United Nations, unsatisfactory as it may be in many respects at present, is the only organization that can be shaped into such a structure.

But then it is not merely a new body which is needed, but also a new mind, including a new way of feeling towards things. How is this new mind to be acquired? It is all very well to talk in high-flown language about a new mind and new emotions, but the mere words are not a magic which will produce the change. A new mind or a new intelligence can only spring from the uncorrupted source of a new spirit that reaches beyond the mind. It is always life at whatever level which creates the organ for its own functioning. We see that in the case of the individual Ego, the soul-nature that seeks expression through the personality of the lower, more material, worlds. It must be so also in the case of humanity.

* * * *

Our great Founder, H.P.B., was fond of using the Latin words *anima mundi*, meaning thereby the soul of the world, which soul, as she has pointed out, changes its character from time to time. We might think of humanity at present as in the process of forming a soul which will be common to all its different nationalities, to its different groups and sections. That group soul of humanity must incarnate in a new form which will be an organization that includes all branches of human activity. The life that flows therefrom will be the life that is expressed in humanity's common thought and ideals. Of course mankind has always been fundamentally one; we know that from our Theosophical teachings. But the unity has been so far largely an abstract idea; the time has obviously come for humanity to embody it in practice.

When we use the phrase, "group soul," what can we understand by it? We have to translate it in terms which are intelligible and clear. It is not of much use to think of it as something uncertain and dark which exists upstairs without much relation to what goes on below. The soul of humanity must lie in a nature that transcends all particularities and is capable of being manifested in common modes of action and a body of common thought, especially on matters of fundamental importance. We can see that such a body of thought and such common modes are in the process of formation at present.

Modern science is contributing to it. Whatever our nationality or our culture, we are all being influenced by scientific ideas, and humanity everywhere is thinking more and more along scientific lines. The spread of the English language, which is fast becoming an international vehicle, is also bringing about the sharing of certain aptitudes of thought and expression by the whole of mankind. The very world-conditions and the increasing intercourse of its peoples with

The Group Soul
of Humanity

one another for a variety of purposes are giving rise to an assimilation of each other's ways and ideas in many different walks of life.

But all these factors together cannot make a common soul, giving to the word "soul" that deeper significance which we usually associate with it. Something more is needed, and that is a spark from above, the lightning flash that can weld humanity only at that level where the mind ceases to be a purely material mind and is free to take on the hues of the Spirit.

* * * *

It is for this, amongst other things, that the Theosophical Society was launched. It is only through the nucleus of a real brotherhood, which means a pure relation of harmony, and the poise of a clear understanding that the influence of the Spirit can flow. We cannot evoke that which is transcendent to us except by creating the field in which it can manifest itself. We cannot go to it, but we can make it possible for it to come to us; when we create the conditions, then there is the manifestation, the descent, the out-flow. So our work in the Society, although it may sound grandiose to state it in such language, is gradually to transform the thought of the world on all matters by a touch of that spirit which belongs to the world of truth, the world of unity. That is really our mission, whatever else we may undertake in addition. We must lead the way in a forward movement that will eventually transform life in all its aspects, and to that end must first change or transform ourselves. We must create a vessel into which the pure wine may pour, the wine which causes not confusion but clarification, the wine of the sunlight of Truth and of a renewing vitality.

How can we constitute ourselves, our Lodges, Sections and gatherings, the whole of our Society, into such a vessel?

Our Mission

It is done not by mere words, but only by deep thought, by creative living. It is possible for each one of us to begin this process in a small way by changing himself a little here, a little there, his relationship to this person or that, his manner of speaking and acting, his approach to the various little problems. Such changes, though small in themselves, will eventually make a channel that is both an inlet into ourselves and an outlet of extraordinary significance.

* * * *

In addition to whatever we may be able to do with our present capacities, we have to deepen ourselves in order to utter the message which is needed, which is waiting to come from the depths. Unless we do that, we shall be merely indulging in a lot of superficial words, so much froth and effervescence, that signify nothing.

It is possible for everyone, however simple he may be, however little gifted he may consider himself, to be of help at such a time as this. It is a time of crisis, which calls for action not superficially but out of the best that is in ourselves. We may write articles for the newspapers, or for the Theosophical journals. We might spread Theosophical thought in other ways. But in addition to all such work, everyone who is steady and full of the spirit of peace and brotherhood in his daily life is of help to the great spiritual Powers. Such a person becomes a channel for the forces that are needed all over the world, a truth that needs to be deeply realized by each one for himself.

Every Theosophist ought to be both a steady and a dynamic influence. The two adjectives may be thought of in correlation with each other; being dynamic does not mean that we push everyone around us and cause a great disturbance. That is not true dynamism, though it may be dynamism of a sort.

* * * *

Look at any tree here or elsewhere; there is nothing more dynamic than the life which flows through it. There is a constant change all the time, an upwelling current flowing through its cells. The tree which looks so peaceful, under which we may repose and shelter, is capable of achieving a revolution when the time comes, not a revolution of force, but a revolution of life which in a very short time transforms the earth and all that is there from the bareness of winter to the manifold activities and richness of spring. Is there any revolution more wonderful than that which takes place in Nature by the shedding of that which has become old and the mantling of a renovated earth with fresh life and beauty?

If there can be such a revolution in a tree, cannot something similar on a higher scale and even more profound and radical take place in that tree of life and knowledge which is ourselves? We are more evolved than the trees of the earth though more removed in our minds from the natural soil of our being. There can be a revolution in us too, and it will take place by itself, through forces innate in ourselves, when it is not hindered by our wrong thoughts and actions.

* * * *

So it comes to this: We have to realize that Theosophy must be to us a way of life, a way of being, rather than a mere accumulation of facts. When I say "life" I mean not merely the physical actions but a way of looking at all things and acting, a relationship with everyone and everything which uncovers a hidden beauty. To be a Theosophist is not just to believe one or two things, like reincarnation and karma, and then go on in the same old way. If one is a Westerner he is apt to think that belief in reincarnation and karma is what makes a Theosophist; but in the East, where these doctrines have long been accepted, being a Theosophist may mean a

belief in something more. But even then belief involves only the mind and the emotions that go with it and in fact determine its working. But it is not only the mind which is involved in any fundamental change but the process of one's whole being.

If we think, feel and act with a sense of what is true, good and beautiful, even though it be but an elementary sense, we will find that more and more of the hidden depths of ourselves come into action, more and more of that real being which is concealed by the exterior personality. Then we will be able to act not merely with a superficial mind but with the whole of our being, with entire sincerity, with truth, with the genuineness that springs from within. It is only then that we come to know how full our lives can be.

We are not most of us extraordinary people, but the wisdom that we call Theosophy is capable of giving us extraordinary stimulus and help. Since we have responded to it to some slight extent, there is hope that the response can increase. A river begins as the tiniest of streams, but as it proceeds, swells and flows with increasing power. Such is life in all living forms. It starts from the simplest organism, and there is an ever-widening and deepening flow, fanning out in numerous directions. Such also is that life which flows from the unsullied heights of divinity in ourselves.

So let our wisdom grow ever purer and clearer, and let more of its beauty enter our lives from day to day, so that even as we live our lives in our limited settings, we are to the world at large a channel of increasing blessing.

N. SRI RAM

THE LORD BUDDHA

By ANNIE BESANT ¹

THAT was the secret of the Buddha—that by the extinction of desires man rose to peace. Under the tree of wisdom He had seen the sorrow of the world, its cause in desire, its end in the ending of desire, and the noble eightfold path which led out of it into peace eternal. Seeing it for Himself and for the race, He passed into Nirvāna, the uncreated, the passionless, the all-embracing. And when the Blessed One had thus entered into Nirvāna, He sat beneath the Bodhi tree for seven days, “enjoying the bliss of emancipation”.

The teaching of the Buddha as to Nirvāna is, perhaps, the clearest on record, being positive instead of, as is usual, negative. Having said that the Bhikkhu should concentrate within himself all his mental faculties, “as the tortoise draws its body into his shell,” the Lord proceeds to tell of Nirvāna:

Bhikkhus, the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced, exist (as well as) the created, the visible, the made, the conceivable, the compound, the produced; and there is an uninterrupted connection between the two. Bhikkhus, if the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced, was nonentity, I could not say that the result of their connection from cause to effect with the created, the visible, the made, the compound, the conceivable, was final emancipation.

. . . The impermanency of the created, the visible, the made, the produced, the compound, the great torment of subjection to old age, death, and ignorance, what proceeds from the cause of eating;

¹ From “Buddhism” in *Four Great Religions*.

(all this) is destroyed, and there is found no delight in it; this is the essential feature of final emancipation. Then there will be no doubts and scruples; all sources of suffering will be stopped, and one will have the happiness of the peace of the sanskāra. . . This is the chief (beatitude) of those who have reached the end, perfect and unsurpassable peace, the destruction of all characteristics, the perfection of perfect purity, the annihilation of death. (*Udanavarga*, xxvi).

Such is His description of a state in which He ever dwelt, whether in or out of the body; yet we find people who instead of believing in the annihilation of death, believe in the annihilation of life in Nirvāna. I know no scripture in which the truth as to Nirvāna is put as plainly as it is here. It is existence, and not non-existence; it is reality and not non-reality; it is permanency, and not transitoriness. What is meant by "Nirvāna," by the "going out" implied in the name, is, He declares, the going out of all these impermanent things; these disappear, and then man attains his final emancipation.

Greatest among its teachers, purest and fairest of all the blossoms of humanity, this flower flowered on the Indian soil, this teacher spake the Indian tongue, and loved the Indian people. He taught them, He worked for them, He healed them, He instructed them; and then His compassion flowed outward, overflowed the worlds. Then surely we may reverence Him, the Blessed One, the Lord, the Teacher. He is admitted to be Teacher among the Gods; He may well also be done homage to as Teacher among men.

ANNIE BESANT

. . . Seeking nothing, he gains all;
Foregoing self, the Universe grows "I":
If any teach Nirvāna is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.

The Light of Asia

FOURTEEN YEARS OF THEOSOPHY¹

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

WHATEVER else may be thought of Theosophy and its Movement, time has at least proved that it is not the ephemeron which the American and foreign press called it upon its first appearance. It seems to have come to occupy a permanent place in modern thought, thus vindicating the truth of Sir John Herschel's observation that "the grand, and, indeed, the only, character of truth is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience, and coming unchanged out of every possible form of fair discussion".

The Theosophical Movement was a necessity of the age, and it has spread under its own inherent impulsion, and owes nothing to adventitious methods. From the first it has had neither money, endowment, nor social or governmental patronage to count upon. It appealed to certain human instincts and aspirations, and held up a certain lofty ideal of perfectibility, with which the vested extraneous interests of society conflicted, and against which these were foredoomed to battle. Its strongest allies were the human yearnings for light upon the problem of life, and for a nobler conception of the origin, destiny, and potentialities of the human being. While materialism and secularism were bent upon destroying not only theology and sectarian dogmatism, but even the religious

¹ Condensed from an article in *The North American Review*, Vol. CCCCIV, August 1890; from the Archives at Adyar.

conception of a diviner Self, Theosophy has aimed at uniting all broad religious people for research into the actual basis of religion and scientific proofs of the existence and permanence of the higher Self. Accepting thankfully the results of scientific study and exposure of theological error, and adopting the methods and maxims of science, its advocates try to save from the wreck of cults the precious admixture of truth to be found in each. Discarding the theory of miracle and supernaturalism, they endeavor to trace out the kinship of the whole family of world-faiths to each other, and their common reconciliation with science. The growing inclination of the public mind toward Theosophy seems to mark a reaction from the iconoclastic influence of Colonel Ingersoll's and Mr. Bradlaugh's school. Undoubtedly there are thousands of so-called Free-thinkers who sincerely believe in personal annihilation at the death of the body; but it would seem from the fact of the recent conversion of Mrs. Annie Besant from secularism to Theosophy, and the discussions to which it has given rise, that there are also many persons enrolled as followers of the two great leaders above mentioned who are so from ignorance of the views included in the term Theosophy. We officers and fellows of the Theosophical Society are, therefore, encouraged to hope that, with the wider dissemination of the facts, we shall see very large accessions to our cause from the secularist ranks. Surely this must be considered a gain by the friends of spirituality as opposed to materialism—those, at any rate, who think that morals, peace, and prosperity will be promoted by the universal belief in a life after death (whether eternal or broken up by a series of reincarnations on the same earth), and in man's possession of a higher, undying SELF, latent spiritual powers, and consciousness.

It is the worse for the public, particularly for the religious feelings of the public, that the organs of sectarian bigotry should have succeeded so well by perversion of fact, frenzied

calumny, and downright falsehood, in making our cause and the Society appear in such a false light during the past fourteen years. If justice be the law of Nature, and injustice a transitory evil, direful must, indeed, be the retribution these misguided people have invoked upon their own heads. The suffering we have been made to endure has but served as discipline, and taught us to turn the more loyally toward the esoteric doctrine for comfort and encouragement.

We can only thankfully repeat, slightly paraphrasing it, the Christian adage, now so applicable to our movement: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Theosophy." Its Society has done too much good work, the good grain is much too evident even in the piles of admitted chaff, not to have built a secure foundation for the temple of truth in the immediate, as in the distant, future.

For, see, the literature of Theosophy is growing rapidly. We have seven principal centres of publication—Madras, Bombay, Ceylon (Colombo), Stockholm, London, Paris, and New York. The Stockholm branch, founded hardly a year ago, has far over one hundred members, and our literature in Sweden is spreading rapidly. Little Ceylon had twenty-one branches three months ago, and may have more now. Madras is the general Headquarters of the Society, the official residence of the President and executive staff, and the office of THE THEOSOPHIST is there. At Bombay we have a "Theosophical Publication Fund," created and managed by Mr. Tookaram Tatyā, a Hindu Theosophist, which brings out important works in Sanskrit and English; an enterprise spoken of with great praise by Professor Max Müller in a letter published both in THE THEOSOPHIST and *Lucifer*. In London there is a "Theosophical Publishing Society," which brings out the magazine *Lucifer* (edited by Mrs. Annie Besant and myself) and a series of pamphlets called the "T. P. S.,"¹ issued

¹ Theosophical Pamphlets Series.

fortnightly, and many new Theosophical works. Following the good examples set to us by the Aryan Theosophical Society of New York—the headquarters of the Theosophical movement in America—a committee was formed in London last May for the wide distribution through the post of leaflets on Theosophical doctrines, each member taking charge of a definite district. During the first months of the establishment of the “tract-mailing scheme” at New York, the Aryan Theosophical Society has distributed over 150,000 papers on Theosophy and its doctrines. In Paris another monthly was started a year ago, the *Revue Théosophique*, edited by myself, and managed by the Countess d'Adhémar; and now another Theosophical magazine has appeared, *Le Lotus Bleu*, since March, also edited by myself, and managed by Arthur Arnould, a well-known journalist in Paris, and the president of the Theosophical Society of Paris, “l'Hermès”. In New York we have *The Path*, whose editor, Mr. W. Q. Judge, publishes also a number of books and pamphlets. The existence of these centres shows undeniably that our movement is constantly on the increase, and that all interested and malicious reports to the contrary are without foundation.

But it is our Adyar Library, founded by the loving labor of our President, Colonel H. S. Olcott, which is the crown and glory of the Theosophical Society. Though only three years old, it has already acquired a large collection of Oriental works of the greatest value—3,046 volumes—besides over 2,000 works in European languages, and a number of rare palm-leaf manuscripts. That noble library will survive the founders and all present members of the Theosophical Society, and go on speaking of the work done when many other things are forgotten.

Having cast a hasty glance at the general aspect of the Society as it stands at the present moment, I may be permitted to state very briefly the three broad principles upon which it

is building up, and then recapitulate the results actually achieved under each heading.

The three officially-declared Objects of our Society are:¹

1. To form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies, and sciences.

3. A third Object, pursued by a portion of the fellows of the Society, is to investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the psychic powers of man.

Two general Objects, one restricted Object, of attention. Everyone entering the Society is supposed to sympathize with the theory of essential brotherhood; a kinship which exists on the plane of the higher Self, not on that of the racial, social, and mental dissimilarities and antipathies. These elements of discord pertain to the physical man and are the result of unequal development under the law of evolution. We believe the human body to be but the shell, cover, or veil of the real entity; and those who accept the esoteric philosophy and the theory of “Karma,” (the universal law of ethical causation), believe that the entity, as it travels around certain major and minor cycles of existence with the whole mass of human beings, takes on a different body at birth, and shells it off at death, under the operation of this karmic law. Yet though it may thus clothe and re-clothe itself a thousand times in a series of reincarnations, the entity is unchanged and unchangeable, being of a divine nature, superior to all environments on the earthly plane. It is the physical body only which has racial type, color, sex, hatreds, ambitions, and loves. So then, when we postulate the idea of Universal Brotherhood, we wish it

¹ It is to be noted that the wording of the Objects is different from what it is now; see page ii of *THE THEOSOPHIST*.

understood that it is held in no Utopian sense, though we do not dream of realizing it at once on the ordinary plane of social or national relations. Most assuredly, if this view of the kinship of all mankind could gain universal acceptance, the improved sense of moral responsibility it would engender would cause most social evils and international asperities to disappear; for a true altruism, instead of the present egoism, would be the rule the world over. So we have written down as the first of our declared Objects this altruistic asseveration, and have been working practically to bring about a beginning of the better law.

The second of our declared Objects speaks so plainly for itself that I need not dwell upon it, save in the most casual way. The founders of the Theosophical Society thought they had the best reason to believe that there existed, locked up in the ancient literatures of India, Ceylon, Tibet, China, Japan, and other Eastern countries, a very large body of truth which would be most important and valuable to the present generation, if it could be got at. The best agents to employ in this work were the Oriental scholars who knew the ancient languages, especially those—if any could be found—who had learned the concealed meaning of the names, figures, and expressions with which Asiatic writings teem, and which are the despair of our Western Orientalists. These savants are priests of various religions and pandits, or professors, in a number of philosophical Eastern schools of thought. They had never before worked together in the interest of the whole family of mankind, so antagonistic are their personal views and so mutually contradictory their several religions and philosophical books. No scheme of co-operation between them could be carried out save upon the lines defined in our first declared Object—that is to say, upon the theory of the universal relationship of all mankind on the plane of the higher Self, and the policy of not meddling with what concerns only the mutual

relations of the lower self, the physical man. It shall be shown presently how this part of our scheme has worked.

Observe the third declaration, that only a portion of our fellows occupy themselves with the study of the occult properties of matter and the psychical powers of man. The Society as a whole, then, is not concerned in this branch of research. And naturally; for out of every ten thousand people one may meet, the chances are that but a very small minority have the time, taste, or ability to take up such delicate and baffling studies. Those who do are born mystics, and, of course, natural Theosophists; a Theosophist being one who seeks after Divine Wisdom, i.e., the comprehension of the ultimate causes of force, correlation, and psychic development, the method of solving all life's riddles. Persons of this temperament cannot be bigots; they chafe under the sectarian yoke, and their hearts warm with sympathy for all who suffer, who groan under social burdens resulting from ignorance, for all of any race, creed, or color, who aspire after knowledge. These men are true Theosophists, the brothers of humanity, and, in their complete development, the spiritual exemplars, guides, teachers, benefactors, of our race. We thought it a good thing to proclaim this line of research and self-discovery as the third of our three Objects. For those who are interested in it, and all inquirers whom they can reach and encourage, have the mystical philosophical books of the present and former times been written. To the general public these books are caviare.

Taking the three divisions of our Objects in order, let us see what has actually been accomplished during the fourteen years of the Theosophical Society's existence. The compilation shall be made from official documents and be capable of verification at any time. First, as regards Object number one, let it be noticed that we have done things on the broadest possible scale, dealing with nations in the mass as well as with

individuals or small groups. Colonel Olcott and I removed from New York to Bombay at the beginning of the year 1879, at which time we had just established relations between Western students of Oriental mysticism, and a few educated Hindus and Sinhalese. In the East we found division between sects, castes, and races; the ancient religions neglected, and by the educated classes unappreciated; the pride of race, reverence for ancestors, and patriotic spirit almost extinguished. Now the traveller will be struck with the brotherliness which has begun to prevail; the resuscitation of interest in ancestral character, achievements, and literature; and a fervor of patriotism which has culminated in the formation of the Indian National Congress—a political body with which our Society has no connection, though it was organized by our fellows, Indian and Anglo-Indian. Soon after our arrival in Bombay our Society began to grow, branches rapidly sprang up, and it became necessary to hold annual Conventions of delegates representing the now widely-expanded Society. Responsive to the President's call, thirty-odd branches sent as their representatives Hindu, Parsi, Buddhist, Mohammedan, Hebrew, and Christian fellows to the first Convention at Bombay. The spectacle was unique in Indian history, and provoked wide journalistic comment. At the public meeting in Framji Cawasji Institute the platform was successively occupied by speakers of the above-named religions, who vied with each other in fervent declarations of mutual tolerance and good-will, to the accompaniment of tumultuous applause from the audience. Thus the clear note of Universal Brotherhood was struck and the evangel of religious tolerance declared in a part of the world where previously there had been only sectarian hatred and selfish class egotism. This was in 1882. Annually since then the Convention has met as a parliamentary body to transact the Society's business, and not the least sectarian or race discord has occurred. The whole of India became leavened

with the benign influence emanating from these meetings, through the agency of the delegates in their respective states and nations; and when the political agitation began, the National Congress that was called was modelled upon our lines, and officered and managed mainly by our own fellows who had served as delegates in our Conventions.

Besides helping to weave this golden web of brotherhood throughout India, our Society has extended its filaments from that centre to Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, and Japan, bringing these peoples into fraternal relations with the Hindus, though of a different religion, and creating channels for international intercourse upon religious and educational subjects. In those countries, also, we have sown the same seed of good-will, and in Ceylon we are already reaping the harvest. In that ever-green, paradisaical isle of the sea we have revived and begun to purify Buddhism, established high schools, taken some fifty minor schools under our supervision, circulated literature in all parts of the island, induced the Government to proclaim Buddha's birthday a public holiday, founded two journals, created a printing-office, and brought the Sinhalese Buddhists into direct relations with their Japanese co-religionists.

This is what we have done in India and the Far East. As to Europe, as we began to work in earnest here only three years ago, the effects begin to be hardly perceived as yet. Still in London, in the very centre of the most luxurious materialism, we have founded in the East End the first Working Women's Club, wholly free from theological creeds and conditions. Hitherto all such efforts have been sectarian, and have imposed special religious beliefs: ours is based on *brotherhood* alone, and recognizes no differences in creed as a barrier. When the club opens, a few weeks hence, the members will find themselves in a bright and pleasant home, with books, papers, and music at hand, and a band of their better-educated sisters will take in rotation, night after night, the duty of

helping and guiding—not controlling—the evening recreation. Only those who know the dreary lives of our poor East End girls, with temptation lurking in every form of amusement within their reach, will understand the brotherly nature of the service thus rendered to them. We (the cultured classes) make outcasts of these less fortunate members of our family, set them in a special part of the town, amid squalid surroundings and coarsening influences; and we then complain that their roughness shocks our refinement, their brutality jars on our delicacy! Here, then, against class division, as in India against caste division, the Theosophical Society proclaims the Brotherhood of Man.

As regards the revival of Oriental literature, the whole press of India, Ceylon, and Japan unqualifiedly give us the credit of having done more in that direction than any other agency of modern times. We have not only helped to revive in India the ancient *Tols*, or pandit-schools of Sanskrit literature and philosophy, and to reawaken reverence for the class of real Yogis, or saintly devotees, but we have created a demand for reprints and translations of ancient Sanskrit classics, which is being met by the frequent issue of works of this class at Calcutta, Bombay, Benares, Lucknow, Lahore, Madras, and other Indian literary centres.

Among the most important are the Vedas, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the writings of Shankara, Patanjali, and other renowned Aryan philosophers and mystics. The Asiatic people have publicly testified, most unqualifiedly, their gratitude and respect to us for what we have done on the lines of the second of our declared Objects. Nor should it be overlooked that the prevalent interest in Theosophy and mystical Oriental philosophy in general, which the most casual observer is forced to see throughout Europe and America, is directly or indirectly the result of our Society's activity. With thirty-eight branches in the United States, and others in various European countries,

among whose members are men and women of high culture, including many writers for the press, it is easy enough to comprehend the justness of the above claim. Of course it is not for me to say how much, if anything, the books I have myself written, and the magazines I have edited and am editing in English and French, have helped to cause this new bent of the Western mind. Suffice it that it exists. For Theosophists it is the presage of the dawn of a new religious day for the world, the harbinger of a new marriage between science and religion, and of peace between the good people of the most incongruous sects—as the world thinks them.

Now as to the third Object on our list. Properly speaking, the term “psychical research” should include the whole of the great movement known as modern spiritualism. But the subject is too vast to be dealt with in the closing paragraphs of an article. Suffice it to say that many investigators have been led to discriminate much more closely between the various classes of phenomena, while much has been done to weaken the sentimental, but unphilosophical, superstition which made the “Spirits” of the departed the suffering spectators of the follies and crimes of the living. For details as to the conclusions we have arrived at on this subject, the reader must be referred to *The Key to Theosophy*, wherein the question is dealt with at length. At least we may claim to have placed before the thinking public a logical, coherent, and philosophical scheme of man's origin, destiny, and evolution—a scheme pre-eminent above all for its rigorous adherence to justice. And, that we may broaden our criterion of truth, our research extends to an inquiry into the nature of the less known forces, cosmic and psychical. Upon such themes many of our books have been written, and many of our reprints of ancient works, with or without commentaries, have been selected with reference to the light they throw upon these *quaestiones vexatae*.

