



THE THEOSOPHIST

ADYAR

FEBRUARY 1941

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is a world-wide international organization formed at New York on 17th November 1875, and incorporated later in India with its Headquarters at Adyar, Madras.

It is an unsectarian body of seekers after Truth promoting Brotherhood and striving to serve humanity. Its three declared Objects are :

First—To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

Second—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.

Third—To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

The Theosophical Society is composed of men and women who are united by their approval of the above Objects, by their determination to promote Brotherhood, to remove religious, racial and other antagonisms, and who wish to draw together all persons of goodwill whatsoever their opinions.

Their bond of union is a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by service, by purity of life, and by devotion to high ideals. They hold that Truth should be striven for, not imposed by authority as a dogma. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or of intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. 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 offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and demonstrates the inviolable nature of the laws which govern 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, thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence as, in their original purity, they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition. The Society claims no monopoly of Theosophy, as the Divine Wisdom cannot be limited; but its Fellows seek to understand it in ever-increasing measure. All in sympathy with the Objects of The Theosophical Society are welcomed as members, and it rests with the member to become a true Theosophist.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

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 nor 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.

THE THEOSOPHIST

Vol. LXII

(Incorporating "Lucifer")

No. 5

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A journal specializing in Brotherhood, the Eternal Wisdom, and Occult Research. Founded by H. P. Blavatsky, 1879; edited by Annie Besant, 1907 to 1933.

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this journal, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE
ADYAR MADRAS INDIA

"IT CHANTED ITSELF"

The Brotherhood campaign, inaugurated in Great Britain by the General Secretary and his devoted band of helpers, has been warmly taken up in India, with the help and approval of our General Secretary. . . . At the request of a number of our travelling Inspectors who are organizing the movement in Southern India, I wrote them a few lines for daily repetition, morning and evening, as I did not feel that I could write a meditation, as they had asked me to do. Meditation seems to me to be a very individual thing, the working of one's own mind on some special theme; the most I could do was to suggest a theme. Here it is, as it chanted itself :

O Hidden Life, vibrant in every atom ;

O Hidden Light, shining in every creature ;

O Hidden Love, embracing all in Oneness ;

May each, who feels himself as one with Thee,

Know he is therefore one with every other.

It sends forth successive waves of colour, pulsing outwards from the speaker, if rhythmically intoned or chanted, whether by the outer or the inner voice, and if some thousands would send these out over successive areas, we might create a very powerful effect on the mental atmosphere, preparing it for the Brotherhood campaign through October, November and December [1923].

ANNIE BESANT

(Watch-Tower, June 1923)



THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

TO THE 65th INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, BENARES

26 December 1940

BRETHREN THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD:

Wherever you are, The Theosophical Society greets you, your International Headquarters at Adyar greets you, your President greets you, the Indian Section greets you, as in sacred Benares is being held both the Annual International Convention of The Society and the Golden Jubilee Convention of our Indian Section.

The thoughts of us all here assembled turn ardently first of all to those of our members who are suffering as a result of the homeric conflict taking place between the forces of Good and evil everywhere, both where there is overt warfare on the physical plane itself and where there is that other warfare never absent from the

world. Upon all our brethren in every land who are bearing the brunt of this great battle, we invoke the Blessing of our Elders, for we know that each is faithful to Them, to Theosophy and to The Theosophical Society, be the darkness round about him what it may. There is indeed heroism abroad in The Theosophical Society, and we are grateful to all who have the honour to display it, thus strengthening The Society to those high purposes for which it was established 65 years ago. Let them rest assured that they are helping to show the world the Way to Peace through the Victory of Good.

A LIGHT IN THE GLOOM

As ever, our Society stands immovable for Brotherhood amidst

the terrible prostitution of Brotherhood by those who are committed to its destruction. In many countries today the forms and organization of our movement have temporarily disappeared, and the Light of Theosophy has become dimmed by the dark gloom of what is nothing less than fratricide, for are we not all of the family of God? But the Life of our Society and the Light of Theosophy have survived all attacks upon them even in these almost Sunless lands, for every member cherishes them in his heart, knowing that the time must come when, as Brotherhood triumphs over hatred, his Section and its Lodges shall emerge immensely vivified by their present crucifixion, while the Light of Theosophy, never extinguished, shall shine with added brightness, quickening all with its Rays of Truth.

Many there are who *hope* that victory will come to the forces that champion the cause of Good in every land. Many there are who *believe* that victory will come. We Theosophists *know* that victory will come. But we know too that we have been born into this kingdom of the world to add our utmost strength to the quicker advent of victory, and I most earnestly hope that there is not a single member of The Theosophical Society, (still less a single Theosophist), who is not doing his own individual best to give power to

Good, fortified as he himself is by inclusion in a mighty Brotherhood on the very physical plane itself and by his access to that Well of Wisdom-Truth which is Theosophy. Thus equipped with the weapons of the Soul, he should indeed be a beacon-light to all of Courage, Understanding and calm Certainty.

TO ARMS! FOR BROTHERHOOD

Evil is abroad and the practical recognition, though not the fact, of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity is gravely imperilled almost everywhere, and here and there set at naught. Thus is The Theosophical Society in danger; while the irrigation of the world with the sparkling waters of Theosophy suffers lamentable retardation. Hence the usurpation by wrong and tyranny and war of the throne of Right and of Justice and of Peace. Everywhere, therefore, be a country in active belligerency or not, every citizen in it has the urgent duty ceaselessly to engage for the Right, for Justice and for Peace in that universal war between Righteousness and unrighteousness, between Dharma and adharma, in the midst of which every country without exception lives its daily life, and which today is more catastrophic, more horror-ridden, than ever it has been before.

To arms! do I therefore say to all Theosophists. To arms with

the weapons of physical conflict if so be their dharma ! But always to arms with the spiritual weapons fashioned in the flaming forge of the Love and the Justice of God !

But howsoever you may be called to arms, whether to the arms of physical warfare, or to weapons which "are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," remember that you must never fight in any spirit of hatred or revenge, but only in reverent and brotherly fulfilment of the Law. Such is the true nature of Ahimsa, the true nature of harmlessness—not to refrain from fighting but to fight in a just cause nobly and with perfect chivalry towards your opponent, be his modes of fighting what they may.

Let us remember that our Lord the Christ was speaking of the dharma of the mountains, and on a mountain itself—physical or otherwise—and to chosen disciples, calling them into a mountain where alone the dharma of the mountain might be proclaimed, when He admonished them to resist not evil and to turn the other cheek when smitten on the one. He was not declaring the dharma of the plains which we who live in the plains are called to fulfil. The whole of the 5th chapter of St. Matthew in the Christian *New Testament* has been dangerously misunderstood and interpreted by those who would apply its mighty ex-

hortations to a setting other than that in which they were given.

REMEMBER THE MOTHERLAND !

And addressing an audience largely composed of my Indian fellow-members I say : Remember the heroic fight fought by the great second President of The Theosophical Society for the happiness of the Indian people and for the release of India's eternal glories for the blessing of the world. Remember her fight, which shall go down into history as a veritable epic of courage and of chivalry, and strive as she strove for the victory which still remains to be won. She is with us now as our General. She is Annie Besant—Warrior now as she ever was. Let the warrior spirit inspire us to serve our Motherland in her time of danger and of need.

I shall now ask you to listen as a few of our members sing that song which she herself composed in honour of her beloved land India.

[A Group of members sang :

INDIA

God save our Motherland,
God bless our much-loved Land ;
God save our Ind !

Sing of her story old,
Sing of her heroes bold,
Sing of her hearts of gold,
God save our Ind !

Sing Ramachandra's praise,
Sing of the Rajput days ;
God save our Ind !

Sing of great Akbar's sway,
Sing of Shivaji's day,
Sing boldly Freedom's lay,
God save our Ind!

Lord of the Burning Ground,
Send forth Thy damru sound,
God save our Ind!

Grant us the hero heart,
Careless of loss or smart,
As men to play our part,
God save our Ind!]

THE FRUITS OF OFFICE

Brethren,

I address you all for the last time as President unless you think fit to re-elect me to what is one of the most onerous, but wonderful, posts in the world. I know well that I cannot have satisfied every one of my constituents, for I can only do my own best, and the many different bests of us all are needed to ensure our Society's well-being.

Ours is in truth a Universal Brotherhood, a Rainbow of the White Light of the Unity of Life. As there are many Faiths to praise the glories of the One Truth, so are there many differences among our members to bear testimony to the abundant wealth that constitutes our Brotherhood; and my own mode of difference is but one among the many. I am thankful for all differences so long as they are differences dedicated to the cause of Truth as each is able to perceive it, and so long too as each difference is expressed, however emphatically, in terms of courtesy and appreci-

ative understanding towards all other honesties. I hope that during my term of office I have never failed either in courtesy or in appreciative understanding towards all who may have strengthened our cause by differing from me.

Many an outstanding fact have I learned during my membership of The Theosophical Society and especially my tenure of office as President of The Theosophical Society. One is that membership of The Theosophical Society is a wonderful *open sesame* to the hearts of members throughout the world. Go where you will, the home of a member of The Theosophical Society is your home, and you are king of it while you tarry there. Indeed have we within our own ranks achieved a rich measure of Brotherhood and thus have justified the gift to the world by the Members of a Brotherhood far more real, of course, of what is in truth Their Society.

A second outstanding fact is the stimulation in us by virtue of our membership of an unrestricted search for Truth. No dogmas hedge us in. No orthodoxies confine us. No conventions blind or bind us. As members of The Theosophical Society and as students of Theosophy we are free to wander as we will in search of Truth, and so do we honour the wanderings of others. We are a Fellowship of Faiths just as we are a League of Nations, and thus do we find ourselves at home

in every facet of the Diamond of Truth as we find ourselves at home in every facet of the Diamond of Humanity—in every race, in every nation, in every community. I repeat: We Theosophists are free. For we seek Truth, and has it not been said “the Truth shall make you free”?

A third outstanding fact is that our Society is most richly endowed with splendid workers who count no sacrifice too great in the service of the Cause for which The Society stands. Onlookers, judging the virility of The Society by the extent of its prominence in the outer world, sometimes compare one period of its life detrimentally to another period. But I know that never was The Society more alive than it is today, never have its members been more enthusiastic than they are today, never have they been more eager to sacrifice than they are today—as The Society's finances at the present moment testify. Everywhere there are devoted and able men and women serving Theosophy and The Theosophical Society—some of them giving all their time, some giving every minute of their time that they can possibly spare.

UNEXAMPLED HEROISM

Our Society and Theosophy are in a danger at the present time which never before they have encountered. But to meet the dan-

ger there is a fine strength available no less from members who for the time being are inhibited from all outer activity, as in Poland, in Norway, in Denmark, in Holland, in Belgium, in France, and elsewhere, than from members who are fortunate enough to be free. My heart bleeds for our beloved Polish brethren who have suffered almost unmentionable horrors, yet who, in the midst of all their agony, endure their martyrdom with unexampled heroism and so are beautifully and wonderfully faithful to Theosophy and our Society. Great indeed shall be the resurrection of Poland out of a crucifixion such as she is now bearing, and great indeed must be The Society which is honoured by the membership of such men and women as these. Great indeed must be its Truths which thus inspire them. Need I say that The Society's resources are available to them all to the utmost? The difficulty lies in being certain that the help we are so proud to give will reach them. Our War Distress Relief Committee in London is exploring every possible avenue of help, but inaccessibility is for the moment increasing, and we can only do our best.

I specially wish to draw your attention to the heroism of our brethren in Finland. Their Section still lives, and a measure of freedom is still theirs, unlike the situation in Poland, and they live

most nobly, too, in the midst of sufferings only less acute than those of our Polish fellow-members.

Poland and Finland! What examples they are to us all! And how true it is, I think, that the wonderful silent and dangerous loyalty of our brethren in all the stricken countries is almost more potent than the more open and entirely safe loyalty which is available to all of us who are free from the encompassing of evil. But let us not appraise. The loyalty of all our members to Theosophy and to The Theosophical Society is universal and flawless. It has stood all tests everywhere, nowhere more splendidly than in Britain as Mr. Jinarājadāsa has just told you. Victory will come the sooner and the ensuing Peace will be the more righteous because members of The Theosophical Society, being weighed in the balances of Steadfastness, Worth and Devotion, are not found wanting, but are being found worthy of their elders, worthy of H. P. Blavatsky, worthy of Colonel Olcott, worthy of Dr. Besant, worthy of Bishop Leadbeater, worthy of all those great souls who in their lives have borne witness to the essential majesty of membership of The Theosophical Society and to the almost inconceivable uplift Theosophy confers upon its devotees. We are on the whole in good standing, I think, we Theosophists! And I say this in all humility, knowing well how

great is our mission and how difficult it is of fulfilment.

CONFIDENCE FOR THE FUTURE

We may look forward into the future with confidence, though each of us must work his hardest to make that confidence secure. A great inheritance has been entrusted to us by those who have gone before us. I think we shall pass it on to our successors unimpaired, so that it may be said of those who upheld the banner of Theosophy and of The Theosophical Society during the period of the greatest war the world has ever known that they proved worthy of the unique honour of being called to the colours of the Masters in such critical times.

THANKS TO ALL COLLEAGUES

May I take this opportunity of offering my grateful thanks to all my colleagues of the General Council who have so generously helped me during the term of my office, and specially to those who have held the greater offices in The Society? I think first of all of our noble and revered Vice-President whose wisdom and guidance have been so priceless in their value. With him I venture to couple our great and loved leader, Mr. Jinarājadāsa, whom we so thankfully welcome home to India, although the loss of his calm and radiant strength to our most valiant brethren in Britain in their time of

trial so magnificently borne must needs be an offset in some measure to India's gain. Throughout my term of office he has given me all possible encouragement and help, and I do indeed thank him. Then I think of Dr. G. Srinivasa Murthi and Mr. N. Sri Ram, the former at present my Deputy, the latter our much revered Recording Secretary, and of the Bhikkhu Arya Asanga, now The Society's Treasurer. All these dear and valued friends have given me wonderful co-operation and most efficient service to The Society. I do not know where I should have been without them. I also owe a deep debt of gratitude to all our splendid workers at Adyar, who do so much to make Adyar the Abode of Peace and Power it undoubtedly is. Indeed have I been fortunate in all my colleagues throughout the world.

And no less fortunate have I been in all my fellow-members from each of whom streams forth affection and goodwill, which are priceless to me as President of The Theosophical Society.

It is also my happiness to thank Rukmini for all her help and wise counsel during my seven years of office. She has indeed caused my burden to be much lighter than otherwise it would have been.

HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS

But above all I humbly bow before Those without whose Bless-

ing no President, nor any other officer of The Society be he where he may, can in any way be worthy of his post. I bear thankful testimony to Their constant concern with the affairs of Their Society, no less constant now than in the days gone by, and I bear thankful testimony, too, to the wonderfully immediate help which, as far as is possible and within the Law, our beloved leaders, Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater, are ever giving to The Society they so deeply loved and love and serve no less now. If my note of optimism with regard to The Society and its members is justified, and I know it is, it is because beyond them striving on the plains of earth lies the mighty mountain range of a spiritual Himalaya from which all good things flow down to earth to bless and fortify. May The Society and its members ever abide at the feet of their Himalaya in reverence and in service!

I declare open this International Convention of The Theosophical Society in the 65th year of its present incarnation, and I pray upon its deliberations the Holy Blessings of Those whose gift to the world it is.

* * *

GALLANT GREECE

Since preparing my Presidential Address and since delivering it I have received the following letter

from our brother, the General Secretary of The Theosophical Society in Greece :

The Theosophical Society in Greece address an appeal to your good self, dear President, and to your esteemed co-workers at Adyar, as well as to every free-minded people in the whole world, to express themselves properly concerning the unprovoked attack of violence from which our country suffers and against which she is unanimously and resolutely fighting with the aid of the Powers of Light.

I need hardly say that I feel the utmost confidence that Greece with all her splendid traditions will

triumphantly repel, as she is already repelling, those who are attempting to violate her national integrity. I read the letter to the members of the General Council at Benares, and it was at the wish of the members present that I am thus adding it to my Address. I am certain that all free-minded people throughout the world, and especially all Theosophists, are with gallant Greece as she stands for liberty and justice side by side with Britain and Britain's great Allies. That the Powers of Light send down upon Greece their Rays of Blessing, no less than upon Britain and her Allies, I have no doubt whatever.

George S. Arundale

It is the Rishis who have brought Britain and India together. It is the Rishis who have willed that Britain should be helped by India and India should be helped by Britain. Is there not a greater Government of the World than just those governments which we see in nation after nation? Is there not a great Purpose in this vast evolutionary scheme which extends from the lowest levels of consciousness in the mineral kingdom right up among the Gods Themselves? Is there not a mighty Destiny for every nation? Is there not a mighty Destiny for every people and for every faith? Are there not those Wise Men, those Divine Personages who, while recognizing the freedom of the will of you and me, still are constantly inclining us and the world to follow the pathway of our duty? Part, as it seems to me, of the expression of that Will has been the coming of Britain and India together.

—G. S. A.

WHAT IS TRUE YOGA? ¹

BY HIRENDRA NATH DATTA

Vice-President of The Theosophical Society

FRIENDS :

AT every Convention now, during the last seven years or more, I have been inflicting on you my nondescript addresses, so that it threatened almost to become an annual institution. To break this monotony, I respectfully begged our President to leave me out this year. But he was inexorable—as inexorable as Hitler—and wrote back: “I cannot excuse you from giving a Convention Lecture.” That proves—does it not?—that Hitlerism has infected the thought-atmosphere of the whole world and that even George Sydney Arundale is not immune from it. In due course came our President’s *ukase*: “Take as your subject, if convenient, (*that* you will appreciate is only the velvet glove) something along the line of Yoga, in relation to some aspect of modern life, perhaps dealing with Yoga and War as well.” So here am I, once again on the Convention platform and cordially invite you to undergo your annual infliction.

