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THE THIRDSOPHIST

March 1958

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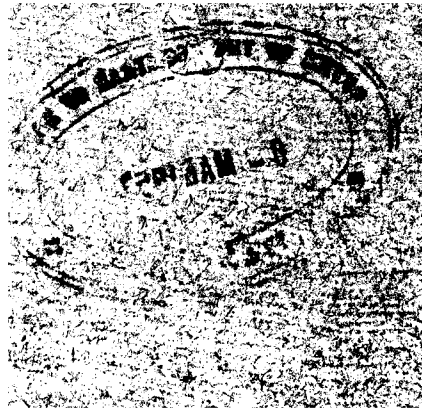


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**THE THEOSOPHIST**  
EDITED BY N. SRINIVAS RAM



**THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE**

ADYAR, MADRAS 20

**MARCH 1958**

**Vol. 79, No. 6**

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.

MARCH 1958

Vol. 79, No. 6

# 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.

### N 58-79-6 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".*

THE present age, among various other descriptions of it, is an age of mass activity in many different fields, of grouping and organization. Both democracy and totalitarianism, each from its own end, represent this phenomenon of organization. Anyone can perceive that group activity in every form, on a scale much larger than what was possible even in the last century, is producing results which from an objective point of view tend to enrich modern life and amplify its material possibilities. Being caught in the process we tend unconsciously to imagine that a group or a team can achieve all that is worth achieving more and better than the individual; also that all progress consists of results tangibly achieved by following the appropriate plan.

The placing of the two artificial moons by Russia (since then followed by a similar though smaller accomplishment by the United States) has particularly boosted in many quarters the importance of training as many persons as possible to become scientists and technicians capable of being drafted into large research institutions with ample resources

and equipment, where they can work in teams to produce indicated results. It is assumed, possibly rightly, that it is by such mass attacks on technical problems that Soviet Russia has gained the lead which she apparently has in certain fields of technical progress.

In the nineteenth century the inventor was generally a lone individual, with a streak of originality in him, and he was very often a person with little or no scientific training, working with simple equipment, generally by himself and by empirical methods. He came upon his discovery apparently by accident, as Galvani by observing his frog's legs, or by a flash of intuition, and not by the application of logical procedures following from settled premises. Science was not then linked to technology so systematically as it is at present. Both scientific discoveries and inventions based on them were made sporadically without planning and without those forcing tactics now being resorted to. Even in the present century there have been men like Albert Einstein who was a solitary man working all by himself, following certain principles in which he had an intuitive faith. He had to work alone because his lines of thought were his own and not those of the orthodox scientist. But now we seem to be bringing into existence conditions totally different, in which it will be not the individual, working untrammelled, according to his own bent and interests, necessarily with limited resources, who will be the significant factor, but universities, firms and large research institutions, following techniques of team-work, necessarily under some sort of central control. It is evidently a sign of the time; but is the emphasis on team, group and organization altogether a change for the better? Can a team of which each member has his allotted part and which is guided in a certain direction by the controlling authorities take the place of the pioneer who can proceed on a track of his own, without the restraints of guided thinking?

This is a question not without relevance to the crucial issues in the developments of today not only in the scientific field but in the whole field of human living. Institutions and team-work are obviously needed. An individual cannot by himself build a cathedral. The translation of an idea into concrete form has to be achieved in many cases with the co-operation of others. Also when there is increasing specialization, the specialized lines of endeavor and the results achieved on them have to be brought together and co-ordinated in some manner. Furthermore, these different lines react upon one another at many points. There has to be an attempt more than ever before to integrate the bodies of specialized knowledge and the processes of specialized thinking. This endeavor obviously calls, among other things, for a process of give-and-take among specialists, although for this process to be effective, the specialists need to have a foundation of basic knowledge covering at least broadly the fundamentals of their specialized knowledge. But even so their give-and-take or whatever degree of integration is achieved can only be at the level to which they can rise in their exchanges from their common foundation. It is only in an individual mind, rising above the premises and assumptions of others, or perhaps in a depth of understanding going beyond the cogitations of the active mind, that either the best possible synthesis or a departure giving rise to new views can be achieved.

Mr. John Jewkes of Merton College, Cambridge, writing in *Lloyd's Bank Review* of January last on "The Sources of Invention," points out that while team-work is inescapable and obviously of value—he is referring to science and technology but we can extend his meaning—"there is no kind of organized or even voluntary co-ordination which can approach in effectiveness the synthesizing which goes on in one human mind". He further says—his remark is based on a study of how various inventions arose—

that "a large team is essentially a committee and thereby suffers from the habit common to all committees but especially harmful where research is concerned, of brushing aside hunches and intuitions in favor of ideas that can be more systematically articulated". This does not mean that we should do away with teams and committees or with conferences to discuss common problems, but at a time when there is ever-increasing organization for every conceivable purpose there is need to stress the importance of the individual and what he can achieve when he is left untrammelled, whether for scientific research or for anything else which might attract his deep interest.

In the aforesaid article Mr. Jewkes and his co-workers, having examined the origins of some sixty important inventions of this century, find that more than half of them were inventions either by individuals working on their own or, if employed in institutions, working autonomously. Quite a number of successes are to the credit of small teams of workers, though some outstanding ones came from large firms. The inventions chosen for study were the following. The list is very impressive.

Acrylic Fibres, Air-Conditioning, Automatic Transmissions, Bakelite, Ball-point Pen, Catalytic Cracking of Petroleum, Cellophane, Cellophane Tape, Chromium Plating, Cinerama, Continuous Casting of Steel, Continuous Hot Strip Rolling, Cotton Picker, Crease-resisting Fabrics, Cyclotron, D.D.T., Diesel-Electric Railway Traction, Domestic Gas Refrigeration, Duco Lacquers, Electric Precipitation, Electron Microscope, Fluorescent Lighting, Freon Refrigerants, Gyro-Compass, Hardening of Liquid Fats, Helicopter, Insulin, Jet Engine, Kodachrome, Krilium, Long-Playing Record, Magnetic Recording, Methyl Methacrylate Polymers, Modern Artificial Lighting, Neoprene, Nylon and Perlon, Penicillin, "Polaroid" Land Camera, Polyethylene, Power Steering, Quick Freezing, Radar, Radio, Rockets, Safety Razor, Self-winding Wrist Watch, Shell Moulding, Silicones, Stainless Steels, Streptomycin, Sulzer Loom, Synthetic Detergents, Synthetic Light Polarizer, Television, "Terylene" Polyester Fibre, Tetraethyl Lead, Titanium, Transistor, Tungsten Carbide, Xerography, Zip Fastener.

It has been said that the present is a time of "material increase and spiritual decrease". One realizes more and more since this statement was made sixty years ago how true it is. At present the advance is on such a wide front that there is all the time something new being discovered or achieved in one sector or another. But there is a fundamental distinction between an idea that is entirely new and the developments that take place subsequently having their origin in that idea. The basic discovery has in the past generally come to one individual who is ready to receive it, or in some cases to a few whose minds were turned in that direction. But obviously the mind that can receive a new idea has to be free from any conditioning—even if it be by established scientific ideas—which would put off the new. Mr. Jewkes pertinently queries whether the increasing institutionalization of research would not eventually hinder the flow of new ideas. When we turn from science and technology to those more vital fields such as art and religion, in which there is a predominance of qualitative values, which can be realized only individually, it becomes even more true that while institutions have their place, the individual can make his discoveries—these are not discoveries made by one man for others, but discoveries to which each one has to come by himself—only to the extent he is free from the limitations of regimented thinking.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. W. E. Wilks of Orpheus Lodge in Vancouver, Canada, in a letter to me, refers to a statement I made in the Watch-Tower of March 1957 which was as follows:

We can understand what a Mahatma is in His inner nature not from any superficial and disconnected impressions gained from letters, which according to H.P.B. were written mostly by chelas, but only by delving deeply into the philosophic roots of the question.

Mr. Wilks thinks that there is here an implication that "the *Mahatma Letters* were not a true representation of what the Mahatmas wanted to say," and "if the Mahatmas allowed a false idea of Their teaching and Themselves to be conveyed to Sinnett and Hume, then They themselves were lacking in common honesty"—which of course is unthinkable. I reproduce also the following paragraphs from Mr. Wilks's letter:

If further proof is needed to show that the Mahatmas always accepted full responsibility for what was written by their direction, I quote the following Mahatma Letter, page 231, whilst contrasting themselves with the Jesuits: "As I once said before, *they* know that what they teach is a *lie*, and *we* know that what we impart is truth, the only truth, and nothing but the truth." And again, page 232: "In noticing M's opinion of yourself expressed in some of his letters you must not feel altogether so sure that because they are *his* handwriting, they are written by him, though of course every word is sanctioned by him to serve certain ends."

It is my experience that many, if not most, students who have read and studied *The Mahatma Letters* find it the most valuable Theosophical book we have, for not only does it give us their philosophy direct from themselves, but still more valuable, to some it conveys the impersonal yet very friendly attitude and something of the indefinable atmosphere of our two Theosophical Mahatmas. For too long have so many members of the T.S. been kept away from this invaluable treasure.

I agree fully with Mr. Wilks about the importance and value of the teaching in *The Mahatma Letters*, and it is also true that many passages in the letters not only show a breadth of comprehension and dignity in expression which arrest attention but also have about them "the indefinable atmosphere" that Mr. Wilks refers to. Nevertheless, it is a fact that even Mr. Hume, who was one of Their correspondents, could not understand the standpoint of the Adepts, and repeatedly brought against Them the charge of being inconsistent, selfish and even rude. What has troubled some people, as I know from persons who have spoken or written to me, is not the occult teaching, but remarks about certain individuals which were meant only for the recipients and made in strict confidence.

It was apparently necessary to warn the principal persons on whom the growth of the movement then depended against certain dangers of which they were ignorant. The remarks can be explained only by what was then taking place and the inner knowledge of the Mahatmas which the recipients of the letters implicitly trusted. When we read the remarks now, we read them out of context and form certain superficial and disjointed impressions which hardly do justice to Their inner dignity and greatness. It is not those letters or portions which contain the teaching that puzzle some people but those which refer to various incidents and personalities, their character, intentions and so on. One who has some real knowledge or understanding of what a Mahatma is in His inner nature, the difference between Him and even a good ordinary man, will not of course judge Them by any statements that are not to the conventional taste.

It is not sufficiently realized how strongly the Mahatmas were opposed to the publication of Their letters. Let me quote from one of the letters, received in 1884:

. . . to put before the world all the crude and complicated materials in your possession in the shape of old letters, in which, I confess, much was purposely made obscure, would only be making confusion worst confounded. Instead of doing any good thereby to yourself and others it would only place you in a still more difficult position, bring criticism upon the heads of the "Masters" and thus have a retarding influence on human progress and the T.S. Hence *I protest* most strongly against your new idea . . . My letters *must not* be published, in the manner you suggest, but on the contrary if you save Djual K. trouble copies of some should be sent to the Literary Committee at Adyar—about which Damodar has written to you—so that with the assistance of S. Y. K. Charya, Djual K., Subba Row and the Secret Committee (from which H.P.B. was purposely excluded by us to avoid new suspicions and calumnies) they might be able to utilise the information for the realization of the object with which the Committee was started, as explained by Damodar in the letter written by him under orders. It is neither new "Kiddle developments" that I seek to avoid, nor criticism directed against my personality, which indeed can hardly be reached; but

I rather try to save yourself and Society from new troubles which would be serious this time. The letters, in short, were not written for publication or public comment upon them, but for private use, and neither M. nor I will ever give our consent to see them thus handled.

Their wishes have not been respected. The letters were written, says the Master K.H., with very little time for them, at odd moments snatched out of other more pressing work on which They were engaged. "We have weightier matters than small societies to think about," He says in one of them. They did the best possible in the circumstances under various limitations, one of the Mahatmas who corresponded not having a knowledge of English, the language used in the correspondence. There was no reason for H. P. B. laying stress on the fact that the letters were mostly written by chelas, except that she wanted that any impressions that might be formed on them should not be unjust or derogatory to the Masters. It is possible that They themselves did not care very much, being so impersonal, as to the impression formed of Them by persons incapable of understanding Their aims or standpoint. They did not want Themselves to be publicized but only that the teaching should be given out, that teaching being such portions of the Wisdom as the world can grasp and assimilate at present.

N. SRI RAM

The powers of chelas vary with their progress; and every one should know that if a chela has any "powers," he is not permitted to use them save in rare and exceptional cases, and never may he boast of their possession. So it must follow that those who are only beginners have no more or greater power than an ordinary man. Indeed the goal set before the chela is not the acquisition of psychological power; his chief task is to divest himself of that overmastering sense of personality which is the thick veil that hides from sight our immortal part—the real man. So long as he allows this feeling to remain, just so long will he be fixed at the very door of Occultism, unable to proceed further.

H.P.B. in THE THEOSOPHIST, October 1884

## ON COSMIC CYCLES, MANVANTARAS AND ROUNDS

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

[The MS. of this unfinished essay, in H.P.B.'s handwriting, exists in the Adyar Archives. Some of its pages are missing, and some of the sentences are broken off. There is no definite clue in it which would help to determine the date at which it was written, except for the fact that a footnote mentions the sixth and seventh editions of *Isis Unveiled*. This MS. contains numerical relations and data not mentioned by H. P. B. anywhere else in her writings. It contains important keys which some students might be able to apply to various cosmological problems arising in their individual studies. The most noteworthy point in connection with this MS. is that it is written in two different handwritings, one of which is larger and more rounded than H. P. B.'s ordinary one.—B. DE ZIRKOFF]

SINCE the total period of the existence of our Planetary Chain (i.e., of the Seven Rounds) is 4,320,000,000—and we are now in the 4th Round; and since we have unto the present *Terrene* year period 1,955,884,685 years from the beginning of the Cosmic Evolution of Planet A; therefore, in point of time, we shall reach the middle point, or just  $3\frac{1}{2}$  Rounds in 204,115,315 years, although in point of space we have virtually reached it, being on planet D and in our 5th race.