In one word, our whole aim and desire are to help, in at least some degree, toward arriving at correct scientific views upon the nature of man, which carry with them the means of reconstructing for the present generation the deductive metaphysical or transcendental philosophy which alone is the firm, unshakable foundation of every religious philosophy. Theosophy, the universal solvent, is fulfilling its mission; the opalescent tints of the dawn of modern psychology are blending together, and will all be merged into the perfect daylight of truth, when the sun-orb of Eastern esotericism has mounted to its noon-stage.

For many a long year the "great orphan," Humanity, has been crying aloud in the darkness for guidance and for light. Amid the increasing splendours of a progress purely material, of a science that nourished the intellect, but left the Spirit to starve, Humanity, dimly feeling its origin and presaging its destiny, has stretched out towards the East empty hands that only a *spiritual* philosophy can fill. Aching from the divisions, the jealousies, the hatreds, that rend its very life, it has cried for some sure foundation on which to build the solidarity it senses, some metaphysical basis from which its loftiest social ideals may rise secure. Only the Masters of the Eastern Wisdom can set that foundation, can satisfy at once the intellect and the Spirit, can guide Humanity safely through the night to "the dawn of a larger day".

Such is the goal which Theosophy has set itself to attain; such is the history of the modern movement; such is the work which Theosophy has already accomplished in this nineteenth century.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY¹

By AXEL VON FIELITZ-CONIAR

THE Theosophical Society exists in the world today, thanks to the pioneer work of H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott. But its real founders were two Masters of the Wisdom. Dr. Besant has said that the Masters protect all Theosophical movements, but that behind the Theosophical Society, our Mother-Society, stand not only the two Masters but the Great White Brotherhood. As the power of the whole Brotherhood stands behind our Society, so the power of the whole Theosophical Society stands behind each member. Thus no member of the Theosophical Society, even though he may live in a small place and seem isolated, is really isolated.

There is a beautiful saying of the German poet, Christian Morgenstern:

It may more than ever before be necessary in our excited times just to lift our eyes from our affairs and to turn them from the daily news towards the eternal news, the letters of which are the stars, the content of which is love, and the author of which is God.

Einstein has said that the special characteristic of our times is perfection of technique and confusion of soul. This confusion of soul is the main reason for the confusion now prevailing in the whole world.

If we as members of the Theosophical Society want to help the world, we shall best do it by trying to practise Theosophy. It is very good and very useful to read Theosophica

¹ Lecture given at Helsinki, Finland, November 1955.

literature, to study what is said in it; but if we stop at that, then we shall not be able to be real helpers. Good thoughts and feelings are very important, but if they are not put into practice, they are not of much use. We know all the great laws of life, the unity of life, the divinity of man; we know the laws of Karma and Reincarnation. But if we want to become helpers of the world, we must apply these laws in our daily life. Once we succeed in doing this, our attitude towards life changes, and there are no longer any unimportant happenings in it. As H. P. Blavatsky has put it:

Once an earnest student joins the Theosophical Society, there are no more meaningless or trifling circumstances in his life, for each one is a link purposely placed in the chain of events that is to lead him to the Golden Gate. Each step, each person he meets, every word uttered, may be purposely placed into the day's sentence for the purpose of giving certain importance to the chapter it belongs to, and karmic meaning to the volume of life.

When we try to practise Theosophy, we shall begin to understand the language of life. Life does not speak to us in words but the language of life is the experiences which we undergo. Life is constantly speaking to us, every second of our life, and as students of Theosophy we should understand the language of life better than other people do. We must understand that every suffering has a deep meaning, and when we understand the meaning of suffering we shall cease to be in opposition to it, we shall understand that pain helps us to broaden our consciousness. As H. P. Blavatsky has said, pain is a teacher and an awakener of consciousness.

Let us try just for a moment to imagine that all of a sudden there was no more pain in the world. What would be the reaction of humanity at its present stage? Most people would become more superficial than they already are, only seeking amusement and becoming more and more shallow. Unfortunately, we seem to need pain as long as we are imperfect. By practising Theosophy in our own life, however, we may

gradually be able to master pain. Mastering pain and suffering we would become masters of life, we would become free of the narrowness of our own "I"-consciousness.

There is a curious statement in *The Secret Doctrine* that "there is only one hell, our planet the Earth". Why is it so? Because the human being is the only one on earth that has will and the "I"-consciousness, and it is this "I"-consciousness which isolates man from life, from God. The more we try to broaden our consciousness, the more we try to come into contact with the Divine in ourselves, the less isolated we shall become. This isolation comes through our intellect. H. P. Blavatsky says: "The mind is the great slayer of the real," and the founders of great religions have stressed the importance of becoming strong in love—but the love must be that which does not seek anything for itself, which does not expect anything, but only gives and expands. It is this kind of love which is needed to be put into practice.

The act alone is the proof of love's power.¹

Faith without love is like a wind-mill without any wind—barren of results.²

We must learn to see that everything important in life is invisible. What we see of each other is not the real man. We see only the physical body, we cannot see the feelings and thoughts, but every act of ours is only the putting of our thoughts and feelings into practice. The heart is not only the centre of our physical body but also the gateway to the realm of spiritual reality. Again to quote H. P. Blavatsky, "the heart is the centre of spiritual consciousness as the brain is the centre of intellectual consciousness"; this cannot be stressed too strongly in our times, when the tension is so great, in order to explain everything intelligently.

As soon as someone is in contact with the invisible, he understands everything better. It is as if one were no longer

¹ Goethe.

² H. P. Blavatsky.

travelling in a train but in a plane. When I came here today from Stockholm, I had the feeling that I was seeing a symbol. Up in the air, the horizon I saw was much wider than the horizon one sees when travelling by train or boat. It might even be a symbol of the fact that man is mastering the air more and more, a symbol indicating that the humanity of the future will be much more intuitional than mankind today. In future the people may not be intellectual at all. The man of tomorrow will understand everything immediately as a whole, he will not have to analyse everything with his intellect. He will, so to say, understand without words.

As we have often been told, Theosophists are pioneers—and so they ought to be pioneers in this respect too, trying to broaden their consciousness here and now. The best way to do this is to develop our own Divinity. We have every possibility, all the forces within ourselves, for doing that. We human beings have nearly forgotten our origin, nor do we see the final goal. Theosophy shows us this goal, it has also revealed our origin, and if we look deeply enough into what it has to say, the origin and the goal become one. Theosophy is really both a source and an ocean, a spring of the very ancient wisdom, from which all religions, noble thoughts and feelings ever flow forth—and also the open water into which all spiritual streams are pouring. In the form of Theosophy a very great gift has been given to us and to the whole of humanity. As already said, when we put Theosophy into practice our entire life changes, it becomes much more interesting, more fascinating, because no event is then without meaning. Every person we are brought into contact with has some message for us. Every person arouses in us feelings of sympathy or of antipathy, and thereby they challenge us as regards how far we are able to put into practice what we have theoretically recognized as true.

Everything has already been thought out and said, but not yet *lived*. We have to live it, every moment of our lives. Then we shall be good Theosophists.

What is the Divine in us? It is that greater Self to whom we may appeal any moment of the day, if we can become silent, still. We must learn to listen to the voice of the silence. The voice of the silence is never loud, and it is only in the stillness that great and sublime things are born or produced. The purer a man is, the less clamorous and less loud he will be in his demeanor. The voice of the Spirit speaks, but it does not shout. It makes others resound, but it never hurts them.

There is a wonderful sentence of Dostoevsky: "To love a man means to see him as God intended him to be." God has intended every human being to be perfect, as He is Himself. It is only because man has used his own will in opposition to God's will that all the difficulties have arisen in the world. You can experience yourself that as soon as you bring your own will into complete harmony with the cosmic will, all disharmonies cease. Disharmony is the sign that our will is working against the cosmic will. Every being that works in harmony with the cosmic will is in harmony with himself. Where everything is in harmony with itself, there can be no pain, no suffering. When we are able to live in compliance with the cosmic will, then the whole of life changes for us. The outer world does not change, but our attitude towards it alters. We understand every experience and its meaning. We learn from each experience, and the more we learn the more we understand what it means to teach us.

Theosophy is one of the best means of learning the language of life. It has often been said in our literature: "As above, so below." There is a great similarity between the microcosmos and the macrocosmos. As long as the physical body is healthy, it is a most wonderful organism. Each cell amongst millions of other cells does its work admirably; it

never tries to interfere with any other cell; these millions of cells are thus working in perfect harmony with each other. The moment there is some pain in the body, it shows that something is wrong, that some part of the body is not working as it ought to be. It is exactly the same with our soul. All the inner forces of man ought to work in perfect harmony with each other, the forces of thinking, of feeling, and others. But most people are disharmonious, they do not know how to bring their thinking and feeling into harmony. Here again, Theosophy can help us to put into practice what we have learned from our literature.

It is not only self-consciousness and the waking consciousness, but especially the superconscious part of us that is important, that part which is in direct contact with the Divine. This superconscious part of our being can best be reached through the heart. As H. P. Blavatsky says, "the heart represents the higher Triad," and the higher Triad is the superconscious part of our being. The more we feel ourselves as being one not only with some people but with everyone with whom we come into contact, the more we shall be able to feel one with life, the better we shall understand ourselves, each other, and life as a whole. This understanding is very necessary. There is so much misunderstanding, so much disharmony in the world that everyone who is harmonious, clear and strong is an oasis in the desert. When thirsty people on a long journey in the desert come to an oasis and drink from its waters, they are able to continue on their way strengthened and re-invigorated.

Where the mind is inwardly completely open, the man no longer needs to speak in order to have influence. His most secret thoughts change the souls imperceptibly, and with and through them, the conditions of the world.

These are valuable words of Count Keyserling. We are ourselves so complicated and have made everything around us

so complicated that we no longer see that life in itself is simple and clear. The high works of art are very clear and simple, because they are manifestations of the Divine.

The Lord Buddha summed up His teaching thus:

Cease to do evil,
Learn to do good,
Cleanse your own heart;
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.

Note what He said: "This is the teaching of the Buddhas"—not His own teaching. The Buddhas refer to a very high state of consciousness. Everyone who has reached this high state is a Buddha. The Lord Gautama Buddha was one of these, and what He said is so simple and so clear that to us, complicated human beings, it seems impossible to put it into practice!

We have to become simple and natural. Then we shall understand Nature, Life and God. The more we understand Nature and life, the more we shall be able to become helpers of this world. All the forces of the cosmos will be at our disposal, because they are in ourselves. We only have to develop the seeds, and in the seed of an acorn, for example, there is already the whole tree; it only needs soil, rain, air, sun and time to develop all the possibilities existing in it. Similarly, it only needs time for each one of us to develop the divine seed within us so that it becomes the wonderful tree which God meant it to be. We must therefore be patient with ourselves, we cannot grow up in a minute, not in many years, not even in one life. But here, again, Theosophy is a great helper because it shows us that we have many, many lives in the course of which we shall be able to do it, and as H. P. Blavatsky says, "let us wait patiently for the day of our best birth". Learning to be patient with ourselves, we shall be patient with others too, and when we can be patient with others we shall be able to help them to develop their own divine seeds.

Each member of the Theosophical Society endeavoring to put into practice what we have learned from our literature can thus become an oasis for those who are thirsty, for those who are tired and exhausted, for those who are looking for help.

I think there is nothing more beautiful in life than to be able to make the life of others a little easier than it is. How wonderful it is if one is able to make a person who is full of sorrow to smile, be it only for a short moment. This smile of the sufferer is the response of the Divine in him to the Divine in ourselves. In broadening our consciousness more and more we shall be living up to what we really are in the essence of our being; then there will no longer be anything in life which can shake us so much that we lose our balance. Life may still be very hard, but we shall become so strong that we can bear it with a smile on our lips and accept the suffering. When we have learned to accept everything that occurs in our life, as a lesson to us, then we shall be on our way towards becoming perfect, and we shall be putting Theosophy into practice every day.

Let us help each other! We are, in Dr. Arundale's words, all in the same boat, we are one team. And, as I said in the beginning, the power of the whole Society stands behind each member, and the power of the Great White Brotherhood stands behind the Theosophical Society. Every one of us can thus be in touch with the Great White Brotherhood, be open to its influence. We may close ourselves to this influence, or we may open wide the doors of our being to it. When we so open wide the doors of our being, the great streams of blessing will go through us and help everyone who comes into contact with us. This is what it means to put Theosophy into practice.

AXEL VON FIELTIZ-CONIAR

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EVOLUTION OR THE LAW OF BECOMING—II¹

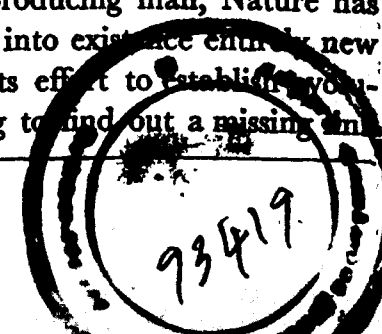
By ROHIT MEHTA

THE evolutionary stream takes a different turn when it reaches humanity, for, in man, the field of evolution is not so much physical as psychological. This does not mean that physical variations do not occur in human life. They do, but they are of minor importance compared to psychological changes. In fact, the physical body of man seems to be more or less fixed, although there are bound to be alterations due to racial differences. But, what needs to be remembered is that, in man's evolution, the determining factors are psychological and not physical. Le Comte du Nuoy says in his *Human Destiny*:

Man is still an animal by his very structure, and has inherited a large number of instincts from his ancestors. Some of them are still necessary to protect the species. Nevertheless, he has also brought into the world, from an unknown source, other instincts and ideas specifically human which have become overwhelmingly important although contradicting the first, and it is the development of these ideas, these new characters, which constitute the present phase of evolution.

The emergence of human life is indeed a major mutation in the evolutionary process. In producing man, Nature has taken an enormous jump bringing into existence entirely new characters. Physical science, in its effort to establish evolutionary continuity, has been trying to find out a missing link.

¹ Part I appeared in our April issue.



between man and animal. It was commonly believed that the anthropoid ape must have been man's ancestor because of a certain amount of structural similarity. But evolution has two aspects—the structure or form, and consciousness; and in the ultimate analysis, it is consciousness that determines structure. If the principle of mutation indicates anything, it is that there is intelligence in Nature. In mutation, Nature seems to be following its own will.

There are quantitative as well as qualitative changes in evolution. While variation functions at the quantitative level, it is mutation which constitutes the qualitative movement. A qualitative change is that of kind or of dimension. In psychological terms, it is a change in consciousness. It may not be wrong to say that the change from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, and from animal to human is fundamentally a change in consciousness. The structural change is indeed to subserve the change in consciousness. It is, therefore, obvious that the meaning of mutation can never be found at the structural level, and since physical science does not take into account changes in consciousness, mutation must remain to the scientist a mystery and an enigma. It is a change in consciousness which is responsible for a change in the hereditary constitution of an organism. The root of the structural change is no doubt in the alteration caused in the hereditary constitution. But to search for the significance of mutation in the alteration of hereditary factors would be utterly futile. Even if hereditary alterations were noted, the question would still remain as to how such alterations arose in certain organisms. Thus, the noting of hereditary alterations only shifts the problem of mutations—it does not solve it. The meaning and significance of mutation, and therefore of evolution, is to be sought in consciousness and not in structure, for mutation is fundamentally a jump in consciousness and incidentally a change in structure. It is a qualitative jump and

not merely a quantitative advance. Le Comte du Nuoy rightly says that "there exists a chasm between the world of quality and that of quantity which science can never bridge".

While it is true that, from a deeper standpoint, the evolutionary movement from mineral to vegetable and from vegetable to animal is a change in consciousness, it is only at the human level that this change lends itself to clear observation. And so the transition from animal to man and the emergence of psychological factors of growth in humanity are of profound value in the study of evolution. The three main factors of evolution noted by physical science, namely, heredity, variation and mutation, assume a psychological significance with reference to man. Let us, first of all, understand the psychological significance of these three factors of evolution.

The problem of heredity, which is comparatively simple at the sub-human level, becomes complex when evolution comes to the stature of man. In man, there is a threefold layer of heredity—physical, social and psychological. The physical heredity of man is obviously derived from the parents. It is needless to say that bodily characteristics are determined by physical heredity. But man has to take into account his social heredity which means a background consisting of the family, the community, the nation, the race, the religion, the ideology within which he is required to grow. These may be broadly called social influences that play upon man, and mould to a very large extent his reactions. There is, however, a third factor of heredity operating in the life of man, and this may be described as psychological. It is derived neither from the parents nor from society; it belongs to man himself. It is a matter of common observation that within the same parental and social heredity no two individuals behave in exactly the same manner.

From where do these differences in reactions arise? Surely the differences do not lie in the parental or social background,

but in the psychological heredity of man himself. This factor of a psychological past is peculiar to the human individual. At the sub-human level we do not see this individualization of heredity. Animals of the same species hardly differ in their reactions to environment. Their reactions are determined by parental and group heredity. But such is not the case with human individuals. And so, in man, psychological heredity is an overruling factor—one that determines the parental as well as the social heredity. The psychological content of heredity constitutes a special line of interest in the study of human evolution. It is from this individualized heredity that man experiences a sense of psychological separateness. It is not by breaking up the influences of parental and social heredity that man can be free from separative tendencies. It is the psychological heredity peculiar to the individual himself which indeed is the root of the matter.

Heredity, whether parental, social or psychological, is a conditioning factor in the life of an organism. It is a moulding influence operating from the past. It constitutes the habits or inclinations of an organism. In the sub-human kingdoms the habits are fundamentally physical or biological. It is in man that the element of psychological habits is to be perceived. This is because of the important role which the mind plays in the life of man. The human individual in the main is shaped and moulded by the habits of his mind. The psychological heredity of man is thus the established habits of his thought and emotion. It constitutes his adaptation to environment. It represents an element of mental and emotional drift. It may more appropriately be described as the habitual continuity of his psychological life. The human individual does not realize how much he is a creature of habit. His responses to the world of things, the world of men and the world of ideas are very largely reflex actions. His psychological life has much of a mechanical element in it. All

responses and reactions that emerge from habits are mechanical. They go on because of the momentum given to them once upon a time. All mechanical, reflex or habitual actions are the reflections of the law of inertia in the psychological life of man. The law of inertia says that a body that is at rest will continue to remain in that position unless acted upon by an external force. Similarly, a body that is in motion will continue to be so unless compelled by impressed forces to change that state. Thus, the law of inertia is the law of continuity in Nature. In man this law functions at the psychological level through the habits of the mind. The mind that is caught up in habits is a dull mind, rigid and set, devoid of all pliability. It is controlled and directed by the past and hence does not possess a sensitivity to respond to the present. This psychological heredity or habitual continuity forms an undercurrent of man's conscious life.

Since heredity contains factors that are transmitted from generation to generation, the psychological heredity of man too transmits its tendencies to all his actions and responses. Thus, there cannot be a fundamental change in the responses of man as long as his psychological heredity remains unaffected—as long as there is no break in his psychological past. A fundamental change implies the arrival of new heritable characteristics in man's psychological make-up. The arrival of new heritable characteristics is possible only when there is a radical transformation at the unconscious level, and not merely an alteration in the functioning of the conscious mind.

Now, as long as man's environment, both external and internal, remains unchanged, there is a perfect adjustment between the conscious and the unconscious layers of his consciousness. In other words, he is free from conflicts and contradictions. His conscious mind is completely under the direction of the unconscious—it has adapted itself to the requirements of the unconscious. Thus it is that his actions and responses are

mechanical, carrying on in an undisturbed manner the contents given by the tendencies of psychological heredity.

But man's environment does not remain unchanged. There is a constant change both in his physical and psychological environment. His world of objects as also his world of ideas are subject to constant fluctuations. His ideals, ambitions, aspirations undergo changes. His external conditions too are not static. In the sphere of relationship with his fellow-beings also there are constant changes. Thus, man's environment has numerous ups and downs. It is these constant environmental fluctuations which disturb the adaptation between man's conscious and unconscious layers of consciousness. A conflict arises in man's psychological nature. There is created a contradiction in man's psyche. From this ensues man's struggle for psychological existence. Not for long can man remain in a state of conflict and contradiction; a new point of adaptation must be discovered by the conscious mind so that its open conflict with the unconscious may cease, even though it may be for a time.

This new point of adaptation between the conscious and the unconscious is indeed variation in the psychological field of man. Variation is only a new angle of inclination established by the conscious mind with reference to the unconscious. It is a new mode of behavior arising in the same hereditary background. As Julian Huxley says, variations "cause the same constitution to develop in a different way". And so variation, whether physical or psychological, is only a superficial change, not affecting the constituent factors of heredity. In psychological terms, a variation is only a change in behavior-patterns and not in consciousness. In other words, in variation there is a continuity at the level of consciousness, although there is a change in the pattern of behavior. Thus, variation is only modified continuity in the realm of man's psychological growth. It is only a fluctuation and not a

fundamental change. Variation is only an alteration at the conscious level of man's mind leaving the unconscious and therefore the hereditary factors unaffected. It is a change in the pattern of behavior, not in the source of behavior. It is a change in the drawing-room of man's psychological mansion leaving the basement, to use Freudian analogy, untouched.

Now, all moral or ethical efforts are of the nature of variation, for they deal with modes of behavior. They constitute new adaptations to the changed and changing environment. A well-adapted organism is regarded, at the biological level, as Nature's success. Similarly, in the psychological sphere too, a moral or ethical adaptation is considered as a great triumph of man. A moral or ethical education all the world over is an education for adaptation. Since it is variation, it constitutes only an alteration in the reactions and responses operating at the conscious level of the mind. It is a new habit arising out of the same hereditary continuity. It thus represents modified continuity at the psychological level. All moral and ethical progress is only a modification in psychological continuity. A consciously cultivated virtue is only a new habit emerging out of the same psychological background. It is a variation in behavior effected to produce a better adaptation to environment.

It is interesting to note that conventions and traditions play a great part in all moral or ethical endeavors. A moral change invariably takes place within the background of established conventions or traditions. Unconventionality is hardly associated with moral or ethical movements. Now conventions and traditions are indeed the psychological heredity of man. As long as changes occur within the continuous background of psychological traditions, whether individual or collective, they are not fundamental transformations—they are structural alterations or modifications in behavior-patterns. This indeed is the scope of variation. It is impossible to expect a new type

of man to emerge out of variations; nor is it possible to reach new dimensions of living through these continuous variations. And yet, there must arise new characters of a heritable nature in man if human evolution is to proceed at all. In other words, there has to be a change of an entirely different order from the one indicated by moral or ethical endeavors. It is this which may be described as a spiritual transformation in man. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan very rightly says:

The spiritual is not an extension of the ethical; it is a new dimension altogether, dealing with things eternal.

If human evolution did not touch constantly new dimensions of living, there would be utter stagnation in man's psychological existence. Mere variation, or modifications introduced by moral or ethical endeavors, will ultimately result in the perpetuation of a stagnant species of man. It is extremely important to understand the distinction between moral change and spiritual transformation with reference to the evolution of man. From the above statement to conclude that the spiritual is opposed to the moral would be utterly meaningless. The moral and the spiritual are different but not contradictory. In fact, in terms of spiritual transformation, moral endeavor assumes a new meaning and a new significance. Once again to quote Dr. S. Radhakrishnan:

Till the spiritual life is won, the law of morality appears to be an external command which man has to obey with effort and pain. But when the light is obtained, it becomes the internal life of the Spirit, working itself out unconsciously and spontaneously.

It is spiritual transformation that imparts a quality of dynamism to morality—without it, moral existence would become static, and therefore stagnant, devoid of all life, concerned only with forms and patterns of behavior. Morality without spiritual transformation is a soulless tradition. It is spiritual transformation which is the driving force of human evolution. Where this does not exist, human life stagnates and then disintegrates.

The question is: What is this spiritual transformation and how does it arrive?

Spiritual transformation may truly be designated as psychological mutation in the life of man. Just as at the biological level a mutation constitutes a fundamental change, similarly a psychological mutation indicates a fundamental transformation in man. While an ethical change is only a variation, a spiritual transformation is a mutation, a fundamental alteration in the constitutive factors of man's psyche. It signifies the arrival of a new evolutionary factor. What appears at the biological level as a jump in the structural composition of an organism, becomes at the psychological level a jump in consciousness. Just as physical evolution does not describe a straight line of structural continuity, so psychological evolution, which is man's field of growth, does not always move along a path of continuity. If psychological evolution had maintained a path of continuity, there would not have been the arrival of new types of humanity. Without discontinuous variations, or jumps in consciousness, man would have become only a stagnant species of life. New dimensions of thought, and therefore new dimensions of living, would have become impossible to man. He would have become a monster extending indefinitely only the animal propensities brought from the past. But we see in human history a quality of new life appearing from time to time. This cannot be explained in terms of a continuity of consciousness. A Buddha or a Christ is not the product of evolutionary continuity. We see new departures of thought and action initiated by individuals in every field of life. Discontinuous variations are the only hopes of biological as well as psychological evolution, as without them there would be nothing but utter stagnation. Human history is full of scientific inventions, adventures in metaphysical thought, and masterly creations in various spheres of art. Many of these display new qualities and dimensions such as

cannot be produced by operations of the normal consciousness of man. In other words, they are not manipulations of the human mind. They are intimations from a consciousness which transcends the human mind. In other words, their emergence is due to jumps in human consciousness. Dr. Albert Einstein, in an interview which he gave a few weeks before his passing away, stated:

The mind can proceed only so far upon what it knows and can prove. There comes a point where the mind takes a leap—call it intuition or what you will—and comes out upon a higher plane of knowledge, but can never prove how it got there. All great discoveries have involved such a leap.