A FALSE YOGI

As regards Herr Hitler², I have heard him spoken of by those with

pro-Nazi sympathies, as a great yogi, who has already out-distanced Kaiser Wilhelm, the all-highest, and is destined yet to achieve what Napoleon the Great failed to accomplish, namely establish a new world-order. For, it is pointed out, is not Hitler a strict vegetarian, a confirmed *Brahmachari* who has abjured sex for ever? He is, we are told, a mystic, practises high *tapas* in his lonely castle at Berchtesgaden and takes all his important decisions there, pacing with even steps in his solitary cell (only it is a big hall), in a sort of half-trance. It is not unlikely that Hitler is something of a yogi; but the question is, is his Yoga of the right sort?

Hitler inevitably reminds a Theosophist of the white-robed Egyptian priest Agmahd, whom we know from that Theosophical classic, *The Idyll of the White Lotus*. We meet him there, set apart on his high pedestal, silent and statuesque, altogether removed from the ordinary life of man, equable, intolerable, impenetrable and immovable in a certain perfection of assuredness—pitiless, heartless,

¹ First Convention Lecture delivered at Benares, 26 December 1940.

² This “Herr” is with a double “r” shewing he has nothing feminine in his composition.

soulless—with unfathomable blue eyes, cold as though they were jewels, and withal cruel with the cruelty of the beast of prey. This Agmahd is a deep devotee, not of the Goddess of the White Lotus, the Spirit of light, love, truth, wisdom and grace, but of the dark devi, the spirit of negation, with the cold glare in her cruel eyes, full of an icy anger that flashes not but freezes, with her shining and gleaming robe and blood-red roses on her shoulders, with terrible serpents wreathing from her arms; in a word Agmahd is a worshipper, not of *Uma Haimavati*, who is *Vidya* incarnate and scatters golden seeds which in due season bear fruits of glory, but of *Avidya*, of *Kāli Karali* and is the tool of this terrible goddess. You will recall the scene where this calm, crafty, clever priest lays bare his inmost soul and cries out: "*I demand power*"—power to work his indomitable and absolutely selfish will among all mankind and is prepared to pay the price. "Then utter the fatal words," the dark goddess says. Agmahd's face, (we read) changed. He stood still for some moments; then his face grew colder and more stony than any carven form. "I renounce my humanity," he said at last, slow and deliberate.

Hitler is exactly like that. He also has renounced his humanity. Who knows, he may be a reincarnation of Agmahd himself. He is

also intoxicated by the frenzy of power. Blinded by his own conceit, this yogi (if he is one) has also been wreaking his all-embracing cruelty. Stern, self-absorbed, self-conscious, he also has been satiating his hunger for self-gratification, which he cherishes like a serpent next his heart. That explains the "frightfulness" which has marked his conquering career over devastated Europe. That explains his un pitying ruthlessness. Hear the testimony of an eye-witness in Flanders, Major Mahamed Akbar Khan:

It is extremely hard to describe the way they (*i.e.*, the Germans) treated the unarmed refugees. They bombed and machine-gunned them. I saw it with my own eyes, at least twice. It was most tragic to see old men and women and children in a state of starvation, out in the open, in rain and mud—not knowing where to go—and then being shot and fired at.

That also explains Hitler's permitting, as a matter of policy, the ravishment and violation of young women and even of girls in their teens, in the conquered countries. Let me quote from a recent issue of *Conscience*, the following information received by Dr. Arundale from "a reliable source":

In order to devitalize to the utmost the nation to which that information relates, the German authorities have the *regular* practice of sending to the German concentration camps as many

girls as possible between the ages of 15 and 25, so that not only may they have hard labour in these camps but may be defiled by the brutes who have charge of them. When no longer of any use, these martyrs are returned to their homes, utterly broken in heart, in mind and in body. . . . Many, of course, go mad.

It is a fact that Hitler still enjoys the strong backing of the German nation. But it is as certain, as the night follows the day, that Herr Hitler will soon meet the same fate as overtook his prototype Agmahd. For you cannot fool all men for all time. The sovereign people, betrayed and lied-to by false and perjured lips, will one day rise in revolt; and enraged crowds, surging compact and close-packed, will first murmur at the gate of his castle, until their murmurs swell into a great roar and then will rush forward in their fury and trample Hitler to the dust, as they did Agmahd in the old days. Thus his body will perish. But, we may be sure, *that* will not be the ending of his soul, tainted dark as it is with the lust of power and ambition. This false yogi will be born again and again and further slide down the Avernus of black magic—for he has to qualify for the "office" (*adhikāra*) of Rāvana himself in a future Manvantara, and has step by step to rise to that wicked eminence, so graphically limned by the Gospel of Humanity (*The Gītā*):

Ashapashashatair Badhah Kama-Krodha-parayanah: "Bound by a thousand fetters of desire and dominated by *Kāma* and hate, he works unrighteously for more and more possessions."

Iyate Kama-bhogartham-Anyāenārtha-Sanchayam: "And by and by comes to regard himself in his purblind pride as the unrivalled overlord of the Universe—the one and only one: (*Isvaroham Aham Bhogi*), (shall we say—yogi?)"

Siddhoham Balavan Sukhi Adhyo bhijanaban Asmi Ko nyasti sadrisho Maya.

PSEUDO-OCCULTISM

I have been reading recently Madame Alexandra David-Neel's *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet*. She is a Frenchwoman, studied at the Sorbonne in Paris, and was for a time Professor at the Brussels "Université Nouvelle." She is a practising Buddhist and has spent fourteen consecutive years in various parts of Tibet, where she was initiated a "Lady Lama." Her book bears the impress of truth, and where she personally vouches for an incident we need have no hesitation in accepting it as true. Naturally, she has to say a great deal about the yogis of Tibet, the anchorites, mystics and magicians. Among other things, she relates some incidents connected with her personal contacts with what is called in Tibet *Tumo* and *Lung-gom*.

The word *Tumo* in Tibetan means heat, warmth, but technically it connotes a form of Hatha Yoga, whereby such extreme heat is produced inside the body as keeps the practiser not only alive but comfortable even in mid-winter on the snowy hills of Tibet, at an altitude varying between 11,000 and 18,000 feet. We are told that upon a frosty night anchorites, who think themselves capable of victoriously enduring the test, are led to the shore of a river or a lake. A moonlit night, with a hard wind blowing, is usually chosen.

The neophytes sit on the ground, cross-legged and naked. Sheets are dipped in the icy water; each man wraps himself in one of them and must dry it on his body. As soon as the sheet has become dry, it is again dipped in the water and placed on the novice's body to be dried up as before. The operation goes on in that way until daybreak. Then he who has dried the largest number of sheets (sometimes as many as forty) is acknowledged the winner of the competition.

Madame Neel says that she has witnessed these exhibitions with her own eyes and has herself obtained remarkable results from what she calls her small experience of this *Tumo*.

As regards *Lung-gom*, that also is a form of Hatha Yoga which develops the power of levitation and enables the *Lung-gom-pa* to take extraordinarily long tramps with amazing rapidity and nimble-

ness. The man does not run but lifts himself from the ground and proceeds by leaps, with a perfectly impassive face, eyes wide-open with their gaze fixed on some invisible far-distant object, somewhere high up in space. *Lung-gom* is, I believe, the same thing as the Tantriks speak of as *Khecharagati*. The practiser's body becomes by and by so light that it floats, as it were, in the air. Madame Neel says that she has been lucky enough to catch a glimpse of three adepts of this art at different places in Tibet.

Suppose one has become a proficient in these and similar "psychic sports," is a past master of these and other "psychic arts"—technically called Siddhis, such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, psychometry, etc., etc.—but *cui bono*, of what profit is it all to him? One is reminded in this connection of a story connected with the Lord Buddha. It is related that the Buddha was once journeying with some of his disciples and met an emaciated yogi all alone in a hut in the middle of a forest.

The Master stopped and enquired how long the man had been living there practising austerities. "Twenty-five years," answered the yogi. "And what power have you acquired by such long and arduous exertion?" asked the Buddha. "I am able to cross a river by walking on the water," proudly replied the anchorite.

“My poor fellow!” said the Buddha with commiseration; “have you really wasted so many years for such trifling result? Why, the ferryman will take you to the opposite bank for a small coin.”

The question is: “Is the psychic on the path of *true* Yoga?” My answer is: “By no means.” Did not Patanjali admonish us 2,000 years ago that the so-called *Siddhis* are really hampers—not helps but hindrances for the yogi?

Te Vyutthane Siddhayah Samadhau Upasargah.

So our President-Mother characterized them as “pseudo-occultism,” and her colleague, the late Mr. G. N. Chakravarti, warned us against being allured by the ignis-fatuus gleam that flits across the psychic’s vision, tempting him to the bypaths of psychism and the mayavic regions of the astral plane.

These psychic arts, as our Mother cogently points out, are often turned to selfish and self-regarding purposes, instead of being used for service, for the uplifting of humanity—thereby strengthening one’s lower self “that covets and grasps and holds and sets itself against all others,” and in due course he slips into black magic and enters the ranks of the adversary.

It is true that a few mystics endowed with sensitive sensoriums develop psychic powers, in spite of themselves. These powers wait on them (I am using the words

of the *Bhagabata Purāna*) like bonds-maidens (*Shulka Dāsi* is the word used), ready to carry out their slightest wishes. But being true yogis, they never use those powers for self-indulgence or self-aggrandizement or even for self-evolution. They hold those powers on trust for the uplifting of humanity, and make themselves channels so that the great life of God might be scattered through them more abundantly over our world. So, we may be sure, the acquiring of *Siddhis* is not true Yoga.

TRUE YOGA

What then is true Yoga?

As you know, Yoga means union. Union of whom with whom? Union of the individual self with the Universal Self, of the *Jīvātma* with the *Paramātma*.

Sanyogo yoga ityukto, jivatma-paramatmanoh.

“Yoga is at-one-ment—to be united with God.” This union is not a transient unity like that of the cloud with the ocean in the familiar phenomenon of the water-spout, but a sempiternal unification like that of the dew-drop slipping into the shoreless sea and becoming one with it:

Yatha nadyah syandamanah samudre, Astangachchhanti nama-rupe vihaya.

The Vedantist speaks of this as “*Brahma-Sājuya*” when the *Jīva*

becomes utterly merged "like a fish in the sea" in the ocean of Divine Bliss. The mystic regards this as "amalgamation with God, immersion in the Absolute, absorption in the Divine Dark or self-loss in the nudity of Pure Being." So, we read in *The Voice of the Silence* :

Where is thy individuality, lanoo ?
Where the lanoo himself ? It is the
spark lost in the fire, the drop within
the ocean, the ever-present ray become
the All and the Eternal Radiance.

Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras* speaks of this as *Swarupe Avasthanam*, when with the total inhibition of the processes of the psyche, who, by the way in her delusion, prefers, as Arthur Wells puts it, the earthly wedlock with the terrestrial self—*Bhutatma*, the physical Ego—rather than her divine husband, the celestial self—*Pratyagatma*, the *Purusha*—I say, with the total inhibition of the processes of this psyche the Purusha, the Monad, rests in his own Self. Patanjali is here echoing the teaching of an ancient Upanishad, where the Rishi speaking of this exalted state says :

Esha Sanprasadah asmat sharirat samutthaya paran jyotir upasarpadya swena rupena abhinispadyate.

This Ego, rising above the body and having attained the pure light rests in his *swarupa*, "his own true self."

This must be so, because to mount to God is really to enter into

One's Self. So the poet Tennyson, who was a mystic himself, advised us "to dive into the temple-cave of our own self"—that is, "to sink into the depths of our being."

In order to appreciate the position of Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras*, it is necessary to bear in mind that according to the Sankhya system (which Patanjali accepts and endorses in full), each Monad or Purusha is primevally attached to and associated with a psychic apparatus called *Linga*, which is his distinctive mark and which he keeps appropriated for his own end until the achievement of *Kaivalya* or emancipation, which, as we have seen, is no other than *Swarupe Avasthanam*. *Muktir hitwanyatharupam swarupena vyavasthitih.*

On attainment of Mukti, the specialized fragment of *Prakriti*, associated with the particular *Purusha* so emancipated, returns to and is merged in the ocean of *Prakriti*.

THE STORY OF THE MONAD

At this point may I, with your permission, make a short excursion into metaphysics ? How and why did the Monad, the *Pratyagatma* (who as we know is a divine fragment, a spark of the Divine Flame and so transcendent in its own nature)—how and why has he become entangled with the psyche ? Well, by his self-will :

Monokritena Ayati Asmin sharire (Prasna Upanishad).

He willed to enter *Prapancha*, the fivefold Universe, and to become immanent. Having so willed, he became the triune *Jivātma* with its three higher *Koshas* named *Hiranamaya*, *Anandamaya* and *Vijnanamaya*—the Causal body, the Buddhist body and the Spiritual body of Theosophy—collectively called the “*Karana sarira*.” So Madame Blavatsky used to say: “The unit becomes three.” How? The Monad, *Chinmatra* (the unit of Consciousness), sends down a ray, in its process of descent, which, appropriating the necessary material from *Brahmaloka*, *Prajapatiloka* and the *Arupa* level of *Devaloka*, for serving as its vehicles for functioning on those planes of *Prapancha*, shines out as a central focus of consciousness, as the *Jivātma*, the Ego of western psychology. But the process of descent does not stop there. “The unit becomes three and three generate four” (H. P. B.). How? The *Jivātma*, in his turn, puts down a fragment of himself into incarnation in the lower planes, namely the *Rupa* level of *Devaloka*, *Pitri-loka* (astral plane) and *Manushyaloka* (physical plane) with its etheric and sub-etheric levels, ensheathing itself in bodies of mental, astral and physical matter—the *Manomaya*, *Pranamaya* and *Annamaya* *Koshas* of the Vedantist—the mental body, the astral body and the physical body with its twofold sub-

division (the gross and the etheric) collectively called the *Sthula* and the *Suksma sarira*. This fragment of the Ego—really its reflection and so-called *Chidavasha*—is the Personality of western psychology, our illusory, terrestrial self—our *Bhutātma*. Now the descent is complete, for, as the Upanishad tells us:

*Shariram abhisānpadyamanah
pāpma bhīh Sansriyate* (Bri., 4-3-8).

With the process of Yoga, the return movement begins. “The Four have to become the Three and the Three to expand into the Absolute One” (H.P.B.). That is, the yogi has first to climb from the lower *Bhutātma* to the higher *Jivātma*, and then pass beyond that higher to the highest, the *Pratyagātma*, when that comes into view. So Madame Blavatsky advised the aspirant to “merge the Personality in the Ego and the Ego in the Monad and thereby become One with the Universal All.” That is the true spiritual life, that is the end and aim of Yoga, and when that is achieved, man has fulfilled his highest destiny. He has returned to God, from whom he was emanated in the immemorial past and can now say with the Christ: “*Consummation est*: It is finished”; or with the Buddha: “*Vusitan Brahmachariyam*: Lived out is the Holy Life”; or with the Vedantin: “*Dhanyohan Kritakrit-yoham saphalan jibitan mama*.”

THE PATH OF YOGA

How is this consummation to be accomplished? First of all, the aspirant, instead of drifting with the current as the majority of us do, must take himself definitely in hand and start to work steadily at self-purification—what is technically called *Chitta-Shuddhi*, that is, to unmake and remake himself.

This is necessarily a long and slow process and has to be built up laboriously, requiring years of arduous self-discipline. So, we hear of the steep and thorny path of true Yoga, in which the subjugation of the lower nature is most rigorously insisted on. As regards purification, Patanjali sums it up in two words, *Yama* and *Niyama*, to be practised "without haste but without rest." The yogi has to cease from wrong-doing, *Navirato Duscharitat*, give up self-indulgence, become passion-proof crushing and annihilating all desires in the retort of an unflinching will, cultivate charity and tolerance and love for all, perform Karma impersonally in His name and for His sake; in a word, renounce the self, unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action.

So, Dr. Besant says: "Purity, selflessness, devotion, utter self-surrender, utmost abnegation must be found in the yogi ere he touches the ark of occultism, for, without these any success is a defeat." So, he has, she says, to give and not to

take, help and not to hold, and pour out without looking for return and to go forward, donning, as she puts it, the armour of purity and the helmet of unselfishness. In a word, he has to transcend the personality, nay eliminate it altogether, so that the very idea of the separated life is entirely obliterated and he becomes pure, physically, emotionally and intellectually, and the master of his thoughts and passions.

I have not time for detailed treatment and must hurry on. According to Patanjali's technique, after *Yama* and *Niyama* come *Asana* (posture) *Pranayama* (breath-control) and *Pratyahara* (mind-control). As H.P.B. said, ecstasy is reached by this inward control and the command of the Self over the physical Ego, his whole organism, both physical and psychical, so that as the result of a life of rigid temperance in all things, the animal nature is subdued and the yogi's bodies become perfect instruments for the Divine Player within to play upon.

These Bahiranga (exoteric) limbs of Yoga, which Patanjali has told us is *Astanga*, are in due course to be followed by the three esoteric (*Antaranga*) limbs, *viz.*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samādhi*, that is to say, the yogi "has to pass progressively from concentrated thought (*Dhāraṇa*) to meditation (*Dhyāna*), and from meditation to profound

contemplation in which everything within him stands still (Samādhi)."