No. 2 of Agreement.

Since it is said that a Day of Brahma (representing or covering the totality of the Seven Rounds)—equals 14 manvantaras *plus* a Satya Yug; or 4,320,000,000; but as the Kali

Yug covers only 4 Yugas, whereas there are 7—and therefore the correct sum . . .<sup>1</sup>

The astrological work states, that:

3. "The number of years that elapsed since the beginning of Vaivasvata Manvantara—equals 18,618,725 years."

The Secret Doctrine tells us that:

The number of years passed, since the Dhyan Chohan, known in India as Manu Vaivasvata, inaugurated the human Manvantara on our planet *D*, in the *present* Round—equals 18,618,725 years.<sup>2</sup>

For purposes of comparison, and to make, at the same time, some of the Sanskrit expressions clearer, we will now quote from *Isis Unveiled* what is said therein of the Hindu Kalpas.

"The Vrihaspatis, or the periods called yugas, and Kalpas, are life-problems to solve. The Satya-Yuga and the *Buddhi*<sup>3</sup> cycles of chronology would make a mathematician stand aghast at the array of ciphers. The Maha-Kalpa embraces an untold number of periods, far . . .<sup>4</sup>

The exoteric Brahminical works give 4,320,000,000 years as the duration of a great Kalpa, a "Day of Brahma". This includes all the seven "Rounds" of our Planetary Chain, i.e., the period of human existence on different planets in different Rounds together, with what are called "Obscurations" or the period of rest for humanity between two planets, in its

<sup>1</sup> [MS. breaks off at this point.]

<sup>2</sup> See further on the Series of the Manus quoted from the July THEOSOPHIST of 1883.

<sup>3</sup> We take this opportunity of correcting the many typographical errors found in *Isis*. Having been stereotyped on plates all the six or seven editions of the work had to be reproduced with their primitive *errata*.

<sup>4</sup> [It is evident that a page or more of the MS. is missing at this point. The sentence in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 31-32, ends with the words: ". . . back in the antediluvian ages." It is interesting to note that H. P. B. altered "Buddhistic" into "*Buddhi*".—B. DE ZIRKOFF]

passage from the one to the other, after its seven Races are evolved on that planet. It also includes the period of *Sandhi* (twilight) which is equal to one *Satya Yuga*. If we take the above figure, as our basis, according to certain mathematical series, explained further on, we obtain the following results:

| YEARS       |     |                            |  |
|-------------|-----|----------------------------|--|
| First Round | ... | 154,285,714                |  |
| Second "    | ... | 308,571,428                |  |
| Third "     | ... | 462,857,142                |  |
| Fourth "    | ... | 617,142,856                |  |
| Fifth "     | ... | 771,428,570                |  |
| Sixth "     | ... | 925,714,284                |  |
| Seventh "   | ... | 1,079,999,998              |  |
|             |     | <hr/>                      |  |
|             |     | 4,319,999,992 <sup>1</sup> |  |
|             |     | <hr/>                      |  |

We have thus 617,142,856 years as the period of our Fourth Round. And as the "Night of Brahma" or period of Rest, is always equal to the "Day of Brahma" or the period of activity on each planet,—the period of activity in this 4th Round equals 308,571,428 years. It thus exceeds the period of duration given for our Manvantara (308,448,000 y.) in the Brahminical calculations, only by 123,428 years; and this would be made away with, if in making this calculation we had deducted from it the overlapping of the period of *Kalpa* which is equivalent to one *Satya Yuga* and which the Brahmins for purposes of esoteric secrecy have added to the "Day of Brahma" . . . the same arithmetical progression, as above and explained further on, the following is the duration

<sup>1</sup> It will be obvious that for the purpose of having round numbers, we have, in our calculations, omitted fractions. Thus on the whole "Day of Brahma" we have left off a period of eight years. It should also be noted that each "Round" period in the above table signifies both the period of planetary Activity and interplanetary Rest.

of humanity on each Planet in our fourth Round, during the period of its activity:

|          |     | YEARS                          |
|----------|-----|--------------------------------|
| Planet A | ... | 11,020,408                     |
| B        | ... | 22,040,816                     |
| C        | ... | 33,061,224                     |
| D        | ... | 44,081,632                     |
| E        | ... | 55,102,040                     |
| F        | ... | 66,122,448                     |
| G        | ... | 77,142,856                     |
|          |     | <hr/> 308,571,414 <sup>1</sup> |

Now, it will be seen that 44,081,632 years is the Human Period of Activity of our Planet in this Round. Applying to this period, the same ratio as above, explained further on, we obtain the following results:

DURATION OF EACH RACE IN OUR ROUND ON OUR PLANET

|            |     | YEARS            |
|------------|-----|------------------|
| First Race | ... | 1,574,344        |
| Second „   | ... | 3,148,688        |
| Third „    | ... | 4,723,032        |
| Fourth „   | ... | 6,297,376        |
| Fifth „    | ... | 7,871,720        |
| Sixth „    | ... | 9,446,064        |
| Seventh „  | ... | 11,020,408       |
|            |     | <hr/> 44,081,632 |

The reader will observe that in the above calculations we have given the key to the understanding of these different periods. Till now, the exoteric works only gave the period

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of having round numbers, we are again obliged to leave off fractions and hence there is a slight difference. This figure when doubled, will give 28 years less than the 4th Round period mentioned above. Here in the period of activity we have a difference of only fourteen years.

of the day of *Brahma*, without either giving the other periods which might help toward the discovery of the secret, or giving that key itself which might give the results now shown above. But if we have the period of the Day of *Brahma* and if we know that there are seven rounds, that each round covers seven planets, that on each planet there are seven races and that the period of rest of a planet in every round equals that of its activity, and if to all this knowledge we apply the key of the septenary arithmetical progression series, then we get the numbers as given above. There is a gradual rise of, from one to seven. The duration of the existence of humanity during the Seven Rounds is 1: 2: 3: 4: 5: 6: 7. In each Round, the duration of the existence of humanity, on the seven planets of our chain is 1: 2: 3: 4: 5: 6: 7. The period of human existence in seven races, on one planet, is again 1: 2: 3: 4: 5: 6: 7. Now, as the planet evolves the 7 races in succession, before humanity can pass on to the next planet, the interval between the disappearance of humanity from one planet and its reappearance on the next, is equal to its existence on the planet which it has just left. Take then 4,320 millions as the day of *Brahma*, and calculate according to the above explanation and you will arrive at the above given results. It is noteworthy that in the Hindu exoteric works the period of the *Manvantara* (One Round) is given at 308 millions, to speak in round numbers. Now two reasons may be assigned for the adoption of that course. In the first place, the duration of the 4th Round according to the above calculations is 617 millions again, to use a round figure. Now, we have already stated that the period of activity of the planetary chain in one round is equal to its period of rest during the same round, while humanity rests in its passage from planet to planet. Thus divide the period of the 4th Round, into two equal parts; and you have 308 millions and odd as the *Manvantaric* period of our Round. Thus our Round

period may have been in the first instance taken as the *Manvantaric* period. The second reason may be this. Our planet being the exactly middle period and we being in the middle of the seven rounds, our round period may have been taken to denote the *average Manvantaric* period, thus at the same time giving a key in a veiled form to the mystery of the geometrical progression. We have already stated that the above figures are exact, if the exoteric calculations of the Brahmins about the day of Brahma be correct. But we may again state here that that figure is not correctly given out in exoteric numbers. We may, however, add that the explanations given by us about the progressions, etc., are facts and can be faithfully utilized when any one of the above-described figures are correctly known—in calculating all the rest of the figures. And these processes we have explained because we know that not one of the *exact* numbers will ever be given out, as they pertain to the Mysteries of Initiations and to the Secrets of the occult influence of Numbers.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

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What has the number of incarnations to do with the shrewdness, cleverness, or the stupidity of an individual? A strong craving for physical life may lead an entity through a number of incarnations and yet these may not develop its higher capacities. The Law of Affinity acts through the inherent *Karmic* impulse of the Ego, and governs its future existence. Comprehending Darwin's Law of Heredity for the body, it is not difficult to perceive how the birth-seeking Ego may be attracted at the time of rebirth to a body born in a family which has the same propensities as those of the reincarnating Entity.

*The Mahatma Letters*

## THE MASTER K. H. AND C. W. L. ON ATOMIC ENERGY

By G. NEVIN DRINKWATER

IN view of the remarkable Anglo-American announcements on the Zeta apparatus, and its advance towards harnessing the hydrogen reaction in atomic energy for peaceful purposes, it is of interest that C. W. Leadbeater clearly prophesied the use of atomic energy in an article which appeared in 1911 in *THE THEOSOPHIST*. This was incorporated later in *Man: Whence, How and Whither* (pp. 439 et seq.) written in collaboration with Mrs. Besant, and published in 1913.

Oliver Lodge had already supposed the existence of some such energy on theoretical grounds in 1907, but C. W. Leadbeater in pointing this out, described how in the future the power would become available from compact apparatus in ordinary houses and factories, so that older sources of energy would no longer be necessary. There was to be a preliminary stage in which power would be sent over long distances from central power-stations, linking the various countries. In this way waterfalls in all sorts of places would be harnessed, including Central Africa.

This latter part of the prophecy has already largely come true. Much of Western Europe is linked with an electrical grid, and Great Britain is to be linked with it in turn in the near future, by means of cables under the English Channel. Central African developments are well illustrated by the enormous Kariba development scheme under construction along

the Zambezi river; not to mention many huge developments and electrical grids elsewhere in various parts of the world which have arisen since 1911.

The atomic power plants built in the last few years are large, and require special radioactive fuel, while the heat from the reaction is used to generate steam for driving a conventional electrical generating plant. The Zeta apparatus, when developed eventually for commercial purposes, will quite possibly be considerably smaller, as there are theoretical grounds for thinking that it will be possible to generate electricity directly and without the large intermediary steam and electric power plant, while ordinary sea water will be used for fuel. This would be a considerable advance toward C. W. Leadbeater's forecast of a small and compact machine which can generate power anywhere. He described one form of apparatus which could be carried in the hand, and which could develop immediately a temperature of many thousands of degrees in a region even as small as a pin-point. While the Zeta apparatus cannot do this, it is perhaps significant that it has to generate an enormously high temperature by novel and entirely new methods to secure results.

The temperature reached is much higher than any previously available on earth. It is already much higher than the surface of the sun, 6,000 degrees centigrade, and has been as high as 5,000,000 degrees. It is believed that if a temperature could be reached some ten times greater, a reaction would set in similar in nature to that which takes place in the sun's interior and supplies its heat and light. The machine would then give out energy in a controllable form which would be greater than that which is supplied to it, and which would be available for an indefinite amount and for an indefinite time, just as C. W. Leadbeater prophesied.

Modern science has long abandoned any theory that the sun is burning, and regards the substance of the sun as being

in a different state than that which occurs naturally on earth. All this was clearly adumbrated by Master K. H., when, in a letter to A. P. Sinnett on the scientific views of the day, He stated that one of the greatest misconceptions of science was

. . . the absurd and tacitly accepted idea, that force is capable of existing *per se*, or of acting any more than life, *outside*, independent of, or in any other wise than *through* matter; in other words that *force is anything but matter* in one of her highest *states*,—the last three on the ascending scale being denied because only science knows nothing of them; and her utter ignorance of the universal Proteus, its functions and importance in the economy of nature—magnetism and electricity . . .

We *know* that the *invisible* Sun is composed of *that* which has neither name, nor can it be compared to anything known by your science—on earth; and that its “reflection” contains still less of anything like “gases,” mineral matter, or *fire*, though even we when treating of it in your civilized tongue are compelled to use such expressions as “vapour” and “magnetic matter”. . . The Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion*, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the *Maha Yug*. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 164, 165, 1923 ed. Italics as in the original.)

Such a statement, made in 1882, long before the electrical nature of matter and the existence of atomic energy in the sun or anywhere else had been realized, is indeed remarkable from any point of view. It is not only strikingly modern in tone, but was a dire “heresy” to the scientific outlook of the day. Reference to any late Victorian textbooks on physics and astronomy will show that it was a seemingly irrefutable principle that matter and energy were completely distinct and never under any circumstances could be transformed one into the other, atoms were believed to be hard indestructible particles, while the sun's energy was variously explained as due to the heat from meteoric collision, or to the gradual contraction of the sun under its own gravitational attraction, views long since abandoned.

G. NEVIN DRINKWATER

## MANKIND'S SURVIVAL:

### THE WAY OF HARMONY<sup>1</sup>

By JAMES S. PERKINS

*(Concluded from page 307)*

NOW it is the awakened individual who will influence the course of events in human affairs in a new direction. But free and happy individuals will develop only in a free nation, in a society of free nations in a lawful world. No concord of free nations can be created except by free individuals. That is why today's imperative for progress towards a world-civilization based upon law lies in the efforts of each nation and cultural group to free the individual within himself, and in international efforts is aimed at inviting and permitting each cultural group to render its contribution toward the freeing of all individuals everywhere.