These jumps in consciousness or psychological mutations appear in man's life in various forms and at various levels. Like mutations at the biological level, there are minor as well as major psychological mutations in the life of man. The meaning of evolution cannot be comprehended either through structural continuity or through continuity of consciousness. A continuity of consciousness can produce only variation, whether physical or psychological. As variations are determined by environmental changes, a man without psychological mutations would become only a creature of environment. If mutations are ruled out, we have to accept the principle of man's destiny being moulded and determined by socio-economic factors. And so, in terms of mere variations, human growth and development would depend upon environmental changes only. This is the stand which the Behaviorist school of psychology has maintained, for it says that man is only a bundle of conditioned reflexes. In other words: "Change the environment and you will be able to change the individual!" In this approach, the entire initiative for change and growth is transferred from man to environment. If this were true, it would be possible for us to produce a Christ or a Buddha by environmental changes. But we know that such is not the case. There is a factor of individual initiative involved in such

fundamental changes as the emergence of a human type like the Buddha or the Christ. A mutation is a departure from the normal course. It defies all statistical measurements, for it cannot be explained in terms of the law of averages. A mutation, whether physical or psychological, is essentially individual. Le Comte du Nuoy rightly says:

Even in animal evolution the new characters, which appeared as a result of some kind of mechanism and were either capable, or incapable, of insuring a superiority to those who possessed them, always developed in individuals and not in the mass. A mutation can never be general . . . otherwise it would no longer be a mutation.

While variation is determined by environment, mutation is based on individual initiative. It is because of this that it can be described as spiritual transformation.

Now, if self-initiative is at the root of mutation, the question is, how do psychological mutations happen? While the emergence of a Buddha or a Christ may be called a major mutation, there are numerous minor mutations which appear in the life of men. It may be noted that a psychological mutation is a jump in consciousness; therefore, discontinuity, and not continuity, is its secret. In man's psychological life, a movement from thought to intuition is not continuous, for intuition is not a subtle or quick thought. Intuition is a different dimension of consciousness even as thought is dimensionally different from feeling. Now, a dimensional difference is a qualitative difference, and therefore it cannot be bridged by a process of continuity. In other words, intuition is not the result of a continuity of thought—it can arise only when there is a break in this continuity. It is only in this interval or gap that an intuitive flash can come. There is a beautiful passage in *Light on the Path* indicating this flash. It runs as follows:

Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm; not till then. It shall grow, it will shoot up, it will make branches and leaves and form buds, while the storm continues, while the battle lasts. But not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted—not

until it is held by the divine fragment which has created it, as a mere subject for grave experiment and experience—not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its higher Self, can the bloom open. Then will come a calm such as comes in a tropical country after the heavy rain, when Nature works so swiftly that one may see her action. Such a calm will come to the harassed spirit. And in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found.

The “blooming of the flower” is indeed a spiritual transformation of man. It is a psychological mutation, a mysterious event happening in deep silence, in what may be called the discontinuity of consciousness.

How do these mutations take place? It does not matter whether they are major or minor, for there cannot be any qualitative difference between the factors that operate in the case of both. The difference between major and minor mutations is quantitative and not qualitative, for both are jumps or leaps in consciousness. The factor of discontinuity is common to both; and it is discontinuity which is most fundamental in mutation. All psychological mutations are initiations or expansions of consciousness—and not mere extensions of the normal field of consciousness. While major mutations may happen occasionally, rarely, it is possible to have the experience of minor mutations constantly in one's life. Needless to say, every mutation implies the entry of a new factor in one's consciousness; and so it is a re-vitalizing or renewing force in one's life. It is a point from where new evolutionary departures emanate, because of the experience it brings of a new dimensional quality of consciousness. While the quantity of this experience may vary, that is, whether it is a major or a minor mutation, its quality is the same.

The essential questions, therefore, are: What is the mechanism of psychological mutations? How do they arrive? And can they be consciously sought after?

ROHIT MEHTA

(To be concluded in Part III)

THE EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF CREATIVE ALTRUISM

A SYMPOSIUM ON CREATIVE ALTRUISM

PART I

[The Science Group of the Theosophical Research Centre in London held last October a symposium on some recent investigations into the study of Creative Altruism which have been carried out at Harvard University. The introductory paper by the Chairman, Dr. E. Lester Smith, and a summary of two of the main Reports from the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism, compiled by Mr. D. J. Hall, are given below.

In the June issue of THE THEOSOPHIST will appear Part II of this article representing a paper on “The Science of Creative Altruism,” contributed by Mr. Neville Reed.

Two further contributions on the possibility for the individual of a deliberate cultivation of creative altruism in everyday life, and on the philosophy which forms the basis of all altruistic effort will form the subject of Part III. These papers are by Dr. Tudor Edmonds and Dr. Corona Trew.

—E. L. S.]

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

By E. Lester Smith, D.Sc., F.R.S.

THE modest human needs of every inhabitant of this planet could be satisfied, if we willed it so. Our technological skill is such that by gradual re-deployment of effort, this could be achieved without lowering the present standard of living in the more advanced countries. It could probably be accomplished within one generation. Why then do we not at once

adopt such a common-sense project? Why, instead, do all the nations expend a high proportion of their resources on armaments for mutual "protection" against each other? Because what is recognized as good and desirable is frustrated by the emotional and mental immaturity of mankind. If every man were kindly disposed towards every other, then the world's troubles could soon be resolved. Basically this change of attitude is all that is required; the organizing abilities, the technical skills are available already. Why then do we not tackle this one basic problem with energy and enthusiasm? Because, it seems, we have not yet admitted to ourselves that it *can* be resolved. We still muddle ourselves with the old stock argument, "You can't change human nature". This is not only pessimistic and pathetic; it is just not true. Every psychologist knows that he *can* change human nature. It has been done with deplorable efficiency on a nation-wide scale by the fascist and communist regimes. It is being attempted all the time by the priests of every world religion. In the West, however, Christianity, as expounded by the Churches, makes only a limited appeal. There is nothing wrong with Christian principles; the fault lies only with the way they are presented. In the mood of today an emotional appeal makes little impression, and any effect tends to be short-lived; more often it is discounted in advance. We pride ourselves on being hard-headed, practical realists. We live in a sad, cynical world where a term like "Utopian idealist" is used in a derogatory sense. However, that is the way things are; evangelism is out of date; Western man now demands a *reasoned* argument before he can be persuaded to change his ways.

There is no real difficulty in presenting an unanswerable case in such terms. It is just that not enough leaders of thought have seen the imperative need; nor have they convinced themselves yet that the campaign could succeed. It must be launched and it must succeed; the only alternative is a perpetual

drift from one world crisis to the next, with always the dread possibility that the next will be a prelude to another world war.

Here is a thumb-nail sketch of man's progress, from the dawn of humanity to its radiant evening of perfect good-will. Primitive man is completely selfish. He helps himself to everything he fancies; he plunders the planet and his fellows with no regard for others. This behavior is instinctive and becomes habitual: it is accepted as "natural," as indeed it is, at the appropriate stage of evolution. At the end of his pilgrimage, truly civilized man is completely unselfish: refraining from causing the slightest injury to any creature or person, he is actively considerate and helpful to all. His joy is to give freely and anonymously to his utmost capacity without thought of return in any form: this is true creative altruism. Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Schweitzer are modern examples of such men.

In between lies the long and painful road we tread. Primitive man finds that indiscriminate taking brings retaliation and pain; he slowly learns the advantages of fair exchange. Later, he discovers the inner joy of giving freely without expecting value in return. Animal instincts of love and protection towards offspring are gradually extended to a wider circle, that will eventually include all mankind. Thus creative altruism is born—and the man discovers his own spiritual self. But he is too often deterred from the spiritual life he really seeks by the legacy of his past. Action flows easily into the old habitual patterns: only by continual effort can habits now regarded as bad be discarded and replaced by altruistic ones. No one perhaps has described the struggle more graphically than St. Paul:

For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

All this is depressing to the man who wants to lead a better life, but somehow cannot manage it. Today's need is

not for emotional religion but for training in the techniques of self-adjustment. We are beyond the need for exhortation: we know vaguely where we want to go but we need to be shown the way. The old precept, "Honesty is the best policy," needs modernizing to become "Altruism is the best policy".

One organization at least is working along just these lines. It is the "Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism," from which we have borrowed the title of this Symposium. It was founded in 1949 with an annual grant of \$15,000, which has supported a good deal of work by student investigators under professorial guidance. The first phase of the work comprised the historical aspects of altruism, including recording and analysing the life-histories of many saints, collection of other data and new observations, and consideration of the theoretical and philosophical background. The second phase dealt with techniques of altruism, as described in Yoga practices and the various religions; these were analysed and in some instances submitted to experimental test.

At first, one is inclined to be puzzled and amused at the pathetically elementary nature of some of the experiments. Then one realizes with a shock that this vastly important area of human affairs really is virgin soil. The state of our knowledge (in the West at least) is akin to that of electricity when Benjamin Franklin flew a kite into a thunder-cloud. This work, then, represents the beginnings of a scientific approach to a sadly neglected and despised field. For humanity's sake let us hope it will not be allowed to remain too long in this condition.

Some of this work is reviewed in the following paper. It has been published in several symposium volumes and in books by Sorokin and others; these include: "Altruistic Love"; "The Ways and Power of Love"; and the latest symposium, "Forms and Techniques of Altruistic and Spiritual Growth".

SUMMARY AND COMMENTS ON TWO REPORTS ABOUT CREATIVE ALTRUISM

By D. J. Hall, B.Sc.

Report A: "Studies of the Harvard Research Centre in Creative Altruism" by P. A. Sorokin, pp. 8.¹

What progress has been made towards lessening the wars and international tensions which build up so rapidly and frequently? Great advances have been made in education and in standards of living during the last few centuries. There have been many religious revivals, and organizations, such as the United Nations, have been set up to try to settle differences peacefully. Yet these movements have not been entirely successful, and sooner or later it must be realized that a new approach on a deeper and wider scale is imperative—the approach of creative altruism, or more simply, love.

All possible aspects of love must be studied with academic rigor, by application of scientific methods. A beginning has been made by defining the "dimensions" of love, in the psychologist terminology, as extensity, duration, purity, intensity and adequacy. Psychiatrists, psychologists and sociologists are widely engaged in the study of aberrations, crime, hatred and mental disorders; in most cases, a person has to feel pain before he considers the state of his health. Love and health, which should not be regarded merely as the absence of hate and sickness, should be more positively cultivated.

A catalogue of the lives and personal details of 4,600 saints has been made. The most striking features of "saintly life" seem to be longevity and vigorous health, since the average life of a saint greatly exceeds that of his contemporaries, even without allowing for the fact that 37 per cent of the saints died prematurely, as martyrs. These facts stress the cause-and-effect relationship between health and altruistic activity. The

¹ Published by the Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

catalogue also reveals that the proportion of women saints has increased throughout the ages.

The law that love begets love was tested experimentally among sworn enemies at an American college and a psychopathic hospital, and the positive power of love was found to destroy the hate between enemies. Love is thus a healing power, and when we understand more about it, we may be able to wield it for the benefit of mankind.

An investigation was made into the techniques and common factors involved in spiritual and altruistic expression, beginning with the ancient methods of Yoga, of Buddhism and Sufism, continuing with Christianity and the more personal techniques of St. Benedict, St. Francis, St. Ignatius Loyola, and many others. Wherever possible, the investigations included experimental observations of the therapeutic and physiological effects of the various disciplines studied.

A catastrophe in the lives of men may be reacted to in two main ways. The misfortune may be bitterly resented, and cause a breakdown and degradation of the personality, or the "misfortune" may be accepted and turned to good advantage, when a new sense of values and ennobling of the personality results. Thus, "good" and "bad," as commonly thought of, are relative terms because an action or event can only be described as good or bad when it is seen from a limited viewpoint, in particular circumstances, and if the viewpoint could be expanded, the action would be seen to have both "good" and "bad" facets at the same time. The study of the saints has shown that many of them have become saintly after some "bad" or catastrophic event had occurred to them—an event which challenged them, and forced them to summon all their resources in order to survive.

*Report B: "Instrumental Explorations of Yoga Techniques" by Thérèse Brosse, pp. 93.*¹

¹ Published by the Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

Yoga, as described by Patanjali¹, is the control of the thought-waves of the mind, and as there have recently been developed scientific methods for observing some electrical "waves" in the brain, it seems reasonable to investigate Yoga techniques by methods such as electroencephalography. As the brain-waves are affected by respiration, heart-beats, posture, and many other functions, measurements were also made by the methods of ballistocardiography, spirometry, electrocardiography, piezoelectric tonography, and many others. In fact, too many different recording techniques have been used, without fully understanding the results obtained by any one method.

It should be understood that even with the most refined apparatus and measuring technique, only a minute amount of data about the subject under investigation can be recorded. Certainly, the subject's feelings and emotions will not show directly on the graphs, but only some wave-form which may be associated with his impressions. A certain wave-form may be termed the physical correlate of the particular impression, or state of mind, just as the frequency of a vibrating body may give rise to a particular sensation of pitch; but stimulus and subjective impression will be related to one another on a statistical probability basis, which must be obtained from measurements. It is only in an effort to understand better the mechanism of the Yogi's practices, and the need for mass communication about them, that the recordings need to be made at all. The early masters of Yoga, with their specially developed powers of perception, were probably able to observe the brain rhythms, the positions of the bones in the body, and digestive processes.² Yoga was thus no hit-or-miss affair

¹ The Aphorisms of Patanjali. There are many translations, e.g., *How to Know God*, by Prabhavananda and Isherwood, published by Allen and Unwin, pp. 143, 1953.

² *Vedanta for East and West*, Vol. V, No. 2. *The Practice of Yoga*, pp. 95

but was based upon direct experience, and this experience accumulated through the centuries, as the secret practices were handed down, and revealed only to those worthy of receiving them.

The recordings in the Report are usually presented in the form of wavy lines on paper but, to a practised eye, the wave-form, frequency and amplitude can be interpreted as indicative of anguish, calm, concentration, or "altruistic affectivity". The subjects were 8 Hindu Yogis, 9 intellectuals, 35 mental hospital patients, 25 "normal" adults, and others; making a total of 104 subjects from whom 285 recordings were obtained.

The author concludes from the various recordings that the rhythms of the recordings are dependent upon the functioning of some higher level of consciousness, and that by observing the rhythms some indication of the state of the higher level may be obtained. In the case of the Yogis, these rhythms appear to be more than usually regular, and order and control of the wave-form seem to replace confusion. Some of the recordings were taken before, during, and after an exercise, and in some the exercises had a marked effect on the recording. Generally, intellectual activity produces a saw-tooth wave-form, whereas conscious serenity gives a sinusoidal wave-form. The graphs are not very clear, and are badly annotated in parts.

This type of investigation, which is pioneering, should be well done if the more orthodox investigators in this field are to adopt a favorable view of the work. It is particularly necessary to stress the high ideals of Yoga, and to dispel the common misconceptions about it, such as Grey Walter¹ seems to hold. The fact that some forms of Yoga concentrate on developing what may be described as super-health, and the fact that this requires physical and mental training of a special

¹ *The Living Brain*, by W. Grey Walter.

kind, should not be looked upon as indicative of materialistic and shallow motives. Yoga seeks to build of our bodies worthy "temples of the Holy Spirit".

The investigations undertaken in this project do not stress sufficiently the main purpose of the task, namely, the demonstration of significant differences in the recordings between Yogis and ordinary people, and the definite connection of the Yogi's recordings with altruistic behavior. Also it remains to be shown that the modifications made to the recordings by Yoga practices are the modifications desired. Some more objective measure than the author's opinions is required and it is regrettable that no statistical methods were applied. However, the work has been approached humbly and a useful beginning has been made; the task was indeed difficult.

The highest study of man is man himself, and Yoga, too, says "know thyself" and proclaims that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you". This brings one to the question of what our "I" is. This "I," or ego-sense, is falsely identified with the waves in the mind, and realization consists in breaking down this false association by stilling the waves in the mind and observing what remains. The classical illustration of the lake is so clear and so vital for the theoretical understanding of the process that it bears repeating here. The lake is the mind; and the bottom of the lake is the real immortal self, which cannot be seen when the lake is turbulent and muddy and its surface lashed into waves. When an event in the external world is registered by the senses it sets up waves in the mind, and the ego-sense falsely thinks that the waves are the real "I".

It is hoped that a more thorough investigation of the type discussed here may soon be undertaken as its value to mankind is unquestionably beneficial.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND WORLD PEACE

By SHIRLEY MACPHERSON

MAN is a social being and so from time immemorial there has been the problem of learning to live happily with his fellow-beings. At first his circle was limited to families and friends, but gradually the group has expanded, and he now has to include not just the people of his own particular nation but the peoples of the whole world. The discoveries of science, particularly of the radio, have made the world very much smaller, and he is forced into being brotherly. Force, however, has never achieved anything, or at least, anything lasting; so we turn to Theosophy, to those ancient Truths which ever give the answers to our problems.

Each one of us is part of the One Divine Life, each one of us is essential to God's Plan, that Plan being, as we have learnt, Evolution. Because of that very unity of all life, what one does affects all. Wendell Willkie in his book, *One World*, says:

It is inescapably true that to raise the standard of living of any man anywhere in the world is to raise the standard of living by some slight degree of every man everywhere in the world.

Now if that is the case, there can be no peace in the world until there is peace in our own hearts. Take, for instance, the relationships in a great many families. They quarrel, they are jealous, they hate each other, I am sorry to say. Obviously, there is no peace there. Even where people live and work together for a common ideal, there is not always

harmony, there is not always peace. Is it any wonder that the world, with its diversities of opinions, of ideals, of thought, cannot be at peace? We, the individuals, cause the problems, and we should try to realize why we find it so difficult to have this peace in our hearts.

Here, again, Theosophy gives us a little understanding of the great Law of Evolution. For many, many lives we have been developing our individuality, striving to inculcate in ourselves that stamp of difference which marks us as individuals, and we have habits of self that have been with us for millions of years. We cannot expect to get rid of these with a snap of our fingers; but we can begin. If we have been developing this individuality, the self, it means then that what one person wants is very different from that which another wants; so we have a pull in all directions. If what we desire for ourselves is not forthcoming, then we find our thoughts are rather resentful, our feelings are emotions of anger, and our actions are for revenge. Those of us who have studied a little Theosophy think we know how to put it into practice. But when we do not get what we want, or when someone does not do a thing in the way we think it should be done, we feel irritated, we feel hurt, and though we try to curb our actions, though we are not violent with people outwardly, we do express violence with our tongues. This is something that we all must try to curb. The power of speech is so important, and when we resort to sarcastic language, or say things to hurt people, it does wound, however unintentionally it may have been done. If we could remember those beautiful words in *The Light of Asia*:

Govern the lips
As they were palace-doors, the King within;
Tranquil and fair and courteous be all words
Which from that presence win.

before we answer back or say something cutting, there would be fewer people hurt, and a little more peace in the world.

Again, too, we pass hasty judgments; we condemn people without giving them the benefit of the doubt. Here I am reminded of C. W. Leadbeater who said that, even with clair-voyant vision, there was at least twenty per cent of the motives about which we could not know; so when a person does something, says something, with which we do not agree, let us realize that even if we could see what was in his mind, we would still need to know another twenty per cent in order to pass a just judgment. Theosophists are continually at fault in this matter; people all over the world are culprits too; nations seem to thrive on it! Is it any wonder that there is no world peace?

We do not have to worry about the really big things; it is the little things, the one word spoken unkindly, that can upset the whole situation. We should all try to be living examples of Theosophy. We can spread it so much more in that way, because people around us will say: "Well, he is all right when things go wrong, he is happy, he knows how to tackle that problem, he is not irritated; what is it that he has that I do not have?" Perhaps they will then inquire and our teachings will spread to a few more needy people in a troubled world. What we all need, of course, is the determination to go on. It does not matter that we fail a hundred times, if we still go on. As Dr. Besant said, "it is not the ability, it is nearly always the will to do a thing which is lacking".

Perhaps once again we could, each one of us, try, as never before, to make in our hearts that continuous centre of peace and love, thereby proving to ourselves, and eventually to the world, that our Theosophy is

The power of God in our work,
The joy of God in our play,
The peace of God in our rest,
The wisdom of God in our thoughts,
And the love of God in our hearts.

SHIRLEY MACPHERSON

IN THE GLEN OF THE THRUSHES¹

By F. H. ALDHOUSE

IN a glen where birds sing all the year round, so sweet a place it is and so well sheltered, there lived a wood-man with two children, Oona the fair and Nora the dark. They were extremely pretty girls and as good as they were beautiful, and Angus Oge,² whose Temple of Brugh was near, loved them. One day Oona had been bathing in the Boyne and was returning home. When she was half-way on her road, she heard the clatter of a horse approaching. A knight, a very princely rider, overtook her.

"Good-day, you lovely maiden," the knight said.

Oona curtsied low, for she felt he was a very, very great person. "The Gods bless you, Sir," she said, and she did not notice that the knight winced at her blessing. "I am only a poor wood-cutter's daughter. Can I show you the way or serve you in anything?"

"Nothing, nothing, my pretty girl," the knight answered. "I only pay homage to your beauty, but you just spoke of the Gods. Who is the principal local divinity?" He spoke with a sneer which made poor Oona tremble.

"Oh, Sir," she replied, "don't you know the glorious Angus Oge, the bright Lord of Brugh? He is our Defender against all evil, our Lover and Deliverer."

"Oh, that fellow," the knight said and laughed.

¹ One of the Celtic folk-tales about the contests between light and darkness.

² God of love, life and summer.

Oona was silent for a moment, then plucking up courage said: "I am sure, Sir, you must be a stranger or you would not mock at the great bright God. I trust absolutely in him."

"You do?" cried the knight. "Well, we will put him to the trial." And he shouted: "Hey! Playboy, here is a girl trusts absolutely in you, ha! ha! Come and save her from me if you can, you Ever-Young fool!" No one answered, for Angus Oge was fast asleep, and Balor Beman¹ caught the shrieking girl up on to his pale steed and galloped into Nothingness.

* * * *

A year had gone by and Nora and her father still mourned the lost Oona. "I wonder where our Lord was when Death came into his own garden?" the wood-cutter said.

"Our God will yet help us," Nora answered him.

The wood-man sighed and went to his work. As Nora replenished the fire a knock came to the door, she opened it and a knight in black armor asked to be allowed to rest himself. Nora placed a chair for him and asked if she might offer him some refreshment.

"No, no, pretty maiden, I only wish to rest awhile, but thanks," the knight said and sat silent for a while. Presently a chorus of birds could be heard about the house, for it was spring. "What a distorting noise those creatures are making," the knight said peevishly. "Only silence is pleasing, all that whistling and chip-chip-chirruping is disgusting and distracting."

"They are greeting the spring, Sir," Nora answered him, "but perhaps like us you have lost someone you love, even a bird's song is not melodious then."

"Ah!" said the knight, "you remind me of what I called for. You had best know, sweet one, who I am," he bowed slightly. "I am Balor Beman, the Master of Destiny. I took your sister. She is lonely, so you shall join her."

¹ God of evil, death and winter.

Nora screamed and tried to escape, but Balor caught her with his iron hand and pulled her to the door, then she cried out in despair: "O Angus Ever-Young, hear and save me."

And the knight in mockery joined in her cry, calling Angus a foul name. As he dragged her to his horse three birds flew away crying and calling across the glen. "The bird of Truth, the bird of Love, the bird of Dreams," Balor said. "O birds, is that drivelling idiot, who is your master, sleeping? Ah, my Lord Angus! Awake for once! Keep out of danger, Playboy, I mean to have this girl, and that is that. Get out!"

Angus flushed with anger and, with the sword of Light drawn in his hand, answered: "Robber of the beauty I make, enemy of all life and light, draw and defend yourself. I will die or you shall."

"Quite, quite," Balor answered him. "You will, brat of Brugh!" And he opened his third eye, the eye of blasting, full on the young God. At that moment a hand of Light came out of the sunbeams, it seemed to have plucked the silver moon out of the skies, for it held an argent mirror before the face of the Playboy, and Balor's baleful glance back on black death was reflected in the horror of his own dusky fire. A whirling of black dust danced and settled down on the ground.

"O Light Immeasurable!" Angus cried to God. "You have destroyed Destruction, you have slain Death."

"My Son," the voice of the Great Good God answered, "I have abated his cruel pride, you and your children are delivered for a season."

And Oona stood beside her rescued sister, and Angus blessed them with happiness and long life. But Black Death is undying and Balor built himself another body speedily. Nonetheless, in the end of days, Life shall live and death shall die.

F. H. ALDHOUSE

REVIEWS

Non-Absolutes, by Basanta Kumar Mallik; Vincent Stuart, London, 1956, pp. 295, price 26/- net.