So Patanjali says: *Deshabandah Chittasya Dharana. Tatra Pratyai-katanata Dhyanam.*

True concentration is self-forgetting attentiveness and must be so deep, intense and one-pointed that the yogi becomes oblivious of all else beside the object of concentration. Next comes Dhyāna—meditation. The object of meditation may be almost anything—*yathā-bhimata-dhyanat va*—"a picture a statue, a tree, a distant hillside, a growing plant, running water, little living things." We need not, with Kant, go to the starry heavens. "A little thing—the quantity of a hazelnut" will do for us, as it did for Lady Julian long ago.

The yogi thus alters his mental equilibrium and "puts to sleep that normal self" which usually wakes and awakens that "transcendental self" which usually sleeps.

By now, the yogi must have left behind the operations of the understanding and of the lower mind and risen from analysis to synthesis. This *Dhyāna* is the necessary prelude to *Samādhi*—pure contemplation, that state in which the yogi enters into communion with Reality and rising to the higher levels of consciousness comes into touch with the larger Life in which we are all immersed. So it is said: "Be still, be still *and* know."

When *Samādhi* deepens into super-samādhi—what is termed by Patanjali, "a-samprajnata"—the soul is left alone in silence; and in that silence the voice of the Divine in him is heard and the Uncreate Light shines out before his inner eye. In that *lux eterna*, all barriers melt away and the self mingles with the boundless All:

Atha yatra Ahameva idan sarvam Asmi iti manyate (Br., 4-3-20).

THE TRUE YOGI

That then is true Yoga. In that exalted ecstasy, the yogi gets unknown revelations of glory, wisdom and bliss.

What is more,—by this time the yogi's spiritual nature being fully awake and active, he grasps the One in the vortex of the many and in the words of *The Gītā*, he sees Him everywhere:

Yo mām pashyati sarvatra sarvan cha mayi pashyati.

So Sri Krishna, the Maha-yogi, the Great Lord of Yoga, assures us:

Sarvabhutastham ātmanan

Sarvabhutani chatmani

Ekshate Yoga-juktatmā

Sarvatra sama-darshana.

"The true yogi, he who is harmonized in Yoga, sees the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self—having achieved *sama-drishti* everywhere."

The yogi has now finished his task!

THEOSOPHY IN INDIA—WHENCE, HOW AND WHITHER¹

BY G. N. GOKHALE

General Secretary of The Theosophical Society in India

WHEN the President sat down to prepare the menu for this great feast, he evidently thought that you would all relish a little *chutnie* after the delicious sweets you have had and are going to have here: and I obey the call, if only to heighten the value of the nourishment. In discharging this duty I have had necessarily to draw upon what our Elders have taught us; and if I have lifted things wholesale, please do not be surprised. Do you not expect to find traces of the mother's milk in the baby's blood? So please bear with me for a while. It is only an hour!

Having accepted the task, I thought this Jubilee year of the Indian Section would be a fitting occasion to review Theosophy in India in all its three aspects—Whence, How and Whither. For, we have to bear in mind all along, that our future cannot but be founded on our past. Just as a lens focusses the light of the Sun to a point, to send it out again in an ever-expanding cone into the future: so

is our past gathered together in the present, and the future can only be a continuation of the same. Perhaps it is true that the lens shifts its position in time: and so, the point we call Present moves on as we gather more and more experience, and it never really reaches the expanding cone. Anyway we all live in the Point in the Now; but that necessarily includes the Past and the Future, without which there is no Present.

We must therefore ask ourselves first: What has been the Theosophist in India in the past? What has been our knowledge of God in the past? How have we understood that word in this our Aryavarta?

INDIA'S GREATEST TRUTH-GIFT

To get a correct idea of what our forefathers meant by that term God, *Theos*, we have to go back into the dim past of history when the Aryan Race was founded, round the Sacred Island in the Gobi Sea, as we believe, or at least to those times when they settled down in India. We must trace the vicissitudes through which this Idea has passed.

¹ Fourth Convention Lecture delivered in Benares, 29 December 1940.

That is a big historical task, for which I have neither the capacity nor the time. So what I propose to do is to dive down into these depths, and bring up whatever shell comes to my hand, and place it before you. Whether it contains any pearls, you will have to decide for yourselves.

Now orientalists and other historians have studied these things with a patience and perseverance which commands our greatest admiration. They have described to us in detail the struggles between various Gods for supremacy, and how Indra held sway at one time amongst the child humanity, Varuna at another, and so on. They have even determined for us when each hymn of the Vedas was written. It is true that the recent discoveries in Mohenjodaro and Harappa have slightly upset their calculations, but the orientalists give us the sequence fairly correctly. I am afraid I am entirely ignorant of these researches, but from what little I have read, their whole method seems to me to be like describing the contents of the head from a study of the headdress. Because a man puts on an English hat they conclude that he must be an Englishman, and when he seems to discard it for a Gandhi cap, they feel certain that he must have become a confirmed Indian patriot. Now we must admit that the change in the headdress must be a result of some

change within the head, but it does not necessarily follow that it is any real change of heart. Whether the Trinity came into its own some century B.C. or A.D. does not, I submit, make any real difference to the Idea of God that has dominated the Aryan Race. When they were on the North Pole they naturally wrote of the long long twilights, and then of the glorious sunshine. Their imagery, which is after all meant to convey the Unknown in terms of the known, must have changed, but their concept of the Unknown was something fundamental which could not change so easily.

This method of judging the contents of the head from the headgear has been further complicated by the fact that the word *Devas* in Samskrit has been translated as "Gods." The result is that Aryavarta—the Land of the Aryans—has been known for its innumerable temples full of the strangest of Gods, instead of Angels or Ferishtas and Avataras—Divine Men. The land is dotted all over with a multitude of such shrines, but the Indian has never forgotten that behind all these stands the ONE—Eternal, Immortal—and when he worships, he worships that ONE within. The very multiplicity of the images—not idols—is the surest guarantee that we are worshipping neither the multitude nor the idol. We worship fossils,

or just paint ordinary stones with read lead, than which no better paint is yet known to science. We worship stone images, wooden images, or those made in brass, silver or gold. We worship the cow, the cobra. A mouse has an honoured place in our temples, and we worship the very tools with which we do our mundane work.

In India every morning, we remembered our seven sacred cities, twelve Jyotirlingas, four Dharmas, six famous confluences of rivers, five lakes ; and hundreds of devout Hindus spent the latter part of their life in visiting these places. As they moved from Kedar to Rameshwaram, and Dwaraka to Puri, they described a veritable cross over the country. Their life moved round these centres, as our consciousness moves round our nerves, with the Head, Heart and Hand centres in holy Prayag, Kashi and Gaya. But the Aryans in India were a joyous crowd, whose God did not live in heaven alone. He did express Himself a little more clearly, through His officials the Devas, to whom the Shrines in these holy places were dedicated, as He did through Saints and other holy men ; but the Aryans' God existed in the sinner, in the gambling of the cheat as well. He lived in a thousand heads and a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. He filled the whole Universe, all that is and that is to be, the living and

the non-living and remained—the One Eternal, Immortal, Invisible—and the true Aryan's life was centred round the ideal of finding Him out as such. He was constantly trying to see the One in the Many and the Many in the One, and everybody looked forward to that day when he would be able to say: "I and my Beloved are One." Well, that has been "*Theos* the One" in India from ancient times.

Although God did reside in everybody some had to dig down a little deeper to get at Him ; and in order to help him to work from his own stage, the Aryan in India evolved a Social Polity of his own, in which there was room for everybody. Every one had a place of his own, and an honoured one at that—a place where even his very shortcomings were yoked to the Common Good. His life was based not on Suppression but on Sublimation. Varnashrama Dharma was this Social Polity, but the goal of every one's life was the same—reaching the God within. Every individual was enjoined to follow the path of Non-killing, Truth, etc.

That is the Eternal Religion. It must be kept in mind, all along, that these terms referred to the God within and not to the body without. So Non-killing meant "not killing the One God," acting from within, beginning with oneself, by not losing one's own temper,

or by yielding to the six enemies—Kāma, Krodha, etc. Truth was seeking the One who alone truly resides within every one. *Asteya* meant not depriving another of the Spirit within, by taking from him more than we give him, and so on. This has been "*Theos* the Many" in India. The two taken together, "One in the Many and the Many in the One," has formed the Wisdom of God, the Theosophy in India from times immemorial whatever outer form it has taken or may take.

CHALLENGED THROUGH THE AGES

While the Aryans lived this Ideal, they were a happy, adventurous and hence a victorious and prosperous lot. But along with plenty came the seeds of the downfall. Those born with a silver spoon in their mouth, were more anxious to preserve it, than those who knew how to get a new one. We became rich men—men who are afraid of losing what they have, as a Samskrit poet has aptly described them. Then we began to apply the terms that referred to the Spirit within, to the body without. Non-killing became not killing the other man, even if it meant allowing his Spirit to run riot. Truth meant the truth that was convenient to ourselves. *Asteya* meant not taking things by stealth, and so on. Fear entered the hearts of the fearless, and degeneration set in. Sons of Brahmins began to hold on to their fathers'

privileges, whether they in turn deserved them or not. Men born in Kshatriya families claimed to rule only because they were the sons of kings; and so the Division of Society by Functions hardened into Caste. Every one of these divisions grew a shell round itself in sheer self-defence, so much so that they refused to touch each other. Ashrama Dharma became mere touch-me-not, and took precedence over Varna Dharma, and we have seen how the Individual's Dharma was already misunderstood. The country naturally could not stand united before invaders who came again and again, and slowly we reached the present stage.

Anything like a consistent history of this fall—even if only to see what lesson it has to teach us—is beyond my capacity; but I see in it all a challenge to our ability to hear the fundamental note of the land in all these clashes. Could we see the face of God in the invaders? . . . That was the question of questions before us. After the Mussalmans had come and more or less settled down in the country, the old Aryans became Hindus, and Guru Nanak came to remind us of our goal, about the end of the fifteenth century, when he declared that there was "No Hindu no Turk." After him Akbar, from his throne, struck the same note in his "Tahuddi-Ilahi" about the end of

the sixteenth century. It was only when both had failed more or less, that another Servant of Those that guide the destinies of Nations, Shivaji, came along to show that seeing God in the invader was not necessarily touching his feet, in a so-called non-violent manner, but by restraining him with force if necessary, when he transgressed the Laws of God. That is what Shivaji did when he opposed the arrogance of the Rulers but never Islam; and it is well known how he treated captured Muslim ladies with honour, and how his largesses were freely distributed amongst Muslim *Fakirs* as they were to Hindu *Bairagis*. All these showed to India the truly Aryan Path, but we did not learn the lesson. So when the Hindus and Muslims had neutralized each other, came in another invader, the British, again asking the same question.

Christianity was now already in the land, but with the coming of the British Christianity rose to political power. Luckily the Britishers' Christianity was of the milder variety. Still they felt that theirs was the only true religion, and their missionaries expressed this in no uncertain terms. That was so radically against the fundamental note of the land, that even the degenerate Indians mutinied, the spark that set fire being a bit of fat smeared on cartridges. Thank God, the Britisher took the hint, and

Queen Victoria in her Great Proclamation reverted to the key-note of India, and so made British rule possible. If the Hindus had learnt their lesson, and made room for Islam and Christianity in their Pantheistic Pantheon, and if the Muslims had accepted that position, which retained for them complete freedom, as it does for those who choose to worship Shiva or Vishnu alike, the whole religious problem in India would have been solved. All we had to do was to add two more temples to the great host we already had in the land. It is interesting that in the Maratha records, Musjids were already described as *Shunylayas*—temples without images—and if the Christian Churches had been made and treated as *Christalayas* the thing would have been done. But alas! this did not come off.

INDIA IS NEAR TO DEATH

About the time that the British rose to power, the sun of science had just risen, this time in the West, and they naturally brought with them that particular sunshine into our lives. We were so dazzled by it that we could not distinguish between the Lord and his locomotive, and knelt before both. The Englishman had decided to teach us his language partly because Macaulay hoped we would all turn Christians that way. Grammarians and philosophers as we all

are, we plunged into his books, and devoured his Huxley, his Spenser, his Burke, his account of the French Revolution, and so forth. We saw that *material* success had led the western scientists to conclude that they knew everything. Evidently finding it difficult to forget their clash with the Ecclesiastical power, they saw no necessity for God, even as a hypothesis, because Matter had all the potency of Life. We envied the British their freedom—even from God. We thought the secret of his character lay in the brandy we saw him imbibe every day, and in our desire to please him which we did not, and in our hurry to be like him we began with that beverage. We also started railing against “idol worship,” and agreed with him that God was no longer required. Religion, in fact everything that was not “Made in England,” ceased to please us. We disliked the old, and knew not what new to take. As in Æsop’s fable what the whirlwind of Muslims had failed to achieve, the sun of science accomplished in a trice. We took off the mantle that had given us warmth and protected us for centuries. Our Ahimsa turned into sycophancy, and convenient half-truths took the place of Satya. And this is how *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika* summed up the situation in 1879:

India is dead to all sense of honour and glory. India is an inert mass which

no power of late has been able to move. . . . India has no heart and those of her children who have as yet any portion of it left have been deadened by blank despair. Talk of regenerating India to the Indians. . . . What can the doctor do? The patient is already stiff and cold.

THE GREAT ONES INTERVENE

If the patient was to revive—as he has done—it was first necessary to rouse in him the will-to-live, to make him call up his strength from within, to set up his mental, astral and etheric currents right. It was necessary to remind the dying disbeliever, that this Vedic-scientific Dharma, his religion, was as much based upon the Laws of God as science was, and they were but the two inseparable poles of one magnet. That His Laws held good whether we agreed or no. That His Agents, the Hierarchy of His servants, still watched over the destinies of Nations as they had done before.

It was necessary to get a Doctor who himself was not deadened with despair, who had a vision of the glorious Ind that was and that is to be. He had to be a foreigner because no Indian who had breathed the poisonous atmosphere could rise above it, and yet he had to be a foreigner who was different from the Britisher, who moved about the land in gas-masks. On looking round the world, the Great Ones found only two persons—a Colonel

from the U.S.A. and a Russian lady who could do that trick ; and They invited them to this thankless task, which those Servants of Light accepted.

How thoroughly they were fitted for the work was seen at Bombay on 16 February 1879, when the venerable bearded Colonel, after sitting up on deck to catch the glimpse of this Land till 1 a.m., on touching land, kissed the granite step of this Sacred Soil—his instinctive act of Pooja. It is true that scholars like Hunter and Taylor had studied our Vedas before ; but as the Colonel himself tells us, the great Max-Muller once took great pains to explain to him that “they had found no evidence anywhere of the pretended esoteric meaning,” and did his best to persuade him, not “to pander to the superstitious beliefs of the Hindus in such follies.” The Colonel relates how he explained to the great scholar that he himself had the clearest evidence at first hand that the Rishis live and work for humanity today as they ever have, and that the claims of Patanjali as to the Siddhis were to his certain knowledge true. The Founders not only proclaimed this from the rooftops but constantly proved it to everybody—H.P.B. with her phenomena and H.S.O. later with his wonderful healing—that they themselves possessed these powers. The orientalists had only admired our

grammar. The Theosophists did more, and when one of these heckling scholars wondered in a meeting how the Colonel could understand in a few months what they had failed to find out in twenty years, and a person in the audience shouted “*Brains*, sir,” he expressed a great truth, though “heart” would have been a better word. The Colonel read our literature with sympathy, and so could reach its depths and show us gems which are of great practical use today. Unlike the missionaries, who only railed at our religion and idolatry, Theosophists showed us all the gold in the old and restored to us our self-respect. The others dealt in words, the Founders gave us their meaning. That was the difference between knowledge and wisdom.

Unlike our British rulers these two had “crossed many seas and baffled many storms” only to meet and to live with “our dear Heathens,” and so they took a house in the “native quarters” and made it their home—the first foreigners to do so. “Making no call at the Government House nor social advances to the European class, who were as densely ignorant of Hinduism and Hindus as they were of our plans,” the Founders paid the full penalty for their independence, including surveillance ; and it was only after the respectable Editor of the respectable paper, *The Pioneer*, had joined them and they

had carried their campaign into the very holy of holies at Simla, that things improved, although the missionaries continued to harass them for a long, long time. They braved all this for the sake of dear India; and what is more, when members resigned from The Society to please their rulers, or when Indians let them down as they did very often, the Founders refused to take them as the real India.

COLONEL OLCOTT AND INDIA'S REGENERATION

Being thoroughly grounded in the First Eternal Principles on which all religions are based, the Colonel was thoroughly at home in all. This is what happened when he was once confronted at Lucknow with a lecture on Islam.

Posters and handbills were already issued, and the whole Muslim public were to be present. Escape being out of the question, I borrowed a copy of Sale's *Koran* and sat up all night to read it. Here I found the immense advantage of Theosophy, for, as I read, the key to the exoteric teachings helped me to grasp all that lay between the lines, and light was shed upon the whole system. I had never before realized so fully the incomparable value of Theosophy as an interpreter of religious systems.

At the end of the lecture, a devout Muslim expressed a wish that their children knew one-tenth as much about their religion as the Colonel did.

Later in Poona one of his Jewish friends dressed him in Jewish costume—turban, gaberdine and all, he already had the beard—and presented him to a venerable old Rabbi, with whom he had some conversation; the latter refused to believe that the Colonel was a mere Gentile.