I think it should be of profound interest to inquire into what are the cultural contributions that the various nations are making towards the creation and release of the Harmonized Man. What are the contributions that India is making?—that America makes? and Britain, France, Russia, China, and other nations? What are these contributions? I have been thinking of the contribution to the human problem of freedom and happiness that America has made and is making. In my experience in that country I have found that most significant

<sup>1</sup> Public Lecture given during the 82nd International Convention, Adyar, December 1957.

is America's dedication to the pursuit of happiness named as one of the three inalienable rights of man. This is not a superficial matter. It is connected, as I have tried to indicate, in a profound way with the release of powers latent in the Immortal Soul and in the Spirit of man.

I wonder if any of you have in recent years had cause to review thoughtfully those basic propositions upon which the declared freedoms of the United States are founded—I mean those truths in the Declaration of Independence that are said to be “self-evident,” namely, that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness”. Here we see that the founders intended that the very epitome of the rights that are said to be inalienable, the rights of life and liberty, secured by successfully establishing federal government, is the right to pursue happiness. It was left to the individual to determine what is happiness for him. For some it is the pursuit of their spiritual welfare. For others it is the freedom to think, to explore ideas in the further reaches of the mind or to fulfil deeper emotional drives. For most it is the pursuit of sensational pleasures, and for all it is the freedom to accumulate possessions, and to move about at will.

If the pursuit of happiness is an inalienable right, comparable to life itself, it has a profounder meaning than we are apt to attribute to it at first glance, and I have indicated that meaning in my preceding thoughts. The pursuit of happiness is the secret of man's true purpose, constituting in fact an alignment of body, soul and Spirit. It is therefore the key to his health, the key to an integrated physical, mental and spiritual well-being, both for the individual and the nation. If the pursuit of happiness is basic to American culture, it is pertinent to inquire into the state of this endeavor in twentieth-century America. What are we encountering in the United States? More stressful conditions, for one thing,

greater anxieties, tensions, conflicts, disturbances, confusion as to what are the essential aims of life itself. There is a growing fear of too much serious thought in this direction, because it implies changes, changes from which everyone shrinks when there is a comfortable *status quo*. When there is an all-pervading physical comfort even one's religion becomes complacently materialistic, and philosophy becomes an idle quoting of other men's ideas. Truly, we believe that to know too much is folly. You have heard the old saying: "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." It seems to me that there is something of that spirit in the present-day outlook. With emphasis so great upon materialistic aspects in our time, the pursuit of happiness has become a bewildering endeavor. In the eighteenth century when serious thought was being given to the rights of man and the establishment of a government that would secure these rights, Greek ideas, Neoplatonic ideas, prevailed, and there was easy reference to the Soul, to "universal principles," to Immortal Self, to Divine Being. Plotinus, the great Neoplatonist thinker, believed that all life proceeds from One Principle. Everyone and everything evolve from this One Life and the Good Life extends to all—to animals, to plants, to minerals, to invisible beings as well. True happiness, therefore, Plotinus said, seeks the good of all—a Theosophical idea indeed. "Happiness," he believed, "can exist only in a being that lives fully. Such will possess not merely the Good but the Supreme Good." That kind of language is not used any more. We are not clear as to what is "the good," let alone the Supreme Good. On the other hand, in the United States there is a relentless round-the-clock instruction via television and radio, the cinema and all publications, emphasizing possessions and pursuits that secure our physical well-being in this modern era. The ideas of philosophers that happiness is a concern of the Soul, an immortal pursuit, are being overshadowed by the version of

happiness as it is experienced in America today. The modern spokesmen for happiness are the commercial advertisers who are instructing us every day, every hour, in what to eat and drink, what to hope and strive for, what to fear and to rejoice in, even what to think in the pursuit of happiness—all of it in terms of sensate values. Through implications, by means of every adept phrasing of words and visual enticements, the advertising fraternity is indoctrinating a whole population to associate smooth skin, white teeth, glossy hair with a state of happiness, and to be fearful of not keeping up in these matters. Thus throughout every day in authoritative proclamations the good life is being associated with material possessions, with the transient life of sensation, with all that inevitably perishes, the securing of which entails conflict, increasing tension and disharmony, unless we make deliberate efforts to offset it. Recently I saw a billboard as I drove along the highway upon which there was placed in box-car letters these words: BE SURE—BE SAVED—JOIN (a certain) CHURCH; which simply means that we have turned to the manufactured slogan for our deepest convictions.

Surely these articulate spokesmen for happiness are offering sugar pills to a humanity that needs a clearer knowledge and a profounder adjustment to the fundamental nature of man, a humanity in need of reorientation to the direction in which lies Reality, and from which flows the healing, life-giving forces that are needed so much in this world today.

Man's parts are at war with his basic nature, in a time when disintegrating forces have free sway over him unless he draws apart regularly to explore the mysteries of his own Soul, "mountain-tall and ocean-deep"! There is so much that is not understood about the total experience of man, so little we know of our inmost strength, of our durability, of the inevitable triumph of our Godhead, which no advertisement ever tells us about. The thinking that is manufactured for us is shaped

to view Nature as a maelstrom of blind forces amidst which the individual is all but helpless. How much we need the reassurance of the poet, the mystic, the artist and the philosopher, those who perceive that immortal Nature is

Ever carving a fairer race,  
Covering errors of every kind,  
Whispering softly: "Never mind,  
Tomorrow you wear another face."

—a beneficent Nature whose very laws lead struggling life onward to fulfilment.

But such perspectives are open to the eyes of the Soul alone, and "soul" is a word that has fallen into disrepute, supplanted by the word "psyche". In a braver and more self-reliant time one philosopher boldly and truthfully proclaimed that the Soul is the perceiver and the revealer of Truth. We cannot truly perceive or define happiness until we take into account the whole of man's nature in the light of every kind of knowledge. And it is urgent that we do so, because humanity now must have a greater vision, a fresh sense of purpose.

All of this leads me to perceive as supremely important the twentieth-century idea that life emerges from within. It will generate a new sense of man's direction forward. The terrifying problems of today will be met successfully only by free individuals turned Soul-ward, changing themselves from within by the power of their awakening Divinity, attuned to their Source through a creative acceptance of the outer pattern of life. This is the way the individual will change himself and the world.

Nations are but groups of individuals with common interests. They turn naturally to violence and to war when their interests are threatened. War is a collective fight pattern that renders incommunicable the nation's higher destiny or Soul and its outer existence. But war is the old way, the way of long ago when tribes first formed nations and nations held together against enemies. War today means annihilation for

all. Nations and mankind will survive only in another way. Therefore, it has become of crucial importance to activate the principle of Unity. There must be a greater effort on the part of every population to perceive the meaning of each nation, its contribution to the spiritual welfare of all nations, to the problem of freeing the individual man in every nation. Viewed in this perspective it can be seen that the nations need one another. A Brotherhood of Nations is as essential as the Brotherhood of Man. Each is making its cultural contribution to the overruling individual problem of freedom and happiness. Each is a part of the world-pattern, working out the cyclic destiny—the voluntary uniting of all nations in a free World Order. Each needs all others. We can begin to ask seriously, we in America, for example: What does India contribute to America's destiny? What, on the other hand, does America contribute to India's Dharma? What are all the nations, each in turn, contributing to the world-pattern? With this effort to perceive the spiritual destiny of each nation and the exchange between nations at this cultural level, through such effort, is commenced the practice of alignment of the nation's outer life with its higher destiny. In other words, this procedure is a beginning of practice of the alignment of Spirit, soul and body of the nation. Where there is an awakening appreciation for each other, there is a creative acceptance of all. Through creative acceptance, nation by nation, people by people, we begin letting the life-pattern teach us of the changes that must be brought about in national lives. When there is creative acceptance internationally, when people are quietly receptive rather than outwardly bellicose and belligerent, there is perception of the aligning of outer facts of international life with the inner ideal of a destined world-civilization. There is appreciation for the contribution of each nation towards that world-civilization. For example, the American ideal of the pursuit of happiness

can be appreciated in itself as a great contribution to the world's peoples, even though the central problem in the United States is the same as it is everywhere—the problem of materialism.

The whole of humanity is tackling this problem and contributions are accumulating from all directions to the emergence of the twentieth century's great idea that life's source is within. When it is realized that life does not originate in the physical world but rather in the spiritual world, it will be seen then that the pursuit of happiness is indeed a golden thread drawing our outer action ever in the direction of ultimate Reality, the source of all created form in Eternal Bliss. It seems to me an inspiring fact in this world of sorrow and terror that a whole nation should be dedicated to such a proposition. And I am sure that if we analyse each nation in turn, we shall find equally important and inspiring contributions by them being given to the whole of humanity. By discovering what these are, by pointing them out and exchanging knowledge with each other regarding them, we shall give voice to the uniqueness in each.

Now I think we have already made a tremendous step forward in this direction with the creation of the United Nations, for here we have a forum for sharing physically, mentally and emotionally the qualities of each nation. This is the only way in which a world-balance and a healthy international life can be achieved. Here is objectified a trend of the world's peoples to consult and act together for the general welfare of all. Eighty-one nations are now at work through many specialized agencies and activities creating international law, and establishing human rights for all, giving technical aid and many other services—thus creating a new promise for the future of mankind.

Yet there appears to be some element lacking, something needed. Is it not the need to approach each other spiritually?

We are neglecting spiritual foundations at our peril. Today's lessons are calling upon us to create *spiritual* foundations for a World Order. And we shall progress towards it more rapidly as we take up a sympathetic research into a comparative study of the enduring wisdom teachings of all countries and civilizations. The religions, philosophies and sciences of the world, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, are the source-material for such an endeavor. From it will proceed a universal knowledge, a knowledge from which, as I have said, can emerge irrefutably those ethical, moral and spiritual structures that will be found acceptable everywhere in the world. The world at present is a veritable Tower of Babel with monotonous overtones of materialism, hypnotic in its effect, a reaching with hands and feet for God and the Source of things, rather than with soul and Spirit. Where will we search for a synthesis of knowledge that conveys the sense of reality in our experience?

Here we can be reminded that throughout the past eighty-two years Theosophy has been pointing in this direction. Theosophy has introduced a framework for the synthesis of all knowledge. It has pointed to universal principles; these have been perceived and stated; fields of law have been opened up that are not yet within the horizon of modern knowledge—much of it documented by observation and experience only possible through awakened powers in certain individuals in advance of present humanity. We must remember that Theosophy is not an invented cult, not a religion, not a collection of fables. Theosophy is a restatement of the cumulative wisdom of mankind about the principles of order that prevail in the universe, and about the origin and constitution of man. It has been the pioneering task of Theosophists to promulgate this knowledge. For eighty-two years, the Theosophical Society has been the voice of Theosophy around the world, calling men everywhere to form a nucleus of the

Universal Brotherhood of humanity. The Theosophical Society has been welcomed in every free land because it is a free society, not bound by beliefs or creeds, or to its individual leaders, cleaving only to universal principles that are stated and restated with ever more penetrating knowledge and perception. Theosophy encourages the awakening of free and fearless thinkers in every land, and points steadily to the creative changes needed, the changes that must come lawfully. It invites revolution throughout the world. But the revolution which the Theosophist would stir in our midst is the revolution of Love, the alignment of Spirit, soul and body in the individual through voluntary action, through creative appreciation that is beneficent, altruistic, non-destroying action born in the deep Centre of the Eternal Self. As one of the great scriptures has put it, "From such action arises the Sun of Wisdom; and Wisdom obtained, the individual moves swiftly to the Supreme Peace".

So Theosophy echoes the harmony that is universal in the worlds within. It sings of peace in every realm. It would bring peace to all nations—to Asia, to Europe, to the Americas, peace throughout the world. Theosophy encourages in individuals everywhere the institution of a beneficent self-revolution of will acting through love, of thought acting through sympathy, of acts that are ever beautiful because they are ever lawful.

Thus have I said that humanity's survival rests upon a world-wide, non-violent self-transformation of individuals who have become reoriented to the inward Source of All; that such a revolution in the individual can be brought about by creative acceptance and appreciation of his and the world's pattern of life, permitting himself in his pursuit of true happiness to be taught from within, to be self-regenerated in the non-violent way, the way of harmony, the simple way of mankind's survival.

JAMES S. PERKINS

## THE OCCULT TEACHINGS OF THE YOGAVĀSISHTHA<sup>1</sup>

By B. L. ATREYA

I AM very grateful to Shri Rohit Mehta for inviting me to deliver this year's Besant Lecture, and thus giving me a unique opportunity of associating myself with the hallowed name of Mrs. Besant, and enabling me to pay my tribute to one of the greatest figures, and in my opinion the greatest, in the recent history of the world. In the development of my outlook on life and in the formation of my character I have drawn more light and inspiration from Mrs. Besant than from any other whom I have seen. Her life, speeches and writings have considerably moulded me and my philosophy of life. As a seeker of Truth, as an original thinker, as a forceful lecturer, as a clear writer, as a person of action, and as a humble servant of humanity—all combined into one—Mrs. Besant stands unrivalled. She has given something to the world which will be more and more appreciated as Science progresses in the right direction.

If I were to choose a characteristic denomination for Mrs. Besant, I would say that she was an Occultist, and all her greatness is rooted in Occultism more than in anything else. Her greatest gift to humanity, the knowledge of Theosophy, has been due to her occult contacts. In fact, many

<sup>1</sup> Besant Lecture given during the 82nd International Convention, Adyar, December 1957.

a writer has synonymously used the terms Theosophy and Occultism. Even if the two have different denotations, Theosophy is meaningless without Occultism.