Basanta Kumar Mallik is one of those who do not consider it possible to "either accept or reject any of the cosmologies which the long tradition of our species has handed down to us". The subject of the origin of the universe being vital to humanity, the author in this book gives his ideas on the subject of Reality based on his own experience.

The first 57 pages of the book are devoted to a "Critical Survey of European Thought". The titles of some of the chapters are: The Problem of Beginning, The Issue of Illusion, Notion of Opposites, Direct Experience and Negation, Origin of Thought, and The Problem of Knowledge. In tone and terminology the essays are purely philosophical, and only students of philosophy can well appreciate the subtle ideas and arguments of the author.

There is nothing new in most of his statements, they do not differ from the traditional views. Mr. Mallik, however, says: "The cate-

gorical structure which constitutes my thought is absolutely different from any ever known in human history. It stands remote and aloof from what my contemporaries are still cherishing in my neighborhood." It is said that for the coming generation the key-note will not be martyrdom or heaven or moral virtues, but simple *Jnana* or knowledge, or the vision of Truth which dispels ignorance.

Mr. Mallik, the *Jnani*, puts forth a strong plea "to mature knowledge and, with the assurance that it is destined to bring us, eliminate the illusory conceptions of Reality, and abstain from working out the values which these conceptions created". He calls this real detachment.

The following passage in the book is revealing as indicative of a deep-rooted trait in human nature to make astute knowledge rightly give place to the noble quality of devotion to the Most High. "All the heavens of history must give way to *Jnana*, so that the human spirit may rise out of that clean catharsis and enter the stage of

Bhakti, which, to me, is the realm . . . that follows *Jnana* and builds in expectation of the Real."

S. G. VENKATARAMANAN

The Goose Is Out, by W. J. Gabb; The Buddhist Society, London, 1956, pp. 121, price 9s. 6d.

Only in the past few generations have Westerners in any considerable number been aware of Zen Buddhism. There is today a considerable literature at hand consisting of translations of Zen texts and books written on Zen, some learned, some delightful. The present brief book has both characteristics. The author has not attempted a wholly technical explanation of Zen; he has preferred to write from his own experience. The first half of the book, entitled "Beyond the Intellect," consists of ten little chapters, the contents of which do not make up the step by step analysis of the meaning of Zen the reader may have been expecting. Here and there are compact statements about Zen that hit home; but these follow accounts of events in the author's life and possibly on a first reading seem unrelated.

But there is a relation because a key-notion in Zen is that in all happenings and objects there lies the Buddha-nature to be perceived by man. The little happening, the unpremeditated word, the casual gesture, all are hints of That which is not to be locked up in any one

"philosophy". The author says: "In reading about Zen it is necessary to feel oneself into the subject, just as beauty is to be felt and not analysed, or it is no more beauty."

Mr. Gabb writes that "the thing to remember is that Zen evolved a system which had for its object the shattering of the logical framework of conceptual thought. With the mind clear of preconceptions, having ceased to hold opinions, the successful exponent of this technique would experience a turning about in consciousness, or unification with a wider range of awareness".

The second part of the book is called "Tales of Tokuzan" and is a reissuing of a series of *koans* composed by the author in the style of the traditional *koans* which are succinct accounts of the old Zen masters' endeavors to break up the type of sequential thinking in the minds of their pupils that shut them out from experiencing Zen, the realm beyond *manas*. "Cease from measuring heaven with a tiny piece of reed," the author quotes from a Zen text.

Mr. Gabb's *koans*, like the ancient ones, are delightful, baffling, wry; and about them there is glimpsed a profundity; but the profundity is not in the choice of words, it lies in between the words. The content of the *koans* is so startling, so illogical in the usual meaning of the

word, that the reader's train of thought may jump the rails and then there may be an inkling of Zen, of what Zen is about.

Apparently the monks never knew what to expect from the Zen masters: it might be an abrupt action, such as a whack from a stick, a cryptic remark, or smiles and tea and cakes from the master. The psychological theory of the Zen masters seems to be that their shock technique could be a means to halt the endless additions of the mind so that there might be an influx of the Zen experience.

Readers interested in Zen will find this a good book; it says many useful things. This, for example: "All through the ages people have been agitating to find out the truth about this and that, while all the time, according to Zen, there is no truth in this or that or anything. There is no more truth in Zen than there is in my foot—how can there be when all is of the stuff that dreams are made of, when all is mental matter, mind in movement? I may conjure up the idea of a tree, or my foot, or Zen Buddhism, but Zen would say it is all the same thing, essence of mind. Any discussion of ideas can only be pursued on the plane of ideas and in terms of ideas, and if ever we are to get beyond ideas to the transcendental

significance of those ideas, we must drop the lot and walk on."

S. D. BALLARD

In the Footsteps of the Buddha, by T. L. Vaswani; Gita Publishing House, Poona, 1956, pp. 66, price Re. 1.

According to the writer, the subject of this essay, Shanti Deva, is one of the three great Buddhist thinkers in Asia, the other two being Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu.

Shanti Deva lived in the seventh century of the Christian era. The son of a king, he renounced the throne on the eve of his coronation, tradition has it, because of a mystical experience that came to him. He became a bhikkhu and dwelt in the forest. His later career was to become a famous teacher at the great Nalanda university which has been described very appreciatively by the Chinese traveller and scholar, Hsuan Tsang.

T. L. Vaswani views Shanti Deva as a great exponent of Mahayana Buddhism. He taught for fifty years the Buddhist ideals, and left in two little books the essence of his teaching. These are: *Siksha Samuchchaya* or Compendium of Teaching, and *Bodhisattvavata* or Introduction to the Practice of Enlightenment. In both of these books the goal of Bodhisattvahood is held before the aspirant.

SEYMOUR D. BALLARD

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEOSOPHIST

MAY 1957

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The following receipts from 1st December 1956 to 31st March*1957 are acknowledged with thanks:

ANNUAL DUES AND ADMISSION FEES				Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in England	1956-57	£ 38-17-10	...	516	12	0
" New Zealand		£ 57- 0- 2	...	745	13	9
" Ireland		£ 1-18-10	...	17	12	0
" Australia	1956	A£ 56-10- 6	...	597	2	0
" Chile		£ 6-14- 0	...	88	6	6
" Norway		£ 6-14-11	...	90	5	0
" N. Ireland	1956	£ 2- 1- 6	...	27	9	0
" Mexico	1956	\$ 70.00	...	328	13	0
" Argentina		\$148.00	...	701	13	0
" France			...	1,789	15	9
" India	1955-56		...	1,439	7	0
" Burma			...	83	0	0
Lodge Armonia, Lima, Peru		£ 3- 0- 0	...	38	8	0
Lodge Liberation, Lima, Peru	1956-57	£ 3-15- 0	...	49	11	9
Lodge Paz y Amor, Peru		\$ 3.00	...	12	4	0
Mr. S. L. Yen, Hongkong	1956-57		...	16	11	0
Mr. K. S. Fung, Hongkong	1956-57		...	16	11	0
Sir Paul Dukes	1956-57	£ 1- 5- 0	...	17	3	0
Mr. Mouni Sadhu, Australia	1956-57	£ 1- 0- 0	...	13	4	0
Mrs. I. I. Hurd, U.S.A.	1956-57	£ 1- 0- 0	...	13	5	0
Mrs. Diana Fitzgerald, Johannesburg		£ 1- 5- 0	...	17	3	0
				6,621	9	9

DONATIONS (GENERAL)

			Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in France		...	37	15	3
Mr. H. A. Kern, U.S.A.	\$1000.00	...	4,729	4	6
Miss Edith C. Gray, U.S.A.	\$ 150.00	...	711	12	0
Miss Frances Geisman, U.S.A.	\$ 5.00	...	23	10	3
Mrs. Ann E. Warwick, U.S.A.	\$ 3.00	...	14	3	9
Mr. John H. Simmon, U.S.A.	\$ 75.00	...	353	0	0
Mrs. Helena and Mr. Albert F. Hardcastle, U.S.A.	\$ 5.00	...	21	12	0
Mr. G. H. Hall, U.S.A.		...	100	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Nguon-Har, Saigon		...	100	0	0
Mr. S. P. Oak, Bombay, in memory of Mrs. Jankibai I. Raje		...	10	0	0
Mr. Pandya Vallabhram Veniram, Surat		...	11	0	0
"Two Adyar Residents"		...	150	0	0
Mr. A. Sadasivam		...	50	0	0
"C. R. R."	£100- 0-0	...	1,308	5	6
"Anonymous"	£ 0-10-0	...	6	8	0
			7,627	7	3

DONATIONS (ADYAR DAY)

The T.S. in Australia	A£ 48- 3- 0	...	508	10	6
" New Zealand	£ 29- 3- 0	...	381	6	6
" England	£ 3-14- 6	...	49	7	9
" Norway	£ 50- 7- 3	...	666	13	9
" Ireland	£ 4-10- 0	...	59	8	3
" Venezuela	\$165.67	...	784	10	9
" Cuba	\$ 53.50	...	252	14	0
" Argentina	\$ 57.00	...	270	4	6
" France		...	189	6	0
" Burma		...	167	0	0
Lodge Harmony, Adyar Group, Montevideo	\$ 20.00	...	92	10	0
Poona Lodge, T.S., Poona		...	8	0	0
Noshir Lodge		...	11	0	0
Sanatan Lodge, T.S., Surat		...	81	0	0
Bangarapet Lodge		...	32	0	0
Shivshankar Lodge, T.S., Motihari		...	18	0	0
Bangalore City Lodge		...	57	1	9
Krishna Lodge, T.S., Zanzibar		...	247	5	0
Sachchidananda Lodge, Tapeswaram		...	5	0	0
Sri Krishna Lodge, T.S., Guntur		...	8	0	0

			Rs.	A.	P.
Usha Lodge, New Delhi		...	23	0	0
Merida Lodge, Mexico	\$ 5.00	...	22	11	3
Mombasa Lodge, T.S., Mombasa		...	100	0	0
Indraprastha Lodge, Delhi		...	20	2	0
Ananda Lodge, T.S., Juhu, Bombay		...	68	0	0
Non-Sectionalized Lodges		...	149	0	0
Bihar Theosophical Federation		...	11	0	0
Mr. Nadarshaw Nowroji Dotiwala, Surat		...	5	0	0
D. R. D., Adyar		...	25	0	0
"Two Adyar Residents"		...	100	0	0
Prof. R. Srinivasan, Madras		...	10	0	0
"A Resident of Adyar"		...	25	0	0
Mr. P. G. Dingomai		...	25	0	0
			4,474	0	0

ADYAR BESANT COMMEMORATIVE FUND

			Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in Australia	A£ 1- 3- 0	...	12	2	3
" New Zealand	£10-10- 0	...	137	6	0
" England	£ 1-14- 0	...	22	9	6
" Ireland	£ 4-10- 0	...	59	8	3
" N. Ireland	£ 8-14- 0	...	115	9	0
" Mexico	\$93.00	...	427	5	0
" U.S.A.	\$50.00	...	236	7	3
Mrs. Olive Stevenson-Howell, London	£ 5- 0- 0	...	66	5	0
Mr. Galo R. Hernandez P. Veracruz	\$25.00	...	117	9	0
Dr. G. R. Phansalkar, Varanasi		...	100	0	0
"Two Adyar Residents"		...	100	0	0
Mr. Nadarshaw Nowroji Dotiwala, Surat		...	5	0	0
Mr. V. W. Samudra, Amraoti		...	20	0	0
Mr. K. N. Ramanathan, London		...	50	0	0
Mr. Hermeregildo Munoz, San Juan		...	235	2	0
Mr. M. M. Parekh through Mr. H. K. Mehta		...	37	15	9
Mrs. Gool Minwalla		...	25	0	0
Mrs. Gulnar Parakh		...	25	0	0
Dastur Khurshed S. Dabu, Bombay		...	151	0	0
"In His Name" from Srimati Aimai M. Dabhoiwala		...	600	0	0
Legacy from the late Prof. D. D. Kanga		...	4,000	0	0
			6,543	15	0

RAJA COMMEMORATIVE FUND

			Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in Australia	A £28- 8-10	...	300	7	0
" Ireland	£ 5- 0- 0	...	66	1	9
" New Zealand	£ 2-10- 0	...	32	11	3
" U.S.A.	\$ 5.00	...	23	10	3
Mr. A. Tavera Garcia		...	125	0	0
"Two Adyar Residents"		...	100	0	0
Mr. Jamubhai Dani, Bombay		...	101	0	0
Dr. Shri Ram, Panchgani		...	5	0	0
Mrs. Gulnar Parakh		...	25	0	0
Mr. Nadarshaw Nowroji Dotiwala, Surat		...	5	0	0
Mr. Michael Alexander		...	27	8	9
Mrs. Alice M. Jones, England	£ 1- 0- 0	...	13	2	0
Mr. Jeremy G. Beattie, Cape Town	£ 1-11- 6	...	20	1	0
Mr. Galo R. Hernandez P. Veracruz	\$ 25.00	...	117	9	0
			962	3	0

FAITHFUL SERVICE FUND

			Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in England	£37-10- 0	...	498	4	3

PRESIDENT'S TRAVELLING FUND

			Rs.	A.	P.
The T.S. in England	£50- 0- 0	...	663	7	9
Mrs. Olive Stevenson-Howell, London	£ 5- 0- 0	...	66	5	0
Mr. H. B. Vaswani, Madras		...	1	0	0
			730	12	9

THE T.S. DISPENSARY

			Rs.	A.	P.
"Two Adyar Residents"		...	50	0	0
Mrs. Gulnar Parakh		...	25	0	0
Dr. G. Srinivasa Murti		...	10	0	0
Mrs. Aloo J. Contractor		...	1	8	0
Mr. Harold Tyrwhitt, England	£ 2- 2- 0	...	27	11	3
			114	3	3

ADYAR LIBRARY BUILDING FUND

		Rs.	A.	P.
Mr. A. Tavera Garcia	...	170	0	0
Mr. E. R. Hill	...	92	8	0
Mr. N. S. Patankar	...	5	0	0
Mrs. Gool Minwalla	...	25	0	0
Mr. K. H. Kanga	...	11	0	0
		303	8	0

ADYAR LIBRARY

		Rs.	A.	P.
Mrs. Ila Fain Knudsen, California, U.S.A.	\$50.00	...	236	7 3

For the Theosophical Society,
EDWIN N. LORD,
Hon. Treasurer.

THEOSOPHISTS AT WORK AROUND THE WORLD

By the Recording Secretary

Easter Conference

The 34th South Indian Annual Theosophical Conference was opened by the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, in the Headquarters Hall at Adyar on Friday, April 19th, at 9.30 a.m. There was a large gathering of members representing the eight South Indian Federations of the Indian Section. In addition to cables and other messages received, greetings were personally given by members present from 28 Lodges.

Following the recitation of the Prayers of the Religions, Professor R. Srinivasan sang four verses from

a set composed by the late Sri M. R. Venkataraya Iyer on the Great Teachers.

Mr. M. Subramaniam, on behalf of the General Secretary, Mr. Rohit Mehta, welcomed the delegates to the Conference.

In his opening address the President referred to similar gatherings—Conventions and Conferences—which were taking place in a number of our National Societies and Federations, during the Easter season; cabled greetings had been sent by him to Australia, Southern Africa, Indonesia, the Philippines, Finland, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and the

Canadian and West African Federations. The President gave a deeply thoughtful and beautiful address in which he spoke of the true work and mission of the Theosophical Society, inspiring all present. The substance of what he said is embodied in the Watch-Tower notes of this issue of THE THEOSOPHIST.

A special feature of the Conference was the holding of a set of three symposia at which the following subjects were introduced by selected speakers: "God and the Divinehood of Man," "The Goal or Fulfilment of Life," and "Moral Laws and Right Living". These were dealt with in relation to the teachings of the religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

A very fine atmosphere pervaded the Headquarters Hall on the occasion of the Ritual of the Mystic Star, which so beautifully defines the message of each World-Teacher and the religion which He founded.

On Easter Sunday morning the Holy Eucharist was celebrated in the chapel of the Liberal Catholic Church, the celebration being by Bishop Charles Shores, who was at Adyar *en route* to Australia after a tour in Indonesia. The congregation was composed of adherents of several of the world religions.

Among other activities of the Conference were lantern talks by Mr. E. Norman Pearson on "A Message from Mars," and by Mr. M. Subra-

maniam on "A Glimpse of the Future". These evening entertainments, held in the open at the Adyar Theatre, were appreciated by the delegates.

On the final day of the Conference the members gathered at a Tea Party under the Banyan Tree with its beautiful influence; then followed a stirring address to the departing delegates by the Recording Secretary, Miss Emma Hunt, after which the President declared the Conference closed.

Venezuela

The annual Report from Señor Pablo Bonilla T., General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Venezuela, shows their Section as having 9 Lodges with a total membership of 118.

A new Lodge "Evolucion" was chartered in the city of Barquisimeto on the 14th December 1955. The General Secretary, who made periodic visits to the Lodge following its formation, writes that the members "are working with great fervor and enthusiasm".

The Section enrolled 35 new members during the year, with two rejoining and one member transferring from Holland.

Correspondence courses on Theosophy are made available to all who apply for them.

The visit of the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, during the year, was

naturally an occasion for rejoicing among the members who were greatly encouraged by his presence among them. His public lectures drew excellent audiences and created a widespread interest in the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom.

The Venezuelan Section, chartered on 23rd September 1953, is the youngest of our National Sections, and the General Secretary, when sending his annual Report, writes: "The year which has just ended has been the most fruitful of the three that have passed since this has been a National Section, since the presence of our beloved President was the motive for many new members entering the Society. His presence will remain for long in the minds of those who had not earlier known of our teachings and who received thereby a new understanding."

In a recent letter enclosing a cheque for Adyar Day from his Section, Señor Pablo Bonilla writes: "All the members unite with me in sending to you and to the members at our Mother Centre our best wishes for its future growth."

Italy

The Italian Section has realized a long-standing ambition to have a permanent "Theosophical Home" in Rome which it plans to use as a National Headquarters.

At the 42nd annual Convention held in Rome in September last, Dr. Joseph Filipponio was elected General Secretary on the retirement of Dr. Giuseppe Gasco who had served in that office for many years. Dr. Gasco was given the title Honorary General Secretary in recognition of his services.

The last annual Report shows the Section as having 29 Lodges with a total membership of 1,080. There were 58 admissions during the year.

The Lodges in Rome, Turin, Trieste and Naples, in addition to the usual activities, have done good publicity work in public meetings and lectures.

The Section journal, *Alba Spirituale*, is placed on sale in public book-stands.

In his annual Report the General Secretary states that the Section has not only maintained its position but has made some progress during the year under review.

In a recent letter to Dr. Gasco the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, writes: "I hope the Theosophical Society in Italy will prosper and will help to propagate the pure wisdom which is so much needed, especially at the present time."

Uruguay

Señor Mario Radaelli, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Uruguay, gives an interesting report of the work of the seven

Lodges which comprise his Section. The Report reveals to some extent the distinctive nature of each of the Lodges which together have a membership of 90.

Lodge Ariel, founded in 1924 by the present General Secretary, who is once again its President, is the only one remaining of the Section's 7 founding Lodges. In its syllabus of lectures a ready use is made of lantern slides and diagrams to expound Theosophical principles. Special interest is shown in the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, *Letters from the Masters*, the writings of the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, and the Lodge is "harmonious" with the teachings of Buddhism and of J. Krishnamurti.

Lodge Harmonia has "developed a useful programme under the watchful attention of the Director of Studies, Señora Julia de La Gamma on themes from the works of Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater, C. Jinarajadasa, N. Sri Ram and other well-known authors".

The President of Lodge Morya, Señora Esmeralda N. de Laguarda, assisted by Brother Alvaro A. Araujo, "has made translations of fundamental texts and keeps a careful

watch on the Theosophical movement throughout the world".

Lodge Vidya, which has a small membership, is kept active "by the constancy of its President, Señorita Berna Canavese". She is a fine pianist and, with the assistance of members of other Lodges, offers a varied programme of Theosophical teachings, poetry and music.

Lodge Pallas Atenea is presided over by the Section Treasurer, Señor Luis Sarthou, "who gives talks, and lectures freely on the various texts of Theosophical books, especially by Annie Besant, and on Yoga and the literature of the East".

Lodge Karma Marga has as its President Brother Fulgencio Horra, who has travelled and has had wide experience in other countries. "He uses a varied programme, paying special attention to practical aspects of our teachings and on conduct."

Lodge H. P. Blavatsky is being reorganized. Its President, Brother Perini Balbi, in his programmes specializes on Theosophy and Science.

The Section has also an "Adyar" and a "Youth" Group which function intermittently.

Peace is the outward and visible sign of wisdom. Where peace is not, wisdom is less. Where peace is, there wisdom has taken the place of ignorance.

G. S. ARUNDALE

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Founded in the City of New York, November 17, 1875

President: N. Sri Ram. Vice-President: Sidney A. Cook. Recording Secretary: Miss Emma Hunt. Treasurer: Edwin N. Lord.

Headquarters of the Society: ADYAR, MADRAS 20, INDIA

Official Organ of the President: *The Theosophist*, founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY, 1879

Date of Separation	Name of Section	General Secretary	Address	Magazine
1886	United States	Mr. James S. Perkins	P.O. Box 270, Wheaton, Illinois	<i>The American Theosophist.</i>
1888	England	Mrs. A. L. Berry	50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1891	India	Sri Rohit Mehta	Theosophical Society, Varanasi 1	<i>The Theosophical Review.</i>
1895	Australia	Miss Helen V. Zahara	29 Bligh Street, Sydney, N.S.W.	<i>Theosophy in Australia.</i>
1895	Sweden	Herr Gösta Lindström	Ostermalmsgatan 12, Stockholm	<i>Theosophical Tidningskr.</i>
1896	New Zealand	Miss Sandra Chase	10 Belvidere St., Epsom, Auckland, S.E.3	<i>Theosophy in New Zealand.</i>
1897	Netherlands	Mr. B. Wouters	Amsteddijk 76, Amsterdam Z.	<i>Theosophie.</i>
1899	France	Monsieur Francis Brunel	4 Square Rapp, Paris VII	<i>Le Lotus Blanc.</i>
1902	Italy	Dr. Giuseppe Filippone	Corso Trieste 88, Rome	<i>Alba Spirituale.</i>
1902	Germany	Director Martin Boyten	Hagenau 15, Hamburg 23	<i>Adyar.</i>
1905	Cuba	Señor Armando Alfonso León	P.O. Box 965, Habana	<i>Revista Teosófica Cubana.</i>
1907	Hungary	Miss Sigee Rosvall	Városliget 7C, Helsinki	<i>Theosoph.</i>
1907	Finland	Mr. I. G. Mitford-Barberton	P.O. Box 2284, Cape Town	<i>The Link.</i>
1908	Russia	Mrs. Jean Allan	17 Queen's Crescent, Glasgow, C.4	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1909	Czechoslovakia	Mrs. I. G. Mitford-Barberton	Bruderholstrasse 88, Basel	<i>Clarif.</i>
1909	Southern Africa	Mrs. Jean Allan	834 Rue Vanderkindere, Uccle-Bruxelles	<i>P. T. T. I.</i>
1910	Scotland	Mrs. Jean Allan	Blavatkypark 5, Merdoka-Barat 17, Djakarta	<i>Adyar.</i>
1911	Switzerland	Monsieur Th. Chapellier	No. 102, 49th Street, Rangoon	<i>North Theosophical Tidningskr.</i>
1911	Belgium	Mr. Socmardjo	Paracelsusgasse 4, T. 6, Vienna III/40	<i>Theosophie.</i>
1912	Indonesia	U. Po Lat	Bjornstetiv. 2b, Lilleaker, Oslo	<i>Theosophy in Ireland.</i>
1912	Russia	Herr F. Schleier	(President, "Hilfmet El Kadima" Lodge),	<i>Revista Teosófica.</i>
1912	Austria	Herr Erling Havrevold	18 Enad El Din Street, Cairo	<i>Theosophy in Ireland.</i>
1913	Norway	Mr. Zaki Awad	Strandvejen 198a, Aarhus	<i>Revista Teosófica.</i>
1913	Belgium	Mr. Zaki Awad	31 Pembroke Road, Dublin	<i>Revista Teosófica.</i>
1918	Denmark	Herr J. M. Möller	Iuribide 23, Mexico D. F.	<i>Revista Teosófica.</i>
1919	Iceland	Mrs. Evelyn O. Housledge		
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* No Sectional Lodge only.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY was formed at New York, November 17, 1875, and incorporated at Madras, April 3, 1905. Its three declared Objects are:

- FIRST.—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
- SECOND.—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
- THIRD.—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 23, 1924

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the civilized world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher or writer, from H. P. Blavatsky downwards, has any authority to impose his teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to attach himself to any teacher or to any school of thought which he may choose, but has no right to force his choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office, nor any voter, can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion he may hold, or because of membership in any school of thought to which he may belong. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties. The members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

FREEDOM OF THE SOCIETY

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 30, 1950

The Theosophical Society, while co-operating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such co-operation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title, The Theosophical Society.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.