Again, he gave in Bombay a lecture on Zoroastrianism, and "endeavoured to show its spiritual character, and its identity with Hinduism and Buddhism in the matter of yoga training and awakening of spiritual powers in man"; a subscription was raised on the spot and 20,000 copies of the lecture and its Gujarati translation were subsequently distributed.

A special Durbar of Jains was held to meet the Founders, by the most learned of Jain priests and the Chief Jatti in Bombay, and here after a good deal of cross-questions the Colonel won his sympathies.

When the Colonel went to Ceylon on a whirlwind tour of the Emerald Isle, "finding the shocking ignorance of the Singhalese about Buddhism," he began, "after vainly trying to get some monk to do it, the compilation of a Buddhist Catechism on the lines of similar handbooks used in the West. To fit myself I had to read 10,000 pages of Buddhist books." This book had gone through more than 33 editions in the Colonel's own lifetime, and has been translated into various languages. It was the

Colonel who later reduced Buddhism to Fourteen Propositions, and what is more got the Chief Priests from Burma, Ceylon and Japan to agree to that common draft. In a visit to Japan the most distinguished Priest in the Japanese Empire accepted that "that he had greatly aroused the feelings of the people at large was beyond dispute." It was he who started the Buddhist Education Trust which later had numerous schools all over the island. He devised the Buddhist flag, and in a word his services to Buddhism were such as will never be forgotten.

The first President of our Society was no less a Hindu as was admitted by the Benares Pandits in a special address they gave him. I cannot resist the temptation of asking you to have a peep at our Colonel sitting for dinner with a number of Brahmins (of course sitting in the opposite row)—"clothed in dhoti like them, from the waist downwards, the torso being left bare," and with H.P.B.'s long gold chain worn in place of the sacred thread.

It was he who pointed out how "the peril of Indian Youth lay in the fact of their irreligious and anti-nationalistic education, which destroyed their reverence for their national religion, which to a Hindu is the spur to all action, his guide and pole-star. To rob him of this is to leave him like a rudderless

ship on the sea of life." For the young men he started the *Arya Bal Bodhini*, the first magazine of its kind, and in fact laid the foundation of the work for Hindus and Hindu youth, which was so nobly carried on by Dr. Besant in the Central Hindu College, in the Sanatana Dharma Textbooks and so on.

I have not even the time to enumerate the services rendered to India and to the world by Dr. Besant and her distinguished colleagues and successors. But all these have been following in the footsteps of the Founders so closely that when Mr. Jinarājadāsa purchased a house last year for the London Centre, he paid for it exactly the same sum that the Colonel paid for Adyar, namely, six hundred pounds!

But perhaps some of you will tell me that I have been talking only of what our elders have done. What have we in The Theosophical Society done? I would reply by asking you if it is not true that in every family the father earns the money and the mother washes and feeds the babies? What do the children do? They only eat, play, thrive on the nourishment, and often quarrel among themselves. Ours is such a family and we are behaving no worse than average families do. Some of the grown-up children are even helping the mother to mind the babies; and when any member of this fairly fertile family does

anything which the world considers not up to the mark, do they not ask us to behave in a manner worthy of The Theosophical Society? That is a public admission of the fact that we have set a certain standard in this world where the general tendency is to efface all landmarks.

Anyway history will record that it was at a Theosophical Convention that for the first time in India, "a display of machinery made by native artisans" was made in 1879. It was at a Theosophical Convention that the idea of starting the Indian National Congress was first mooted, and the well known "Father" of that child was a prominent Theosophist. It is in our Society alone that you will see Indians and Europeans moving about on terms of perfect equality, and race adds but a variety to the show. It is here that different religions are so many excuses for worshipping in different languages, and caste and creed are seen at their minimum. It is only when we move about the world that we realize how easy it is to feel "at home" in Theosophical families in any Province in India as it is in any country in the world.

I think I am right in saying that our THEOSOPHIST is the oldest magazine in India which has regularly appeared month after month for sixty-one years, with its Editors wandering all over the world. This

periodical, together with the numerous publications issued from our Headquarters, have literally flooded the world with very valuable literature, dealing not with this world but the next, in a perfectly scientific spirit. A good deal of this will last for centuries, and little manuals like *The Astral Plane* will perhaps be better appreciated as pioneering works in that field, a thousand years hence. Our Adyar Library is by itself an achievement to be proud of; but it was at its opening ceremony in 1886 that our President once again clearly sounded the fundamental note of the land—"One in the Many and the Many in the One"—as applied to Hindus and non-Hindus alike; and this note is being sounded in our Common Worship today. Our Motherland cries out to us to stop all religious squabbles, and that is the only solution. The sooner we accept it the better. With pleasure if possible; with pain if we must. That is the Eternal Lesson.

Well, that is The Theosophical Society in India during the last sixty years. The patient who according to *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika* had already grown "cold and stiff," is still alive and kicking. It is true that his sycophancy has now turned to hatred of the British; and Annie Besant lived to see herself hooted only because she had a white skin, and generously called it a sign of the change towards which she had

worked. The patient far from talking of dying now calls for independence and even Communism—the modern material equivalents of his old Moksha—a very natural reaction. If only our British friends have a little vision, the hatred which is only skin-deep will go, the aggressive nationalism will soon wear off, and the delirious fits he gets occasionally when he hears music before mosques, will stop. For our country is no longer a dying patient, but fully alive and awake; and as soon as we all understand Ahimsa aright in the true sense propounded in *The Bhagavad Gītā*, we shall be walking on the right road.

Of course it would be foolish to suggest that all this doctoring has been done by The Theosophical Society alone. Many individuals and Associations have contributed to this recovery, in diverse ways; but I do claim that it was The Theosophical Society that first gave us back our self-respect, and the will-to-live. In addition to this it has greatly helped in other spheres—Religious, Educational and Political, where Dr. Besant's whirlwind campaigns will never be forgotten. I do say that no single Society, even if it has done more in one of these fields, can show similar work in so many departments of life. The hand of our Elders can be seen in all matters of vital importance, and whatever it has touched, it has turned into gold. That is what marks the pre-

sence of the Great Ones, who are not gold as some of us imagine, but *Parisa*—the Philosopher's Stone which makes gold of us. Therein lies spiritual greatness and a clear proof of the existence of Great Rishis standing behind us. All of us are but the gloves, the ectoplasm that clothes the spirit-hand that works these wonders. The mother does not need or expect thanks from the children; but it is our bounden duty to understand all this, to feel gratitude in our hearts for all that we have received, and so that we may in our turn go out into the world to carry on the good work. That is the task before us.

THE PATH OF RETURN

If I have been able to make my idea of the Past of Theosophy in India clear to you, the answer to our Whither is easy. We all go back to the Past. That is the Path of Return. In misunderstanding our very fundamentals we have strayed from the Plan laid down for us by the Father of Mankind as far as we could, short of annihilation. It is time to get back.

One thing I must repeat. We can never do this by merely copying other Nations, however successful their methods may appear to be. As Dr. Besant so often reminded us, every Nation has a Message for Humanity written on its forehead, and ours is to see and show others how to see "the One

in the Many and the Many in the One." In fact every individual has such a note of his own—his individual uniqueness. That is the foundation of the Nation.

That is why, in our Society, we have perfect Freedom of Thought stressed again and again. We have no system of rewards and punishments. Accepting the Divinity in each one we sit on judgment on no one. Ours is the only Congress, the only Convention, where we come together to exchange notes for a week and disperse without passing any Resolutions[—]which are often forgotten the moment they are declared passed. We leave each one to form the Resolution in his own heart, and carry it out as best he can. Our Society must have that atmosphere of Freedom with it, where we are all prepared to give others the same freedom that we claim for ourselves. Ours is not a civilizing mission; on this platform you will only hear "How to be Civilized." How much of that we follow is each one's own business. In our Society we do not establish Brotherhood. It ever exists. We only form a nucleus where those who accept it can stand. We do not organize religion or Truth. That exists; we only organize a study of the same. We do not teach Yoga; we leave every one to discover his own Yoga. Of course there is plenty of guidance in The Society, but no authority.

We are pioneers, and have to live under difficult conditions. We are like the nursery where small seedlings are to be grown for transplanting all over the world. One such nursery was established round the Great White Island, the type of our civilization was established there apart from the rest of the world. Now ours is the task to carry it on to the whole world. It is for that purpose that our Aryavarta has been kept alive for centuries. India was but sleeping, she is now awake, and must fulfil her duty.

In India we have a number of undesirable things, it is true. As Krishnaji once beautifully put it: "We have a tradition which has lost its soul." But underneath these ashes is our true heritage, the living part, the real inheritance from the past. It is the genius to see "the One in the Many and the Many in the One." That is our Liberation. If we could revive that spirit the miracle of our regeneration would be achieved.

For to such a spirit nothing is impossible. It would carry all before it. Not only would it bring political freedom as one of its minor and natural results, but it would, in one great act of self-assertion, make India what She is destined to be, the Spiritual Centre and the Dynamo of the world. That, friends, is "Theosophy in India: Whence, How and Whither."

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND ITS ROLE IN WORLD RECONSTRUCTION

BY JAMSHED NUSSERWANJEE

Notes on which was based the Fifth Convention Lecture delivered at Benares, 29 December 1940—a great address. Mr. Jinarājadāsa, introducing the lecturer, said that Mr. Jamshed Nusserwanjee was especially qualified to speak on Reconstruction as he had been the Mayor of Karachi for 11 successive years and during that period had so reconstructed his city that Karachi became a model city in India.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS :

This evening's subject admits two broad facts, namely, that the world needs reconstruction, and that The Theosophical Society has to play a definite role in that reconstruction.

Why the world needs reconstruction is a deep problem. All round us in the world we see mighty developments in all possible branches of life: art, science, culture, knowledge, music, painting, sculpture. Great scientific discoveries, wonderful inventions, unimaginable quantities of food and all necessaries and comforts of life, and yet our world is in chaos, needing reconstruction, a world in the grip of a great war of destruction and that also in the name and for the purpose of establishing a "New Social Order": one feels that the problem is very much deeper.

For several centuries past various thinkers have been suggesting that the world needs reconstruction—a New Social Order. Attempts have been made from time to time and continually. In the past, it was suggested by a few thinkers only. Today it is urged by all thinkers: statesmen, capitalists, revolutionists, rich and poor, parliamentary, communistic or totalitarian minded persons, all urge for a reconstruction of the world.

There has been something amiss and terribly amiss, there has been such a mighty and terrible confusion in the minds of individuals and nations about the world's reconstruction that it has created and brought about war on a gigantic scale of destruction. All this is due to something wanting in humanity and in its leaders specially. And it is here one feels that Theosophy

is needed and that The Theosophical Society has to play a definite role.

SOURCE AND OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY

Theosophy and its knowledge was given in the past and to the modern world by Great Messengers of Light. The world failed to understand this knowledge and missed opportunities from time to time. Thus the Powers of Light have to make attempts over and over again to make the world understand and realize its glorious destiny.

The Theosophical movement is one of such attempts of the Great Messengers of Light, who are generally known as the Masters of Wisdom and Love.

The present Theosophical Society was started 65 years ago by two such Great Brothers of the Inner Government of the world through Their trusted agents Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott; and these Inner Founders have been guiding it ever since through Their other trusted instruments, the past and the present Presidents and leaders of The Theosophical Society, Dr. Besant and Dr. Arundale, Bishop Leadbeater, Mr. Jinarājadāsa and Rukmini Devi, to a definite Path and Goal.

Their one principal aim was Reconstruction of a shattered world. If the world including the members of The Theosophical Society

had understood Their great message of Brotherhood, it would have been a good deal reconstructed by now, and there would have been no chance or reason for this war. But many of us have not yet realized the purpose of the Theosophical movement. Many of us still feel that The Theosophical Society is for leading a few devoted thinkers to occult study and to some kind of spiritual ladder. Occult study and spiritual power, some kind of measurement for one's own growth, are still hunger and thirst for many of us. What The Society stands for in the minds of the Masters can be easily seen clearly if we read and study Their words carefully. In 1880, Master K. H. wrote over and over again to Mr. Sinnett about this; I quote a few lines from His letters:

(1) You must be aware that the chief object of the T.S. is not so much to gratify individual aspiration as to serve our fellow-men. Yet you have ever discussed but to put down the idea of a universal Brotherhood, questioned its usefulness, and advised to remodel the T.S. on the principle of a college for the special study of occultism. This, my respected and esteemed friend and Brother, will never do.

(2) The term "Universal" Brotherhood is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us, as I tried to explain in my letter to Mr. Hume. It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble

one for mankind, and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.

Sixty-five years have rolled away, and instead of a reconstructed happy, healthy, peaceful world, there is chaos and a terrible war. The Brothers of the Inner Government—the Brothers of Light—naturally must work harder to save the world from destruction by the powers of darkness. In one of the letters of Master K. H., there is a statement which should open our eyes widely, in these days specially :

I may tell you in confidence that Russia is gradually massing her forces for a future invasion of that country under the pretext of a Chinese War. If she does not succeed, it will be due to us.

It is clear that China is under the protection of those Great Ones who are Brothers of the Inner Government and the Founders of The Theosophical Society.

BROTHERHOOD

Thus the role of The Theosophical Society is very clear. Either we follow Them or we do not. Hitherto the world has failed in maintaining its level of Brotherhood, and many of us have failed in playing our role as members of Their Society. As I have said, many of us have been attracted to our own inner development, our personal growth, measuring our own spiritual high jump.

The tragedy of the world has been its unbrotherliness, its unsociability, its selfishness. The weakness of many of us has been our self-centredness. Thus the world has missed its opportunities of reconstruction, and the role of The Theosophical Society has been left unfulfilled. Shall we begin it over again? If we do so choose and decide, as we must, let us first consider how the world was led astray. What was there in the world a few centuries ago when as a whole it was happy? There was food for all even though it may be just enough, clothes and comforts for all. Notwithstanding wars and ambitions of kings to conquer more kingdoms and land, all round the world people were healthier and more content and happy. Each had a family house or hut. Each worked hard, had at least two square meals a day, milk and clothes. Each lived without much anxiety or care for the next day. Each sang, played, looked happy and was cared for. Why?

Because there was practised Brotherhood. And now it is not practised. The Theosophical Society has to play that role of re-establishing Brotherhood in the world. The world-war evidently will make it easier than ever before to change and enable mankind to realize Brotherhood. It is this war which taught Marshal Petain to feel that it was too many pleasures and not

enough service, too many demands and not enough sacrifice, which led his great nation to fail. Now The Theosophical Society gives entire Freedom to its members to form their individual ideals and to act, but the members are undoubtedly pledged to Brotherhood. And this Universal Brotherhood includes the ideals of France, those divine principles of Fraternity, Equality, Liberty, without which there can be no end to wars, no reconstruction, no new social order.

THROUGH WISDOM OR WAR

We must learn these lessons through war which we could not learn through Wisdom. I do wonder if we, the citizens of India, will learn these lessons until and unless war comes right into our own country. I often wonder if these lessons will be learnt by British merchants and officers who are far away from the battle-fields. If India our country joins the war whole-heartedly, it will undoubtedly gain the glorious privilege of attaining more knowledge and happiness through reconstruction. In the Commonwealth of the Empire or the Federation of Nations, it will have its direct share and right. By showing goodwill and standing shoulder to shoulder with Britain, our country can become right now a link in the Empire or Federation of Nations. One can see the wisdom and mercy of the Great Ones in

bringing Britain and our country nearer, about 200 years ago.

Thirty-one years ago, our revered late President Dr. Besant gave a series of lectures in London, called *The Changing World*. She implored the world to understand the changing human society, its needs and rights, its duties and obligations as citizens. She pictured the destruction through war if we did not learn by Wisdom. The destruction came five years later with the great war of 1914-18. After the end of the war she continued to labour harder and harder to teach mankind to build human society on the rocks of Fraternity, Equality and Liberty. She used up her entire strength of a true Yogini to urge us to be pioneers, servers of humanity, and to use the master-keys of Religion, Education and Economics to unlock the Divine Treasury of Brotherhood.

In 1924, when she delivered in London another series of lectures, *Civilization's Deadlocks and the Keys*, Dr. Besant urged Britain not to build the new world on the ruins of the old. She urged the British nation to take advantage of victory, to give a lead to the world by giving Self-Government to India; to handle with wisdom and love the German youth in whom she saw great potentialities, if rightly directed, and to establish a great international Youth Movement. Failing this she saw the coming of another

and greater war. How far-sighted she was. But her mission was not at all understood. It was not to be.

The new civilization was attempted to be built on the ruins of the old. The same imperialism, capitalism, class-distinction, unsociableness continued. British youth were left, in the name of democracy, to more pleasures in various directions. India was still kept in the grip of autocracy. German youth fell into the iron-grip of an unbalanced dictator and his group of intoxicated friends. Thus the mission of Brotherhood failed, and we are amidst a greater war of destruction. Today the same picture is before us with greater darkness. But the master-keys of her Wisdom treasury are still available if we even now choose to use them.

Let Brotherhood be our keynote from now and onward. India's mighty past and Britain's mighty present, so beautifully earned by great sacrifice, can build a new human society of true Brotherhood.

The lessons learnt of common living without distinction of class and creed on the battle-fields, on the seas and in the air, by the armies, navies and air forces of Britain, the Dominions and India, and by the civil population of Britain day and night in factories and in air-raid protection shelters, will help, will make it easier to abolish class distinction, to bring about a new social

order—a new order of true socialism.