I will quote a few lines from a chapter contributed by me to the great work, *Where Theosophy and Science Meet*, published from Adyar and edited by my friend, the late Prof. D. D. Kanga (Vol. II, pp. 115-16):

Occultists tell us, on the evidence of their own experience, that there are entities, facts and events in the world, and aspects and qualities of things, which remain unknown to the "normal man" in whom the faculties adequate to know them have not yet developed. As there are hidden and unrevealed aspects of things and entities in the Universe, so are there latent senses and faculties in man with which they are known. All of us can, by undergoing an occult training, develop these latent powers of perception. Endowed with these capacities, we shall behold much more in the Universe than the scientist does with his finest instruments of observation, or the philosopher does with his fine logical intellect. The occultist tells us that in the course of our spiritual evolution all these latent faculties of knowledge will become patent, but that the natural course of evolution can be hastened through a certain occult training. He also tells us that there exist such spiritual beings as have perfected themselves and whose knowledge of the Universe verges on omniscience.

The ancient Indians were aware of the existence of the occult world and of the occult powers of man. In course of time they developed an art and science of occult training, which are generally known as *Yoga*. In Chapter III of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sūtras* we get a glimpse of the supernormal powers a practical Yogi develops and of the world he discovers with these powers of cognition. I have summed up these in a chapter, "Modern Western Psychical Research and the Ancient Indian Adhyātma Vidyā" in a recent work of mine, *An Introduction to Parapsychology*. Mrs. Besant has written and spoken considerably on Yoga, as is well known to all of you.

One of the best works on Yoga or occult training, and the best according to me, written in ancient India, is the *Yogavāsishtha*. It is both theoretical and practical and has

been composed in beautiful and simple Sanskrit. I have had the pleasure of writing several books on it in Sanskrit, Hindi and English, including *The Philosophy of the Yogavāsishtha* published from here (T. P. H., Adyar) in 1936. It is futile to discuss when and in what part of India the *Yogavāsishtha* might have been composed, for it is one of the few works of the world which are meant for the seekers of wisdom in all times and all places. Few authors in ancient India had the copyright spirit and fewer still cared to perpetuate their names. Tradition, however, says that originally, before its recensions with additions and omissions, the work was composed by Vālmiki, the reputed author of the *Rāmāyana*, and it contained the teachings of the sage Vasishtha imparted to his pupil, Shri Rāmachandra, the young son of Dasharatha, the ancient king of Ayodhyā.

The *Yogavāsishtha* is a veritable mine of spiritual, occult and psychological wisdom, and deserves to be studied over and over again by seekers of truth and peace. I shall try to confine myself to the occult teachings of this great work.

The teacher Vasishtha himself was not an ordinary man who acquired knowledge by the intellectual process of ratiocination or induction. He was mentally created by Brahmā the Creator, for the purpose of enlightening the seekers of wisdom. The latter taught him the wisdom that gives peace, removes all suffering, and brings solace to everybody (II. 10). Vasishtha could perceive the inner secrets of the universe and life, and held that without actual perception nobody could be convinced of anything. Personal testimony is, therefore, the only source of knowledge recognized by him (II. 19. 16; III. 42. 15). He who does not perceive himself cannot be convinced by any argument or scripture (v. 65. 53; v. 73. 15; vi. 118. 4; vii. 52. 28). Much of what is contained in the *Yogavāsishtha* is based on the actual direct experience of Vasishtha and cannot be fully grasped until one actually has

extraordinary or supernormal cognition. The *Yogavāsishtha* is not therefore a book of philosophy like other philosophical treatises. It contains a view of life and a way of life based on occult experience of deep and hidden realities, processes and events of which the ordinary human consciousness is not aware. Nobody on mere *a priori* grounds can accept or reject the statements of an occult work like it. No arguments can prove or disprove them. The only challenge an occultist throws is: Come and see. For the occultist himself the hidden aspects of things are as real as the verified facts are for the scientist. That is why Vasishtha in the *Yogavāsishtha* tells Rāma that some day he would share the experience of his Master.

#### *Man or the Individual*

Modern science knows man only as a physical, chemical, biological, psychological and social organism, being acted upon by and reacting to other similar organisms. All beings, of whatever complexity, are ultimately ephemeral forms of matter which nowadays is believed to be dynamic in nature. All the activities of man as all the processes in Nature are ultimately ever-changing modifications of dynamic matter. Mind and Spirit as apart from mere functions of the material dynamism called the body are not yet recognized generally by science as entities by themselves, independent and superior to the bodily organism. All occultists including Vasishtha, however, tell us that the essential nature of man is spiritual and mental and that the material or physical body is only an uppermost and superficial garment of man, a garment made by the mind for the satisfaction of some of its own desires and obligations. Here are a few of the innumerable statements from the *Yogavāsishtha* on the nature and powers of man, who is ultimately spiritual and mental:

All beings are mental in nature. Physicality is only an illusion, a wrong vision due to ignorance (vib. 68. 34). Mind, intellect, ego, memory, action, imagination, awareness, desire, perception, inner organism and outer body, all are mental in nature. They are all functions and forms of the mind. The mind assumes all these divergent forms and appears to be different in different situations as one and the same actor appears differently in different roles (III. 96. 56, 43. 18-28). The *Yogavāsishtha* describes at length how the mind assumes the form of an ego and becomes dense and why and how it assumes a physical form and moulds it in accordance with its own desires and needs (III. 64. 12, 14, 15; III. 13. 18-32). The mind gradually becomes an ego on account of the intensity of its tendency towards objectivity, as a spark of fire grows in volume on account of the increase of fuel, as on account of depth the sky appears to be blue, and as air becomes wind (III. 64. 12-15). Through the intensity of the many-sided imagining activity, the mind knows itself in the form of "I am *this*" and imagines a starlike monadic form for itself, which later on develops into the form of a physical body. It then desires to see, makes an effort to see, and immediately there arise two tiny holes in its monadic form and these develop into eyes. *Pari passu* with the desire to see is created on the objective side a subtle object of vision. In the same way its desire to touch gives rise to the skin, and its desire to hear gives rise to the ears. That with which it desires to smell becomes the nose and that with which it desires to taste becomes the tongue. Its desire to act gives rise to the organs of action. On account of the same desire evolve the objects of sensations on the objective side. In this way, the power of desire of the mind gives rise to the ego, perceptions and objects and ideas. The individualized mind now stands clothed in the eightfold subtle body—monad, intellect, ego, the five subtle senses and their corresponding

subtle objects. Through the intensity of thought and desire to grow, this subtle body gradually develops into and is experienced as the physical body in the uterus (III. 13). The mind creates its own limitation in the form of the physical body by its own desire and effort like a silk-worm (IV. 42. 31-32).

From the stage of pure mind, which in essence is the ultimate reality called the Brahman or the Absolute Spirit, (V. 13. 53) to the gross physicality expressed in the form of apparently inert stone, there are many grades of objectivity, and countless monads (individualized minds) enjoy and suffer in them. Various types and classes of such innumerable monads are described in the *Yogavāsishtha* (IV. 43; III. 117; VIb. 50; III. 94). There is no time to go into those details. We may, however, repeat that Vasishtha is a thorough-going pan-psychist. He knows from his personal experience, to which he has referred in many places, that everything in this universe has a subtle mental activity in and behind it (III. 40. 20). There is mind behind every particle of dust; it grows within every sprout; it moves as sap in the tender leaves; it rises up in the waves of ocean; it dances within the womb of a rock; it rains in clouds; and lies inert in a piece of stone. In all inert things resides desire in potential forms as flowers are present potentially in their seeds (III. 40. 20-22; VIb. 10. 19).

#### *Superiority of the Mind*

According to Vasishtha, there are no limits to the powers and potentialities of the mind. If there appear to be any limitations they are of its own creation to satisfy its own desires. The mind in each individual or thing has the same unlimited powers. These powers are exercised through desire and imagination and intensification of thought. Here are some of

the countless statements of Vasishtha in this connection: The mind is omnipotent. It is capable of accomplishing everything (III. 91. 16). As it imagines within itself, so happens forthwith in the objective world (III. 91. 52). Whatever is intensely thought of by the mind that comes to be effected and materialized (III. 91. 17). It evolves objects out from within itself (III. 66. 6). It is the creator of the world and it manifests itself in the forms imagined by itself (VIb. 139. 1). Time and space are experienced as the mind thinks them to be (III. 103. 14). The mind imagines the world and the body in accordance with its own free will like a magic scene (III. 4. 79). Every mind has this power (III. 40. 29). Every individual can attain all that he desires (III. 45. 12). Whatever one strives to attain one attains surely (III. 45. 18). The mind itself is the giver of the results of its own efforts, although it may do so in the form of a God or penance (III. 45. 19). No other being is responsible for what one acquires, as everything is the consequence of one's thought (IV. 13. 11). An individual becomes what he sets his heart on (III. 56. 28). The nature of the objects is as it is believed to be (III. 56. 30). Even poison can be turned into nectar by being constantly imagined to be so, and an enemy will behave as a friend, if one has faith in his being so (III. 60. 17). One experiences as one thinks (III. 60. 16). If a moment is imagined to be an age, it is experienced as such and *vice versa* (III. 60. 20-21). Sweet is experienced as bitter and *vice versa* by intense thought (III. 60. 27-28). Sometimes people are killed on account of their own imagination by an absolutely non-existent devil (III. 60. 33). One experiences only that to be real which one thinks to be so (VIb. 100. 3). One is affected by things only in accordance with one's ideas about them (VIb. 148. 5). It is by thought alone that we get into delusion, undergo the experience of birth and death, are bound in the world, and become released from it (IV. 4. 9). All our states of happiness

or misery, in heaven or in hell, are simply effects of our own thought (iv. 23. 13). There is nothing true or false in itself; everything is as it is believed to be (iv. 21. 58). One takes that alone to be real on which one has pinned his faith and believes that there is nothing better than it (iv. 21. 22). People have different conceptions of duty, value, enjoyment and liberation in accordance with their own different convictions, and strive after their own ideals (iv. 21. 23). Poison becomes nectar and the unreal becomes the real through one's faith (iii. 56. 31). We perceive only what we believe (via. 51. 3). Things become what they are repeatedly thought to be (vib. 67. 20). The mental or the subtle body becomes physical only through repeatedly being imagined to be so, and so also can the physical body be realized to be subtle, through constant meditation on its being so (vib. 67. 30-31). There is no power in the world to withstand the determination of a mind (iii. 88. 18). Our present state is what has been wished and willed by us, and can be changed by our effort into any other (iii. 40. 13). If one believes oneself to be separate from the Absolute Reality, one is so; if one thinks oneself to be the Absolute Brahman one is so. We limit ourselves by our own thought (iii. 67. 58). Everything, even bondage and freedom, depends upon the mind (iii. 98. 3). The increase or decrease in our sufferings is in the hands of our own minds (iii. 99. 43). Mind is the creator of all our sorrows and joys (iii. 115. 24). Our world-experience rises or falls in accordance with our own desires (iv. 45. 33). The world-experience is a long dream constructed by the creative imagination of our mind (iv. 45. 24). Whatever desire is cherished by anyone in his heart is ultimately realized in the world (iii. 96. 10). By our own mind, through our own creative imagination, with our own efforts taking various forms, is this multifarious objective world spread out before us like a magic scene (iii. 96. 8-9). The physical body is created by the mind for

its own use, as a silk-worm forms a cocoon around itself (iv. 45. 7). The mind creates the body from the material of its own thought (iv. 11. 19). The body changes in accordance with the thought in which the mind is engaged (iv. 21. 16). The body experienced in the present is as it was eagerly imagined to be in the past (via. 28. 34). The disharmony or disturbance (disease) in the body follows the disharmony of the mind (via. 81. 30).

#### *Supernormal Powers*

Supernormal powers of cognition and action can be acquired by purification and concentration of the mind. A mind is powerless to be in direct touch with other minds, as long as it is impure. It can acquire direct contact with other minds, when it is purified (iv. 17. 29-30). One can perceive subtler and finer worlds and see the perfected beings living in finer worlds by a purified mind. Only those who know what ought to be known and who lead a life of virtue can enter the subtler world, and not others (iii. 54. 1). Only those whose minds have become enlightened and subtle can meet the enlightened ones residing in the subtle worlds after their death here (iii. 22. 10). By the practice of breath-control and by awakening the Kundalinī power and by realizing oneself to be the Real Self, one can attain extraordinary powers such as (i) becoming heavy and stout like a mountain; (ii) flying through space to any distance; (iii) seeing the enlightened ones; (iv) leaving one's body and entering another's body; (v) perceiving distant events and things; (vi) becoming abnormally small; and (vii) becoming abnormally large (via. 81; via. 82).

#### *The Self*

Even the mind which keeps changing and imagining is not our real being. We are something deeper than the mind.

We are the Self which is identical and one with Brahman, the Absolute Reality, which pervades and transcends everything. The Self is the unchanging Seer of all changing processes. It is that which is the ground of all the four types of experience, namely, the waking, the dream, the deep sleep and the Samādhi experiences. As the Self, we have no limits. We are omnipresent and omnipotent and one with all beings. "I am the whole universe and exist in the state of subtle etheric void (v. 17. 17). I am the sky, I am the directions, I am gods, I am demons, I am all the world. I am darkness, clouds, oceans, air, fire, etc. (v. 73. 3-4). All that exists in the universe is a portion of myself as the waves of an ocean are of the ocean. He seeth truly who seeth thus (iv. 22. 33). I am the consciousness in the Sun, in all creatures, living and non-living, gods and demons (v. 26. 12). I am fragrance in flowers; beauty in leaves and flowers; beauty of all beauties I am; and I am the awareness behind all objects" (v. 34. 52).