THE THEOSOPHIST ON THE WATCH-TOWER

*The Theosophical Society is responsible only for its
Official Notices appearing in "The Supplement".*

IT is sometimes said, in criticism of the way the work of the Theosophical Society has developed, that we do not pay much attention to the Third Object of the Society, which is "to investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man"—not all the laws by any means but only some that can come within our purview. But then is it not pertinent to ask: Where are the people competent to undertake this task? If there are some or any among our members, they are surely not debarred from sharing the results of their researches with others, from saying what they want to say on the subject. No one was better qualified, whether by her own extraordinary powers, or by the light she has thrown in her works on the matters covered by the Third Object, or by her part in the founding and early development of the Society, to write on the place which the Three Objects should have in our work, than H.P.B. herself; and this is what she has said in the article entitled "Fourteen Years of Theosophy," printed in the May number of THE THEOSOPHIST (The article must have been written in 1889.):..

A third Object, pursued by a portion of the fellows of the Society, is to investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the psychic

powers of man. Two general Objects, one restricted Object, of attention. . .

Only a portion of our fellows occupy themselves with the study of the occult properties of matter and the psychical powers of man. The Society as a whole, then, is not concerned in this branch of research. And naturally; for out of every ten thousand people one may meet, the chances are that but a very small minority have the time, taste or ability to take up such delicate and baffling studies. . . We thought it a good thing to proclaim this line of research and self-discovery as the third of our three Objects. For those who are interested in it and all inquirers whom they can reach and encourage, the mystical philosophical books of the present and former times have been written.

The work of H.P.B. in the field of the occult has been followed up in a remarkable manner by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, who have both elucidated and, as regards some matters, added much detail to H.P.B.'s pioneering work. There will no doubt be others in the future to add to the results of their investigations.

In so far as such investigations stand at a purely intellectual level, anyone can take part in them. But the intellect that is at present most in evidence is but a limited instrument. A more direct and profound knowledge of what is latent in ourselves (the self-discovery that H.P.B. speaks of) and of the laws of Nature as they operate at various levels is possible only by means which become available when we have come to the stage of transcending the material mind, the stage in which the pure consciousness attains unity with the truth that exists at its source or origin. But if it be a question of research, neither in the field of intellect nor through means which are supra-intellectual, which involve going deeper and further than the mind we normally use, but in what may broadly be termed the field of psychism, we cannot do better than warn those people who, out of an impulse to attain an end that appeals to their own sense of importance, some fancied sensation, may want to rush in where angels fear to tread—that is to say, where the angelic side of ourselves, if consulted,

would indicate the need for great caution and discrimination. H.P.B. has dwelt repeatedly in her works upon the great dangers attending not only any attempt at premature development of psychic powers but even the premature disclosure of occult secrets, the attainment of knowledge for which the world is not yet ready.

All this is not to say that the Third Object ought to be dismissed; but it can be taken up and advanced only as the means are available, although all the time our Lodges and members do study what is available in the way of information as regards Nature's more hidden paths, and the possibilities that belong to the deeper and more delicate but still largely unawakened areas of man's being.

Obviously there is no point in the Theosophical Society as such duplicating the activities of such bodies as the Psychical Research Society; nor would it be wise, in view of the dangers as well as limitations of the processes too loosely and generally inaccurately described as Yoga in the West, a word which has more a spiritual than a psychic significance, for us to devote ourselves to such matters as Kundalini (the force known as the serpent-fire), the awakening of which brings a wholly hidden mechanism into action and forces the development of the super-physical powers. What most people who are interested in such development need to understand is the fundamental distinction between psychism, whether trained or untrained, the seeing of things that others cannot see, and spirituality or pure spiritual living, by means of which alone true wisdom is attained, the tree of life and knowledge, namely ourselves, is transformed into the tree of wisdom.

* * * *

The Laboratory, a journal published by Fisher Scientific Company of Pittsburgh in the U.S.A., gives details of some **A Remarkable Find** remarkable finds, at the outskirts of Baghdad, where the archeologists have been digging for evidence of

the ancient Babylonian and Sumerian as well as the later Parthian civilizations. These finds, which date back to some time B.C., were so remarkably like an electric battery that it was thought worth while to make an exact duplicate of one of them, and see if it worked. A young scientist, Mr. Willard Gray, of General Electric's High Voltage Laboratory in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, made the duplicate, using the diagrams and analyses of the material in the finds, given to him by Mr. Willy Ley who reported these finds in English and American journals.

Science Digest of April 1957, which summarizes the article in *The Laboratory*, gives a section of the constructed model, which is now in Pittsfield's Berkshire museum. The model worked exactly like an electric battery. The construction of the find was as follows (says the article):

Thin sheet-copper was soldered into a cylinder less than 4 inches long and about an inch in diameter. The solder was a 60/40 tin-lead alloy. . . The bottom of the cylinder was a crimped-in copper disc insulated with a layer of asphaltum. . . The top was closed with an asphalt stopper, through which projected the end of an iron rod. To stand upright it was cemented into a small vase. . . The copper-iron combination in these ancient batteries is the same that Luigi Galvani used in 1786 when he "discovered" the galvanic cell. What electrolyte the Parthian jewellers used is a mystery, but Gray's model works well with copper sulphate. Acetic or citric acid, which the ancient chemists had in plenty, should be even better.

It seems the discovery of these batteries was made 20 years ago by the German archeologist, Mr. Wilhelm Konig, who then wrote about it, though Mr. Konig's theory that it might be an electric battery has been tested only now.

It is no wonder that the results of the test were regarded as "startling"; for without these finds and the testing of their construction and material, very few people of the present time would have believed that the use of electricity was not unknown to the ancients. We may ere long find further evidence to show that some at least of the discoveries of the

modern (post-classical) epoch are really re-discoveries. It appears to have been the case that some truths, now part of the general knowledge of all the peoples, the application of which has resulted in a rapid advance in both Science and technology, were in the old days kept within the special precincts of sacred learning. Undoubtedly there has been latterly "a curious rush of human progress" along certain lines, to use the language of one of the questions put to the Mahatmas in the early days; but neither can we assume that all past civilizations were inferior to ours in the quality of their culture, nor can the peoples of the so-called historical times appropriate to themselves such exclusive credit even for their discoveries as they have done.

* * * *

As one watches the events of the bustling world-scene, as they are taking place at present, the moves and cross-moves on the chess-board of international politics, one might well feel puzzled as to how the game will develop, whither we are going, and what will be the end of it all; the situation is so confusing, and to us who are in it, both baffling and difficult. The changes that go on from day to day are rapid and many.

Although when we look at the movements in detail, they seem confused and contradictory, even cancelling each other at many points like movements in a battlefield, yet from our Theosophic studies we can have some idea of how the picture *must* eventually shape itself and we can discern even already certain trends asserting themselves, which must finally prevail.

One of these, a phenomenon which had its early beginnings in the first world-war but has gained enormous momentum since the second, is obviously the liberation of one nation or people after another, and the assumption by them—for good or ill, as the observers might be inclined to think, according to their sympathies—of their own destinies. Beginning

with India, Pakistan and Indonesia, the process has step by step included Burma, Ceylon, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, the territories that formerly comprised Indo-China, and lastly Ghana (the Gold Coast, as it used to be called), with Malaya, Singapore and in all probability, Nigeria to follow. The movement for democratic freedom is not of course, confined to these countries, because it is active and resurgent in yet others.

In Dr. Annie Besant's view, as it was repeatedly expressed by her during the campaign for Indian Self-Government, "the hinge of fate," equating fate for the moment with freedom or democracy, was in India, because of her large population, her spiritual traditions, the capacity of her leaders and the role she is likely to play in a world-civilization.

Side by side with the disintegration of the previously agglutinated groups, an agglutination which took the form of domination by some of them and the subordination of the others, "colonialism" in short, a word much used these days, there has come into the picture also a complementary process of union among groups related to one another either by geographical contiguity, common racial characteristics, economic needs or, as a result of past association, common political ideas. Thus we have the Commonwealth of Free Nations which Dr. Besant loved to call the Indo-British Commonwealth—indicating thus the two foci to which the movements in its orbit would be principally related—and other less formal associations of States in different parts of the world.

The most important of all the unions that either exist already in some form or are taking shape, is of course the United Nations, the world-wide scope of which was already adumbrated in the League of Nations that arose in 1918 out of the ashes of the first great holocaust. The lesser brackets had to be brought within the big bracket of a world-unity,

which alone can meet the demand, now so urgent, for a world-peace.

It is in this context that we have to assess the significance of the moves now being taken to create a common economy among the six States of Western Europe—France, West Germany, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Italy—whose territories have been the principal battlefields for a long time in Europe, and whose peoples now feel that it ill serves the interest of any of them to stand apart from all the others. Not only are they agreed to constitute one trade area, without tariff barriers, but their plan is to include within the scope of a common administration the coal, iron and steel industry within their areas, and the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, pooling their nuclear resources. Although only the six States named above will form the free trade area to start with—free trade meaning also free travel, possibly a common currency, and in due course many other things—it has been proposed by Britain that any other States in Europe that desire to come in should be allowed to do so.

Thus the unification of Europe, which has been for long only a dream, is now at last taking concrete shape, though still only on the economic plane. But out of an effective economic union the Governments concerned may well hope to develop a structure of political unity.

Over thirty years ago, when the hopes engendered by the League of Nations were still in the ascendant, Dr. Besant spoke in the Queen's Hall in London on the need for a United States of Europe. She was then full of hope also that her Commonwealth of India Bill for India's Freedom would form a rallying point for the forces in favor of Freedom both in India and England. India's Freedom was, however, deferred for 20 long years. The United States of Europe, though yet to take shape, is beginning, as pointed out above, to show its first faint outlines.

In the book *Man: Whence, How and Whither*, written jointly by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, and first published in 1913, there is a description of certain developments to take place in this century. One of these is a Federation of the World, then not even remotely in the minds of any people, including within itself a "Confederation" of Europe, "with a kind of Reichstag, to which all countries send representatives".

Although only Europe is mentioned in the book as an area in which the States had organized themselves into a Union within the World-Union, one can see the likelihood of similar groupings for economic and other purposes of other States in other parts of the world. The hand of the Time-Spirit is to be seen clearly in the assertion of freedom on the one hand in every department of human life, and in the movement for an organization of the free units for co-operation on the other.

* * * *

We are grieved to hear that Mr. Karl Riedel of Vienna, Austria, passed away some two months ago. When I met him at the European Federation Congress last year, he looked much as usual and in a fairly good state of health. His departure removes from the Austrian Section a devoted member and a specially earnest student who had been long an active worker. Mr. Riedel was a fairly frequent contributor to *THE THEOSOPHIST* and was interested particularly in the School of the Wisdom for the benefit of which he sent various papers out of his writings, with diagrams and explanations. He will be much missed in Austria and at the various Regional and European gatherings where he was a familiar and welcome figure.

N. SRI RAM

THE DOOR TO BEAUTY¹

By C. JINARAJADĀSA

IT is our task as Theosophists to search for truth in all directions. What makes us different from most religious-minded men is that they think of truth as revealing itself only in scriptures, whereas we are seeking truth not only in scriptures, but also in the sciences and the arts, and in the development of the world in its many phases of economics and administration.

We must therefore keep our minds open to every possible presentation of truth. In a land like India, the minds of us Theosophists are open not only to the inspiration of Hinduism, but also to that of the other religions, such as Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam. Also, among religious-minded people, perhaps we Theosophists are distinguished for the fact that we have an eager interest in the discoveries of science, for we know that there is no distinction in God's facts between religious and secular facts. Wherever there is any fact in the manifested universe, that fact is the sign-manual of God.

I desire very specially to call your attention to a door of truth which we need to open from within ourselves. That is the door of beauty. Here in India especially, owing to our specialization in religion, our sensitiveness to beauty is comparatively slight, compared to certain nations of the West, particularly the ancient Greeks. Just as what the Rishis

¹ From the Archives at Adyar.

“saw” is revealed in a Veda which gives a wisdom, so is there to be “seen” an aspect of Reality which is beauty.

The more, therefore, that we can understand the significance of this sign-manual of God, and read its hidden message, the more shall we understand both Him and ourselves. We must make each Theosophical Lodge not only a temple of holiness and service, but also a temple of beauty. In our aim to help mankind to discover the hidden God within themselves, we must use every possible means. Hitherto, in our work of presenting Theosophy, we have appealed to the sentiment of religion in man. A very great development of our work awaits us when we train ourselves to guide them to know what is Truth by their awakened sense of God the Beautiful.

One exquisite quality of Theosophy as Divine Wisdom is that it is inseparable from the sense of the beautiful. The more one studies Theosophy, and understands the wisdom of what is “God’s plan, which is evolution,” the more clearly he sees also how beauty envelops that plan. He who knows Theosophy profoundly grows in the sense of the beautiful. But also, in a converse manner, he who responds to beauty in all her manifestations discovers Theosophy. He who loves the beautiful can understand Theosophy with a depth of significance which cannot be achieved by one who restricts himself to Theosophy merely as religion.

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

See whether, as you study Theosophy, your character does not change, so that you practise better than the ordinary Christian the two precepts of Christ—to love God with all your heart and soul and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself. Remember, it is the ideas which you possess and which you practise, which mark you as the good man or the good woman, instead of the man or woman who is critical and hostile to everyone else.

C. J.

EVOLUTION OR THE LAW OF BECOMING—III¹

By ROHIT MEHTA

The Story of Evolution shows that its spearhead usually comprises a small number of individuals—the so-called mutant forms.

LE COMTE DU NUOY

IF mutation is an intimation from a realm beyond the normal consciousness of man, it is quite obvious that it cannot be consciously sought after. A conscious seeking by the mind can be only in terms of what it knows. This seeking is, therefore, conditioned by the past. It functions within the sphere of psychological continuity. As Einstein says: “The mind can proceed only so far upon what it knows.” Thus, there can be no conscious seeking by the mind for that which is outside its sphere of continuity. Since discontinuity is the essence of mutation, there can therefore be no question of a conscious seeking with regard to it. Psychological mutations come; they cannot be brought. They are not the products of conscious effort. Their arrival is sudden and spontaneous. They come like a flash of lightning shedding an indescribably brilliant light upon the otherwise darkened path of man. A mutation can arise only when there is a break in continuity. A continuity implies a bridge, and therefore the absence of a gap or an interval.

¹ Parts I and II appeared in April and May respectively. This Part III concludes the article.

Now a jump in consciousness, which a mutation fundamentally is, does not indicate a break in chronological memory. It is not in the condition of amnesia that a mutation takes place. A mind that is devoid of chronological memory is a dull mind. Such a mind is incapable of receiving intimations that come from beyond its frontiers. A lunatic has also a discontinuity of consciousness, but this discontinuity arises because of a break in chronological memory. It is possible that psychological factors may have caused this chronological break—but then so long as chronological memory is impaired, so long the mind is rendered useless to serve as a receptacle for the receiving of new impulses emanating from the Transcendental Reality.

It should be remembered that a discontinuity in consciousness produced by drugs results in a break in the chronological memory. A mind that is out of gear may see beautiful visions but such visions may be projections of the unconscious. A conscious effort to produce a discontinuity of consciousness is naturally self-defeating, for a discontinuity consciously brought about is only a continuity! A mutation, therefore, cannot arise in a mind that has been drugged, or a mind that is devoid of chronological memory, or a mind that makes a conscious effort at producing discontinuity. As has been noted above, psychological mutations come suddenly and spontaneously.

We saw that, at the biological level, mutations appear in inconspicuous units of life. The units that struggle in loneliness, utterly unnoticed, are usually found to display mutations. Similarly, psychological mutations appear during inconspicuous moments, in the life of a human individual. They come in the midst of small incidents and unimportant events that fill the day-to-day existence of man. In other words, these mutations come when a man is least prepared for their arrival. In big events and incidents the mind is in a prepared condition.

It is this advance preparation of the mind to meet a particular situation which creates an insurmountable barrier to the emergence of mutations. Unexpected moments indeed provide a suitable climate for their appearance, for, during such moments, the defence-mechanism of the conscious mind is weakest, and therefore most vulnerable for the entry of new factors which mutations bring in their train. The mind that expects is held fast by the shackles of continuity. It is during small events and incidents of life, in which the conscious mind does not think it necessary to interfere with the inclinations of Nature, that one can see the sudden and spontaneous emergence of psychological mutations. The great discoveries of science have taken place during inconspicuous moments and in the midst of trivial incidents. These discoveries have changed the entire course of human thought and action. It is in inconspicuous moments that one is most natural, and spiritual transformations or mutations can arise only in conditions that are natural and not affected.

It may, however, be stated that we do not find mutations or spiritual transformations taking place during all inconspicuous moments. In fact, most of the time such moments are utterly dull and drab with no trace of freshness which a mutation must imply. We have seen, while discussing problems of biological evolution, that well-adapted units of life do not lend themselves to mutant influences. A well-adapted organism is capable of numerous variations but is completely closed so far as fundamental changes or mutations are concerned. It is, therefore, not enough that an organism is inconspicuous—it must show forth a "creative instability," to use the phrase of Le Comte du Nuoy. At the psychological level also this is exactly the case. Inconspicuous moments are congenial objective conditions, but there has to be a creative instability as a necessary subjective factor if mutation is to take place in the life of man. A mind that is set and therefore under the

operative influence of the law of inertia is a dull mind incapable of receiving new influences. Similarly, a mind that is positive is also unsuited to the emergence of mutations because of the strong wall of continuity which it maintains. A mind that is receptive and yet not pursuing any particular line supplies the necessary subjective condition for the arrival of mutations. In Buddhist literature there is a doctrine known as the Doctrine of Suchness attributed to Asvaghosa. A statement which appears under this doctrine runs as follows:

A man who is lost goes astray, because he is bent on pursuing a certain direction; and his confusion has no valid foundation other than that he is bent on a certain direction.

Here we have a description of a positive mind bent upon "pursuing a certain direction". It is confused because it is over-confident! It is lost in its own jungle of thoughts, and therefore is unable to find a clear way. It is a mind that is closed; having turned its back on the light it cries out that it is dark!

And so, for psychological mutations, there has to be a mind that is open—or sensitive. Not sensitive to something, but in a state of sensitivity. It is only such a mind that can show forth creative instability. It is not a mind that is set and rigid—but one that is intensely pliable. It is this pliability of the mind which renders it a willing instrument on which Nature can play its own distinctive tune. For a pliable mind new departures are easy, and since mutations indicate new pathways of evolution, it is only such a mind that can register and respond to fundamental transformations. A sensitive mind is humble and therefore willing to learn; and a new quality of life, which a mutation is, can express itself only through a mind that is willing to learn.

Thus, with reference to psychological mutations, the three factors of supreme importance are: The suddenness of arrival,

the inconspicuousness of events and incidents, and the creative instability, sensitivity or pliability of the mind.

In the evolutionary language a mutation is known as a discontinuous variation. It implies that the new characters appearing in mutations are capable of being transmitted from generation to generation. A mutation is a change in the hereditary composition of an organism. Thus, while it is a break from the past, being discontinuous, it initiates a new line of growth and development along which the evolutionary stream can move. As an isolated phenomenon, mutation has no meaning; as such, it would be just a freak of Nature. Now, this is exactly the case with reference to psychological mutations. If the new characters born out of mutations are not heritable, then such a mutant organism is utterly devoid of any significance. If a psychological mutation is to be of any value, it must initiate new lines of thought and action in the life of an individual. It must become the starting-point of a new type of psychological life. Thus, a continuity in the midst of discontinuity is the secret of mutation, and therefore of evolution.

Now, a psychological mutation fulfils a twofold purpose. First, it serves as a point of departure—a starting-point for new lines of thought and action, and second, it serves as a point of integration bringing the scattered parts of the organism into a unified pattern even as a magnet brings the iron filings into a pattern. The very presence of the magnet creates this structural unity. Thus, a psychological mutation serves both as a point of qualitative transformation and as a point of quantitative change. It establishes a nucleus for a new way of life, the while it fashions a structural unity. In other words, the aspects of both discontinuity and heritability are to be seen in a psychological mutation. There is in it a communion with a higher dimension of life, and at the same time there is a communication of the new impulse to all the

levels of man's existence. All the nooks and corners of man's normal consciousness are illumined by the light of the new impact. But there is, at the same time, the starting-point of a new life, the experience of a new dimension of consciousness.

There are instances of individuals who have had some sort of spiritual experience but have found themselves unable to convey its influence to others. Such spiritual experiences may have the element of discontinuity in them, but certainly they are not heritable variations. They may, thus, be described as freaks of Nature. All lower mysticisms are often of this nature where some discontinuity is caused by drugs or mescaline forcing open some of the "doors of perception"—but no new heritable characteristics are received which can be transmitted from generation to generation of thought and action. The next generation of thought and action is not affected at all. Where this happens, no psychological mutation has taken place resulting in fundamental spiritual transformation.

While mutations, whether physical or psychological, must arise in individuals, their impacts and influences permeate the entire species or race-groupings. In the field of human evolution, new race-types must arise only through mutations. But, while such mutant individuals serve as nuclei for new race-types and for new civilizations, they at the same time supply necessary influences for the integration of the existing civilization leading it on to its own heights. A mutant individual is not only a pioneer of a new way of life; he is also one who brings strength and inspiration to those who are engaged in building up the existing civilization. Thus, he is a revolutionary as well as an integrating influence in society. While maintaining a continuity or modified continuity of a structure, he brings into it a new content of consciousness. It is this which makes him, not a destructive, but a constructive revolutionary. If a structure is so rotten that it cannot

be altered in terms of the new consciousness, it must needs be discarded, or it will break down under the impact of the new consciousness. But if the structure is capable of being modified, if it is not too rigid and set, then, under the impact of the new consciousness, it becomes revitalized. The revitalization of existing structure and the forming of a nucleus for a new way of life, and therefore for a new vehicle of consciousness—these are the two major functions of a psychological mutation.

This idea of psychological mutation or jumps in consciousness can become clearer on examining the concept of the group-soul which is a unique contribution of modern Theosophical thought. Modern Theosophy enunciates that animals—and other forms of sub-human life—have group-souls and not an individualized soul such as a human being has. We saw in the earlier part of this discussion that, while animals are moulded by group heredity, it is the human being who has an individualized or psychological heredity. This is displayed by the fact that, while two animals of the same species do not differ from each other in their reactions to environment, human beings do show considerable differences, and the greater the development of the human mind the greater are the differences shown by individuals in their reactions and in their behavior. In fact, man is most unpredictable so far as his reactions are concerned. It is not possible mathematically to forecast the psychological behavior of man. But such is not the case with animals, for they are mostly creatures of environment, moved by conditioned reflexes and biological urges.

Now, the trend of evolution seems to be towards individualization. This process of individualization is to be seen in mineral, vegetable, animal and human forms of life. Be it noted that every transition from one kingdom of Nature to another is through a process of individualization. A distinct

individuality is born in every kingdom of Nature, and it is this that opens out a passage for new types of life or for new dimensions of existence. All major mutations, whether physical or psychological, are through individualizations, while minor mutations lead up to the focusing of the ray of light to the pin-point of individuality. Minor mutations are thus the shadows cast by the coming events which are major mutations. In short, Nature seems to be fulfilling its plan of individualization through mutations. Since man's evolution is largely on the psychological plane, we see in psychological mutations the emergence of man's spiritual individuality.

This process of individualization can be comprehended a little more clearly through the concept of the group-soul. In the earlier stages of animal life, this group-soul is entirely undifferentiated. Gradually, as the animals grow in different climatic and other environment, they show forth modifications in habit. It is through these environmental responses that the first differentiations arise in group-souls. These are in the nature of variations. They do not show forth as yet the arrival of an individualization. Now, such differentiations constantly happen in animal life. Modern science has an exhaustive nomenclature for these differentiations, or classifications, of animal life. The following quotation, from the book *The Marvels and Mysteries of Science*, amply illustrates this particular point:

The Animal Kingdom is divided into two great *Phyla*—the Vertebrates (backboned) and the Invertebrates (backboneless). Each of these is sub-divided into *Classes*, such as Mammals, Birds and Fishes. The classes are divided into *Orders*, such as Carnivora or flesh-eaters and Rodents or gnawers. Each Order is again divided into *Families* such as the *Felidae* or cat family; the *Canidae* or dog family. Each family into *Genera* such as the genus, of *Felis* or true cats; and *Passer*—the true sparrows. Finally, each Genus, or the smallest of these groups, is split into *Species*, each species bearing the generic name in addition to its specific name—for example, *Felis Domesticus*, the household cat. In this way in an orderly manner the whole Animal Kingdom is classified without any confusion.

This scientific classification of animal life is indeed a differentiation of the animal group-soul. By this differentiation the units of life composing a particular group-soul tend to become less and less in number, as the experiences are so varied that they can be shared only by fewer and fewer units of life. A time ultimately arrives when the experience of a particular unit of life is so fundamentally different that it can no longer share its experiences with other units of animal life. It is this experience of a fundamentally different nature which serves as a nucleus for the emergence of a new type of life. This nucleus is the beginning of the process of individualization for the animal life. Such an animal begins to feel lonely in the animal kingdom, it cannot adapt itself to animal environment, and therefore supplies the ground for a major mutation.