THE NEW ECONOMICS

The role of The Theosophical Society lies there. The new economics has to be learnt, and let the members of The Society be the first to serve in that direction. The new economics is not charity, patronage, goodness, kindness, or compassion. The new economics is Brotherhood, acknowledging the rights of a weaker member of the world-family, be that a nation, a community, a group or an individual. It has to be brought into existence, not by giving opportunities or allowing or helping violence such as struggles between capital and labour, between classes and creeds, between communities and groups, but by willing sacrifices and by voluntary level-minded and large-hearted legislature, the passing of necessary Acts, etc.

It must begin with the acknowledgment of the rights of peasants on the land and of factory workers on the profits of industries. They form practically 90 per cent of the world's population. We cannot go back to the ages when no machinery existed. Machinery will have its place, perhaps a greater place and more place in the new civilization, and the only way of the new civilization or reconstruction of the world will be to see that we accept the labourer, the hardest

manual worker, the mechanics and scientists who work with brains, and the director who finances and builds up industries, on the basis of joint partnership, every individual of each class drawing enough, weekly, to live and maintain his family comfortably, and then each individual also sharing the profit equitably, yearly. For the peasants we shall have to go back to systems of medieval ages when villages existed and worked on the plan of mutual aid. The land belonged not to any individuals, nor to the state, but to the village. The village contributed to the state by building a portion of the common trunk roads, by taking up the responsibilities of its own schools, its own medical relief aids, administering justice, settling disputes, dividing produce, giving mutual aid to the sick, crippled and old. None then starved or suffered from poverty and each was protected. All over the world, in all nations, some such system existed.

But land was robbed from the villagers, and slowly and surely a class of landlords came into existence, who then became the city builders, legislators, law-makers, and completely routed the village life. This brought misery, ruination, poverty. Then the state became the over-lord and took up the protection, administration of justice, education, medical aid, road-building, and mutual aid was

displaced by heavy state taxations which made the villagers more poor. This widened the class distinctions further. Our own country has produced the classes of Zamindars and Jagirdars since the seventeenth century.

This destruction of the village land system and of mutual aid is the vital cause of discontent. It created communal and class feelings, feelings of revolution and even wars.

The role of The Theosophical Society will be to proclaim this truth, teaching its members to live with the villagers, work for the mutual aid of peasantry, their rights, work for the partnership of labour; at the same time we must live that life of mutual aid and partnership as peasants and labourers and workers, even if some of us are now landlords, directors, proprietors, financiers, or brains of industry and commerce.

In whatever field of life, we have to be pledged to this Brotherhood—this socialism. All of us must learn to contribute our power, physical, mental and moral, to the common good, thus forming a true community.

I do not call our society of today a Human Society. It is a society of struggle, of combat, of man against man, of class against class, a social anarchy rather than social union, and society should surely be a union built by brains that understand the causes

of Poverty and so can deal with its effects, and of hearts that will never be satisfied until they see all around them sharing in the possibilities of happiness, which now are restricted too much to the few.

PIONEERS OF CO-OPERATION

Next to bringing back the mutual aid of peasantry and the partnership of workers and financiers, our attention has to be devoted to eliminate competition and replace it by co-operation. Competition leads to over-production and mismanaged distribution. This ideal of competition created the foolish and selfish theory of self-sufficient nations and countries. This competition has created wretched tariff walls. Nations have built armies, navies and air bombers, to protect their own commerce and industries and we see wars of destruction.

The role of The Theosophical Society in the building of a new world will be to become pioneers of co-operation in all walks of life. If the members belong to legislatures, business, industries, or have any influence, they will try to give a hard blow to the ideals of self-sufficient nations and communities and to work hard against tariff walls, boundaries and business limits.

Hitler's new social order aimed at self-sufficiency. In order to eliminate competition, he did not seek co-operation; in order to break tariff walls, he did not seek

for a world-federation of nations. He sought for a greater self-sufficient Germany which could overlord the world with power and production and demand its own price.

Mutual aid of peasantry, elimination of competition and replacing it by co-operation, partnership of workers and financiers, will automatically solve the greatest and hardest problem of distribution. There will be distribution of wealth and distribution of goods, prices will be normal, manufacturers will be able to make and people will be able to buy at cheapest rates. The hunger of speculation and the desire to become very rich by robbing another rival nation, community or individual will eliminate themselves.

But even with all these, class distinctions will remain if we do not turn to ways of simple living. Our ideals and tastes of a life of pleasure and comfort will have to be considerably changed.

Here, again, the role of The Theosophical Society will be to preach and its members will have to set practical examples. Even with means at their command, it will be excellent to live with peasants, with workers, and work for them and serve them. The Theosophical Society and its members will play their true part if the life of a missionary is truly lived, amongst those who need us.

FRATERNITY LINKS

Next to Equality comes Fraternity. Fraternity is deeply connected with education and all progressive movements in which the young are specially interested. Here The Theosophical Society can play a definite role. Exclusiveness for one's own progress should be given up, and members of The Society should join all progressive and humanitarian movements, encouraging youths, to mingle with them and break all bonds of separation, of classes, creeds and communities. Theosophists have to be links between old and young, past and present, and bring about true fraternity. For this, we need Theosophist teachers to teach the young. Our lessons in history, geography, all our text-books, will need considerable changing. With the background of Theosophy, one can be an ideal teacher and can be progressive in instituting such educational reforms.

This will need research work in mental laboratories. Theosophists with the background of knowledge given by the Masters of Wisdom can be very useful for establishing fraternity in the fields of education, social work, agriculture, business, industry and administration of state. With ideals of service, we can strengthen all groups and societies. Our path being "the Middle Path" as taught by Great Saviours, we can be helpful to every family,

group, community or nation by not allowing matters to go to extremes and to be overbalanced.

THE WORLD'S FREEDOM

Friends, we now come to our role in the work for Liberty.

In all ages, the Brothers of the Inner Government have thought liberation of and for humanity and all creation as a vital need and The Theosophical Society cannot ignore this important work.

When we have seen Dr. Besant and when we see now our dear President Dr. Arundale working away single-handed, hard and laboriously, giving up almost everything in preference to work for the liberty of nations, the liberty of India, the liberty of individuals, we cannot but bow down in reverence and gratitude to them.

The signal to the member of The Theosophical Society is here "Line Clear": the green signal, not to stop but to go onward on the straight railroad, not to run on unconstitutional lines, not to break the laws of the road, but to go forward steadily to the destination of freedom.

I well remember one day with Dr. Besant in Calcutta. It was December 30th, I believe in the year 1928. She was to reach Benares to be in time even for the last one day, at the International Theosophical Convention. Every one was looking forward to her coming. But

an important meeting of the Indian leaders was fixed on that day in Calcutta. She decided not to leave for Benares. I was with her when she finally decided. Oh you could see in her eyes that deep compassion, urge and longing for our country's freedom! I looked at her thinking how every one at Benares would be disappointed. Perhaps she read my thought. She gently placed her hand on my shoulder—it was a blessed touch—and said: "In India's freedom the world will be free." As one devoted to her, I bowed down to her reverently, but I could only understand this great truth lately, after 1st September 1940.

There lies the true role of The Theosophical Society. For India's freedom, for the world's freedom, our path is clear. Our present obligation is to throw our heart and soul into the work of winning the war, to free the world from further destruction, to demand the freedom of our country and of every country, and then live in true democracy, in true Brotherhood.

OUR WEAKER BRETHREN

Friends, the ideal of Brotherhood necessarily includes our weaker brethren—those who are poor, ill, suffering, lepers, insane, cripples; and also our younger brethren—animals, birds, fishes. The cries of pain of the poor, crippled, insane, netted fishes cannot

but throw the world into continued and periodical hysterics, and unbalanced conditions such as wars. In our own country, 45 cities slaughtered 533,000 cattle in the year 1937 for daily food. Add to this the number of chickens, birds, fishes. Stretch your imagination to this terrible destruction of life—and all for our satisfaction. Medical authorities now widely and clearly proclaim that meat is not a necessity. . . They say firmly that there is greater health in vegetable food and dairy products.

Here The Theosophical Society has to play an important role. We can guide and help in newer methods of living healthy and natural lives without meat or flesh of any kind. We must vigorously proclaim this truth to the world. This will save the world from terrible Karma. Then only wars can cease. The cattle, birds and fish saved will add a greater treasure to the world than the yearly production of gold, precious metals and gems. When we destroy cattle, birds, fish, we are destroying a great economic value and force in the world.

TRUTH AND LOVE

Friends, you will question why I have not spoken a word about ethics or religion. The motto of The Theosophical Society is: "There is no religion higher than Truth." Our President-Mother added a line: "There is no power

greater than Love." Brotherhood—fraternity, liberty, equality—cannot exist without Truth or Love and all through this evening, our thoughts have been on subjects of Truth and Love which are the bases of highest and truest Religion.

There may be some who think that in a life of simplicity and mutual aid there will be no room for art, beauty, music and such higher conceptions of creative life. But the history of all countries tells us that all these developments of creative life have always been enriched whenever people of each respective nation turned to constructive socialism and mutual aid.

Prince Peter Kropotkin in one of his books has given facts and figures from the histories of almost all the nations to prove this fact. I quote two passages from his writing:

(1) But we see also that the practice of mutual aid to successive developments has created the very conditions of society life in which man was enabled to develop his arts, knowledge and intelligence, and that the periods when institutions based on the mutual aid tendency took their greatest development were also the periods of the greatest progress in arts, industry and science.

(2) Even the new religions which were born from time to time were at epochs when the mutual aid principle was falling into decay in the theocracies and despotic estates of the East, or the decline of the Roman Empire . . . They found the first supporters

among the humble, in the lowest down-trodden layers of society . . . the mutual aid principles is the necessary foundation of everyday life.

Friends, let me humbly submit in the end that the role of The Theosophical Society now is to take the message of Brotherhood, of mutual aid to the humble, in the lowest and down-trodden layers of society; preaching and practising brotherhood, to raise the lowly and bring down those who have been growing rich or powerful by robbing or exploiting the blood-sweat of humble peasantry and workmen; to lead both to a middle path of constructive socialism and mutual aid; by taking part in all progressive movements which work for equality, fraternity and liberty, by preaching the truth of the One Life in all, strong, weak, rich, poor, animals, birds, fishes, to raise the level of humanity's thought to a level of true Brotherhood and Religion.

All these preparations once set in motion, we may well hope that the Great Healer and Inspirer will deem it fit to begin His Great Work of Regeneration and train the world in the arts of peace and progress, raising Humanity to higher levels than ever before on the Path of Service and Sacrifice. We hope and pray that there may set in an era of creative constructive co-operation based on and guided over by the principles of Brotherliness and Brotherhood.

RUKMINI DEVI

BY G. VENKATACHALAM¹

The impression which Rukmini Devi's dancing made at Bangalore was expressed by Sir C. V. Raman, the scientist: "Some of you, I hope for your sakes all of you, must have been thrilled yesterday evening by what I can only characterize as the heights of Indra's heaven, brought from the Himalayas and put down on to this platform by the dance recital of S'rīmati Rukmini Devi."

IS genius a matter of heredity, or is it the "art of taking infinite pains"? Is art spontaneous creation, or is it laboured achievement? Is art free and unfettered, or is it one of design and discipline? Is there conscious effort and deliberate planning behind any great work of art, or is it the unconscious and effortless expression of a tremendous creative mood?

The experts, of course, have their own theories and conclusions, all arbitrary, assertive and authoritative. There are as many defini-

tions of art as there are critics who have attempted to define or interpret it.

There are the critics who interpret art in terms of environment and movements of matter, without reference to any life influx at all. And there are those who see no inspiration or spontaneity in art creation but only human forethought and planning, like building a house or framing a constitution. The truth, however, seems to lie somewhere between these two opposing views; and the life and work of all great artists tend to confirm this.

The art of dance in India, as evolved and elaborated in this ancient land and codified in that classic, *Bhārata Nāṭya Śāstra*, is a very complicated science, with a history as old as Hindu civilization itself, with a technique as rich and varied as the races that inhabit the land, and with a vitality as perennial as the culture that gave birth to it.

¹ "Rukmini Devi is a perfect genius," was Mr. Venkatachalam's appreciative comment after her second dance recital at Bangalore (where he lives) on June 30. He was induced to write his enthusiasm down on paper, hence this article. Mr. Venkatachalam is a writer on Indian art, and included a charming monograph on Rukmini Devi in his book, *Daughters of the Dawn*. Rukmini Devi's two recitals in June were on behalf of Kalākṣetrā, of which she is the president; she gave another recital in Bangalore on July 21 in aid of the Mysore war effort. Like the others, it was a brilliant success, and among the audience were His Highness the then Yuvaraja of Mysore (who has since succeeded to the Throne), the Dewan of Mysore (Sir Mirza Ismail), Sir C. V. Raman, eminent scientist, and other distinguished citizens.

(A portion of Mr. Venkatachalam's article appeared in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, Bombay, of August 11.)

Bhārata Nāṭya is not the inspired work of any single individual or a group of individuals, but is the heritage of the race. It is like any one of the mighty things for which India is rightly famous, like the Himalayas, like the Upanishads, like the South Indian bronzes. It is a stylized art, like the Russian ballet or the Rajput miniature, and an art of the connoisseur.

In this great art there is as much designing, planning and forethought as there are unfettered rhythmic movements and spontaneous expressions. There is as much scope, within its rigid codified rules, for individual uniqueness and self-expression as it is possible to imagine. It is an art where the artiste does not get lost or crushed, but where the dancer finds fresh inspiration, new discoveries and limitless possibilities. It is a world in itself, a world of rhythm, where there is much unsuspected beauty of design and composition.

Bhārata Nāṭya, as preserved and practised in South India, is most unquestionably the classical dance art of ancient India. Only the South has been able to retain its pristine purity and its primary forms unsullied by any outer influences. Like Carnatic music, it is a vast store-house of art-idioms, and no dancer, however great or original he or she may be, can really exhaust its rich beauty.

Among its living exponents and interpreters Śrīmatī Rukmini Devi easily stands supreme, and her art is unique in that it is extremely refined and definitely spiritual. Bhārata Nāṭya, in its popular aspect as *Dāsi Attam*, has long been held as an erotic art, and was taught as such to young *devadāsīs* by its hereditary exponents. Even born dancers like the late Jeevaratnam and Varalakshi, and its best living exponent today, Balasaraswati, have not revealed the splendour of its sensitive æsthetic qualities as Rukmini Devi does.

Rukmini Devi is a genius. Her cultural heritage is immense, and she has had an ideal environment for the full flowering of her soul. Genius though she is, she has had to work hard, like any other aspirant, to master the technique of the art, and learn for years before she could master the complicated bodily movements and intricate footsteps with appropriate gestures and facial expressions.

Inspiration is all right, creative imagination is necessary, but the artiste needs technique, medium and form through which to express her individuality, and this means hard honest work and not fanciful hops and fantastic gyrations of the limbs and hips attributed to the moods of the moment. There is inspiration in art, spontaneity in expression, but they do not express themselves in the ridiculous way

claimed by some of the so-called dancers.

To see Rukmini Devi dance is to see an inspired artiste at work. Her art is her own and an expression of her soul. Her technique is flawless. Taught by the greatest teacher of the Bhārata Nāṭya in South India, Pandanallur Meenakshisundaram Pillay, she has had the best of training.

Her gift for *abhinaya* is matchless. It captivates one so completely that you can watch her spell-bound for hours. She weaves a magic world with her gestures, and transports you into the very heart of it until life becomes an endless dream of beauty—where all emotions soften into deep ecstasy, and every passion, drained of its dross, burgeons into a song of loveliness.

There are moments in her dancing when she is almost ethereal, but such moments, even in her case, are rare, and it is possible that she herself may be unconscious of it. She is then like an uncaught flame, burning with a bright lustre, almost too beautiful to be real.

When she is in one of those rhythmic moods, where she loses herself in her dance, it is difficult to gauge at times how much of hers is body and how much soul. It is one of those rare moments of ecstasy when soul and body blend themselves subtly and exquisitely to be a perfect expression of life.

She lives then in a world of her own, a world all too rare even in an artiste's life.

Her slightest step then suggests graceful motion, and there is poise in her pose and speed in her actions. One had not realized till then that a human body could effect such a rich variety of striking attitudes and graceful flexions; and even the seemingly impossible poses that one sees and studies in Indian sculpture, become a possibility. And Rukmini Devi's pose of Natarāja is about the nearest possible to that wonderful original in bronze, that immortal creation which has ravished the hearts of art lovers the world over.

"Rukmini Devi is the most fascinating personality I've ever seen on the stage," remarked an artist-friend, himself a widely travelled man. She is an uncommon type of beauty, whether off or on the stage. Everything about and around her is elegant and artistic. Her costumes, designed by herself, are the delightful creations of one who understands the value of line and colour and who knows how to combine them to produce the most pleasing effects. Her jewels are real gems and are as rich and radiant as her art.

On the stage she is like a dream come true, a vision materialized. Her face becomes like a magic mirror on which subtle passions and emotions play an endless "hide

and seek," as she portrays the *navarasas* of her art, while her nimble feet dance with joyful cadence and her lithe body moves and sways gently and softly like the ruffled surface of a calm mountain lake. "Burning Eyes" describe her physical personality as "Dancing Flame" suggests her genius.

Rukmini Devi's art cannot be described. To attempt it would be like trying to trace the ecstasy of spring-time or the joy of the dawn.

It has to be seen to be experienced. I should like the great wide world, which has not seen, to see it. Rukmini Devi brings to us something of that ancient greatness of our forefathers, a breath of India's real spirit. She is the daughter of Today who has captured and for ever made her own the luminous gifts of Yesterday. She not only makes us re-live the age gone by but she stirs us to create the age to come. Therefore, I salute her!