There is no death for the mind and the Self. Death is not the total extinction of personality (vib. 18. 1). To say that the dead person has ceased to exist is wrong. He experiences other worlds in different time-space orders (v. 71. 68). The man who dies here wakes up in some other world (vib. 105. 29).

#### *The Objective World*

The *Yogavāsishtha*, on the basis of the occult vision and experience of the sage Vasishtha, presents quite a different picture of the objective world from what we and our science know it to be. Vasishtha's occult experience has revealed that the nature of the world is in no way different from that of a dream. The experience of the world in the waking state is thoroughly similar to that of a dream. There is hardly any difference between the two, except that the one seems to be stabler than the other (iv. 19. 11). From the

standpoint of the ultimate Reality, there is no difference whatsoever between the waking and the dream objects (vib. 161. 24). Just as in dreams all objective things in reality are thoughts, ideas or images, so the whole world is merely ideal, (*kalpanā-mātram*) (vib. 210. 11). It does not exist except in thought (iii. 40. 57). It arises and exists in the mind (iv. 4. 11). The whole objective universe is an expansion of the mind (iv. 47. 48). It is a big dream arisen in the mind (iv. 18. 47). Nothing of the world—sky, mountains, ocean, earth, etc., is outside the mind (iv. 48. 49). The objectivity, its perception and idea, with their essence, duration and movement, are all created and destroyed by the mind (v. 48. 52). It is imagination alone that assumes the forms of time, space and motion (iii. 56. 37). The heavens, the earth, the atmosphere, the space, the mountains, the rivers and the directions—all are fragments of the mind, appearing, as it were, to exist outside (v. 56. 35). All the various things of the world are forms of thought, in the same way as currents, waves, foam and particles are forms of water (vib. 110. 48). There is no objective space and no objective time (iii. 20. 28). The reality of things consists in their being thought. They are nothing but products of prolonged imagination (iii. 26. 52). Stability and uniformity of Nature are mental (via. 61. 29; vib. 148. 21). Objectivity and materiality of things are also mental as in dreams (iii. 57. 15, 16). The entire objective world is potentially inherent in the subject, as the seeds of a lotus potentially exist in the filaments of its flower (iii. 1. 42).

#### *The Subjective Worlds*

A very strange aspect of the world, according to the *Yogavāsishtha*, is that even the objective contents of an imagined world become centres of imagination and a new objective world is imagined by each of them. In this way within each

world there are countless worlds, one within the other. And this process of worlds within worlds goes on *ad infinitum* (iv. 19. 3; iv. 18. 16-17). These innumerable worlds exist here and now unknown to each other and unknown to various subjects. The world of one monad exists unknown to another. The inhabitants of one world do not know those of another (vib. 63. 12-13), in the same way as the dream-worlds of sleeping persons, with all sorts of business and activity going on therein, are absolutely unknown and unreal to one another (vib. 59. 19. 34). But, there is a possibility, according to Vasishtha, of every content of any world, existing anywhere at any time, being represented in the same manner anywhere and at any time, for, ultimately we are all rooted in and are one with the Absolute Consciousness, which is the substance of all the forms and which is omnipresent. Because Brahman is present everywhere, at every time and in everything, everything can be experienced everywhere, as it is possible in dreams (iii. 52. 42). All the worlds are not of a uniform nature. There is infinite variety of detail in them (iv. 47. 14-15). Although all the worlds and their objects are mental in nature there are various grades of manifestation, which may be called planes of existence. They too are innumerable. Vasishtha classifies them into three, namely those of Consciousness (*Chidākāsha*), of Mind (*Chittākāsha*), and of Matter (*Ākāsha*). Although apparently different they are all ultimately one Consciousness, which is the ultimate essence and substance of all, and can be experienced as such by those occultists who take their stand in Consciousness (iii. 40. 19).

#### *Yoga or Union with the Absolute*

Now the most important occult problem is how to take one's stand in the Ultimate and Absolute Consciousness. Vasishtha deals with this problem more comprehensively and exhaustively than any other Indian writer has perhaps done.

The process of one's realization of identity with the Absolute Reality and taking one's stand in it is called *Yoga*, literally meaning Union. The word *Yogavāsishtha* literally means the Method of Yoga or Union with the Absolute taught by Vasishtha. So, the *Yogavāsishtha* is primarily a work on Yoga or the method of acquiring occult experiences and powers. Here we collect in brief the important hints on this path of occult perfection scattered all over the work.

The Self is the only friend of the self, and the Self is the only enemy of the self. If one does not save oneself (from suffering, imperfection and limitation), there is no other way left (vib. 162. 18). What one does not attain through one's own efforts cannot be attained through any other agency in the three worlds (v. 43. 18). Whatever one acquires anywhere one does so by the application of one's own force. There is no other method possible (iv. 43. 13). If a teacher can raise the ignorant and lazy without the latter's own efforts, why is he not able to raise a camel, elephant or bull? (iv. 48. 16). Meditation, yoga (ordinary physical yogic exercises), penances and sacrifices are of no avail in making man liberated (vib. 174. 24). Penance, charity and fasts, etc., are of little use in this matter (iii. 6. 4). The control of one's own mind is the source of all prosperity and high position (spiritual and occult) as the earth is the source of all beautiful crops (v. 43. 35). Why do you not propitiate your own mind instead of propitiating the Gods, Vishnu and others? (v. 43. 25). Even Vishnu is unable to give knowledge to a man who does not think for himself, even when He is worshipped for long and seems pleased (v. 43. 10). Those who run to other Gods, having forgotten the God residing within the cave of their own heart, are like those people who run after ordinary stones, having thrown away the diamond from their hands (v. 8. 14). God is within everybody. Those persons are really unfortunate who go to the external Gods, having neglected the

internal one (iv. 43. 26). As a mango ripens gradually so does a mind become purified by constant effort and discrimination (v. 43. 32). God (who pervades everything) is known through one's own effort and ever-growing discrimination; not by penance, sacred baths and ceremonies (iii. 6. 9).

The process of Yoga consists in making effort along these three lines: (i) Deep affirmation of the One Reality, (ii) Control and annihilation of the mind, and (iii) Control and complete stoppage of the vital breath (via. 69. 27). If any one of them is fully accomplished others will follow (via. 69. 40). Of all the three methods of Self-realization, control of the mind is the best, because it is most easily effected and leads to peace sooner (via. 69. 29). A few hints on each of these methods may be recalled here from the *Yogavāsishtha*.

#### 1. Practice in Deep Affirmation of the One Reality

Through constant practice in deep affirmation of one's being the Absolute Reality the mind comes to peace, and when the mind is thus merged in the Reality the activity of the *prānas* (breathing) is totally stopped (via. 69. 48). This may be effected along three lines. One may meditate on the fact of one's being one with the Absolute Brahman. For according to Vasishtha, one becomes that which one constantly affirms to be; one fills oneself with power, the greatest imaginable, in accordance with one's affirmation (iv. 11. 59). Secondly, through realization of the absolute unreality of objects other than the Self one may affirm and realize one's being the Absolute and only Reality. Without the realization of the absolute non-entity of the world in the Absolute, Liberation, which consists in the absence of the experience of the ego and the world, is not realized (iii. 21. 12). Or thirdly, through the negation of the subject-object idea from the Reality, one may realize that one is the only Reality above the distinction of subject and object. This process is called

*avalībhāva*. *Kevalībhāva* is the experience when the Self realizes self to be free from subjectivity as a consequence of the object being realized to be unreal (iii. 4. 53). The first two processes are called *Brahmabhāvanā* and *Padārtha-bhāvanā-tyāga*.

#### 2. Control and Stoppage of the Activity of the Prānas

According to Vasishtha, the activity of the mind and the vital process of respiration are closely connected because the mind has identified itself with the latter. So, the control and stoppage of the one helps in those of the other. Through stopping the movements of the *prānas* the mind is surely stopped from its activities (v. 78. 15). When the *prāna-shakti* is at rest, mind is experienced no more (v. 13. 83). And when the mind is no longer active, the objective world vanishes (v. 78. 16). Vasishtha has dealt at length with the nature of the *prānas* and how to control their activities.

#### 3. Control and Stoppage of the Activity of the Mind

The *Yogavāsishtha* has most extensively dealt with the nature of the mind, its powers, and methods of controlling it. Here we shall pick up a few statements only: The mind is the nave of the wheel of the world-illusion. If one can stop it from moving, the world-wheel stops, and ceases to trouble us (v. 49. 40). By annihilating the mind the world-experience is annihilated, as by the destruction of a jar, the so-called jar-space is annihilated (v. 50. 14). After the annihilation of the mind what remains is Absolute Peace, the pure and spotless One Reality (via. 93. 44).

How is the mind purified, brought under control, and how are its activities stopped, and how is it annihilated? Here is summarized in a few lines all that Vasishtha has said at length: Mind can be controlled and annihilated by (1) Realization of its unreality through philosophical thinking, (2) Avoidance of imagination or day-dreaming, (3) Distaste for objects of sense-pleasure, (4) Renunciation of desires,

(5) Eradication of the feeling of the ego, (6) Practice of detachment, (7) Attainment of equanimity, (8) Mental renunciation of every possession, and (9) Practice of constant *samādhi*. In the words of the *Yogavāsishtha*: A thing which is taken to be real on account of ignorance will vanish when true knowledge about it is attained (via. 111. 32). The ego (mind) is only an illusory conception in the Self like the appearance of a snake in a rope and of water in a desert (via. 11. 34). The mind is dissolved when there is no imagination (v. 13. 80). The experience of the world-illusion is due to our imagination; it vanishes away when imagining is completely discontinued (via. 33. 42). Desire for objects of pleasure is bondage; giving it up is liberation (III. 35. 3). As long as indifference for pleasures is not generated in the mind, so long does full freedom not accrue (v. 24. 37-38). Desire is the most essential nature of the mind. Mind and desire are synonymous (via. 94. 5). The mind with no desire is the Reality, which is Pure Consciousness (iv. 17. 3). The sun of Self-realization is fully seen when the cloud of ego is dispersed (v. 13. 17). The essence of the seed of the sprout of world-experience, which is desire, can be destroyed with the fire of non-attachment (vib. 28. 23). As long as everything is not given up, the Self is not obtained. For the Self is said to transcend everything (v. 58. 44). He who does not care to obtain anything obtains the Eternal, the Perfect Whole, and becomes happy (v. 34. 76). The Absolute Experience, which is like an eternal sleep, can also be realized if one learns to be in a state of thought-suspended *samādhi* (III. 1. 36). They alone experience the highest happiness and joy who have transcended the mind, and are at peace in their Self (iv. 15. 25).

These, in brief, are the occult teachings of the *Yogavāsishtha*.

B. L. ATREYA

## THE CULTURE OF INDIA<sup>1</sup>

By RADHA S. BURNIER

IT is important for us as Theosophists, as well as for all other people, to understand and appreciate the different cultures of the world, including the culture of India. But I think that for a proper understanding of national cultures, it is first of all essential to know what is culture. Then only we shall know how that culture finds expression among each people. "Culture" is one of those words, like "love," which are used in many different senses. It may mean a number of different things. It sometimes means something which is very commonplace and it sometimes means something noble and beautiful. The word "culture" literally means cultivating or tending. And therefore we speak of the culture of plants, the culture of bees, and so on. Metaphorically, we mean by it the cultivating or tending of the mind, of the emotions, of the sensibilities and the faculties. Therefore when we speak of the culture of a nation, it ought to represent for us everything in that nation which is an expression of the development and refinement of the people, and that means the characteristic features of that particular civilization. But culture does not always mean that. When we speak of "primitive culture," for example, we merely refer to a particular stage of civilization. The people who

<sup>1</sup> A short lecture given at the 82nd International Convention, Adyar, December 1957.

belong to the primitive culture are not generally cultured people.

In India this word culture is often considered as synonymous with the arts. But it is obvious to all of us that an aptitude for art, either in an individual or in a nation, does not indicate culture in that individual or nation. And this is true of a talent in any particular direction. An aptitude for science, or an aptitude for scholarship, or an aptitude for any one special thing, does not mean that the person who has that aptitude is cultured. In fact it is a matter of common experience to all of us that where there is development in one exclusive direction, there is often a lack of culture; that a person who is concentrated on science or on scholarship or on art or on anything else is often very uncultured and very crude in other directions. Therefore, it is only when there is an all-round development, when the emotions and the intuition are sensitive enough to understand and respond to beauty, when the mind and intellect are developed enough to perceive truth, when there is maturity and mellowness of outlook, and refinement of action and behavior, that a person is really cultured. It really needs all these qualities to make a person cultured.

The same is true of a nation. A nation with a great culture is one in which the development of the people has found expression in various different ways; and a nation is cultured when there is a matureness in the attitude of the people towards life. We can see this exemplified in the culture of Greece. Each national culture is the expression of the characteristics and genius of the people. Each people, of course, differs from another, due to various reasons, racial, geographical, climatical, and so on. Each people, therefore, necessarily develops in a way different from that of other peoples. And as that development indicates the culture of that people, each culture is unique.