Now, what is this "experience of a fundamentally different nature" which makes the animal feel lonely in its own world? It is the coming into living contact with a higher order of existence. When an animal comes into relationship with man, when it receives the warmth of human love and affection, there begins to grow a nucleus of a higher consciousness in that animal. This nucleus grows within the bosom of the group-soul. It is within the bosom of the group-soul that it develops, gathering more and more strength as newer and newer impulses of higher consciousness come from man. This nucleus is, as it were, an impact of human consciousness on animal life. These impacts are minor mutations bringing the animal in contact with a fundamentally different nature of experience and leading that unit of life towards a great change. The effect of these impulses is to be seen in the animal displaying certain human tendencies. The animal is still an animal but a new quality of life is to be seen in him, due to minor mutations caused by the presence of the human individual. Even in these minor mutations there is a jump in

consciousness. The nucleus is like an opening which is made in the animal consciousness by the impacts emanating from human contacts. When the nucleus has gathered sufficient strength, it separates itself from the bosom of the consciousness in which it had so far existed. Then it is that a new vehicle of consciousness is built round it. The nucleus is like a new functioning quality which builds an organism appropriate to its needs and urges. The nucleus of human consciousness created in an animal group-soul by the presence of man serves as a starting-point for the building up of a new vehicle—the human vehicle—in which the new consciousness may be conveniently housed. When the nucleus separates from its animal-casing, there arrives the great event of individualization.

It may be noted here that the new impulse of consciousness must precede the building of a new vehicle meant for the expression of that consciousness. It is not that the vehicle is constructed first and then the life-impulse descends into it. Thus, if the Buddhic vehicle of man is to be built, there must happen the receiving of the Buddhic impact within the consciousness of the mind. Unless a nucleus is formed within the mind, the vehicle of Buddhi or Intuition cannot be created. And the nucleus is the result of mutations bringing impacts of a higher dimension of existence to the human mind.

It is, therefore, of supreme importance that the animal must come in contact with human influences if it is to emerge as an individual from the group-soul. It is not enough that the animal is by the side of a picture or a photograph or an image of the human individual. A pictorial representation of man cannot create factors necessary for the formation of a nucleus. The living touch of man is essential if the animal is to step out of its group-soul. But it is not every animal that responds to human influences. In fact the great giants of the animal world, the most successful units of animal life,

hardly care for human influences. It is the sensitive animal—probably unsuccessful as an animal—that responds to human affection. Thus, it is the inconspicuous animal, ill-adapted to animal environment, possessing an element of creative instability, that responds to human influences. The living touch of man supplies impulse after impulse of a new consciousness so that within the animal a nucleus or centre of human consciousness is created. The animal is initiated into human life although an appropriate human body may come into existence only in due course.

Now, a psychological mutation, which leads to the spiritual individualization of man, follows the same process, namely, the formation of a nucleus and later the building of a new vehicle. This psychological mutation can take place only when the human individual comes into contact with a new ray of Reality—or with a higher order of existence. Once again, a picture or an image of this Reality cannot serve the purpose. A man must come in living touch with Reality or Truth or a Master if he is to move towards spiritual individualization. This is possible only if he shows in his psychological nature this creative instability which is an essential factor for all mutations. It is only in this condition that a jump in consciousness is possible, opening out new pathways of thought and action to man. All original thoughts and actions emanate in this condition, for the mind is transparent and therefore creates no obstruction to the passage of light. All psychological mutations can take place only in the transparency of the mind. It is only when "the thinking faculty is tense and yet not thinking" that there arrives suddenly a new thought or a new mode of action which the conscious mind could never have produced out of its cogitations. All great discoveries in the realm of scientific or metaphysical thought, all masterpieces of art, all actions of a pure and sublime nature are products of psychological mutations. They

arrive in moments of discontinuity. Just as the meaning and purpose of physical evolution is to be found in mutations, similarly the secret of psychological evolution is to be discovered in the gaps or intervals in consciousness. Once again, it is in discontinuity—and not in continuity—that the significance of evolution can be found. Margaret A. Anderson, writing under “Evolutionary Biology” in the book *Where Theosophy and Science Meet*, states:

We can see the Discontinuity principle at work around us. In spiritual things, initiation is just such another sudden change, an expansion on the side of consciousness.

Modern Theosophy speaks of the great Plan. Needless to say, this Plan is to be seen clearly only in mutations where Nature works freely without any interference by the conscious mind. It is in the transparency of the mind that the direction of Nature can be perceived. To co-operate with the Plan is indeed to see and move in the direction indicated by Nature. As such indication is possible only in mutations, these jumps in consciousness are of fundamental importance. In fact they hold the key to the understanding of the Plan. To try to understand the Plan in terms of continuity is to miss the direction along which Nature moves. Where the principle of discontinuity is missed, there one sees invariably the emergence of the conflict of two wills—the will of Nature and the will of man. All trials and tribulations of man in the evolutionary field arise because of this conflict. If only he takes into consideration the principle of discontinuity and perceives the direction of the evolutionary stream through mutations, he will be able to “help Nature and work on with her”. Anticipating thus the steps of Nature, he will be able to speed up the movement of evolution.

The whole concept of mutations, which we have discussed at length, reveals one important fact, and that is the significance of the individual. In the realm of evolutionary

continuity, the individual unit of life is at the mercy of environment—it is only a part of general collectivity. But such is not the case with reference to mutations, for mutation arises only at the individual level and never on a mass scale. Its influence on the mass is due to the new heritable characteristics brought by a mutant organism. Thus it is the individual that shapes the collectivity of life—and not the other way round, as is commonly believed. This creative or revolutionary role of the individual is visible both in physical and in psychological mutations. Since mutation is the dynamic factor in evolution, without which the evolutionary stream would stagnate, the role of the individual indeed becomes most significant. It is only through individuals that fundamental changes at the biological or psychological levels are possible. In terms of variation, the individual tends to become more and more insignificant—just a part of the general scheme. But in terms of mutation, the individual assumes a tremendously dynamic importance, for he is the significant point for the initiation of new lines of evolutionary movement.

Here it may be interesting to note that the great physicist, James Clark Maxwell, has mentioned in his memoirs a remarkable fact drawn from scientific studies which has a bearing on this concept of the significant role of the individual. He says:

Even in the physical world, there are unpredictable moments when a small force may produce not a commensurate small result, but one of far greater magnitude. . . Every existence above a certain rank has singular points: the higher the rank, the more of them. At these points, influences whose physical magnitude is too small to be taken account of by a definite being may produce results of the greatest importance.

It is this theory of the singular point which seems to operate in all mutations, whether physical or psychological. Mutations indicate to us that an individual, who otherwise is unimportant, assumes a tremendous significance under conditions of creative instability. Here something happens through

the individual which he, by his own effort, could never have been able to create. Lewis Mumford in his book, *The Conduct of Life*, says:

... at intervals, at critical moments in crises ... the human personality may produce an effect out of all proportion to its physical powers just as a tiny seed-crystal, dropped into a saturate solution, may cause the whole mass to assume a similar crystalline form.

These intervals or critical moments are breaks in continuity in which alone qualitative changes or mutations can take place. The moment of creative instability is characterized by utter loneliness and it is only in loneliness that creation is possible. The renewal and the revitalization of life is possible only in these intervals. *Light on the Path* says: "The pause of the soul is the moment of wonder." It is a moment of wonder because a mysterious event takes place in this pause—an event that cannot be explained in terms of continuity. It is an event of such great magnitude that with reference to it it is difficult to say whether "the dewdrop slips into the shining sea" or the sea has entered the dewdrop.

ROHIT MEHTA

When you accept the principal ideas of Theosophy—that God exists; that He is all love; that He has planned the salvation of every soul, even the most wicked; that God asks you to co-operate with Him in making your home, your city, your nation a better one where the spirit of Brotherhood among all men shall be the rule of life; that God asks you just now to help Him to make all mankind one, by transcending the dividing lines of race, religion and sex;—when you believe these ideas, will you not find a new joy in every sacrifice which you make, a new consolation in every offering which destiny sends you?

C. JINARAJADASA

THE EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF CREATIVE ALTRUISM

A SYMPOSIUM ON CREATIVE ALTRUISM—II¹

THE SCIENCE OF CREATIVE ALTRUISM

By Neville Reed, A.M.I.E.E., A.M.I.MECH.E.

BEFORE we can assess the value of the "Sorokin Report on Creative Altruism," and the contribution it makes to religious and scientific thought, it will be necessary for us to consider different types of knowledge, and the meanings of the words to which they give rise.

Theosophy has many aspects: two of these are the scientific, and the religious. Though these two parts are closely linked, it is helpful to distinguish their different functions. The scientific aspect is concerned with knowledge, and the religious aspect is concerned with the application of this knowledge to produce desired ends. The scientific aspect itself has many branches, such as, the study of the meanings of words used in Theosophical literature; the techniques for developing certain faculties (for example, Yoga); and the findings of occult investigation.

To consider only the first item—the meanings of words used in Theosophical literature. Because the language used in Theosophy has not grown from a single source, the meanings of its words inevitably became confused. For example, one can detect a "Natural Theosophy" which is the result of occult investigation, and this may be regarded as an extension

¹ Part I appeared in our May issue.

of the natural sciences, such as botany. There is also a "Postulated Theosophy," which is founded on a limited number of basic postulates, and may be regarded as an extension of mathematical science. The situation is not made any easier by the fact that many of the experiences described in our literature are not accessible to the general public. One is reminded of what Humpty-Dumpty (the arch-enemy of terminologists) had to say on the subject: "When *I* use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

It might help if we first considered how a meaning is given to the words used by science. This subject has been investigated by many qualified people, and the analysis by Professor Northrop is probably one of the most penetrating. A brief summary of his views follows: We could go around like a calf with its tongue hanging out, *just experiencing facts*. But the moment we wish to talk or write about our experiences, we must put them into words. Incidentally, this ability to attach a label to an experience is one of the distinctions between human beings and animals.

The first point I wish to make is extremely important. Every common word referring to natural objects, such as the word "table," *has two different and quite distinct meanings*. Much confusion is caused by this use of one word to cover two meanings. They arise because there are two factors in anything we fully know, and these two factors are known in different ways:

(a) The first factor is perceptive knowledge, and the way of knowing it is by immediate perceptive experience.

(b) The second factor is theoretical knowledge, and the way of knowing it is by postulates.

In the words of a well-known song, "You can't have one without the other"; they are like the two sides of a coin, both are present, both exist, and neither can be reduced to, or expressed in terms of, the other.

Perceptive knowledge of the table is the immediately experienced sensations of color, shape, weight, hardness, etc. Perceptive knowledge is the kind of thing which must be experienced to be known; it is subjective in the sense that an observer must be present to experience the perceptions. In Theosophical literature we are familiar with the idea that certain experiences cannot be described in words. The point I wish to make is that *all* perceptive knowledge is of this type. For instance, if a man were blind, no amount of explanation or description in words could convey the experience of "redness". We should be wrong if we were led to believe that only "occult perceptions" could not be described in words. There is a difference between "occult perceptions" and "normal perceptions," but the inability to convey the experience in words is not one of them. All perceptive knowledge shares this common characteristic, that it is the kind of thing which must be immediately experienced to be known.

We will now return to our two factors and ways of knowing. The first factor is perceptive knowledge, and has just been described. The second factor is theoretical and postulated. Having seen and felt the table we infer from our perceptions the existence of a solid right-angled object with legs and so on. This is the theoretical and postulated aspect of the table, whose existence does not depend on an observer. Thus the postulated table has a back and underneath even though I cannot see them. This postulated table would still exist even if there were no observer present to see it. If two people have seen the table, or indeed if they have shared any group of perceptions, and have agreed upon the words that shall refer to these perceptions, then they can talk and write about their experiences; because the particular word recalls a memory of the corresponding perception.

A further point is that postulated knowledge may be of several types, depending on how closely it is linked to

perceptive knowledge. For example, in the postulated knowledge of the natural sciences, such as botany or geology, one starts from groups of perceptions and postulates the existence of objects. This describes the common-sense world of natural science. Secondly, let us consider the postulated knowledge of mathematical science. Here one starts from a limited number of basic postulates, and deduces their consequences. This shows us, for example, the underlying order and unity between the behavior of a star, a pendulum, and a falling apple. Incidentally, whilst there is usually complete agreement between natural and mathematical science, this is not always so. The Michelson-Morley experiment is an example of such discrepancy. For a number of years natural science accepted the facts of the experiment, but mathematical science could not explain it with the basic postulates as they existed at that time. We have another example on our hands at present. A branch of natural science (psychical research) accepts the existence of certain phenomena, but mathematical science cannot explain them.

Both types of knowledge, perceptive and postulated, give rise to their own words. Often however, the *same word* is used in both senses. You will understand how confusion might arise when we have only the one word "table" to refer to two different things; the table as known by perception, and the table as known by postulation. If one uses methods appropriate to one way of knowing, and applies them to the other way of knowing, the result is nonsense. An example is the following statement: "This wave-length is green." It applies a method of knowing, namely, direct perceptive experience, to a word "wave-length," which gets its meaning in a quite different way (such as Maxwell's electro-magnetic theory) and with respect to which verification by immediate apprehension is inappropriate.

We now come to a third point. Once we have separated out, in anything that we know, the perceptive factor from the postulated, the problem is to determine the relationship between them. There are various ways in which these two types of knowledge have been considered to be related; some of these ways are right and some wrong. By this I mean that it is not a question of personal choice or preference. It happens that an analysis of the method of mathematical physics gives us an answer to this problem. This has to be the case because physics deals with both types of knowledge. The investigation reveals a *two-termed* relation. For example, points on a map bear a one-one relationship with the corresponding points in the country shown on the map, so this is a two-termed relation.

For about 2,000 years philosophers held the belief that there was a *three-termed* relation of appearance to reality; the objects in "real" space and time being the first term, the particular observer being the second term, and the sense data in the continuum of perceptive experience being the third term. This we now know to be an error. Analysis of the method of mathematical physics shows in a non-speculative manner that the two-termed relation of correspondences applies, not the three-termed relation of appearance. Items in postulated knowledge are related to items in perceptive knowledge by means of correspondences. There are various types of correspondences and I will give you an example of one such type: electrical impulses in the brain are the items in postulated knowledge corresponding to the experience of redness. Postulated knowledge cannot be experienced, and so it cannot be *directly* verified, but it can be *indirectly* verified by scientific experiments.

So far we have been considering how science gives meanings to its various words. *We are now in a position to extend this method into the range of experiences frequently described*

in *Theosophical literature*. This is in fact the purpose of this paper.

Perceptive knowledge itself may be classified according to the different types of impressions. From the multitude of impressions which impinge upon the individual, a certain group of them stand out from the remainder by virtue of their stability and insistence. It is found that a similar group of impressions is also shared by other members of the public; so it is called public perceptive knowledge. If we all looked at a red object, most of us would experience the sensations of redness. The postulated knowledge which corresponds with public perceptions is the common-sense physical world. *All* the impressions which impinge upon the individual are not of this class of public perceptions. Some of them are private to the individual; and the postulated knowledge which corresponds with private perceptions is the world of memories, imaginations and dreams.

We now come to a fourth point. We suggest that these two classes, public and private, do not account for *all* the impressions which impinge on the individual. It is necessary to introduce a third category, namely, *semi-public* perceptive knowledge. By semi-public we mean the "occult experiences" of Theosophical literature. Some perceptions cannot be classed as public because only a few individuals share these experiences. Neither can they be classed as private, because they are not restricted to one individual. The postulated knowledge which corresponds with these semi-public perceptions is covered by a range of phenomena, and is summarized in the third Object of the Society as "unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man".

Science is mainly concerned with public perceptions. In explaining these it comes up against certain phenomena it cannot explain. And also there are a few individuals whose experiences cannot be classed as entirely public nor entirely

private. Various religious and philosophical schools and also Theosophical writers have attempted to explain such phenomena, and cater for these individuals by introducing their own particular words. This is the major problem in any comparative study of religions, philosophies and science. Unfortunately, the various words, although possessing a meaning within any particular discipline, present difficulties when one tries to relate them meaningfully to words from other disciplines. To consider just one such word, namely, "spirit". As it refers to an immediate, perceptive experience, it shares the characteristic of all perceptive knowledge in that no description in words or theoretical explanation can convey the experience. It differs from public perceptions in that the word does not recall a memory of the experience to most people, simply because most people have not had the experience.

We are now in a position to understand the implications of the "Sorokin Report on Creative Altruism". It is an attempt to determine, by investigation and experiment, the factors in *public* knowledge which are associated with the *semi-public* knowledge of spiritual experiences. There is a risk that Theosophists might be tempted to under-estimate the value of the work recorded in this report. We might express ourselves something like this: "We all know that the cultivation of altruism is a good thing, but it seems rather pointless to spend so much time and effort merely to try and prove something that is so obvious." The point I wish to make is that the report performs something of greater importance than merely showing that altruism is a good thing. It is an attempt, using the scientific method, to relate semi-public experiences with public experiences. Furthermore, it provides a method whereby words which derive their meaning from the language of religion are related in a meaningful manner to words which derive their meaning from the language of science.

This leads to a fifth point. There are many evidences cited for such semi-public knowledge; these include:

(1) Description and reports by individuals who have had the experience. These often take the form of poetry, analogies, and imaginative expressions.

(2) The overt behavior of individuals who have had such experiences as shown by their expression of creative altruism. The life of Dr. Schweitzer is a good example.

(3) Psycho-physical effects as recorded on instruments, e.g., the electrical impulses from the brain of a yogi when he is in a state of trance.

The findings of the report are positive. There *are* public factors associated with spiritual experiences.

The final point to make is this: If an individual has not had a particular experience, then although the word referring to such an experience does not recall a memory, it is not necessarily useless to him, e.g., if a person were color-blind, the word "red" would nevertheless help him to understand the behavior of traffic at a crossing. Similarly, if a person had not had a particular spiritual experience, the word referring to it might still be of value if it formed part of a complete conceptual system whereby certain phenomena become understandable, and without which the phenomena would remain unexplained.

To summarize our six main points:

1. There are two factors and ways of knowing: by Perception and by Postulation.

2. Postulated knowledge is of several types, e.g., Natural Science and Mathematical Science.

3. Items in postulated knowledge are related to items in perceptive knowledge by means of two-termed correspondences.

4. Perceptive impressions can be classified as public, semi-public, or private.

5. Items in semi-public knowledge (e.g., spiritual experiences) are associated with items in public knowledge (e.g., overt behavior).

6. If a person has not had a particular experience, the word referring to it may still be of value if it forms part of a complete conceptual system, whereby certain phenomena become understandable.

NEVILLE REED

WILL AND DESIRE

Will is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

Desire, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore will and desire are here considered as opposed.

Thus will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; desire the motive power of the animal life.

Most men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable and ever changing, while will is steady and constant.

Both will and desire are absolute *creators*, forming the man himself and his surroundings. But will creates intelligently—desire blindly and unconsciously. The man, therefore, makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light.

His task is twofold: to awaken the will, to strengthen it by use and conquest, to make it absolute ruler within his body; and, parallel with this, to purify desire.

Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification.

Lucifer, October 1887

MEMBERSHIP IN THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY¹

BY SHRIDEVI MEHTA

I WISH to consider briefly a challenge and its implications to all of us who value our membership in the Theosophical Society. The challenge may be stated thus: All organizations, spiritual and religious, including the Theosophical Society, are means of exploitation.

In order to consider this question as to whether there is a process of exploitation in our membership of the Theosophical Society, I feel it is very essential to know, first of all, what is an organization. It is quite evident, if we think of it even superficially, that by itself an organization has no distinctive or separate existence. When we say "organization," the picture that comes to mind is of a physical property; whether it is a Lodge, or some other association, our immediate reaction is that of property—building, furniture, and, if we are secretaries, piles of correspondence.

Then there are the principles and the ideas which are embodied, for which the organization stands, and also the persons who form the organization and participate in its work. When we think of an association, this threefold composition comes into our minds—that of a triangle. Two sides of this organizational triangle are the property and

¹ From a talk during the International Convention, 1956.

the principles; its third side, the base, is the persons. It is quite clear that the first two sides of the triangle do not by themselves create a process of exploitation. From a common-sense point of view one realizes that property is lifeless; and the principles and concepts are intangible, abstract. We cannot hold them. Therefore it is the interaction between the people and the property and the principles that creates or does not create the process of exploitation.

As we look around and also into ourselves we find that there are two kinds of people that form an organization. The first kind consists of those who dominate, who wish to rule. We can think of quite a substantial section of people within our experience who take pleasure in dominating others with their capacities, with their knowledge, with some kind of backing that is theirs. We ourselves, if it is within our power, tend to do the same thing. Then we find another class of people who wish to obey, to follow, who do not want to take any trouble for themselves. They do not want to think, they just want to be told. They feel too lazy to take the initiative in a particular piece of work. They would rather be told what to do and then finish the job, going home to sleep or think no more of the work. We find these two kinds of people in organizations when we look at the base of the triangle.

The resultant evil of this process is mutual dependence. I am deliberately using this phrase "mutual dependence". It is not merely that the followers depend upon the leaders, but the leaders also equally depend upon the followers. Both have to live up to a particular standard. There is exploitation for one's pleasure, for one's sense of security and protection. People depend upon each other; without their always being aware of it, they often act the role of parasites drawing life from each other for their own existence.

This is not an academic question. We are considering this problem in connection with our membership in the

Theosophical Society. So the question that naturally arises is: Does membership in the Theosophical Society lead one to dependence? If it does, then it would seem such an organization is a means of exploitation. But in order to consider this question carefully, it is very necessary for us to know what it is that the Theosophical Society gives to us as members.

Surely you will understand and you will agree that membership in the Society gives no material security. It is just the other way: we have to be out of pocket as members of the Society! Secondly, no particular status or position is gained by being in the Society. In many places in India, if you are known as members of the Theosophical Society you are not because of it specially noticed. If you are members of some prominent club, then your status is enhanced, increased. We do not have any position or status in religious bodies either, because we are not regarded as orthodox religious people; we do not conform to the old patterns of religious life, so we are out of that also. We are not usually respected by orthodox religious people. Nor is our position accepted by the so-called progressive and philosophically revolutionary groups. Thirdly, we find that the Theosophical Society does not give any promises and hopes for the development of supernatural powers. In order that an organization may overflow with members, it needs only to hint at the development of supernatural powers; but the Theosophical Society gives no such promise. Even in the days of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott when various phenomena used to be performed, it is recorded in *Old Diary Leaves* that H.P.B. refused to perform phenomena even when a Mahārāja asked her as a condition for his joining the Society. Even in those days the development of supernatural powers was not held up as an attractive toy in order to draw people into the Theosophical Society.

There are no patterns of worship we are asked to follow—we may follow some but we are not asked to follow any. But

many people may ask: What about all those concepts, the ideas that are given in Theosophical literature? We must remember that the ideas about Reincarnation, Karma and so on are a particular presentation of certain members of the Theosophical Society. We may accept them, we may not accept them; and yet we are free to remain members of the Theosophical Society.

The Theosophical Society can never be considered as a body practising a personality cult. There are no idols. I would once again refer you to *Old Diary Leaves* where Colonel Olcott has drawn our attention to the human frailty of seeking security and creating idols. We know what reverence he had for H. P. B., how much esteem he had for Dr. Besant; yet he sounded a warning to the members then that we should never make these great personalities into idols. Colonel Olcott wrote:

Our efforts should be to spread everywhere among our sympathizers the belief that each one must work out his own salvation, that there can be no progress whatsoever without effort, and that nothing is so pernicious, nothing is so weakening, as the encouragement of the spirit of dependence upon another, upon another's wisdom, another's righteousness. It is a most pernicious thing and paralyzes all effort.

We may learn from others, but when we begin to depend upon another person for righteousness and wisdom, then we are in grave danger of paralyzing our effort. Therefore we can very safely say that the spirit of freedom which has pervaded the Society from its very inception is its most precious gift to the members. Strictly speaking, we cannot say that the Society gives this freedom. Freedom can never be given by an organization; but the Theosophical Society indicates to us the path of freedom. The inculcation of the spirit of freedom has been an uninterrupted work of the leaders and the earnest workers of the Society from its founding to the present. The work has been done steadily and *silently*. There has not been a splash as regards the inculcation of this spirit of freedom. Nevertheless the work has been going on silently and steadily all these eighty-one years.

The significance of the emphasis on freedom in the Society has to be viewed against the background of present-day world conditions. We find in the world today that, on the one hand, there is a systematic attempt to accomplish the regimentation of the human mind. Yet, on the other hand, we note that in the midst of the process of exploitation of the human mind, there is in an ever-increasing measure an irresistible urge, a longing for freedom. A larger and larger number of people are responding to this basic need of human existence. After all we could never be really happy even though we had many things if there were no freedom to live, no freedom to think and to express ourselves as we would like to.

SHRIDEVI MEHTA

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The first necessity for obtaining self-knowledge is to become profoundly conscious of ignorance; to feel with every fibre of the heart that one is *ceaselessly* self-deceived.

The second requisite is the still deeper conviction that such knowledge—such intuitive and certain knowledge—can be obtained by effort.

The third and most important is an indomitable determination to obtain and face that knowledge.

Self-knowledge of this kind is unattainable by what men usually call "self-analysis". It is not reached by reasoning or any brain process; for it is the awakening to consciousness of the divine nature of man.

To obtain this knowledge is a greater achievement than to command the elements or to know the future.

Lucifer, October 1887

MYSTICISM AND CULTURE¹

By K. R. R. SASTRY

MYSTICISM has no genealogy. It is a state of thinking and feeling which is natural to persons of a certain temperament—of any period or place, both in the Occident and the Orient. The mystics constitute a musical band of God, and each contributes his note in such a way that the whole becomes "a harmony and a symphony wonderful".