AT THE END OF A TOUR

Rukmini Devi touched the summit of her profession as a dancer in Benares Amphitheatre last evening (25 December 1940). It was a triumphant climax to her North Indian tour. Whether inspired by the atmosphere of holy Kashi, or the natural Theosophical environment, or the Jyoti Temple background, or by all these influences together, she excelled, it seems to us, all her previous performances both as to the quality of her technique, her grace and beauty of movement, and the depth of spiritual understanding in her interpretations. There is a subtle something which is unique to Rukmini Devi, a spiritual quality which she brings down from higher levels and radiates throughout her audience, and it is this quality which singles her out among the dancers of India, and in all probability among the dancers in all countries. The genius of the Lord Natarāja is alive in her, more literally perhaps than we imagine, and His life, His power, His cosmic rhythm, vibrate through her so that we see Him in our mind's eye dancing before us.

—From the "Benares Convention Daily," No. 2.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE 1940-41 CONVENTION

BY HELEN VEALE

THE Jubilee Convention at Benares was triumphantly successful; a beacon of Brotherhood in a fratricidal world, of Unity in an India torn by political and religious dissensions. Despite the wintry cold, certainly severe for delegates coming from warmer parts of the land, happiness and good-humour radiated from every face. For the first time, I think, in the history of Indian Conventions, all sat together to enjoy the excellent food, prepared by the lady residents of Sectional Headquarters, and served by teachers and girls of the Vasanta College. Delegates who had not recently visited Benares thrilled to see the many improvements there, wrought mostly by our wonderful General Secretary, Mr. G. N. Gokhale; as the terraces on both sides of the Hall, and the Bhārata Samāj Temple, so aptly placed at the head of the old tank (now filled in for an amphitheatre) that it seems as if it must always have been part of its scheme. The well-kept gardens are gay with flaming poinsettias and rich chrysanthemums, and India Lawn along Headquarters Hall bears its name on its surface

in an ingenious device, the map being outlined on it in lines of brick, a marble seat correctly marking the position of the Masters' Himalayan home. The Indian Bookshop has now a most attractive front, blazing with electric lights to welcome chilly strollers in the dusk. The spirit that breathed over the Convention was truly one of pure happiness, exemplified by the number of laughing children encountered everywhere. Many of the little folk were present, but I can remember no infantile wails interrupting the proceedings at any meeting; that in itself a record! The servants too in Benares are friends, grown grey in service from old times, from Laxman and Baghelu, still proud to serve the President at Shanti Kunj, to Chhotu at Headquarters, Gola at the Girls' College, and many others whose names evade the memory though their faces are familiar.

We were happy to have with us our three leaders; not only the President and Rukmini Devi, but also Mr. Jinarājādāsa, who arrived just in time to bear his part—a very notable one—of the burden of directing the Convention. He

was up and about continuously, from the coldest hours of early morning, dispensing his serene cheerfulness, and gave two magnificent Convention Lectures, on a future World Commonwealth and on Plato's Philosophy respectively, besides many addresses to smaller groups; he was a tower of quiet strength. Rukmini drew all eyes and hearts, most conspicuously in her Dance Recital, interpreting the eternal spirit of holy India, but also in her lectures and talks, her simplicity and sincerity of language. The President gave freely of his inimitable humour and encouragement to every gathering over which he presided; opened and closed the International Convention with noble words inspiring confidence in the Masters, and in the work and destiny of Their Society during these days of crucifixions; and in the Indian Section Lecture revealed his dream of the India that shall be—that India which he serves not only in dreams, but continually labours and yearns to hasten to fulfilment.

Over the Indian Section presided S'rī Hirendranath Datta, a reverend exponent of gentle wisdom, who also gave one of the series of lectures, distinguishing true from false Yoga. Ideas of Peace and Reconstruction found expression in a Symposium, in which Brothers Kanga and N. Sri Ram took part with Rukmini Devi, and in a fine lecture

by Mr. Jamshed Nusserwanjee; and Mr. G. N. Gokhale gave a very interesting account of the "How, Whence and Whither" of Theosophy in India, dating its foundation far earlier than the days of H.P.B. and Col. Olcott. He referred *inter alia* to the presence among us of former beloved and eminent General Secretaries, as S'rī Upendranath Basu, Dr. Bhagavan Das and Pandit Iqbal Narain Gurtu, as well as Dr. Arundale himself, who had once held that onerous office.

The Bhārata Samāj Puja in the new Temple was well attended each morning at 6.45, to open the day, which closed each evening with an entertainment in the Pandal, audiences being in every case numerous and appreciative, whether entertained by students of Vasanta College, young children of the Besant Theosophical School, or more sophisticated amateurs of the Art Circle. "And so to bed!" as old Pepys was fond of remarking in his famous Diary. Seeking a snug nest in the midst of all available wraps and rugs, one congratulated oneself on being at Benares, steeped in the influence of our late President-Mother and her associates, where if anywhere one could recapture something of the "first fine, careless rapture" of earlier and less troublous days. Has our enthusiasm helped to light a fire at which the cold world may warm itself and find comfort? God grant it!

THE FOUR CARDINAL POINTS OF TRUTH

BY C. JINARAJADASA

(An Address to Theosophists in Java, November 1940)

WE men are akin to the animals in one respect, for, like them, we have to struggle for our livelihood, we suffer illnesses and accidents, and we die. But we are different from the animals in this, that we do not suffer dumbly, for we ask: "Why do we suffer?"

An answer to this question is offered by the religions. Some religions say that it is the Will of Allah, God, Brahman, and so on. But others, like Buddhism, say that the solution is in a great Law called Dharma. Modern science answers: "There is no understandable reason, it is all chance."

Theosophy brings to a synthesis the best in all these solutions. But Theosophy adds a new truth; it is that the solution which we seek is within ourselves. Theosophy says that, however much we feel helpless, however much we seem to be surrounded by darkness, yet truth resides in ourselves, and that its light can be found in our intuitions, if we look rightly.

Truth is within ourselves; how are we to find it? In many ways;

no one way alone is enough. What are the ways?

They are: (1) To examine the world in which we live, in other words, to understand what are the laws of matter;

(2) To examine the world of our heart and mind, in other words, the laws of the spirit;

(3) Meditation on what we discover;

(4) Action in every possible way of charity to relieve the distress of others, and to abolish the darkness and ignorance of the world.

THE LAWS OF MATTER

Regarding the first, to examine the laws of matter, we have today a great body of facts which we call modern science. Science today is composed of two elements, first, the facts which have been carefully gathered by the scientists; and secondly, the theories of the professors concerning those facts. We advise you in Theosophy to study the first, the facts which no one can challenge. But about the second, we advise you not to believe blindly

what a scientist says, any more than believe blindly what a priest says. We urge you to examine all possible explanations of facts, especially the Theosophical explanation, which is found in our literature.

I cannot describe at length what is this explanation; but, very briefly, it says that (a) God exists; He has made this universe, and He directs its operations all the time;

(b) Everything is God; nothing can exist outside of God; therefore what we call "matter" also contains within it something of the Power and Consciousness of God;

(c) God's Will expresses itself everywhere as Law; the laws of electricity and chemistry are expression of God's Will; but also all that is true and permanent in what we call "Ethics and Religious Law" is an expression of that same Will;

(d) The Soul of Man is always linked to God, because it is God's part of Himself in us which distinguishes us as immortal Souls from the bodies in which we live for a while and which die;

(e) God's Will for man is that man shall make himself perfect—that is, that man shall become perfectly wise, perfectly loving all, and become at all times a co-operator with God's Will; this requires not one life on earth, but many lives; God arranges for the soul of man to return to earth as many times as are necessary to make him perfect;

(f) And lastly, God is always at work, to change the world from what it is now to something better; He works throughout the ages, with a Plan, to make this world a place where there shall be no ignorance, no poverty, no disease, no wars, a world where all shall live as brothers, working together in friendship to create and maintain a happy world for all men.

In the light of these explanations of Theosophy, examine for yourself the world in which you live; see whether Theosophy explains it better than any other system of thought. If it does, become a Theosophist, and tell everybody that you have found the truth; if Theosophy does not explain, then go on seeking in every possible place for the solution.

THE LAWS OF THE SPIRIT

But it is also necessary that you should understand what you are. Each of us is a kind of a trinity of an animal, a human being, and an angel. Why is there in us both good and evil? Why, when I want to do only what is good and noble, do I fail? Why do I so often do what I really do not want to do?

One of the greatest mysteries in life is the nature of man. You will find many philosophies trying to explain it; among them is Theosophy. As you study Theosophy, you will be told that you are an immortal soul, and have within you

the nature of God. But you live in a physical body, made of the matter you see and touch; in an astral body, of invisible matter; in a mental body and a causal body, of still finer matter. You, as the undying soul, live on from age to age; your work is to discover the perfection and beauty of God's nature in you. For this, you must live on earth, and work with other souls like you.

Unfortunately, in the beginning we make many mistakes, like a child beginning to write for the first time. Instead of being kind all the time, we are sometimes cruel. Little by little, we sow many evil thoughts, feelings and deeds. Sometimes we reap at once the harvest of our bad sowing, in pain. Sometimes the pain is delayed. But each individual reaps as he has sown, and there is no escape from the operation of this law.

In this process of discovering the nature of God in us, we are born many times; sometimes as a man, sometimes as a woman; but never as an animal; sometimes poor, sometimes rich; sometimes in a healthy and strong body, sometimes weak from birth, and perhaps also crippled. It is all the harvest of bad sowing in past lives which we do not now remember.

You must, little by little, understand the *why* of the good and the evil in you, the *why* of the good in the friend whom you love, and

the *why* of the evil in the man who is your enemy. You must gather the facts as to the mysterious nature of man, in order to understand yourself, your friend and your enemy.

MEDITATION FOR UNDERSTANDING

You will begin to understand as you begin to meditate about the world and yourself. There are many teachers to give you their explanations; reverence the teacher, examine his teaching, but do not accept it until you have meditated long over the teachings. This work must be done by yourself; no one else can make it easier for you.

Regarding meditation, it is not necessary to develop psychic powers through Yoga. Psychic powers will show you a larger world than this visible work. But will you understand what you see? A man can see only a certain distance clearly with his eyes; objects far away are confused and vague. If he has a powerful opera-glass he can see more. But because he sees more, he does not necessarily understand more. So it is with psychism. It is what you are that matters, not your psychic faculties. Meditation is a process of the mind and the intuition in order to understand; psychic powers may help you, if you have an able Guru to teach you the meaning of each psychic experience; if you have not such a Guru—and there are very

few such in the world today—you will create much pain and disappointment to yourself by trying to develop psychic powers.

PRACTICAL BROTHERHOOD

But all your attempts to understand the mystery of God, the world, and the men and women round you is closely connected with the problem of charity. Every religion teaches that a good man must help others. Theosophy insists on this teaching, by proclaiming that all men must realize that they are brothers, and that therefore they must act as brothers and not as rivals.

Often religious people think that, if they give money in charity to help distressed men and women, or to build a church or temple or mosque, they have done all that God expects of them. Charity is always meritorious, and he who acts charitably will reap a harvest of happiness. But he will not come nearer to God, because of such a kind of charity.

What brings us nearer to God is the charity of the heart, not of the hand merely. As we give to others loving thoughts, as we give to all—men, women, children, animals and plants—tenderness and service, we come nearer to God. And the

proof of it is this: that our hearts have more peace; that every man, even our enemy, has some message to us of goodness and truth; and that we are drawn more to children, and discover in them mirrors of spiritual truths.

This is the kind of life which Theosophy expects you to live as a Theosophist. The result of all your study must be a greater determination in you to serve your fellow-men.

Wherever you are, if you are a true Theosophist, you must work with others, if they will come to work with you, if not, then alone, to diminish ignorance, disease, exploitation of the poor and the weak, and all that means cruelty towards animals. The Theosophical Society was organized 65 years ago to bring together men and women of every race and religion to work towards building a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. That glorious end is still far away. Nevertheless that goal is God's Plan. He wants each of us now as His helper. The message which Theosophy has for you can be summed up in this question: "Will you help God to build a perfect world for His children?"

It is for you alone to answer; no one else can give your answer.

THE ESSENTIAL NOTE OF THEOSOPHY¹

BY GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

I WANT to talk this evening on Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, and I want to sound that note which is the fundamental note of Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, namely, a return to the essential simplicities of life. While we are constantly saying that Theosophy is the Science of Happiness, it is no less the Science of Simplicity.

THEOSOPHY SIMPLIFIES

I venture to say without fear of contradiction that the word of the new age in the new world is that Life is Simple. Theosophy reveals the way to a recognition of that simplicity and how that simplicity may be lived.

It has been said by a great Teacher that "men walk in their own shadows and cry out that it is dark." That is profoundly true. Every one who feels darkness round about him is in truth walking in his own shadow, or in numerous shadows, and so he feels a darkness which very largely is self-made.

I would say, and I think it would be no less true to say it, that men

walk in their self-created complexities and cry out that life is unfathomable. We make life so complicated in all its everyday relationships. With us life is so difficult, as we think, that, of course, it becomes comparatively unfathomable and we do not understand it. We grope about to try to find that understanding.

The message of Theosophy is that life is not unfathomable, that life is not complex, that life is simple. And the more you study and understand Theosophy, the simpler does life in fact become. I am afraid that too often religions and philosophies and sciences lead us into immeasurable permutations and combinations of that Science of Living in the midst of which we so often feel ourselves lost. They lead us into perhaps some sense of wonder and some sense of awe, but not to a sense of our own essential Divinity, to a realization of the fact that we may well wonder at ourselves, we may well regard ourselves with awe.

Theosophy holds the simplicities of life before our eyes and calls to us to tread the Way of Simplicity which leads each one of us straight

¹ An address delivered in Bombay, 17 November 1940.

without deviation to his own individual mountain's summit.

If you find life complicated instead of simple, try to realize that you have not understood Theosophy, that you have not studied Theosophy, that you have not experienced Theosophy, that you have not put Theosophy into practice, for there is not the slightest doubt in the minds of most of us that Theosophy solves every problem, personal and impersonal, which may come within the purview of any of us.

So far as I am concerned, while I recognize the existence of darkness round about us, it is obviously a darkness which the world has made for itself. While I recognize the existence of this darkness, it is not a darkness for me. I see the light. So far as I am concerned, I see the solution of the various problems which are in our midst and which seem to make our way so difficult. So far as I am personally concerned, whether or not I am solving my own problems or overcoming them, I know their solution. I may not necessarily grasp it, but I know it because of my study of Theosophy, and because of my experimentation in the Science of Theosophy. For me life is easy. I may sometimes cause it to be complicated, because I do not take the Path of Simplicity. But I am prepared to say that I think that for me life is easier than for many

others, not because I am in any way a great person who has risen above all the complexities of life, but because I know my Theosophy and because the light of my Theosophy shines upon my way. I am perfectly certain that that can be true of every Theosophist and perhaps is true of many Theosophists.

LIFE'S SIMPLICITIES

Now I will repeat to you what I regard as Life's Simplicities, unveiled in all their simplicity by Theosophy. They are so simple that there is no real need to discuss them. I think they are abundantly obvious.

The first simplicity is the existence of life. I do not think anyone, unless he is a philosopher gone wrong, will challenge the existence of life. *Life Is*. I think we can take that for granted.

Perhaps the second is not quite so crystal-clear: *Life is One*. There is a unity of life. Through the study of Theosophy most Theosophists are well aware that life is one.

The Theosophist at least, I think, will accept the third simplicity, namely, that *Life is Universal*. Life is everywhere. We make no distinction between the organic and inorganic. We do not say that this is dead and that is alive. We say that everywhere there is life. Hence the third simplicity that life is universal.

Now are we getting beyond the limits of simplicity crystal-clear when we come to the fourth simplicity which, so far as I am concerned, is one of the most magnificent and the clearest of them all, namely, that *Life is Individual*. Life is composed of individualities, little "I's," little "ones" within that great ONE which is composed of innumerable ones. Each one of us is a one, is an "I," so that within the tremendous UNITY there are unities. Each one is a unity. This simplicity is wonderful and awe-inspiring, for there is no essential distinction between the Macrocosmic UNITY of the Universe and the microcosmic unity of the tiniest organism of which we can have conception. Life is composed of individualities. It is individual.

Our third simplicity being that Life is Universal, our fourth simplicity is that Life is Individual. I believe that the pendulum of Life's evolutionary process swings between Individuality on the one hand and Universality on the other, that perfect individuality is attained when there is perfect rhythm between Individuality on the one hand and Universality on the other, so that while from one point of view we are tremendously individual, from another point of view we are tremendously universal. While we gain in universality as we grow, we also gain in individuality as we grow. We never lose our indi-

viduality, however much we may attain universality.

My fifth simplicity is: *Life is a Ladder*. Life is a Hierarchy. There are lower rungs to the ladder. There are higher rungs to the ladder. Is there a top to the ladder? I do not know. Is there a bottom? I do not know, but life is a ladder, life is hierarchical.

My sixth simplicity is that *Life is Self-Contained*. I mean two things by that: first, that each individuality or each universality—they are convertible terms in truth—has all that it needs within itself, or outside itself, to grow. There is no individuality which is barren of opportunity to unfold. The flower is in the seed. The flower may need for its unfoldment whatever has to come from outside, but whatever has to come from outside is assured of a welcome which will enable it fully to perform its functions. Life is self-contained.