We shall now try to consider some of the unique features of Indian culture. Indian culture is probably the oldest continuous culture existing in this world. There have been many ancient and wonderful cultures, for instance, that of Egypt and that of Greece. But if we go to those countries, we see that practically nothing of that ancient culture is left. There is no continuity to be found between the past and the present. But in India the elements of the same culture that existed in the Indus Valley civilization of the fourth millennium B.C. still continue today. That the people of this age had a fine culture is generally accepted and archeological remains give evidence of great cities, with well-planned houses, tools, artistic products, writing, an advanced stage of religion, and so on. It is the generally accepted view of various scholars that this continuity of culture exists from the fourth millennium B.C. onwards. According to one great scholar, "The Indus civilization represents a very perfect adjustment of human life to a specific environment that can only have resulted from years of patient effort. And it has endured; it is already specifically Indian and forms the basis of modern Indian culture." It is really a matter of amazement that a continuity of culture has existed from those times up to now, although India has since then gone through many invasions, vicissitudes and admixtures of peoples. India has been invaded by Greeks, by Sakas, by Huns, by Mongols, by Mughals, and later on by the British. All these people have brought to the country some changes but none has destroyed Indian culture. Indian culture has gone on through all these ages enriched by all these influences. It came very near to the danger-point of destruction in very recent times, but we can still surely hope that it will go on.

What are the causes of the extraordinary strength and vitality of this culture? Firstly, this culture has great flexibility, adaptability, and the capacity to receive everything within

its bosom. There is nothing which Indian culture rejects. Everything is taken into its embrace and, therefore, it is able to go on.

All the foreign peoples and religions which came have simply become a part of India and added an element to its culture. None of them destroyed it as the barbarians destroyed the Roman civilization. The Greeks who came into India turned, many of them, into Hindus and Buddhists. Christianity came into India and took a very special form, a form which we know as Syrian Christianity, and it is remarkable that it is the only form of Christianity which is not interested in proselytism. The Parsis who came into India found a home here while they have no home in their native land. The Muslims have also contributed to the development of special types of architecture, painting and music in India. And the British have left the country more rich, because of certain ideals of unity and democracy which they have given us, and also because of the language that they have left behind them. India is now undergoing the impact not of a physical invasion but of an invasion of ideas, political, economic and so on, and let us hope that this vitality which has existed in the culture will still carry it on without its losing its true genius.

Another remarkable fact is the unity of culture which exists throughout this great country where there are many different peoples, languages, sects and beliefs. This, I believe, is due to a common background which comes to all the peoples of this land from the Vedas and the Upanishads, and to the Sanskrit language which was the means of communication for all the people. From this Upanishadic background arise certain ideas and attitudes which are shared by all the people of India.

First of all, there is an attitude of non-materialism, an attitude of idealism. The vast majority of Indians know

inwardly, whether they are able to put this knowledge entirely into practice or not, that the things of this world have only a relative importance and that there are realms of the Spirit which are far more real. It is only in India that the ideal of Sannyāsa or renunciation is held up before every man. As one of our poets has said of the Sannyāsin: "The earth is his delightful couch, the arms of the creepers are his pillow, the heaven is his canopy, the wind is his fan, the moon is his twinkling lamp." That is all that the devout Indian wishes to possess at the end of his life on earth.

There are many countries where there are monks and nuns who feel that asceticism and renunciation are good and beautiful, but it is only in India that this ideal is held up before every man, and every man towards the end of his life can endeavor to live up to this ideal. It is this attitude which makes it possible for the Indian to find contentment even in the midst of sorrows and difficulties. It is a striking fact that in this country the very poor people have no resentment towards those who have more of the world's goods than they

They just accept whatever comes to their lot.

There are many Western people who believe that this attitude and the belief in Reincarnation and Karma make the Indian people apathetic, and that they do not ever want to improve their lot. But this is a complete fallacy, because it was in the days when all these ideals were very real to the people that India was most prosperous. When the Greeks came to India they remarked upon the prosperity and the well-being of the people here. It was only when these ideals were lost that the prosperity also diminished.

Another great characteristic which is common to the whole of India is the acceptance of Dharma as an ideal. Indian culture teaches people to think of father, mother, brother, child, everyone, not in terms of right but in terms of duty. And this duty is not what is understood by the term

"duty" in English. It is not a duty, imposed from without, which brings compulsion and frustration in its wake. It is a duty which is natural, free and spontaneous. In fact, Dharma is not duty but just the natural performance of whatever one should do in life. This foundation of Dharma on which life is built gives a great solidarity to the people of India.

As I said before, culture represents an all-round development. Let us examine very briefly whether this all-round development exists in India and whether Indians can really be called "cultured".

Indian philosophy and thought include all the different schools of Hindu philosophy based on the Upanishads, and also Buddhist and Jain thought. All of these have been recognized throughout the world as bringing a great contribution. The Hindus have clearly realized for centuries the fundamental truths that we accept in the Theosophical Society. From the Upanishadic times onwards, people have realized that there is only One Supreme Principle, Brahman, and that this Supreme Being is immanent in all things, and that therefore all life is divine. And people understood also that eventual liberation would come to all beings through unity with that Supreme Principle. The profundity of this outlook and of those thoughts indicates to us the stage of development of Indians in this particular field.

There has also existed in India a great harmony and a close link between religion and philosophy. And this is very rare; it is found in practically no other country. There is generally in the world a very strict division between religion and philosophy. And, therefore, there are conflicts. Here religion and philosophy are like the warp and woof of a single cloth, and it is often difficult to know whether a great person is a philosopher or a religious leader. It is difficult to say whether Shankara and Rāmānuja were religious leaders or philosophers.

The religions of India have also made a great contribution, namely, that of tolerance. They recognize all ways of life. In India there has never been a spirit of proselytism. Though Buddhism and Jainism do make converts, it is never by force; in Hinduism there is no such thing as conversion. Among Hindus even the people who accept superstitions are never forced to reform. When some Western people see extraordinary practices in India, they wonder how Hinduism can accept all that. It is because Hinduism recognizes that there are different grades of evolution and people must be gradually taught to learn better things. There are many degrees of religion in Hinduism and it is hoped that each person by his own free will will come to the higher forms. As Dr. Radhakrishnan has said: "Reform by consent is slower than reform by compulsion in religion as in politics." It would be very easy to force these people to give up their superstitions, but Hinduism prefers the way of consent even if it be slower. In India it is accepted that Dharma, Artha, and Kāma, the principle of duty, the search for wealth, and the satisfaction of desire, are all aims of life, in addition to the search for liberation or moksha.

It is unnecessary for me to tell you of India's contribution to the arts. It is only possible to realize the beauty of these arts by seeing Indian temples, Indian sculptures, hearing Indian music, seeing Indian dance, and looking at Indian paintings. There is only one thing I should like to point out; it is that even in the field of art the most important factor is that of idealism. In India it has always been understood that Divinity cannot be expressed realistically. Therefore an effort has been made to find symbolic representations for Divinity. There was a great emphasis on the moral character and purification of the artist who had first to understand in concentrated vision what was to be represented. A great

importance was placed on the work and none on the artist. Impersonality was considered very important.

Taking the field of Indian literature, it is again unnecessary for me to say anything, because it is widely accepted throughout the West and throughout the world that Indian literature is very great, particularly Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit is one of the richest and most subtle languages in the world, if not the most. In all the various branches of literature—poetry, drama, prose, and criticism—Sanskrit literature is vast and beautiful, and I would merely like to read to you here a little verse the great German poet and philosopher Goethe wrote when he first read the drama *Shākuntala*. He said:

Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms and the fruits of its decline,  
And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed,  
Wouldst thou the earth, and heaven itself in one sole name combine?  
I name thee, O Sakuntalā! and all at once is said.

I am just quoting this to you to show what a deep impression the first reading of Sanskrit literature made upon this great man.

I shall not go further into the developments of the social sciences, of politics, of mathematics, of astronomy, and so on which took place in India. In every field you will find that there has been a great contribution, and all this shows how there was an all-round development in India, and a very great culture.

One thing alone might be mentioned as regards the social sciences and that is the much misunderstood caste system. This system worked beautifully. Dr. Bhagavan Das points out that these four castes are the four "natural estates" of every civilized people: (a) the man of knowledge; (b) the man of desire; (c) the man of action; (d) the man of unskilled labor or little-skilled labor. Each found his natural place in the social system. Work was divided and order established

according to these categories. Training was also given for specific purposes. Dr. Annie Besant points out that the higher castes had the greater responsibility. The system was less rigid than the class system of the West.

I feel that India has still an important part to play in building a united world. We very much need now all the elements which Indian culture can contribute. We need tolerance; we need understanding; and we need that spirit of synthesis which is to be found in Indian culture. And it is to be hoped that this culture will continue now as it has done during all these centuries and help to bring about the kind of synthesis that is needed in the world today.

RADHA S. BURNIER

Every person, every race, every nation, has its own particular keynote which it brings to the general chord of life and of humanity. . . . India . . . struck the note of spiritual greatness, of pure devotion to a spiritual ideal, of worship that asked only to become what it adored, of the gathering of spiritual knowledge . . . . This spirituality of India has, been her contribution to the world's progress, and it has manifested itself in the dual aspect of wisdom and devotion, Jñāna and Bhakti. Thus she has wedded philosophy and religion, and shown them both as aspects of spirituality, the noblest religion enshrined in the sublimest philosophy.

It is the perpetual affirmation of spirituality as the highest good that is India's mission to the world . . . . India is the one country in the world in which it is still easy to be religious, in which the atmosphere of the land and the psychic currents are not yet wholly penetrated with materiality. If religion perish here, it will perish everywhere, and in India's hand is laid the sacred charge of keeping alight the torch of Spirit amid the fogs and storms of increasing materialism. If the torch drops from her hands, its flame will be trampled out by the feet of hurrying multitudes, eager for worldly goods, and India, bereft of spirituality, will have no future, but will pass on into the darkness, as Greece and Rome have passed.

ANNIE BESANT

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY'S MISSION

By ALBERT BROWN

**B**EFORE we can really determine the value of the Theosophical Society's activities and influence, and its great mission in the world today, we must see whether the original plan and purpose, as visualized by the Elder Brethren of our race, have been carried out and to what extent Theosophy has helped to solve world-problems.

When the Theosophical Society was formed in 1875, humanity in general was divided into two main camps; one consisted of the vast majority of the unthinking masses of people living in comparative poverty and misery, and the other consisted of a small minority of privileged classes, who were bent on exploiting and using the major part of humanity to further the self-interest of religious, economic, political and racial groups and institutions. The struggle for material existence had become so intense and ruthless, especially in Christian countries, that justice, honor and mercy were almost completely disregarded. The intellect of the vast majority was imprisoned in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition, imposed by ecclesiastical authority. Indulgence in the life of the senses was the only aim worth living for, owing to the fear of death and damnation, instilled by false dogmas.

The struggle for material existence was, and still is, most intense in Christian countries, because the way of life as

taught and demonstrated by the Lord Christ two thousand years ago, concerning the unfoldment of the Kingdom of God within man, was declared a heresy by the early Church Fathers. The Gnosis or Divine Wisdom, which the Founder of Christianity sought to reveal, was discarded and replaced by dogmatic distortions of the Truth. These early fanatical ecclesiastics had but one purpose in view—that of increasing and expanding their power and hold over the primitive, ignorant and superstitious peoples of that time, and so the various degrading dogmas were devised and gradually displaced the original Gnosis.

It was in order to combat the gross materialism, superstition and fear of death, which still remain the main cause of humanity's diseases, sorrows and crimes, that the Elder Brethren of our race inspired and guided H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott to form the Theosophical Society and again reveal Theo-Sophia, or the Divine Wisdom, which sets forth the royal pathway of harmonious and creative living, and the basic laws underlying the divine process of creation.

Thus it is that the Theosophical Society was chosen by the Elder Brethren of our race to be the corner-stone, the foundation, of the future religions of humanity. To achieve the proposed object, a greater, wiser and especially a more benevolent intermingling of all grades of society was determined upon, through world-wide co-operation, fellowship and communion of mankind, without any distinctions of race, creed, sex, caste or color. Only thus could further inflictions of man's inhumanity to man be prevented by the unifying and harmonizing influence of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, based on the unimpeachable truth of the Unity and Oneness of All Life.

It is obvious that before this world-wide Brotherhood is possible, humanity must achieve total emancipation from the ecclesiastical authority of religious institutions; it must

achieve freedom from dogmatic and separative distortions of the Truth, before the fundamental Truth underlying all religions can be seen to be identical in its esoteric meaning. When this stage is reached, it will be realized that Osiris, Krishna, Buddha, Christ are but different names for one and the same royal pathway to Spiritual Freedom and to liberation from all man's self-imposed limitations, sorrows and miseries.

There is no easy path to liberation, for man's self-redemption, regeneration or spiritual transformation can be brought about only when the Divine Centre within man unfolds its inherent light and powers of Will, Wisdom-Love, and Creative Intelligence and so rises superior to the separative instinctual urges, emotions, glamors and mental illusions of the human personality.

It is well to keep always in mind that the Theosophical Society's mission is, first and foremost, to lay the greatest emphasis on the fact of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity, the acceptance of which is so vital and essential for the organization of a World Federation of Nations. This objective can be more readily achieved by supplying and supporting evidence which shows the inter-relationship of all sectional aspects of the Truth, presented by science, the arts, psychology, philosophy and religion. When it is more generally realized that these sectional aspects of Truth really refer to the various levels of man's conscious mental responses, due to the blending, interacting and the ratio between the substances of Spirit and matter within man himself, then this fact will bring about a clarification in the world of human thought, which will be followed in due course by a vast improvement in the moral, ethical and spiritual standards in the world of human conduct.