There is nothing mysterious about mysticism. A mystic is one who knows the Divine by his inner light; to him, the Infinite and Eternal is no mere article of faith but an experience. This knowledge and integrated experience can be juxtaposed to culture, reason, science and philosophy. It has to be projected in three-dimensional space. Mysticism gets its expression in poetry, sculpture, painting, architecture and culture.

Limiting one's jurisdiction to the impact of mysticism on culture, the difficulty has to be faced: And what is culture? It is not a matter of garments, or words, or deeds, or all these combined, but culture is something that arises from within. Do we not have it from our mothers? Is it not developed before one's teens? How then may we define it?

Let us dive deeper. An educated person is not necessarily cultured; personal cleanliness can go with social unawareness. Nor is an unsophisticated Indian villager uncultured. A Hindu

¹ By courtesy of the All-India Radio.

may take pride in his spirituality. A Christian, thriving in endless rounds of activity, may forget the Christ in him. A Muslim practising brotherhood may not extend the terrain of such a noble attitude. A Buddhist and Jain trying to excel in mercy may make it a fetish. But a cultured person is recognizable at first sight. In that person is found sweetness and truth. The mystics of the Upanishads, the Tamil saints and Siddhas, the Hebrew, Greek and Christian mystics, the Sufis, the Maharāshtrian and Canarese mystics and those of Aryavarta have never been properly understood. Are they all emotionally unbalanced victims of neurotic disorders? Did the Lord choose only cracked vessels into which He could pour His good wine?

The mystics have a twofold interest for us: First, on the evidence of the known facts of their lives, they are remarkable individuals of exemplary character and deep culture. Second, their unique spiritual experiences are offered to us as "objective truth".

Such records as are available of these mystics transcend or challenge the laws of Nature known thus far to us. Is there not a condition of sanctity distinguishing the select from the rest of mankind? A mystic state is achievable wherein the mystic is completely absorbed into the Deity.

Whether one reads of the life of Nammālvar the Vaishnavite mystic of South India, of the first Shankarāchārya, of Mānickavāchakar the Pāndyan minister, of Andal in the south, of Mīrabai, the Rajput queen, or of Pattinathār, the multi-millionaire who turned mystic in the fifteenth century, their experiences, as they have reached us, can only be termed super-human. Can we say that the dirty water of a stagnant pool is the same as the sparkling streams in Rishikesh or Kashmir? Swāmi Rāmakrishna Paramahansa declared—after running through experiences as a Hindu, a Christian, a Muslim and even as a woman—that there is a difference between dedicated food and rejected stuff. Have not people received solace in

the immediate presence of the late Maharishi Ramana with his eyes looking into Infinity? Mystical experience consists in the penetration of consciousness or awareness into the region of super-consciousness, and brings with it a sense of expansion of being and increase of understanding so extraordinary that no words can adequately describe that state or experience.

What does happen to such an individual? Iron, when it becomes red-hot, seems to be turned into pure fire, but remains no less iron than before. So when rational beings pass into God they do not lose their identity, but pursue it in a higher state of being. Consciousness is inert in the mineral, it is manifest somewhat in the plant, it is exhibited well in the animal, in the human being alone it becomes *self-consciousness*. Consciousness is the very essence of what is termed the soul. Omniscience is a fruit in the garden of super-consciousness. The potential then becomes the actual.

Parapsychology and the psychology of the super-conscious will present the mystics in a new light. Seen as a reasonable outcome of many lives of trial and error in spiritual development, the psychology of mysticism is explicable as the direct, immediate, first-hand apprehension of God.

Culture comes in here; how to educate the ego? The mystic educates his ego to transform its self-interest into an organ of revelation of the Infinite Being. The mystic's life is one of affection for the universe. It flows out of what Shankara calls Introversion. As regards what is the centre of religiousness so far as spiritual culture is concerned, let the greatest scientist of the age, Einstein, answer:

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He, to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms; this knowledge, this feeling, is at the centre of true religiousness.

As Niels Bohr put it, "we are both spectators and actors in the great drama of existence". What have been the impacts of mysticism on cultural patterns of different ages? It is like asking, do the birds leave behind tracks in the air? Do fish leave behind a trail in water? Have the mystics of all ages left behind foot-prints in the sands of time?

In a sense, the answer is, Yes; in another sense, No. A mystic, immersed in ecstatic devotion, may leave behind love-laden lyrics. We venerate him, repeat them, and get sublimated in the process. Such in India have been the poems of Valmiki, the *Ramayana* of Kambar, the *Rama-Charit-Manas* of Tulsidas, and 24,000 songs of Saint Thiyāgarāja.

The mainsprings of spiritual expression of the age have been the lasting impressions of the lives of these mystics. All religious ceremonies are based on symbols, the projections left behind by these adepts. C. Jinarājādāsa rightly included ceremonial mysticism in his book on *The Nature of Mysticism*.

Annie Besant, herself a fruition to mellowness through rebellion, trial, tribulation and achievement, was a shining example of mysticism turned to activism, as was Ignatius Loyola. Thus the immortal lives of these mystics have revolutionized the cultural patterns of India, China, Egypt, Greece and Rome through a timely reminder that man is Spirit encased in a body.

What more can anyone do on this plane than try to be and then to make? The former is the path of mysticism; the latter, making immortal forms of clay, the baked clay for which the potter has no use, is culture.

And how does one cultivate this wonderful plant? With truth as plough, singular yearning as seed, removing the weeds of untruth, with patience to water it, self-knowledge to see it, and self-control to fence it—steadfast will grow the plant of Self-Realization.

K. R. R. SASTRY

HABIT, TRADITION, INSTINCT

By R. J. ROBERTS

CONSCIOUSNESS appears as the activity aspect of some unit of self-awareness or life. Without some activity within this unit, or between it and its environment, whatever this environment may be, there appears no possibility of a self-conscious life, as we may see it. Self becomes a basic form or unit of life which, in itself, in some way is aware of itself. This awareness of self, for some purpose within and cognate with its own being, has created a transient personality consisting of an awareness appearing as the activity forms of thought, emotion and sensation. These forms of awareness have each a formal instrument through which the powers of life may flow and produce its particular form of self-awareness as personal self-consciousness in thought, emotion and sensation. Having created the personality, the unit of self-awareness or life insists that it should be as greatly and as continuously active as the combined instruments are capable of supporting. Further, as and when each personality has attained and produced the utmost intensity of activity of which it is capable, the life-unit releases or destroys that instrument and in all probability creates a new one.

The life or activity of the personality can be seen as a dance, or play, within and between the worlds of sense, emotion and thought, wherein the whole is empowered, observed and controlled by the unit of self-awareness we call the Self. This greater Self now appears to us as the Essential Intelligence behind and within each and every activity of the personality.

The Self then appears as a Sun, and the personality as a planet, in that great ocean of space we call life. Space, our material space, is simply that unperceived ocean of life within which we all live and have our being. The life of the personality appears as a series of innumerable changes, within the activities and inter-activities of those types of self-consciousness we know as thought, emotion and sensation, and as actions and reactions within their three worlds. It is scarcely possible to conceive an instrument for these activities without postulating at the same time a world for their playing, similar to the physical world of sense we know so well.

Having performed some integrated action a great number of times, the personality has been seen to acquire a self-capacity to repeat this action with a relatively small amount of conscious supervision. Having thus grown only partially conscious of it, we call it a garment for the personal life, in fact a habit. These habits appear to wear circular grooves or tracks in the personal instruments and in their environmental worlds, such that any impressed life-impulse from the Self very readily takes the same route. The basic purpose, or spring to every action, is to provide some element of satisfaction for the Self, and is perceived by the personality as happiness. The purpose within these habits, since their several repetitions can provide apparently only small amounts of satisfaction for the Self, must surely lie within that general scheme of life of the Self, which, to the personal self-consciousness, seems so inscrutable. All habits are repetitive actions of the total personality, although some appear dominantly physical, others emotional, and a few mental; but all, since our waking consciousness is dominated by the physical, must possess physical expressions to be cognizable. Nevertheless, habits appear as reflections of some fixed ideas, dogmas, customs and traditions.

Tradition is the ideological form of habit and has other forms; but these appear always, with the assumed agreement

of the Self, to demand some form of behavior, or formalized expression of life, from the personality. We have family, social, racial, national, religious, professional and many more traditions which prescribe our personal behavior in many directions and manners. Since they are each an expression of a popular, rather than individual, form of behavior, they possess all the characteristics of habit.

Look now at many of our popular traditions, more analytically than is possible from simple historical recordings; and we shall find in them a definite evolutionary descent. Primarily there was a great Teacher who taught some canon of behavior. In its descent through the centuries, ages even, all memory of the source and the original form of this teaching was lost, or possibly distorted, but its essence has remained quite definitely as a tradition. Ultimately this tradition will have sunk so deeply into what we might call the race-subconsciousness, that it now appears and operates as an instinct. An instinct can be defined as a form of action or behavior performed easily and readily by the individual, without reference by him to any vivid memory of traditions or similar circumstances, but as an action performed precipitately and involuntarily.

Memory serves to recall and repetition to strengthen and perpetuate a teaching. Common acknowledgment and application of the teaching may transform it into a tradition. Active and vivid within a race or great people, through many generations, perhaps unto thousands of years, a tradition becomes ultimately instinctive.

Let us now attempt some understanding of the evolutionary development of these limiting and encouraging forms of behavior. A teaching is accepted as an idea capable of expression in actions having reactions or responses at once desirable and good. In the course of generations this teaching becomes a tradition. Desirability, whether as a teaching

or tradition, in time assumes a fixed emotional form; and with each application, every tradition becomes ever stronger and more stabilized, takes a still firmer grip of the community.

All strong tradition, with the passing of generations, becomes more and more stabilized, so that it takes on every appearance of an instinct. No longer a characteristic confined to a single people, it may be found to have appeared among other peoples of a race which had known no such tradition and its precedent teaching. Due, possibly, merely to the force of example, through social impact of one people upon another, there is also the agreeable probability that re-incarnating Egos have impressed the instinct upon their new personalities. Were this so, and there is what may be considered as evidence to support the idea, an instinct can be seen as a fixed tradition which, through its use in many succeeding personalities, has become a habit, as it were, in the Self. Is this entirely unacceptable?

Some instincts, like self-preservation, family unity, sex-attraction even, the perception of rhythm and melody, perhaps heart-beat and breathing, may all have become instinctive through tradition from some long-forgotten teaching to infant humanity. Today there are traditions so fixed and rigid that, having become noticeably instinctive in the majority of some races, they are also appearing as instinctive amid peoples whose ancestors had never known the teaching from which the tradition had been derived. As such we note the growth of chivalry, hospitality, monogamy possibly, the decency of dealing we know as "cricket," and many others; and then could we honestly assert that tradition, even teaching, has no purpose or contributing factors for the upward evolving of mankind? All is not, very definitely, merely the unguided sifting out of the good from the evil in evolution.

R. J. Bonham

MYSTERIES OF THE ANCIENT MAYAS

By HELEN V. ZAHARA

IN Central America there developed and flourished many centuries ago the great Maya-Quiché civilizations, and in the jungles and highlands there are some fabulous ruins. Some of them are almost inaccessible, and are visited by only the most intrepid archaeologists and explorers, who are unable to prevent many temples, palaces and religious centres from disappearing under the relentless growth of the tropical jungles. From time to time new ruins are found, both in Guatemala and in nearby parts of Mexico, and it was in fact only in 1946 that the temple of Bonampak was discovered in Mexico and revealed some of the most exquisite examples of Mayan art.

One day, while wandering through the archaeological museum in Guatemala City, gazing in wonder at some of the treasures of sculpture, jewellery, pottery and other magnificent relics of ancient Mayan civilization, I caught sight of a beautiful sculptured frieze, carved in relief, of a group of figures moving along as in a procession, their arms crossed over their breasts, very similar to many of the figures to be seen on the tombs and sculpture of ancient Egypt. The likeness was so striking that it did not seem to be only a coincidence, and a few days later, visiting some of the archaeological ruins of Mayan culture in the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico—Chichen Itzá and Uxmal—I found more and more symbols in their pyramids, temples and sculpture generally, which would seem

to give evidence in support of the theory of Atlantis, and the possibility of links between the ancient cultures of Central America and those of other parts of the world. There was also strong evidence to indicate that the Mayan people were in possession of the ancient mysteries, and that they had received them from the same source as the ancient Egyptians, and had practised and developed them in a corresponding manner. This is of course in accordance with occult tradition, and in *The Secret Doctrine* Madame Blavatsky refers to the pyramids scattered through Mexico and Central America as "lodges of an ancient Initiation," the mysteries having been "carried into South and Central America, northern Mexico and Peru by the Atlanteans".

The Mayan civilization reached a great height; furthermore, not only with its splendid sculpture and art, but in the development of agriculture and in an intellectual grasp of astronomy which astounds great minds today. Apparently they had developed a philosophy embracing the passage of time, and were perhaps searching for a conception of eternity and a way of expressing it in stone. They explored deeply into the past, marking on their stelae and altars hieroglyphics depicting the various stages or epochs of time, carried by divine bearers. Writing in his book, *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization*, J. Eric S. Thompson, an archaeologist, tells us:

One inscription probes 90,000,000 years into the past, and another sweeps back some 400,000,000 years. The accompanying glyphs record that the starting-points of those calculations were thousands of millions more years in the past.

The calculations move into the future also, but not to such a great extent.

The intellectual feats of the Mayan priest-astronomers included the construction of a table for predicting the appearance of solar eclipses, observations concerning the synodical revolutions of Venus, and the knowledge of the length of a tropical

year. Every piece of Mayan sculpture, every frieze, ornament or relief, was part of their great calendar in stone, and the correlation of their art and architecture with their astronomical calculations and calendar was quite remarkable, apart from the representations of ancient symbols with obviously mystical and occult meaning. C. W. Ceram, in his *Gods, Graves and Scholars*, points out that the Mayan calendar was the best in the world and more accurate than the Gregorian calendar used by our modern civilization today. An absolute year sidereally reckoned covers 365.242,198 days, whereas the Gregorian calendar gives a period of 365.242,500 days, and the Mayan year is 365.242,129 days. We can see, therefore, that the Mayan reckoning was nearer to the correct figure, indicating the great degree of accuracy achieved by the Mayan astronomers.

In addition to the solar or vague year of 365 days, the Mayas had a 260-day sacred almanac. They had also a cycle known as the "calendar round," which signified the period required for the coincidence of a particular date in one system and a particular date in another system to recur. This period is 18,980 days, or 52 years of 365 days each. They had also worked out, through long observation, that it took 37,960 days for the different cycles of the sacred almanac, the revolutions of Venus, and the solar year to reach the same point—quite an intellectual achievement.

Scholars unravelling the inscriptions on the stelae and the hieroglyphics on the Dresden Codex say that it must have required many generations of observers to reach the final accuracy which was achieved. All this indicates that this was a highly developed civilization, and it would not be surprising that the priests were in possession of occult knowledge, apart from their astronomical achievements, and the archaeological remains certainly can lead to a belief that this was the case.

According to modern archaeology, the formative period of the Mayan civilization was from about 500 B.C. to A.D. 325, and the classic period was from then until about A.D. 925, when it reached its height and afterwards began to decline. It is difficult to have any final knowledge about the exact dates, those given having been arrived at from the deciphering of various glyphs and inscriptions, from the three remaining codices and from legend.

Not all legend, however, agrees with these dates, and occult tradition carries the time of the Mayan civilization to a much earlier date, running into thousands of years.

Augustus Le Plongeon, an archaeologist who explored the Mayan ruins somewhere about 1880, and who is frequently quoted by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, was firmly convinced that the Egyptians received their knowledge from the Mayas, and he has written a book, *Sacred Mysteries among the Mayas and the Quichés*, attempting to prove his thesis, and showing the relation of the mysteries of the Mayas and Quichés to the sacred mysteries of Egypt, Greece, Chaldea and India. According to his ideas, the Mayan civilization flourished something like 11,500 years ago. His theories are not taken seriously by modern archaeologists, but according to the occult teaching the Mayas formed part of the third sub-race of the Fourth Root Race, and therefore Le Plongeon may have been nearer the truth concerning the date than that suggested by present-day archaeologists. His theory, however, that the mysteries actually originated with the Mayas and spread from Central America to Egypt and other parts, is not quite so convincing. Madame Blavatsky, who says they were carried there by the Atlanteans, declares further:

It was from divine Teachers and Instructors of Mankind, "sons of God," that infant humanity learned its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge; and it is they who laid the first foundation-stone of those ancient civilizations that so sorely puzzle our modern generation of students and scholars.

If this were the fact, that would provide a logical explanation for the appearance of similar symbols and teachings in so many diverse cultures.

When we study the *Popul-Vuh*, the scripture of the Quiché-Maya, we find that there is a startling similarity to the narrative in *Genesis* concerning the story of creation, and to other symbolic teachings of the Jewish sacred books, including the story of the great flood. Madame Blavatsky goes to the extent of declaring that there is sufficient evidence in the fragments left of the original *Popul-Vuh* to indicate that the religious customs of the Mexicans, Peruvians and other American races are nearly identical with those of the ancient Phoenicians, Babylonians and Egyptians. The similarities of the rites, ceremonies, traditions, and even the names of the deities, are too frequent to be dismissed as merely coincidence. Furthermore, there are so many resemblances in the two narratives, apart from apparent links with Egypt and other ancient cultures, that it is difficult to avoid the possibility that Madame Blavatsky spoke truly when she wrote of the divine Teachers who gave humanity its esoteric knowledge, and who taught the initiated priest-architects, justly called "The Builders". From them, she says, came the knowledge of proportion, in the rules of which is hidden deep esoteric significance, and which are preserved in the architecture of so many of the ancient ruins, including of course those of the Mayas, which astound modern architects and craftsmen.

There is one interesting piece of evidence which C. W. Ceram points out, which indicates that the Mexican civilizations are much older than is generally believed. At the southern limits of Mexico City there is the Pyramid of Cuicuilco, rising out of a weird, stony landscape. Ceram writes:

At one time the volcanoes Ajusco and Xitli (perhaps only the latter) erupted, and afterwards the pyramid was drowned in the flood of lava. The archaeologists investigating this phenomena called on colleagues from

another faculty, the geologists, for help. "How old is the lava?" they inquired. The geologists, not realizing that their answer was knocking awry a picture of world history, answered: "Eight thousand years." . . . It means that the early American culture is a thousand years older than any yet disclosed by the archaeologist's spade in the Old World: older than Sumer and Akkad, than Babylonia, than Egypt, and much older than Greece, a name that we instinctively connect with the "classical period" of antiquity.

Occult tradition of course takes back some of these civilizations, particularly Egypt, much further in time than does modern archaeology, and the disclosure of the age of the pyramid mentioned above lends support to this tradition, particularly as far as Mexico is concerned.

In his book, *People of the Serpent*, Edward Herbert Thompson, an archaeologist who lived amongst the descendants of the Maya people for more than forty years, says that "Toltec and Aztec legends, as well as the local folklore of the region, agree that the dark-skinned natives were led by fair men who were called Chanes—People of the Serpent—who landed from a ship at Tamoanchan". Thus, the Mayas, he points out, like the Pilgrims, had their Plymouth Rock, and "the devotees of the 'Lost Atlantis' theory one more argument". There are many legends of Quetzalcoatl, whose symbol is the feathered serpent so frequently depicted, who was said to be a white man, who came from over the sea, and was revered as a great and wise Teacher.

Apart from the appearance of the serpent as an ancient symbol, there are to be found many more interesting symbols, including the equilateral triangle, the interlaced triangles, the square, the Tau cross and the twelve divisions of the Zodiac. The sun as the giver of life of course plays a prominent part, as these people were sun-worshippers, as were the Egyptians and the Incas. Another symbol which appears in so many ancient cultures is that of the sacred number 7, and we find that the septenary system was also adopted in the Mayan

civilization. In the *Popul-Vuh* there are seven members of the family of King Can, who became the rulers of seven cities, just as in Egyptian tradition there were seven divine rulers, and in the Christian cosmology the Seven Spirits before the Throne. There are innumerable other examples of the number 7 appearing in various traditions through the centuries.

It is said that there still exists a centre of Adept life in Yucatan, and Geoffrey Hodson in his *Lecture Notes*, Vol. I, referring to this writes:

— There is said to be, as in Egypt, a remaining centre of Adept activity called the Brotherhood of Yucatan. These are fourth Root Race Initiates who are partly responsible for the evolution of the remainder of the fourth Root Race people in America, such as Mayans, Incas and the North American Indian Redmen, the Toltecs.

Perhaps this centre was established after the breaking up of Atlantis.

Referring again to similarities in various symbols, it is interesting to note that the symbol of the chakra so prominent in Indian art and sculpture, taught in Occultism as relating to certain vortices or force-centres in the subtler bodies of man, is found prominently displayed in the Mayan pyramids and temples. It is also depicted clearly at the solar plexus and at the top of the head on many carved stone figures called Chac-mools. There is often to be seen too the body of the serpent in Mayan sculpture, depicted with three lines running its full length, presumably relating to the three aspects of the unseen but powerful force in man known in the East as *kundalini*, or the serpent-fire.

The student can go on indefinitely finding many interesting and fascinating correspondences and similarities between ancient Egyptian, Indian and other cultures of the past and that of the Mayan. Apart from the symbology, the intellectual achievements, and the indications of ancient mysteries and ceremonies, there are some marvellous examples of Mayan

art. In the temple of Bonampak the frescoed rooms, with scenes of splendour painted around the walls, show purity of color, control of design, and a feeling of movement and life, which have led experts to place Mayan culture at the same aesthetic level as Egypt and Greece. The colossal pyramids, imposing temples and other archaeological ruins, with their rich and elaborate architecture displaying ornamented carved façades, panels, lintels, arches, walls and ceilings, also indicate that the civilization of the ancient Mayas was one of much pomp and splendour before falling into decay. For the student of Theosophy there is a rich field for research and study, and many of the secrets and mysteries of these ancient people have yet to be revealed.

HELEN V. ZAHARA

THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

(In memory of a lecture)

"The Holy Grail is here; within us all,"
Was what he said. And then he raised his hands,
And touched his head! And yet in distant lands
The search has been. When good men felt the call
To find the thing they revered most of all,
They joined together in crusading bands,
To nobly die, if need be, in far lands;
For to the Quest they did surrender all.

Why is it men so far afield have sought,
For that so near at home; the light of life,
Within the self, wherever men may roam?

Why were so many bloody battles fought,
For this most holy thing, beyond all strife,
The Grail that once again will lead us home?

NELLIE POOL

OUR WORK IN A CHANGING WORLD¹

By GOOL K. MINWALLA

ABOUT fifty years ago, Dr. Annie Besant, in her brilliant lectures on "The Changing World," describing the passing of an age and the birth of a new civilization, stated that the changes through which the world was then passing were not minor changes which must come with the living of human beings in this vast world, but that these changes were such as follow a period of long and calm development, for the destruction of an age, a civilization, in order to build new forms and new expressions for new needs. Since that declaration by Dr. Besant, we have seen in the last few decades changes in all human activity which are cataclysmic, changes which have stirred the thought of humanity and influenced human beings in large masses throughout the world. The most striking fact with which the civilized world is continually confronted at the present time is the crumbling of the values of life which had held their own for centuries. These old values embodied in traditions, customs, religious beliefs and ideas of security in well-established institutions of life, like marriage or the unity of the family—all these are undergoing a radical change. And these changes are making problems that seem dangerous, that make us wonder what the destiny or future of the human race holds for us.

¹ From a talk during the International Convention, 1956.

In the world today we see a widespread disintegration or degeneration, both in the field of art and in the integration of society. We see that the sense of fear and insecurity has entered the hearts of human beings. Science has made the world compact, has brought the peoples of the world so close that space has become as nothing. In spite of this closeness, we find that among human beings there is more fear, more mistrust, more of the sense of being strangers to one another. Although we have come closer together, we have not learned to live together, to understand one another, and to realize the unity which we have accepted through religion but not experienced through our living. Further, we see a great conflict in the fact that, although today there is a large amount of material co-operation, a sense of fellowship, a sense of helping, on an unprecedented scale, at the same time the world is suffering from ideological insularity, vast regions of the world are sharply divided by strong ideological differences, and no one is prepared to see the other man's point of view, but everyone is interested merely in holding on to what he believes to be the truth.

When we, as Theosophists, ask ourselves what help Theosophy gives us in understanding this situation, we find some ideas which are worth keeping in mind at the present time. One of these ideas is that Theosophy is a philosophy of change. There is in Theosophy a dynamism, a spirit of movement, a spirit of change, a spirit of advancement, of growth, of unfoldment—with which we are all familiar. We should try to understand that this spirit of change is necessary, so that the plan which we know exists in Nature may come by various stages and gradations to different levels of fulfilment.

In *At the Feet of the Master*, it is said that "in all the world there are only two kinds of people—those who know and those who do not know; and this knowledge is the thing that matters". I feel this is another idea that we Theosophists

should ever keep in our hearts and in our minds, as we work in a world presenting these great changes. One of the problems before us is, how are we to replace the old faith, which our young people do not seem to need at all? What new aspect of the old teaching will appeal to the youth of today? It seems to me that such a new aspect which will give a new impetus is an emphasis on the idea that man is essentially divine; that this Divinity, this spark of light within him, makes man a co-worker with the Deity as man tries to express not only religious beliefs but religious truths, not only follows religious practices and customs but lives religion in daily life—it is through such a presentation and practice that this great new concept giving dignity to the human individual will reveal itself.