No one can say: "I have no opportunities." Every one of us has all the opportunities he needs to accomplish that which is accomplishable by him at his stage of evolution. Every one of us can be happy. We are sometimes not happy because we want to do things we cannot do at our stage of evolution, or we want to do things, the doing of which we have already rejected and so have not another opportunity to do them for the time being.

There is always a beautiful, a loving reason, for any incapacity that may be ours—a beautiful, a valid reason. Life is self-contained.

My seventh simplicity is inherent in all the others: *Life is Movement*. Life is all the time moving. No one is going back. Every one is moving forward. Sometimes we think people are growing worse instead of better. It is not true. Everybody is constantly growing better instead of worse. If appearances are against him, it is because he has to do something we, perhaps, are not able to understand, which is needed for him in order to accelerate his growth. We judge, we say he is going back, that he is not nearly as good a man as he was. Yet in fact he is really moving forward if only we could perceive that movement. We cannot, so we think that there are movements forwards and backwards.

Hence growth is a matter for the utmost confidence and optimism. Anyone who is a pessimist cannot be a Theosophist. A pessimist is one who is not a Theosophist, or has forgotten his Theosophy, has had a few or possibly several fits of aberration. A Theosophist must be an optimist, because he knows that life is everywhere, and that everywhere life is moving forward. The Theosophist can be his own doctor to discover what is the matter with him, to see where he is misunderstanding him-

self so that he has become pessimistic instead of optimistic. Pessimists are ignorant people. Optimists are wise people. The more you are optimistic the quicker you grow. The pessimist slows down the evolutionary process for himself and for the time being enters a period of slow motion. An optimist goes faster, an optimist quickens things up. A Theosophist is one who is constantly an optimist. Theosophy makes optimists out of pessimists. Theosophy takes a pessimist where that pessimist is, moves him about, shakes him a bit, twists him, kneads him, adjusts him, and all of a sudden the pessimist discovers that he has become an optimist. What has happened? Theosophy has happened—that is all. That is everything. Theosophy with its simplicity has brushed away the cobwebs of complexity from his mind, his emotions, from all of himself, and he sees clearly, he stands up strongly, he moves forward with all due and reasonable speed.

THE OIL OF CO-OPERATION

So these are the seven great simplicities of life. They are the seven characteristics of life. They are the seven laws of life. There are no other laws of life. All laws which seem so complicated in science are but the machinery of those essential laws. The laws of nature are just parts of the machinery of life. Sometimes they seem

to creak in our own individual cases. But it is because we do not oil them with co-operation. If we will oil the machinery of life with the oil of co-operation, then the machinery moves beautifully. If we do not it creaks, or we think it creaks which comes to about the same thing.

THEOSOPHY AT WORK: THE SOCIETY

The Theosophical Society is Theosophy at work. "At work" means Theosophy expressed in terms of Brotherhood. Theosophy is the Science of life. Theosophy is the Science of Simplicity. Theosophy is the Science of Happiness, the Science of anything fundamental which we may like to conceive. The Theosophical Society reduces that science to practical simple terms. The Science of Brotherhood—that is all our Society is, but it is a fairly large "all."

We have our seven reflections of the seven great simplicities.

Life Is—Brotherhood Is.

Life is One—Brotherhood is One.

Life is Universal—Brotherhood is Universal.

Life is Individual—Brotherhood is Individual.

Life is a Ladder—Brotherhood is a Ladder.

Life is Self-Contained—Brotherhood is Self-Contained.

Life is Movement—Brotherhood is Movement.

Just as is Life, so is Brotherhood one great whole. So that The Theosophical Society is Life in all its inherent simplicity at work.

To put it otherwise, it is the Universal State in process of construction through our three great Objects. We often talk of the Universal State. We discuss learnedly about the League of Nations, about a European or World Federation, and we get into all kinds of complications about these, and the way they have failed, and the way they can be made in future to succeed.

But The Theosophical Society is a League of Nations, it is a League of Faiths. It is the Universal State entering into the waking consciousness of the world. It is the Universal State in process of construction through three very simple Objects.

OUR OBJECTS SIMPLIFIED

I want to stress the simplicity of the Objects. My whole talk is a stress on the simplicity of our Theosophy.

The First Object is Self-Assertion. The Second Object is Self-Adjustment. The Third Object is Self-Discovery.

Self-Assertion there is of a Brotherhood of Life, or at least of Humanity, and the work of The

Theosophical Society is to vivify a nucleus of that Brotherhood of Life.

We have to understand the religions, the philosophies, and the sciences of the world. We have to make a harmonious adjustment between them.

We have to discover Truth, the Third Object.

Self-Assertion—there is Brotherhood. Self-Adjustment—the harmonious relationship between all the parts that may be discovered in that Brotherhood in terms of religion, philosophy, science and all other terms.

Then the great adventure into the discovery of Truth as yet unknown. The third great Object is the assertion of our humility. We know very little. There is infinitely more to be known. So we are seeking to know it.

I should like every member of The Theosophical Society and every Theosophist to be busy about the Three Objects, constantly to assert through preaching and practice that there is a Universal Brotherhood—of humanity at all events—that there is a wonderful Brotherhood between all the religions, philosophies and sciences in the world, between all the faiths, that there is a wonderful togetherness which has given me my motto "Together Differently." So important, so vital is the spirit of that motto.

Every Theosophist must be an ardent seeker of Truth. He must not rest content with the truth so far disclosed. He must try to understand it, as so far he does not understand it, and he must be groping about for truth not yet known.

No one can be happy as he remains static, standing still where he is. It is our destiny to be dynamic. The seven simplicities of life mean that life is a dynamo, life is dynamic. To be static is to deny the simplicity of life and to enter into a complexity in which one will lose oneself altogether and from which it will take time to emerge.

We must not belong to one period of time. We must not move and live in the past and the past alone. We must live in the present and if we are Theosophists we must move and live also in the future. We live in the past, yes. We live in the present, yes. We live in the future, emphatically yes. Anyone who does not feel the intimations of the future vivifying him is losing much of Theosophy that might inspire and help him tremendously.

The First Object is : Let us declare what we know we are, and let us live as we know we are.

The Second Object : Let us understand what we know we are. We can make the first declaration without necessarily understanding all the implications of the declaration. Hence the need to come to

the Second Object. Let us understand deeply what we know we are.

The Third Object: Let us know more of what we know we are. We know what we are, yes. But after all that is only up to a certain point. Let us understand beyond that point. Let us try to know more of what we are. That would indeed be wonderful.

THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

How wonderful Theosophy and The Theosophical Society is. How it smoothens everything out like a great hot iron smooths all the creases out which come so unceasingly as we are so constantly wearing our lives. We really would tend to wear our lives out but for the iron of Theosophy that smooths out the creases and makes everything clear, simple, natural, beautiful, worthwhile and inspiring.

Let us declare what we know we are and try to live it. Let us deeply understand what we know we are. Let us know more what we are.

What more does anybody want than the Theosophy that gives such simplicities and than The Theosophical Society which stirs to action?

Whether you belong to one faith or to another, to one community or another, to one race or another, the principles are the same, the simplicities are the same. You may be a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Jain, a

Jew, a Christian, a Muslim, you may belong to any faith or to no faith, to any nation or to no particular nation, the simplicities are the same. They are the uniting simplicities which rise above all these differences which so dangerously tend to separate us at the present time. Fortunately a knowledge of Theosophy and membership of The Theosophical Society help us to get rid of that destructive disbelief that makes anybody so narrow as to say: "I do not believe in this or that or the other truth," and is in a constant condition of disbelief, in tearing down everything builded up, reveling in the tearing-down, feeling rather proud of tearing down what he would regard as narrow, prejudiced, orthodox conventions before which he thinks it is his right to be superior. That is one of the faults of young people. They sometimes think older people are narrow, orthodox and restricted, the slaves of priest-craft, when they themselves are the slaves of a narrow and inexperienced outlook. Everywhere there is inexperience, there is narrowness, and there is destruction.

Theosophy is the Science of Faith, the Science of Belief, the Science of Knowledge, the Science of Certainty, as well as the Science of Simplicity, and therefore the Science of Happiness. In this way through Theosophy and through a practical application of Theosophy

by reason of membership of The Theosophical Society, life becomes simple.

Even in these complicated days where everything seems so difficult, where this party is at loggerheads with that party, where the issue of the war seems so doubtful to some, where there seems so little light in the darkness, a condition in which the result seems to be so doubtful, even in a world like this, the Theosophist has no difficulty. He knows where he is. Whether the world listens or not it is quite another matter. Whether he is appreciated or understood is quite another matter. Whether he is right or wrong is also another matter. He is right for the time being for himself, and nobody can be more right than to be as right as he can be for himself for the time. I know I am right with regard to the Indian situation. You may say that it is very conceited of me. Not so, for if I find some finer right, I shall throw this right aside and take up that right. In the meantime I have burning in me the best right I know, though whether I can follow that right as I should is another matter.

A WORD ON CHANGE

You cannot live a happy, comfortable life unless you have self-confidence. You may change your self-confidence of today for some better self-confidence waiting for

you around the corner of tomorrow. I am always looking round the corner for something better than I have at the moment. Round the corner I may be a little wiser, I may know a little more of Theosophy, my membership of The Theosophical Society may be a little more real. All those things may be waiting round the corner. I most sincerely hope I may be ready for them. As the Latin phrase has it, *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. The times are changing and with the changing times we too must change. The Theosophy that we understand changes. The Theosophical Society changes. We must not be merely yesterdays. Up to a certain point let us be yesterdays. Up to a certain point let us be todays. But we must also be tomorrows so that we are a combination of yesterdays, todays and tomorrows, all moving forward.

There is in that statement a wonderful truth, that the past changes just as the present changes. The past is not set. It modifies itself. That gives us the realization that nothing is irreparable. No crime can condemn us forever to hell. Everything changes, and we change as well. Life becomes simple. Death becomes simple. Sorrow becomes simple. Happiness becomes simple. Simplicity is the essence of happiness. Failure becomes simple. Success becomes simple. The keystone to them all,

the miracle of them all, is that Divinity becomes simple. It is that which is so marvellous. So we grow with the beneficent aid of the Light of Theosophy and with its practical direction upon our pathway through The Theosophical Society, from simplicity to simplicity.

Where we have become entangled, we disentangle ourselves with the aid of Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, and we thank God for the Theosophy which is ours, of whatever nature it may be, and for our membership of The Theosophical Society.

THEOSOPHISTS CAN MOVE THE WORLD

There is a power behind The Society which will give us the strength we need, which will enable us to move the world, if we will but unite and work as one mind, one heart. The Masters require only that each shall do his best, and, above all, that each shall strive in reality to feel himself one with his fellow-workers.

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* *

Do not for one moment relax in your efforts; press closer, shoulder to shoulder, every day; stand together as one man, come what may, fine weather or storm, and the victory of the cause to which you have pledged yourselves is certain. Striving thus in unison with your Higher Self, your efforts must and will be fruitful of good to The Society, to yourselves, to Humanity. Coming years will show a steady, healthy growth, a strong, united organization, a durable, reliable, and efficient instrument ready to the Masters' hands. Once united in real solidarity, in the true spirit of Universal Brotherhood, no power can overthrow you, no obstacle bar your progress, no barrier check the advance of Theosophy in the coming century.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

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This movement has an independent vitality which will carry it along the ages. . . . We are weaving rapidly a girdle of golden ties round the world, uniting the hearts of well-meaning and broad-minded people into a feeling of brotherhood . . . we are simply a knot of humble workers who are transmitting to the present and future ages the wisdom of the wiser people, the sages who came before us, and who left as a bequest to posterity the result of their researches into the laws of Nature. . . . I feel that behind us there gathers a MIGHTY POWER that nothing can withstand—the Power of TRUTH! I feel that we are only the advance-guard, holding the pass until the main body shall come up. I feel that we are enlisted in a holy cause, and that Truth, now as always, is mighty and will prevail.

H. S. OLCOTT, 1875

LIFE

BY V. WALLACE SLATER

LIFE as the word is used in scientific literature has a very different meaning from that in Theosophical literature. The scientific definition implies growth, reproduction and death. The following quotation from the well-known biologist and writer H. G. Wells illustrates this :

“Life differs from all things whatever that are without life in certain general aspects. There are the most wonderful differences among living things today, but all living things past and present agree in possessing a *certain power of growth* ; all living things *take nourishment* ; all living things *move about* as they feed and grow, though the movement may be no more than the spread of roots through the soil or of branches in the air. Moreover living things reproduce ; they give rise to other living things, either by growing and then dividing or by means of seeds or spore or eggs or other ways of producing young. *Reproduction* is a characteristic of life. No living thing goes on living for ever. There seems to be a *limit of growth* for every kind of living thing” (*The Outline of History*, page 11).

Turn to chemistry. Statements such as the following are often

quoted to prove materialistic theories ; the last sentence of the quotation nullifies any such attempt.

“All the potentialities of life are therefore non-living. Although it is not possible to define ‘life,’ it is a fact that the continuance of life in the protoplasmic system is accompanied by the utilization of energy derived from the interaction of oxygen with combustible organic substances, from certain organic substances alone, and from sunlight. Life and energy are inseparable, but the actual secret of life still remains unknown” (*Chemistry, Life and Civilization*, H.T.S. Britton, D.Sc., F.I.C., 1931, p. 67). Thus although the potentialities of life are in the mineral it only manifests there as energy. This energy acquires the peculiar characteristics of life in the plant and the animal.

Science looks at vegetable and animal and sees how they differ from the mineral : this difference it calls *life*. Thus by definition life is excluded from the mineral kingdom, and, scientifically speaking, it would be absurd to say that there is life in the mineral since to do so would be tantamount to saying that that which is not in the mineral *is* in the mineral. We must therefore arbitrarily give another meaning to

life when used in Theosophical literature to describe that something which invests both mineral and biological kingdoms.

Theosophists do not wish to prove that life, in the scientific sense of growth and reproduction, exists in the mineral. Theosophy goes behind the inertness of the mineral, and the growth and reproduction of animals to that something which uses a succession of mineral, vegetable and animal forms for its own education. When Theosophy says there is life everywhere it means that besides the series of forms, which evolution presents to us, there is continuity of process and endurance of some essence behind the forms. In a more remote way it means that the Power of the Logos permeates His system.

“‘A kosmos’ is a system arising from a single Logos, and sustained by His Life” (*The Ancient Wisdom*, Annie Besant, page 311 of 1922 edition).

“‘The one manifested Life’ is the Logos, the manifested God” (*ibid.*, page 313).

Dr. Besant uses the word *life* in an obvious special way in her *Study in Consciousness* where she says :

“Consciousness and life are identical, two names for one thing as regarded from within and from without. There is no life without consciousness; there is no consciousness without life” (p. 32 of 1918 edition). She is speaking of

the life and consciousness of the Logos, using the term *life* in the Theosophical sense rather than the scientific.

C. W. Leadbeater also uses the word *life* with this special meaning of the life of the Logos. “The divine Life pours itself into matter from above. After a long period spent in ensouling the forms of the third of these elemental kingdoms it (life) identifies itself with them in turn, and so is able to ensoul the etheric part of the mineral kingdom, and becomes the life which vivifies that—for there is a life in the mineral kingdom just as much as in the vegetable and the animal, although it is in conditions where it cannot manifest so freely” (*A Textbook of Theosophy*, page 30).

“All the matter of which we know anything is living matter and the life which it contains is always evolving. When the mineral evolution is completed, the life has withdrawn itself again into the astral world, but bearing with it all the results obtained through its experience in the physical. At this stage it ensouls vegetable forms and begins to show itself much more clearly as what we commonly call life—plant life of all kinds” (*ibid.*, page 31). In this last sentence C. W. Leadbeater makes it clear that he differentiates what science “commonly calls life” and what Theosophy means in using the same word.

C. Jinarājādāsa gives us the same impression. "The word 'life' especially has, in Theosophical studies, a profounder and more far-reaching significance; for life is seen, not only, as with modern science, in the small circle of existence which comprises the human, animal and vegetable kingdoms, but also as manifesting in the seemingly dead matter of minerals, and in organisms of invisible matter lower than minerals and higher than man. . . Stage by stage, the life of the Logos manifests as three types of Elemental Essence, and then subsequently as Mineral Life, Vegetable Life, Animal Life and Humanity. . . . The seven stages of evolving life from Elemental Essence I to Humanity, are called the 'Life Wave'" (*First Principles of Theosophy*, page 141).

"Of all the perennially inspiring facts in life which Theosophy reveals, none is so overwhelming as the fact that Matter, Life and Consciousness are three aspects of one indivisible Unity. It is impossible to conceive of Matter which is not living, nor of life which is not conscious" (*ibid.*, page 182).

"Perhaps the most vital principle to grasp is that, as life evolves, more and more consciousness is released" (*ibid.*, page 184).

"Life is indestructible, it works at its self-evolution by experiment after experiment in the building of forms" (*ibid.*, page 183).

Finally we turn to *The Secret Doctrine*: "The matter of science may be for all objective purposes a 'dead and utterly-passive matter'; to the Occultist not an atom of it can be dead—'Life is ever present in it'" (III, 399).

"The Point in the Circle is the Unmanifested Logos, corresponding to Absolute Life and Absolute Sound" (*ibid.*, page 477).

"The expression employed by science 'inorganic substance' means simply that the latent life, slumbering in the molecules of so-called 'inert matter,' is incognizable. ALL is LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism" (*ibid.*, I, 269).

To sum up, Life permeates the universe. This is the Life of the Logos without which every atom would collapse. In addition to this Life there is the differentiated life which It induces in the manifested universe, and it is this life which is evolving through the kingdoms of nature, including the mineral. It might be called spirit, force, vitality, creative urge, underlying essence, or so on, but each of these expressions has just as serious an objection as the word *life*, in the sense of having a restricted meaning in science.