It is clear that until the mind of man is consciously aware of his own Divinity and actively demonstrating its powers, the

powers latent in man can be explained only in allegory and symbol. The Divine Essence immanent in every human being is far too subtle for the response mechanism of the average man to register. So the fact of man's soul must be ascertained through a mode of mystical perception, and through the wisdom of an illumined mind. When we speak of man's latent powers, or man's inner life, we are dealing with divine forces and energies. These, as they cyclically run their course, blending, merging and reacting with greater potencies, make manifest the human personality, which constitutes man's appearance in time and space. This in turn expresses the quality or soul of that great unfolding Universal Life, within whom we all live and move and have our being. It should be possible soon to present evidence, along scientific lines, as to the fact of the existence of the human soul and its nature. Then the spiritual transformation of man will be accelerated, and the fear of death eliminated, because the spiritual unity of all life will be established, and the truth of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity shown to be a fact in Nature and not just a wishful ideal.

In what way can we as Theosophists, and the Theosophical Society as a whole, help to accelerate the spiritual transformation of humanity? The spiritual transformation of man takes place very gradually as the mind of man learns through pain and suffering to discriminate between the true and the false, between the real and the unreal. The mind of man is the medium between matter and Spirit. It may remain held in bondage, through many lives, by the attractions and repulsions of material living, or it may reach a state of serenity and poise, a state of detachment and pure sensitivity, which reflects a continuous sense of unity and harmony. It is this state of openness of mind which registers that Reality within every human heart whereby the individual becomes blended and merged with the Universal Life.

We, as Theosophists, can accelerate the process of man's spiritual transformation by practical demonstration of the fact that we have access to that realm of Divine Wisdom which gives right direction to our own thoughts, feelings and actions, and so by fulfilling the law of harmonious and creative living, we may attract others to partake and to share in that source of Divine Wisdom.

In the degree that each individual member plays his part, so will the Theosophical Society's mission stand out as a valuable means of solving world-problems, because the Society gives a practical demonstration of a world-wide organization which transcends all the barriers and limitations previously imposed by race, creed, sex, caste and color. Since the Theosophical Society is an all-inclusive, all-embracing Society, it will become more and more evident that it stands for the widest reconciliation of all that is good, true and beautiful in whatever race, culture, religion, science or philosophy these divine qualities are to be found.

So it is that the Society's great mission is being fulfilled, for within the Society's sphere of influence are to be found the peoples of fifty-one nations, of all religions, living in complete harmony and accord, forming a vital positive nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of mankind, based on the irrefutable fact of the spiritual Unity of All Life.

ALBERT BROWN

We are apt to think the Transcendence as so perfect as to need nothing from the Immanence. Yet surely the universe would not have come forth from the Unmanifested except that, after manifestation is over, the Unmanifested is in some mysterious way more perfect . . . the mystics know this truth, that the Ascending God takes with Him what the universe has to give.

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

## THE LIVING SILENCE

By H. COOPER JACKSON

IT is certainly something of a gain that for the last thirty years or so, millions of people in many countries have been persuaded into stopping to think for two minutes every year, in the Armistice Day silence; and also in the daily Big Ben silent minute of the B.B.C. For in the noise and hustle of modern life in "super-civilized" countries, there are so few times and places in which people find it easy to think, in silence; to face *inwards*, to take stock of their *real* possessions and achievements.

However, not all who "observe the Silence" really "enter the Silence". Not all who say "Lord, Lord!" enter the Kingdom. No, "many are called, but few are chosen".

Doubtless, most of us "think of peace"; we wish for it, but how many of us *think* peace, *will* peace, *live* peace, *demonstrate* peace, *vibrate* peace?

When we talk of "applied right thinking," the operative word is "applied". We have to realize that there is a world of difference between thinking and being, though happily right thinking usually leads us on to right being. For example, it is good to remember to give thanks for blessings, as we are often urged to do. It is a good habit to cultivate.

Ideally, we should give thanks because we already *feel* thankful, and not as a mere habit. But if we are conscious

that our spontaneity is weak, we should set about cultivating it, and learn to say "Thank you!" with such force and feeling that, in due course, we do not have to *remember* to say it. We find that we are already thankful—full of thanks—instinctively, inwardly, spontaneously; our whole subconscious is colored by it.

An eye-specialist, Mr. C. S. Price, writing of an eye-treatment, says: "With the eyes, as with most other things, it is the unconscious habit of doing the correct thing that has far greater ultimate value than doing the thing occasionally only, merely as an exercise." How true this is, too, of spiritual and psychological exercises!

So, the first and one of the most valuable immediate uses of the Silence is to encourage the development of those things which satisfy the soul, and which register growth towards "God-consciousness"; those things which, in the last resort, and in face of disaster or loss, or of "the end of all things" in life, would most eagerly be retained, and most happily called to mind for their steadying power, and for the conviction of reality and permanence which they give.

Perhaps the most valuable and important of the uses of the Silence is the opportunity it provides for shutting off the noises and distractions of the comparatively unimportant and leaving us clear to tune in to the music of the heavenly spheres; or to the voices from the depths within, where Wisdom resides, and where we may capture messages unheard in the clamor of the market-place, and vibrations unperceived in the stresses and struggles of the multitude.

When "entering the Silence" we close the senses to those things which matter little to the enduring part of us, and open our minds to catch the radiations which come to us from the mind of the Eternal. We can face up to ourselves and judge ourselves (our little selves), by the standards which only the Real Self is capable of setting and which

only in that Silence can we know to be attained. Mr. H. T. Hamblin says in one of his books, *Life without Strain*:

One can retire from the world while still remaining in it, and even amid the noises of the crowd, even amid the trivial conversations of a roomful of people, one can lose, for a time, all sense of contact therewith, and can grasp a fragment of the most elusive thing in life—Truth.

But such a faculty is somewhat rare, and needs patience for its development. I think it will be realized that only in some method of "entering the Silence" is it possible for us to bring forth any manifestation of the abiding Self. Only by losing, for a moment or an hour, our grip upon the earth—or its grip upon us—and then reaching *inwards* to that Fire which we feel and perceive in that other dimension, can we bring into expression the real Self, and find our identity with the One Life which sustains and animates all the universes.

All Truth, all Wisdom, all Love are within us, and behind us, for are we not the out-posts of the Divine? Are we not temples of the living God? They are behind us and within us, and will in due season be revealed in us and by us, in full consciousness, for our application, and for the service of our brother-man.

But only in so far as we explore the Silence—that timeless, measureless world—and bring therefrom whatever of Beauty, Truth and Goodness we can find and hold in our hearts and minds, shall we know with certainty where our real Self resides, and walk in all our ways with the consciousness that "here we have no abiding city," but that, come what may, life is well worth while, if only because it reveals to us many things of Love and Beauty and Strength, which eyes turned always outwards may never find or know.

We have to surrender our hold upon life in order to find Life. For in cheerfully losing all, we shall truly find all.

H. COOPER JACKSON

## REVIEWS

*Man Incarnate*, by Phoebe D. Bendit (Phoebe Payne) and Laurence J. Bendit; T. P. H., London, price 7s. 6d.

This transaction of the Theosophical Research Centre has the sub-title, "A Study of the Vital Etheric Field," which precisely describes it. While the authors have restated much that was already known, much is new. The partnership of a trained clairvoyant with a doctor who has specialized in psycho-therapy would seem to be ideal for the purpose. Certainly the appearance of this small book of 128 pages is very timely, for it helps to bridge the narrowing gulf between occult and modern physics and physiology. It is written in the idiom of the day with the accent on function rather than structure, hence the term "vital etheric field" has replaced "etheric body". (There is an excellent description of it in Ch. 2.) This change of emphasis has been marked in general medicine in the last twenty-five years.

Much detailed and valuable information is given concerning the play of consciousness through the etheric field into the brain and the fourth etheric level is shown to be at

once the most critical and most important part of the bridge.

The approach throughout is eminently practical, for many of the observations made have a bearing on the maintenance of health; several chapters will be of special value to thoughtful parents. There is valuable new material concerning the process of incarnation, the quickening and the birth, all of which I found to be in line with my own ordinary (not clairvoyant) observations made in thirty-four years of practice in obstetrics' and infant welfare.

The subject of damage to the etheric field as a cause of both physical and psychological disease is dealt with at some length. In orthodox psycho-somatic medicine we learn of psychological tensions as a cause of physical disease, and it is useful to know of the important intermediate part played by the etheric field. "Physical health depends on a proper balance and integration of the many energy-streams in the etheric or vital body," they say. This is an exceedingly intricate study, but it must not be thought that the book is of value only to those practising the healing art.

To bring so much information into so small a compass must have been extremely difficult. This may be why there appears to be a diminution in Dr. Bendit's usual lucidity in the second half of the book. Perhaps this can be remedied by expansion in the second edition which will undoubtedly be called for.

CYRIL V. PINK

*The Philosophy of Advaita*, by T. M. P. Mahadevan, Ganesh, Madras, 1957, pp. xix+300, price Rs. 12.

Advaita means non-dualism. The name is very suggestive as non-dualism in every respect is the cardinal tenet of Advaita. Metaphysically, with regard to knower, knowledge and known, Advaita maintains that in reality there is no diversity as such; for the knower alone is really existent and the others have no separate existence from that of the knower. Or we can say knowledge is the sole reality, as the knower is nothing but pure knowledge. Though Advaita does not deny the existence of the universe it holds that only the *existence* is real there; diversity is an illusion. Thus virtually there is only either knower or knowledge or existence. Anyway non-dualism is the result. Regarding man (individual soul) and God (supreme soul) it maintains that they are one and the same; the duality is due to an error. The

supreme soul mistakes itself as conditioned and limited. Hence the false appearance of distinction. Thus, according to Advaita, Reality is to be *realized*, not to be *known*; and the realization virtually means the realization of oneself. Not only is this name suggestive of the nature of the highest Truth; it also suggests the means to realize it. As there is no duality in the realization of Reality, it is not possible to *state* what Reality *is*; it can only be *indicated* by the method of negation (*neti, neti*, i.e., not this, not this); and at the end what remains is Reality. Even when everything is repudiated there will be still the *existence* of repudiation; and that is Reality. So Advaita can have a logical satisfaction at least.

Though the idea of Advaita has existed in India everywhere since time immemorial, in India it was Shankara who propounded it systematically. Shankara did not say that Advaita was his invention. He put forth his theories as commentaries upon some principal Upanishads and the Brahmasūtras of Bādarāyana. Shankara had many followers, for he was an enthusiastic reformer and active worker. Naturally after Shankara many theories came forth criticizing his Advaita, and his followers wanted to uphold it by repudiating the others in turn. Thus there arose an immense quantity of literature on Advaita.

*The Philosophy of Advaita* is the revised edition of the author's thesis for his doctorate at the University of Madras, which was first published in London in 1938. It attempts to study the philosophy of Advaita with a special reference to Vidyāranya (15th century A.D.) who assumes an important place in the whole history of Advaita.

The book is divided into ten chapters. The first deals with the epistemology of Advaita. The second examines the problem of truth and error according to Advaita philosophy. Quite relevantly it also refers to other Indian theories on the subject. The next four chapters are devoted to explain Reality as Existence, Intelligence, Bliss (Sat-chit-ānanda), and Witness (Sākshin), respectively. The seventh chapter deals with the theories on God and individual souls (Īshvara and Jīva), while the eighth explains the conception of Māyā (illusion). The ninth chapter under the caption, "The Path to Perfection," examines the means of attaining Reality. The ways of Karma (action), Knowledge (jñāna) and Yoga are explained. The last chapter probes into the nature of Moksha (release from bondage) according to the Advaitins.

The work is a comprehensive study on the philosophy of Advaita with special stress on the post-Shankara period. As there have been very few attempts to study the post-

Shankara period, this volume has a special attraction. Dr. Mahadevan has a good grasp of the subject and his lucidity of style and clarity of expression make the book good reading. He is not ambitious to make a new discovery or establish a fresh theory on Advaita; but is faithful to tradition and to the authors whom he consults; this is certainly remarkable.

SREEKRISHNA SARMA

*Besant Centenary Volume*, published by Besant Centenary Trust, Adyar, Madras 20, in 1947, reduced price Rs. 5.00, plus postage, etc.

The excellent *Autobiography* of Dr. Annie Besant has had added to it, in its last 1939 edition, a valuable account of her life and work in the Theosophical arena.

In this volume, edited by Dr. J. H. Cousins, are gathered the personal estimates and reactions of many who worked with Dr. Besant. The varied activities of her long and busy life receive pertinent comment from her fellows, themselves eminent and well fitted to give an evaluation of her that will stamp the life of the century.

The book is highly readable, and particularly well illustrated and produced. It is a volume that is a treasure for individual and Lodge libraries. But it should also be placed in public libraries to show how noteworthy is her position.

E. M. LAVENDER

## SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEOSOPHIST

MARCH 1958

### THEOSOPHISTS AT WORK AROUND THE WORLD

*By the Recording Secretary*

#### *Adyar Day*

On the morning of 17th February, residents of Adyar and members from nearby Lodges gathered in the Headquarters Hall to celebrate Adyar Day under the chairmanship of the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram.

The Prayers of the Religions, with which the meeting commenced, followed by greetings received by letter and cable, created a most suitable setting for the addresses which followed. Greetings expressing gratitude and loyalty to the President, Adyar and to the teachings of Ancient Wisdom were received from Miss Clarice E. Gregory, General Secretary for New Zealand; the Manor Centre, Australia; Mrs. Gool Minwalla, Presidential

Agent for Pakistan; Annie Besant Lodge, Birmingham, England; Bhavnagar Lodge, India; and the "Adyar Group" of Lodge Harmonia, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Following short speeches and readings, the President said:

"It is fifty-one years today since the President-Founder, Colonel H.S. Olcott, passed away from here, and it is well that there should be a day on which not only the members all over the world think of Adyar, but also on which we specially remember the President-Founder and his work. There are very few people in the Society today who have had any personal contacts with him. To most of our members Colonel Olcott is but a name, yet he was as much a chosen instrument for the work

that is being carried on as was H.P.B. The great Masters of the Wisdom recognized his services and his great qualities. They have given most striking testimony in *The Mahatma Letters* to his value in the work. Both H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott are spoken of in *The Mahatma Letters* as the Founders of the Society, and in one place as 'the suffering Founders'.