We have already heard that the advancement of scientific thought has brought us on to the threshold of the superphysical world. In the various realms of science, researches, such as the exploration into the atom; the work of J. B. Rhine in understanding the nature of consciousness; medical researches; all these show us that we are now on the threshold of that which is unseen. In the scientific realm, therefore, Theosophy can now push forward the idea of that other science, Occultism, which follows the scientific methods of precision and investigates the unseen. Eighty-one years ago when our Society was founded, Occultism was a new idea to the minds of the people. Today with the progress of science we find that the unseen factor has become an accepted principle in scientific research. Therefore it is now our task to emphasize the unity of all the aspects of living that Occultism reveals to us.

Similarly, we should make it our task to point out the changes which are necessary in the fields of politics, education and art.

Theosophy reveals life to us as a whole. It gives us the great foundation that life is a unity. It shows that all exists as different aspects of the expression of life—as expressed in

religion, art, science, education and other fields. All are parts fulfilling the whole. With this understanding of Theosophy we must take our place in the world as workers. As it has been said to us by our leaders repeatedly, we as Theosophists are not only students seeking personal salvation, but we are those who have seen a great vision, who have felt the power of a great light, of a great wisdom, and we must carry that light and wisdom and power into the world. We have seen magnificent examples of such workers for the world in the lives of all our great leaders.

As the needs of the world change, so the emphasis and the approach and the attitude of our work must change also. In the words of Tennyson: "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world." We, as Theosophists, should try to see what is the new which is needed today, see what is the next step for the world on its onward march, see what are the new forms which will carry the old impetus of the one truth which Theosophy has revealed to us in so many different ways.

We see all around us, and it specially needs a Theosophical understanding, the disintegration of human society. Here the Theosophist will recognize that not through the sufferings of the masses but through the sacrifices of the privileged must a new and beautiful social order be built. It is the sacrifice of those who have, who have the capacity to offer voluntarily and give joyfully, which will enable the world to move peacefully into a new social order for humanity. For we see that it is not the suffering of the poor, the hungry, that can build a new society. It is the best hearts, the best minds, the best intuition in human life that must take the leadership of bringing a new social order into the world. We must continually use every opportunity to proclaim that this is the way all social change can become possible.

In the midst of fear and mistrust that we see around us, we realize that there is a new search which will reveal to man a strong foundation for the new civilization. Fear and mistrust have arisen because of the sense of insecurity. The sense of insecurity is there because man's values have been founded on the idea of seeking happiness through security. What is the new approach? What is the new understanding that we can give to direct man's search to something which is more permanent, of more value? What we can do is to suggest a change in the direction of man's search; the search to be not towards security but towards truth, wisdom, in which alone true happiness rests.

There is the ideological insularity that has caused sharp cleavages, not only between countries but between vast areas of the world. In the realm of ideological understanding we may point out that behind every type of ideology there is an essence of truth, there is an essence of the reality. It is for us to search for that reality, to search for that truth, and around it build up forms which will take men along a future of better co-operation and understanding.

And so, from the standpoint of Theosophy, there is for us much work to be done, there are for us ever-widening opportunities of service to mankind, and of service to Those who direct the cause of human civilization. In the heart of Theosophists there burns a spirit of youthfulness and optimism, a spirit of looking ahead to a brighter, nobler and more glorious future. This spirit is expressed in beautiful words by C. Jinarājadāsa:

Though Time shall pass us by, his hand shall touch us only to keep us ever young, for this is the power the Divine Wisdom gives to those that love her—to greet life in all time not as elders of the sunset, but as children of the Dawn.

GOOL K. MINWALLA

REVIEWS

Buddhism, Northern and Southern, by N. Sri Ram; T.P.H., Adyar, 1957, pp. 26, price 25 naye paise.

Originally appearing in *THE THEOSOPHIST* and now available as a pamphlet in considerably extended form, we have an understanding and reflective essay on the two main streams of Buddhist thought and tradition. The author makes clear the general distinction between the two streams: that the Theravāda school has a psychological direction in that it is concerned with knowing the nature of the mind and its action; and that the approach of the Northern School is mystical and intuitive. Mr. Sri Ram sees these two streams as complementary.

He writes briefly, yet illuminatingly, of certain Buddhist terms such as Nirvāna and Dharma, and gives exposition to two main teachings in the Mahāyāna, or Northern School: the Bodhisattva ideal and the "emptiness" of things.

Anyone going through this pamphlet will acquire information about Buddhism's principal divisions and, more than this, something of the author's own opinion, response and

sympathy for Buddhism, all of which adds to the charm of this very readable essay.

S. D. BALLARD

The Lankāvatāra Sūtra, a Mahāyāna Text. Translated for the first time from the original Sanskrit by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki. Published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, 1956, price 30s.

This book was first published in 1932, and reprinted in 1956. The Hīnayāna form of Buddhism upholds the ideal of Arhatship, the individual stage of emancipation from the wheel of birth and death. The Mahāyāna form accepts the ideal of Enlightenment for all beings, of freedom from "illusion," and teaches that all may aspire after Buddhahood. Dr. Suzuki says in his interesting introduction that "all the Buddhist teachings unfold themselves around the conception of Buddhahood". The Mahāyāna system claims to have caught the true spirit of these teachings in that it stands for "universal and not only individual enlightenment". It may therefore expand at any time into

some new and vital expression. Because the Tathāgata is endowed with a heart of all-embracing love and compassion, he refuses to leave this world of relativity until all beings are freed from ignorance and suffering. To this end he ever designs "Skilful Means" for their emancipation.

The Lankāvatāra is ranked as one of these "Skilful Means," and is thought to have been compiled possibly before A.D. 443. It was a memorandum kept by a Mahāyāna master, and comprises or points to the teachings accepted by the Mahāyānists of his day. Always stress is laid upon the idea that the Buddha will not refrain from the exercise of love and compassion till every creature is led into the salvation and bliss of Nirvāna.

The "invitation" to the Blessed One to answer many metaphysical questions came from Rāvana, Lord of Lankā (Ceylon). Rāvana asked his questions through one Mahāmati Bodhisattva. In this story of the visit of the Tathāgata at the period of the Sūtra, it is obvious that ancient history, myth, legend, keen imagination and subtle esoteric knowledge are combined. Through Right Knowledge and with meticulous care the mind is analysed and its penetrative powers gradually divested of "false" notions, till at last discrimination leads to transcendental wisdom or "Mind only,"

Truth which constitutes enlightenment, or spiritual freedom, or ultimate reality. For from the encumbrances of clinging to appearances the Absolute must be extricated. How this is done is given in detail in this Sūtra, one section of which deals with "Meat-eating". The Buddha says meat-eating "is forbidden by me everywhere and all the time for those who are abiding in compassion . . ."

Dr. Suzuki thinks that the final section called Sagāthakam (one with verses) was not included in the *Lankā* text, and that the verses, 884 of them, are generally meant for memorizing the principal doctrines contained in the prose sections; separately they are difficult to understand.

An index would enhance the value of the book.

JOSEPHINE RANSOM

Early Indian Religious Thought, P. D. Mehta, Luzac & Co., 1956.

The author of this well-written book sees religious thought and practice emerging slowly but continuously out of experience. His major premise is that out of extremely primitive existence human "civilization came on the scene a bare six thousand years ago". He thinks that the foundations of such civilization were agriculture, weaving, pottery and the use of metals. He seems to be entirely unaware of

or unconcerned with the many legends, traditions and myths, which contain intimations, some very clear, of far anterior civilizations which left their results for later improvement and development. As is usually conceded, he accepts that for all Hindu thinking the Vedas must be taken as the starting-point. They express man's relation to the facts of Nature, the "Gods," and how that relation is brought about by rituals and sacrifices. He goes carefully through the Upanishads tracing how they do stand for the patient training of the mind to enable it to probe into the cause and development of creative processes.

The author deals in the section on the Buddha from the point of view of the probable actual course of his life, "stripping the popular account of its fancies". In considering the teachings of this "greatest of human beings," he regards the Buddha as the greatest apostle of human freedom, which is the absolute release from the fetters of self. Thus he ushered in a new age where each individual must win "clear vision" of the eternal realities for himself.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is treated as primarily a philosophy of action which must be performed with precise knowledge of what exactly is one's duty. The ultimate example of this is divine power in action as

divine manifestation, perfect in all its parts. Rightly he says that the religious ideals and teachings, the devotion of Hindu India, are embodied in the Lord's Song.

Some of the other interesting sections in the book are: the Effect of the Buddha upon Hinduism; the Word of God, *Māyā*, Reality; Reason: Buddhi, God-conception. Buddhi, he thinks, supplies the coherence of manifestation. God-conception should lead to God-realization or the ultimate Reality, the absolute fulfilment of man. Karma, Justice and Redemption are surveyed, and Divine Justice is seen as a "transmuting spiritual alchemy" and not a "see-saw effort at equilibrium".

In the section headed "Sin: Good and Evil," many valuable points are raised, especially when it is said that "the Self-realized and the self-controlled are the Self-expressed". Sin is equated as being "Brahman-unaware". The idea is expatiated upon that to live as God lives is religion; the scriptures are examined to see how far they support this "transcendental ethic". The supreme practicality is living this religion, of which exemplars are found in all the great religions.

The value of the book is added to by a useful glossary.

JOSEPH R. BARNES

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEOSOPHIST

JUNE 1957

THEOSOPHISTS AT WORK AROUND THE WORLD

By the Recording Secretary

The President

On the evening of May 13th, Mr. N. Sri Ram presided at the opening meeting of a three-day festival at the Mahabodhi Society in Madras to celebrate the 2,501st anniversary of the *Parinirvāṇa* of the Lord Buddha. In his opening remarks the President mentioned the increased interest in Buddhism in India which has resulted from the celebrations last year of the Buddha Jayanti throughout the country and which brought together, as on this evening, people of all the religions in India to do homage to one who represented in Himself the highest that any human being could attain or even conceive. After several speakers had addressed the gathering, the President spoke about Bud-

dhism and its value to all mankind at the present time. He said: "Those teachings were given 2,500 years ago, but out of the seed which was sown by the Lord Buddha there has been an abundant harvest of philosophy as well as of different forms of cultural development. The chief feature of the Buddhist faith is that it is perhaps the freest from the spirit of dogmatism amongst the various religions of the world. There is a highly developed system of metaphysics or philosophy in the Buddhist books, but no follower of Buddhism is required to believe what is in the books. The only requirement is that he should endeavor to practise the Five Rules of Conduct. . . The religion is essentially one of compassion, and there is a certain lightness, perhaps

also gentleness, in Buddhist lands, which is very characteristic." Stressing the necessity to live in the light of whatever truths one may hold, he said: "... What is needed is that we should take the truth and the teaching to our hearts, try deeply to understand them, and live that truth in our daily life. In that sense we can all be Buddhists. It is possible for everyone to manifest something of the beautiful spirit of the Buddha."

Workers' Training Camp at Adyar

The 4th annual Workers' Training Camp was held at Adyar for four weeks, opening on the 21st of April, with Dr. C. R. Kamath as Convener, assisted by Sri S. G. Venkataramanan.

In declaring the Camp open, the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, stated that Theosophy is not a commodity which can be bought or sold, and that workers should create their own techniques for presenting the Eternal Wisdom, exercising great care as to the content and the manner of their exposition. Adyar, he said, was a centre whence one can draw inspiration for work for humanity.

Attending the Camp were representatives from four South Indian Federations—Andhra Circars, Kerala, Tamil and Madras City. Classes, which were conducted each week from Monday to Saturday, dealt with the fundamentals of Theo-

sophy. Talks were given on the history of the Society, Theosophy and Religion, Mysticism, the Mahatma Letters, and other general themes, by Prof. R. Srinivasan and members resident at Adyar, among them Miss Katherine A. Beechey, Srimati Bhagirathi Sri Ram, Miss Ann Kerr, Mr. E. Lord, Mr. E. Norman Pearson, A. Siitaa Devii, Sri M. Subramaniam, and Dr. E. Sundaresan.

A tea party for the Camp students and Adyar residents was given at the close of the Camp on May 18th. Following the tea, some of the students gave short talks presenting their impressions of the month's work, and Dr. Kamath read a report of the activities. Mr. Sri Ram spoke briefly in conclusion, reminding the students that although they had come to the end of this training period, once started on the Theosophical road there is no stopping place, and one never comes to the end. It is a process of educating oneself all the time, and at the same time unconsciously educating other people. After some experience of Theosophical living one comes to understand that the best way to help is by example; the best way to correct others is to correct oneself. In order to spread Theosophy, he said, "let us make ourselves true Theosophists, trying all the time to live our own lives more beautifully in every little respect".

White Lotus Day

The President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, presided at the White Lotus Day meeting in Headquarters Hall, Adyar, on the 8th May. In his opening remarks, following the Prayers of the Religions, he said:

"We are here this morning to commemorate the life and work of our great Founder, H. P. Blavatsky. Such a commemoration takes place on the anniversary of H. P. B.'s passing in all Sections, from the Philippines and New Zealand in the East, from India to Europe and America in the West. H.P.B. asked in her will that her friends should assemble here on the anniversary of her passing and read extracts from *The Bhagavad Gītā* and from *The Light of Asia*, two books which she particularly loved. Colonel Olcott issued an order the next year, in which he suggested that the name 'White Lotus Day' be used for this particular day. The suggestion has been generally adopted. He also recommended that in all Sections and Lodges there should be this commemoration, to give expression to our love and gratitude. So let us all keep H. P. B. in our hearts and minds always with love, reverence and gratitude."

Srimati Rukmini Devi gave a short address in which she related a number of interesting incidents she had heard from Dr. Besant, re-

vealing the strength and the gentleness of H.P.B.

Readings from *The Light of Asia* and *The Bhagavad Gītā* were given by Miss Ann Kerr and Mrs. Radha Burnier, after which the President spoke, referring to H.P.B.'s travels throughout the world.

At the conclusion of the meeting, members paid homage to Madame Blavatsky by offering flowers at her statue in the Headquarters Hall which was beautifully decorated with white lotus blooms brought from tanks on the estate.

In the afternoon the customary distribution of rice to some 1,500 poor villagers was made at the Hindu Temple.

The United States of America

Mr. James S. Perkins, the National President, stated in his annual Report for the year ending September 1956 that there had been a noticeable increase in the size of lecture audiences throughout the American Section. Four hundred and three people joined the Society; but the net gain, after taking into account deaths, transfers, resignations and lapsings was 124, bringing the total membership to 4,194.

A leading factor in this membership gain was the field programme which included a tour of the Section by Mr. Geoffrey Hodson as guest-lecturer, and tours by the National President and Mrs. Perkins

and by Mr. and Mrs. E. Norman Pearson. The Spotlight activity, designed to found new Lodges and to strengthen the small ones, was conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Felix Layton.

Radio work, which was done on a local basis by interested members a number of years ago and is now a co-ordinated activity, has enhanced the growth of the Section. The Foundation for Radio Theosophy has tapes available for Lodges for a full two years of weekly broadcasts and is well into a third year's supply. In 29 cities during 1956 Lodges have broadcast weekly.

The Section's Department of Information, in answer to inquiries, sent out 15,000 publicity leaflets, thirty per cent more than in the preceding year.

The Theosophical Book Gift Institute, an activity devoted to the placing of Theosophical books in public libraries, donated 5,500 books to 629 libraries. Another steadily growing activity for the public is that of the Mothers' Research Group whose work, chiefly through its journal, is to present articles on child care. The interest in natural childbirth has prompted the Group to publish a new booklet entitled *The Natural Childbirth Primer*.

Department of Education workshops for members have been very successfully conducted by Dr. Dorothy Reed twice a year. These work-

shops, designed to further the preparation of teachers and workers in Lodges, attract a small number of members who are sent by their Lodges and who, during the fortnight of the workshop, live at the National Headquarters.

A new feature in the work of the Section is the National Theosophical Conference which is held annually in November in a part of the country remote from the National Headquarters, with the Section Officers in attendance. The four or five day programme of talks and symposia includes as the chief item the discussion of what are called the "Main Questions". These questions are printed in the Section's journal months in advance of the Conference so that members attending may come prepared to enter the discussions. Those who cannot attend are encouraged to send in their comments on the questions, which are read at the Conference. Summaries of all of the discussions appear later in *The American Theosophist*.

Portugal

We learn from the annual Report of the General Secretary, Mr. Félix Bermudes, that in spite of the rather isolated position of the Portuguese Section, the ten Lodges in Lisbon and the three in the provinces have continued their normal activities. In the provincial towns study groups continue to work enthusiastically.

During the year the great Theosophical festivals were celebrated, and every fortnight general meetings were held to give the members a deeper understanding of Theosophical teachings and to increase their knowledge of comparative religion and philosophy. Programmes included symposia and lectures. These gatherings were often helped by the choral group of the Section, which was organized last year by Lisbon members.

In June 1956 Mr. J. E. van Disel, General Secretary of the Theosophical Federation in Europe, visited Portugal and was able to give his assistance to the Section for four days. Recently Mademoiselle P. Mallet visited the Section and assisted the work with her lectures and contacts with the members.

The whole Portuguese Section shared the honor accorded to its General Secretary in his election in September 1956 to the Presidency of the International Federation of Societies of Men of Letters at the Congress of that organization in Hamburg. Mr. Bermudes is a distinguished author and playwright of international repute.

Argentina

The annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in Argentina was held at Córdoba City during Easter. The main programme of the three-day Convention was the dis-

cussion of 15 proposals from the Lodges.

A new feature introduced by Córdoba Lodge was an entertainment on the day preceding the opening of the Convention. The programme consisted of music and folk-dancing by children of the members and other young people, as well as classical music on the piano by Miss Haydee Batca.

After the closing of the Convention some 70 members went by bus to "Hosteria Naturista" in Nu Porá, situated in a beautiful ridge of mountains. That evening, Mrs. Flavia F. de Palacios Ushman delivered a public lecture entitled "To a New Concept of Life," dealing with India's message to the world as expressed through contemporary Indian philosophers.

Señor Enrique O. Gersweiler, General Secretary, reports that, as at September 1956 the Theosophical Society in Argentina had 1,397 members in 57 Lodges. Their activities received an impetus from the visit of the International President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, who spent a month in Argentina in 1956 lecturing in Buenos Aires, La Plata, Rosario, Río Cuarto, San Rafael and Mendoza.

Under the editorship of Mr. Nazareno E. Rimini, the President's book *Thoughts for Aspirants* has been published in Spanish; four pamphlets of articles by Geoffrey Hodgeson, E. L. Gardner, Sandra Chase,

Dr. MacNaughton and K. Riedel have also been printed in Spanish.

Finland

Miss Signe Rosvall, General Secretary of the Finnish Section, in her Report for the year ending September 1956, writes that the 22 Lodges in Finland have all continued to meet regularly. There are now 538 members in the Finnish Section. Public activities in the seven Helsinki Lodges have included question-and-answer meetings and Sunday lectures, the audiences on these occasions numbering from 40 to 100 persons.

On all festival days a public celebration has been arranged. A special occasion was the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the Theosophical Society, when the biggest newspapers in Helsinki published articles giving a general survey of the history of the Theosophical Society.

The Round Table and the Lotus Circle have been active; there is also in Helsinki a Healing Group.

A special feature in the activities of the spring season was the "winter-gathering" arranged by young people. At that time an independent group was founded called "Young Finnish Theosophists and their Friends". They arranged two successful concerts and gave two lectures intended for youth, and now meet fortnightly.

At the Section's new home at Kreivilä, a summer school was organized in July, with some 40 students attending. The lectures dealt with everyday problems of current interest. Simultaneously with the summer school the young people arranged a camp at Kreivilä with ten participants.

The 1957 Convention of the Section was held at Helsinki from April 19th to 21st, with approximately 150 members in attendance.

The address of welcome by Mr. Matti Varis on Good Friday afternoon stressed the first Object of the Theosophical Society. After a social and musical interlude, a talk on "Liberation" was given by Miss Aila Suvela.

The annual business meeting of the Section was opened the next day by the General Secretary, who gave a brief survey of the work of the Society throughout the world and presented her report of the year's work in the Finnish Section. An invocation, followed by meditation, preceded the reading of greetings which included one received from the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram.

The Convention closed on the afternoon of the 21st with a programme of lectures and music. The two lectures on the subject of the motto of the Society, "There is no religion higher than Truth," were presented by Miss Mirja Horstio and Mr. Yrjö Kallinen.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Founded in the City of New York, November 17, 1875

President: N. Sri Ram. Vice-President: Sidney A. Cook. Recording Secretary: Miss Emma Hunt. Treasurer: Edwin N. Lord.

Headquarters of the Society: ADYAR, MADRAS 20, INDIA

Official Organ of the President: *The Theosophist*, founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY, 1879

Date of formation	Name of Section	General Secretary	Address	Magazines
1886	United States	Mr. James S. Perkins	P.O. Box 270, Wheaton, Illinois	<i>The American Theosophist.</i>
1888	England	Mrs. A. L. Berry	50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1891	India	Sri Rohit Mehta	Theosophical Society, Varanasi 1	<i>The Theosophical Review.</i>
1895	Australia	Miss Helen V. Zahara	29 Bligh Street, Sydney, N.S.W.	<i>Theosophy in Australia.</i>
1895	Sweden	Herr Gösta Lindström	Ostermalmsgatan 12, Stockholm	<i>Theosophisk Tidskrift.</i>
1896	New Zealand	Miss Sandra Chase	10 Belvedere St., Epsom, Auckland, S.E.3	<i>Theosophy in New Zealand.</i>
1897	Netherlands	Mr. B. Wouters	Amsteldijk 76, Amsterdam Z.	<i>Theosofia.</i>
1899	France	Monsieur Francis Brunel	4 Square Rapp, Paris VII	<i>Le Lotus Bleu.</i>
1902	Italy	Dr. Giuseppe Filipponio	Corso Trieste 88, Rome	<i>Alba Spirituale.</i>
1902	Germany	Direktor Martin Boyken	Hagenau 15, Hamburg 23	<i>Adyar.</i>
1905	Cuba	Señor Armando Alfonso Ledon	P.O. Box 365, Habana	<i>Revista Teosofica Cubana.</i>
1907	Hungary	Miss Signe Rosvall	Vironkatu 7C, Helsinki	<i>Theosofi.</i>
1907	Finland	..	..	..
1908	Russia	..	..	..
1909	Czechoslovakia	..	..	..
1909	Southern Africa	Mr. I. G. Midford-Barborton	P.O. Box 2284, Cape Town	<i>The Link.</i>
1910	Scotland	Mrs. Jean Allan	17 Queen's Crescent, Glasgow, G.4	<i>Theosophical News and Notes.</i>
1910	Switzerland	Madame Claire Wyls	Bruderholzstrasse 88, Basle	<i>Clarté.</i>
1911	Belgium	Monsieur Th. Chapellier	334 Rue Vanderkindere, Uccle-Bruxelles	<i>Clarté.</i>
1912	Indonesia	Mr. Socmanesojo	Blavatkyapark 5, Merdeka-Barat 17, Djakarta	<i>P. T. T. I.</i>
1912	Burma	U P. Lat	No. 102, 49th Street, Rangoon	..
1912	Austria	Herr F. Schleifer	Paracelsusgasse 4, T. 6, Vienna III/40	<i>Adyar.</i>
1913	Norway	Herr Erling Havrevold	Sjomslettve. 2b, Lilleaker, Oslo	<i>Nord Teosofisk Tidskrift.</i>
1918	Egypt*	M. Zaki Awad	President, "Hikmet El Kadima" Lodge, 18 Emad El Din Street, Cairo	..
1918	Denmark	Herr J. H. Möller	Brandvejen 130a, Aarhus	<i>Theosophia.</i>
1919	Ireland	Mrs. Evelyn O. Hornidge	31 Pembroke Road, Dublin	<i>Theosophy in Ireland.</i>
1919	Mexico	Señor Adolfo de la Peña Gil	Surbide 28, Mexico D. F.	<i>Boletín Mexicano; Dharma.</i>

* No Section; Lodge only.

Handwritten notes: JL, QM 32, m78, N57-78-79

1919	Canada	..	Lt.-Col. E.L. Thomson, D.S.O.	52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.	..	<i>The Canadian Theosophist.</i>
1920	Argentina	..	Señor Enrique O. Gersweiler.	Cailla Correo No. 238, Rosario (Pcia. Santa Fe)	..	<i>Teosofia en Argentina.</i>
1920	Chile	..	Señor Ricardo Michell A.-P.	Casilla 3603, Santiago	..	<i>Fraternidad.</i>
1920	Brazil	..	Tenente Armando Sales	Rua Anita Garibaldi 29, 11° andar, Sao Paulo	..	<i>O Teosofista.</i>
1921	Bulgaria	..	Mr. Sigvaldi Hjalmarson	Ingolfstr. 22, Reykjavik	..	<i>Gangleri.</i>
1921	Iceland	..	..	..	..	..
1921	Spain	..	Mr. Félix Bermudes	Rua Passos Manoel 20, Lisbon	..	<i>Ostris.</i>
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