"February 17th has been adopted by common consent by members all over the world as the day on which Adyar should be particularly remembered. To many a Theosophist in India and outside India, it is not merely the administrative Headquarters of the Society, but it is a place from where inspiration and guidance are to be had. They turn their thoughts to Adyar on this day, and I feel that we here should turn our thoughts to them. We should think of the work in the various Sections and countries, work carried on under very different conditions from those which obtain here.

"It was H.P.B. who formed Adyar into an occult or spiritual Centre, and it has grown considerably since then. All our important leaders have lived here for a shorter or longer time. I have mentioned H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott, and there was Dr. Besant who developed the original Headquarters estate into what it is today, extending right to

the sea. A place where she lived and worked for so many years cannot but be a spiritual Centre. Then I cannot forget to mention Brother C. W. Leadbeater, as this happens to be his birthday. He has lived in Adyar for different periods at different times.

"It is not enough to have the mere faith that Adyar is a great spiritual Centre and that its inspiration is carried to every quarter. Perhaps that faith is justified and represents what takes place; but I feel that the whole place can become so charged with the atmosphere of our thought and aspirations that anyone who enters it will feel that this is a very special place.

"On such a day as this let us try to extend our vision, think of the world-wide work of the Society. While we are here at the Centre we should have this large vision, a mind which embraces all our members and all peoples, however different they may be from country to country. It is only when we live such a life and carry on our work in this spirit that we shall be able to fulfil the purpose for which Adyar has been established."

#### Switzerland

Madame Claire Wyss, General Secretary for the Theosophical Society in Switzerland, gives an encouraging report of the work of her Section for the year.

The membership of the Section at 30th September 1957 was 234 (an increase of 8), with 12 Lodges, 4 Centres and one Youth Group. Work in the Lodges has progressed steadily, some having formed discussion groups. During the year the Section was helped by the visits of Mr. Axel von Fielitz-Coniar, Mr. John Coats and Dr. and Mrs. Laurence Bendit, all of whom gave public lectures and talks to members.

Public work is sustained and new members joined the Society as a result of hearing a series of lectures at the headquarters in Geneva. Mr. A. Sassi, Mr. G. Tripet and Madame Claire Wyss gave lectures in France and Belgium.

The Annual Convention of the Section, held at the headquarters in Geneva, with Mr. Axel von Fielitz-Coniar and Mr. John Coats as guest-speakers, was a happy and successful occasion.

The Regional Committee of the German-speaking Sections met in Basle for the fifth time; the General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Europe, Mr. J. E. van Dissel, was present, together with the General Secretaries of the German, Austrian and Swiss Sections and other delegates. Through what was accomplished every year at this gathering, the ideals of Theosophy are effectively diffused and a stimulus is provided for the work of the Section.

The Theosophical Order of Service continues to be active, working especially to give help to refugees in Greece and Yugoslavia.

The General Secretary, together with one delegate and a few other members from Switzerland, attended the International Week at Huizen. Madame Wyss also participated in the Summer School held at Pichl, Austria, for German-speaking members.

#### Canada

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, General Secretary for the Theosophical Society in Canada, sends an interesting report of the activities in his Section.

The work during the last year has been one of steady progress. In those areas where it is possible to stimulate further enthusiasm by personal contact there has been a resurgence of interest. "It must not be forgotten," the General Secretary writes, "that we are handicapped to a degree by the thousands of miles that separate our Lodges and that the enthusiasm and interest cannot be what it should if we were closer together. However, our far-flung Lodges maintain their study groups in an exemplary manner and are helped by our magazine and postal information."

The eastern Lodges of the Section are fortunate in having quite a number of lecturers among the

members, and these frequently exchange visits to the mutual benefit of all.

Through the Travelling Library which is situated in Toronto, very fine work is done in sending books to people in other cities and outlying places where literature is difficult to obtain.

The membership fluctuates but maintains a steady total, there being at present 13 Lodges and 376 members. Thirty-two new members were enrolled during the year.

The Animal Welfare Committee of the General Executive is active. It is responsible for sending out pamphlets and maintaining interest in its efforts to lessen cruelty to animals. Other work regarding more humane methods of slaughter of animals for food is being kept up and petitions are being sent to the Minister of Agriculture by all the Lodges. Thus humanitarian work marches alongside their spiritual efforts on behalf of humanity.

In closing his report, Lt.-Col. Thomson writes: "All in all, conditions are satisfactory, and I feel, as I have always felt, that this great country is in a state of flux—beset by growing pains—rather bewildered by the immensity of its natural resources and by the abundant wealth on all sides so that the spiritual aspect is somewhat obscured. But down beneath it all there is an ingrowing desire to express itself

along lines of loftier ideals, and when this upward surge takes place these teeming millions of varying races, religions and sects will look for the Truth and will find it, I feel assured, in Theosophy. With that idea in mind we are tilling the ground."

#### *Sweden*

Mr. Gösta Lindström, General Secretary for the Theosophical Society in Sweden, writes that during the year ending 30th September 1957 the main activities continued in the Lodges, many of which conduct study classes and have public lectures. Four of the Lodges outside the capital received visits from the General Secretary and other lecturers.

The Section has had the benefit of several visitors from other countries. Mr. Otto Viking from Denmark gave much appreciated talks at a week-end at the headquarters and in several Lodges. Mrs. Josephine Ransom was the guest of honor and main speaker at their Convention and won the hearts of all by her great friendliness; she gave much inspiration from her deep knowledge of Theosophy and of the history and work of the Theosophical Society. Professor A. N. Haas from Holland lectured on Theosophical Research when he visited Stockholm.

In the Swedish Section the annual Summer School is an important

vent of the year; it is a fine opportunity for members from all over the country to come together, to listen to good lectures, take part in study groups, and exchange ideas with others. The Summer School held last year at Stensund, a beautiful place on the Baltic, was attended by some 50 members. The theme chosen was: "The Search for a New Consciousness"; Mr. John Coats, who came from England to attend the School, gave a series of fine talks in which he dealt with the subject from different angles. This was continued in discussions and study groups by the members generally.

The Section has 19 Lodges with a total membership of 403—an increase of 10 for the year.

#### *Germany*

The Theosophical Society in Germany has had a successful year of activity, with regular study classes, lectures and discussions in all Lodges and Centres.

In July, the seventh Summer School, held at Rendsburg, was attended by 60 members from all parts of Germany, including several visitors from Berlin and a few from behind the Iron Curtain. Mr. J. E. van Dissel, General Secretary of the European Federation, presided at the Summer School as guest of honor, and Miss Kenderdine of England and Miss Karin Blichfeldt

of Denmark, who were present as guest-speakers, gave several inspiring talks. A number of German speakers participated also.

The theme of the Summer School was "Theosophy as the Spiritual Basis of Practical Life". There was friendly contact between the guests and the German members and, as in all previous German Summer Schools, excellent music was provided by well-known musicians from Lubeck. On the closing day, Mr. John Coats and two Young Theosophists from U.S.A. and Finland were present and brought greetings from their Sections. Mr. Elis Wikström, former General Secretary of Sweden, and his wife also paid a short visit.

Mr. Martin Boyken, who is General Secretary of the German Section, writes that "the Summer School had a double success: on the one hand it brought together once again many friends and co-workers from our own country and, on the other hand, through the contact with friends of other countries, all members experienced the spirit of real international brotherhood".

During the Summer School, the General Meeting of the German Section, which takes place every three years, was held with Mr. van Dissel presiding. Mr. Martin Boyken was re-elected General Secretary for a further period of three years and a number of young members

were elected to the Section Committee. The whole gathering was held in a spirit of great harmony and brotherliness.

In January 1957, Mr. Boyken and his wife attended the meeting of the General Council of the European Federation in Huizen. Mr. Boyken also took part in the gathering of the German-speaking Regional Group held at Basle, Switzerland, in April, and later stayed at Huizen with some other members of the German Section for the International Week. At the meeting of the General Council and its Executive held there, successful discussions took place regarding the Adyar Publishing House in Graz, Austria, and it was decided to print a new German translation of *The Ancient Wisdom* by Annie Besant.

#### Iceland

At the Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in Iceland, held in September, Mr. Sigvaldi Hjálmarsson was re-elected General Secretary. He reports that during the year public lectures were given at the Section Headquarters in Reykjavik, with special regard to introducing Theosophy to non-members. All the Lodges continued to be active, with public lectures, members' meetings, and, in some cases, film and musical presentations.

There are 11 Lodges in Iceland, four being in Reykjavik, with a total membership of 386. In addition, there are many people who are interested in Theosophy and who sympathize with the work and teaching of the Society.

Two study groups were held, one dealing with general Theosophy and spiritual training, under the guidance of the Honorary President, Mr. Gretar Fells, and the other, led by the General Secretary, dealt with the evolution of the solar system and the occult history of mankind.

The Order of Service has been active, supplying funds for some of the Theosophical activities and doing much humanitarian work.

The library has been put into better order and is now more easily available. The number of books has increased during the year, a gift of books having also been received from Mr. Boris de Zirkoff in California, U.S.A.

Mr. Hjálmarsson writes that the strong position of Theosophy in Iceland is due to the enormous work and rare quality of Mr. Gretar Fells, the Honorary President and former General Secretary, for 21 years. His numerous lectures, extensive work and many talks on the State radio made him well known throughout the country, his work and teaching being characterized by deep spirituality and rich inner understanding.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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| Date of formation | 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        | Östermalmsgatan 12, Stockholm                                       | <i>Theosofisk Tidskrift.</i>        |
| 1896              | New Zealand     | Miss Clarice E. Gregory     | 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     | Via della Brianza 8, Rome, Italy                                    | <i>Alba Spirituale.</i>             |
| 1902              | Germany         | Direktor Martin Boyken      | Hagenau 15, Hamburg 23                                              | <i>Adyar.</i>                       |
| 1905              | Cuba            | Señor Armando Alfonso Ledón | P.O. Box 365, Habana                                                | <i>Revista Teosofica Cubana.</i>    |
| 1907              | Hungary         | ..                          | ..                                                                  | ..                                  |
| 1907              | Finland         | Miss Signe Rosvall          | Vironkatu 7C, Helsinki                                              | <i>Teosofi.</i>                     |
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| 1909              | Southern Africa | Mr. I. G. Mitford-Barberton | P.O. Box 2284, Cape Town                                            | <i>The Link.</i>                    |
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| 1910              | Switzerland     | Madame Claire Wyss          | Bruderholzstrasse 88, Basle                                         | <i>Clarité.</i>                     |
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| 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          | Mr. Ernst Nielsen           | Oscars gate 11, Oslo N. V., Norway                                  | <i>Norsk Teosofisk Tidskrift.</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 Mexicana; Dharma.</i>    |

\* No Section; Lodge only.

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| 1919 | Canada                 | Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O.   | 52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.                          | <i>The Canadian Theosophist.</i>     |
| 1920 | Argentina              | Señor Nazareno E. Rimini.        | Casilla 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>                 |
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| 1923 | Poland                 | Mr. N. K. Choksy, Q. C.          | Roshanara, 20 Clifford Road, Green Path, Colpetty, Colombo 3 | <i>The Plenum.</i>                   |
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| 1925 | Yugoslavia             | Señorita Corina Martínez Sanders | Apartado Postal 539, Bogotá                                  | <i>Saurabh.</i>                      |
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| 1933 | Philippines            | Mr. Pham-Ngoc-Da                 | Apartado 2907, Caracas                                       |                                      |
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## THE THEOSOPHIST

FORM IV: Statement under rule 8 of the Registration of Newspapers (Central) Rules, 1956.

- Place of publication: The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.
- Periodicity of its publication: Monthly.
- Printer's name: Mr. M. Subramaniam, Manager, Vasanta Press.  
Nationality: Indian.  
Address: The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.
- Publisher's name: Mr. K. S. Krishnamurti, Manager, The Theosophical Publishing House.  
Nationality: Indian.  
Address: The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.
- Editor's Name: Mr. N. Sri Ram, President, The Theosophical Society, Adyar.  
Nationality: Indian.  
Address: The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.
- Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital. The President (Mr. N. Sri Ram) of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 20.

I, K. S. Krishnamurti, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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March 7, 1958

Publisher, THE THEOSOPHIST.

## THE THEOSOPHIST

|                     |     | Post Free |             |
|---------------------|-----|-----------|-------------|
|                     |     | Per annum | Single copy |
| INDIA & CEYLON ...  | ... | Rs. 10.00 | Re. 1.00    |
| AMERICA ...         | ... | \$4.50    | \$0.50      |
| BRITISH ISLES ...   | ... | £1-0-0    | Sh. 2/-     |
| OTHER COUNTRIES ... | ... | Rs. 13.00 | Re. 1.25    |

London Agency: The Theosophical Publishing House,  
68 Great Russell Street, London W.C.1.

U.S.A.: The Theosophical Press, "Olcott," Wheaton, Ill.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

Adyar Madras 20 India

Published by K. S. Krishnamurti, Manager, The Theosophical Publishing House, and  
Printed by M. Subramaniam, Manager, at the Vasanta Press,  
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