HUMANITY IN TRANSITION

BY ARTHUR LAMSLEY

HUMANITY is in travail: it is living through the birththroes of a new age. The war ends an era of civilization; Peace will bring the dawn of a new day with a changed human consciousness. Like every dawn it was conceived out of darkness. Like every baby human being which has its months of darkness and ceaseless struggle for expression towards the light of life, so the new era of humanity has its years of darkness and agony through war. And as the child grows up, matures and reacts to life through its initial years of unfolding travail, eventually to evolve in the fullness of a grown human being, a creature shaped from accumulated experience, become wise through turmoil and suffering, both inevitable with growth, so is the new humanity today passing through similar fires of its babyhood and youth towards a new grown-up humanity.

Life is progress. Our new humanity, evolving today, will have need to grow up and build better than in the old era. If there is any deep truth in the adage that experience teaches, then many episodes of the past must find no place in the coming new age.

Humanity has had many bitter lessons born of the failure of mater-

ial theories applied to everyday life, through governments, industry and economics. The breakdown of these material theories was inevitable. Another war is the result—material poverty, incalculable human miseries, vaunted selfishness, suspicions, race hatred, a chronic state of human tension, and economic slump, all have been part of the tragic aftermath of the Great War.

Yet, it is only the breakdown of the worst expression of our humanity and character; the best expression of humanity, its spiritual consciousness, has never been given a chance. This is the world's greatest need.

Political democracy, industrial democracy, forms of economic democracy, monarchies, republics, dictatorships, all have been tried, and failed to bring human happiness, lasting peace and economic security. Real democracy, based on the fundamental fact of man being a spiritual being—a spirit with a body and not a body with a spirit—has never been tried. It must be our next step in evolving a new human society, a new civilization, for a coming age.

The spirit of Life, its fundamental and animating principle, is common of all humanity irrespective of nationality or colour.

Spiritually, humanity is a family, a brotherhood, but far too few there are who recognize this greatest fact of life. The same animating Life-Force enters the child born in Africa, India, Asia, or Germany, as entered into the body of my son.

The greatest fact of life is not that we live an unending existence spiritually, but that we live at all. Our human life in its various, diverse expressions, is a miracle.

Sir Oliver Lodge and his co-workers, in creating a scientific knowledge of the spiritual life of mankind, proving its continuity after the transition of death, are merely re-expressing the knowledge given by Sir Thomas Browne, who wrote centuries ago :

There is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though indeed it hath no history of what it was before us, and cannot tell how it entered into us.

Humanity needs to live in this evolving new age with the sublime consciousness that it is eternal because fundamentally spiritual, born of the spirit. This is Divine Law. And even in our over-materialistic wartime there is now much evidence that this new spiritual consciousness is dawning. Its future universal acceptance would mean a new law and order for the world when Justice is conformity to Divine Law ; Liberty is voluntary self-enforcement of Divine Law ; Peace is habitual harmony with Divine

Law ; Democracy is the spirit of justice, liberty and peace in the community ; in one word—BROTHERHOOD.

This conception of how the world's greatest need will be met is not unpractical idealism but based on the hard logic of our spiritual existence.

To support this contention, ex-President Coolidge, when analysing world affairs, said :

We do not need more national development ; we need more spiritual development.

We do not need more intellectual power ; we need more spiritual power.

We do not need more knowledge ; we need more character.

We do not need more government ; we need more culture.

We do not need more law ; we need more religion.

We do not need more of the things that are seen ; we need more of the things that are unseen.

Here we have the matured utterance of a world statesman, one who came to the Presidency of the United States during the most revolutionary political and economic upheaval in the romantic history of the North American Continent.

The unfoldment of this new spiritual consciousness in humanity would bring an enlightened outlook, with a new moral conception of how to live in practical spiritual harmony with our fellow human beings everywhere : for the word international spirit we should substitute

the far more intimate, humanizing, and logical description—family spirit, the human race, wherever it is found, being a spiritual family.

In simple language we should then know that love and not hate is the fundamental truth on which hangs the well-being of the world, and that reliance on brute-force is incompatible with the highest social good: that human nature, under whatever garb, is, at heart, sound and good; that all men and women can be encouraged to pursue unselfish ends, and that it is a finer thing to love one's fellow-men and to seek to bring beauty and happiness into human lives, than to love one's possessions or to harness one's sympathies; that extravagance, sloth, waste and selfishness are sins against the Commonwealth, embittering human relationships, intensifying the spirit of hatred and prolonging national discord; that the mass of people have not had the opportunity for self-expression or of participating in the richness of Life; that bleak and solitary lives, squalid surroundings and monotonous toil generate industrial unrest, antagonisms and national insecurity; that barbed-wire entanglements of prejudice or custom must be removed if they impede the attainment of justice or freedom; that sacrifice and service are demanded of all citizens, but that the higher the position and the greater the wealth, the larger the measure

of sacrifice and service demanded; that the privilege to generate joy is not bounded by the frontiers of one's own family or one's own class, and that given the vision to see, the faith to believe, the will to endure, and the courage to act, the unconquerable spirit of man can, in response to the call of the Divine Spirit, begin to build here and now the City of God.

These tenets were ably expressed some time ago by a conference of ardent Christians who were anxious to affirm that the teachings of Jesus Christ were not incompatible with the needs of the world today. Under the title of "Foundations" a modern creed was formulated and broadcast to humanity. Its main principles were:

The Fatherhood of God as taught by Jesus Christ leads us to treat all men as brothers without discrimination of race, colour or conditions; the social order must be directed beyond merely material ends to the enrichment and development of the physical, mental and spiritual possibilities of every member of the community: We shall seek a way of living that shall be free from bondage to material things, and in which there shall be no barrier between man and man; the forces of right, love and truth are mighty because they appeal to the best; we reject dominance and force not only in international affairs but in industry and commerce. Not antagonism but co-operative goodwill offers the best for every one; mutual service and not private profit is the

motive for all business, and the ownership of property must be regulated to minister to the needs and development of men.

But whilst we in the West naturally channel our religion through Christianity, we must give the same understanding love to devotees of every other world religion, many coming from the East. World religions are as spokes of a wheel, leading to the axle—God. It matters little by which spoke or path, sections of the human family approach God, for their path is a natural expression determined by His plan of Life seemingly arranged by the many parts of the human family.

Convictions along these lines came to me some years ago whilst squatting on the coral-fringed sandy beach in far-off tropical Zanzibar. Our company consisted of a wealthy Parsi merchant, a Church of England missionary, who is now a Cathedral Canon, an Indian merchant, follower of His Highness the Aga Khan, a Naval Officer who was a Christian Scientist, and myself. We were discussing God, and found after a rather involved, but never heated, conversation, we were all walking by different paths to attain a greater knowledge of and affinity with the same Power which was the spiritual basis of our individual lives. Agreement came amongst us towards sunset when we became fully conscious that although we were of widely divergent

views as to the path by which we approached God, each path led to a common centre which was the eternal spiritual source of our life.

Father Hugh Benson, the Catholic priest, writer and propagandist, wrote a charming and inspiring poem entitled "Doors," when approaching the end of his life here, which outlines this universal approach to God:

So many doors, and all divine,
And every latch is loose to Thee.
So many paths, and all are Thine,
That leads me to this heart of
Thine.
And *all* are therefore dear to me.

Our changing world will demand the utmost generosity and understanding from each of us as regards the religious expression of the other fellow. He is not a heathen who worships God in a way which might well be abhorrent to orthodox Christians, but one of God's children, a younger brother of the human family struggling along his own path towards the light. In his turn, could he be brought to an opinion, many happenings in our Christian civilization, war especially, would shock him into thinking his God more loving, and certainly far more understanding, than the white man's Deity.

Instead of seeing in the African native, the Indian and the Chinese peasant, innocent game for material exploitation, the new need of the world is to view them as brothers

in the human family. Recently this point of view was re-expressed to me by Paul Robeson, the world-famous negro singer and actor, whose great artistic gifts have been placed at the service of humanity everywhere.

Over a cup of tea in his dressing-room at the back of a London theatre, Paul became eloquent in our conversation over spiritual matters, declaiming we were all God's children, and that the sooner we got the big idea of mankind as not being separated into coloured and white races, but only as the human race, the sooner we should have world peace and prosperity for everybody. Paul Robeson's direct ancestry were slaves in the cotton fields of the Southern States of America.

Many will urge the impossibility of working out this spiritual philosophy in the world today. But do we not live in an age when the impossible of yesterday has become an accomplished materialized fact of today? The so-called miracle of a few years ago, such as wireless, is now the common service of our homes. It enables our King to address the peoples of the earth, who hear his voice by turning a knob in a receiver; yet not many years ago, I remember, it took from four to six months by sailing ship for a letter to reach South Africa.

It is well today that in every nation there are men and women

beginning to realize at long last, that all things are possible, and that in matters spiritual we are only as yet on the doorstep of vast incalculable discoveries that will, some day, give man a new conception of himself as a spiritual being attuned to the permanent reality behind all creation, and an heir to infinitude of Divine Powers.

Even if we study our material selves we must come to the conclusion there is no work in the whole creation so wonderfully made as man. Meditate quietly on the mechanism of our bodies, think of our eyes, ears, hands, feet, and the marvellously complex internal organism. As a piece of intricate machinery it surpasses the wildest imagination of our great mechanical inventors and scientists. Man can do most things, but he cannot create man. But these bodies of ours, creations of a Divine Artist, are of no use without the spirit which animates them. Truly we are spirits with bodies and not bodies with spirits. It is the spirit which is life, the body, at best, is the instrument for the spirit's expression here, the house in which it lives.

Visualize a world in which the spirit of man ruled supreme. Would Geneva be the wrangling house of selfish race interests under the guise of subtle diplomacy? Would wars be possible, or half the human race forced to live in poverty and want

in a world of overflowing plenty, or would there be unemployment, slums, or the need of child welfare? These things are the negation of a brotherhood logically built on a spiritual foundation, these things show the awful need of a quickened spiritual consciousness in human affairs.

What proof have we that this conception is possible, as to the multitude? Proofs are plenty in everyday life. What man or woman standing on the pavement watching a German, French, Italian, African or Chinese child in danger of being run down by a motor car would hesitate to try and save it because the child had another colour skin, or was of a different nationality? Why would every effort be made to save the child by every normal human being? Because deep down in one's nature, intuition and love would bid us act by insisting it was not a German, Russian or African child, but God's child, fundamentally and spiritually akin to ourselves.

This spiritual outlook on life, contrary to popular conception, does not need courage or even faith on the part of the individuals or communities who would follow its dictates, but merely a fuller understanding of man's life as a spirit. It should not need courage to under-

stand oneself, it should be a duty and a joy. Humanity is, in reality, a family of spirit-born children.

The world's greatest, most urgent need, then, is to realize this Divine Sonship; to see humanity as one family, God-begotten, made up of members, young and old, of diverse race and colour, yet brethren one of the other. The well-known writer, lecturer and Theosophist, Miss Kate Browning, has expressed this need in a few lines, modelled on Kipling's immortal "IF":

If you can sense the ONE in all creation,
And see the God in every brother's face,
Without respect of creed, or race, or nation;
If you can feel at home in every place;
If you can love your country with devotion
And yet love all the other countries too;
If you have freed yourself from class emotion
And understand the other's point of view;
If you can sense in every beast a brother,
And see God blossoming in every flower;
If by no thought or word you hurt another,
And fill with noble deeds the fleeting hour;
If all your thoughts, and words, and acts are holy
You're very near to the Divine, my son.

AMERICA'S POLITICAL IDEALS (DOMESTIC)

BY PIETER K. ROEST

AMERICA'S political creed is summed up in the following three sentences of the Declaration of Independence, which gave birth to this Nation in 1776 :

"We hold these truths to be self-evident : That all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

This doctrine of popular sovereignty boldly rejects "the divine right of Kings" held so long in the Old World ; and is diametrically opposed to the theory of the State as the supreme arbiter of all individual lives, by which dictation or ruling cliques, having to themselves the State's powers, enslave whole populations.

Governments exist for the service and happiness of the people, and by the people's consent alone. They are the

instruments of the people's will to order, justice and peace ; and should never be allowed to lose sight of their true purpose : the service of the commonwealth. Hence, on the surface, America's political ideals are purely secular : political power derives, not from God, or some mystic entity called the Spirit of the Nation, but simply "from the consent of the governed." Yet religious Americans recognize that "Providence" guides the Nation through its leaders, and believe that through or in spite of this Nation's secular methods of election, the right man will emerge as its chief in times of crisis.

To an intuitive people these convictions are not contradictory, but complementary.

Equally natural to Americans, however baffling to logical Europeans, is the paradox of States' rights and Federal rights. Built from the reluctant federation of thirteen "free and independent" states, this Nation still maintains much more than a shadow of sovereignty for its forty-eight present "States." The Federal Government had hardly any power under the Articles of Confederation (1778-1788) and received only such powers as were *transferred to it from* the States under the Constitution which took the place of the Articles. Any powers not mentioned as Federal powers remain *reserved* to the States, which

still jealously guard them ! It is confusing, costly and cumbersome to have forty-eight different systems of State-law—but it is the price Americans willingly pay to keep their Federal Government from becoming a too powerful bureaucracy, swallowing up one after another of their sacred rights as individuals !

For, to the American the individual enshrines the supreme values of human life ; the citizen is a King among Kings. From amongst themselves the voters elect their officials, who are replaced or recalled if found unsatisfactory. Even in the President, the supreme executive, the slightest trace of domineering, of an air of superiority or even aloofness, is likely to turn the people against him, and—through their representatives—to cripple his power.

In America the *people* rule indeed—for better or for worse. The theory is that 130,000,000 heads are better than one, however efficient the one might be. Hence the three tiers of government : local, state and federal, which break up dangerous concentrations of power anywhere ; hence also the three divisions, in each, of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, checking and balancing each other. If either of these became supreme, Americans hold, some basic liberties would be lost, and with their loss, *all* individual rights would soon become endangered. How true this is the recent history of Europe illustrates. The " people " are not all of one mind, obviously ; they are not all sound, or well-informed, or noble, either.

Hence parties, quibbling, log-rolling, horse-trading, propaganda, pressure, perfidious politics—corruptions. Yet the majority of the people are decent, good-willed, fairly intelligent folk, and the majority prevails. So always, in the long run, corruption is attacked, and overcome. It is a thousand-headed monster, indeed, but the St. George of popular decency keeps manfully at his task of battling this tough dragon ; and slowly, surely, government is becoming more efficient, politics a little cleaner.

In spite of all its handicaps, in spite of its relative inefficiency, the average American prefers his form of government to any other operating elsewhere, or advocated as superior to any existing ones. That is because his freedom is much dearer to him than the false security of any kind of regimentation. He sees that new conditions call for new political machinery, for vaster government powers, and for greater government control of economic life, especially. But only *need* can force him thereto ; and even then he insists on *popular* co-operation rather than on enforcement from above. The old town-meeting—western *isotype* of the Indian " panchayat "—with which political life began among the first white settlers, is still America's ideal governmental structure : The people, pooling their wits and their resources to rule themselves, that liberty and justice may be preserved, and human lives may flower into freedom and friendship, and thus—happiness.

A BESANT LETTER

Benares City, February 17th, 1904

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I AM told, on what ought to be good authority, that there is a growing tendency in The Theosophical Society in London to consider me as "a sacrosanct personality, beyond and above criticism."

Frankly, I cannot believe that any claim so wild and preposterous is set up, or that many know me so little as to imagine that if it were set up, I would meet it with anything but the uttermost condemnation. Even a few people holding and acting on such a theory would be a danger to The Society; if any considerable number held and acted on it The Society would perish. Liberty of opinion is the life-breath of The Society; the fullest freedom in expressing opinions, and the fullest freedom in criticizing opinions, are necessary for the preservation of the growth and evolution of The Society. A "commanding personality"—to use the cant of the day—may in many ways be of service to a movement, but in The Theosophical Society the work of such a personality would be too dearly purchased if it were bought by the surrender of individual freedom of thought, and The Society would be far safer if it did not number such a personality among its members.

Over and over again I have emphasized this fact, and have urged free criticism of all opinions, my own among

them. Like everybody else, I often make mistakes, and it is a poor service to me to confirm me in those mistakes by abstaining from criticism. I would sooner never write another word than have my words made into a gag for other people's thoughts. All my life I have followed the practice of reading the harshest criticisms, with a view to utilize them, and I do not mean, as I grow old, to help the growth of crystallization by evading the most rigorous criticism. Moreover anything that has been done through me, not by me, for Theosophy would be outbalanced immeasurably by making my crude knowledge a measure for the thinking in the movement, and by turning me into an obstacle of future progress.

So, I pray you, if you come across any such absurd ideas as are mentioned above, that you will resist them in your own persons and repudiate them on my behalf. No greater disservice could be done to The Society or to me than by allowing them to spread.

It is further alleged that a policy of "ostracism" is enforced against those who do not hold this view of me. I cannot insult any member of The Society by believing that he would or could endorse such a policy. It is obvious that this would be an intolerable tyranny, to which no self-respecting man would submit. I may say, in passing, that in all selections for office in the movement, the sole consideration should be

the power of the candidate to serve The Society, and not his opinion of any person—Col. Olcott, Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Mead, or myself. We do not want faction fights for party leaders, but a free choice of the best man.

Pardon me for troubling you with a formal repudiation of a view that seems too absurd to merit denial. But as it is gravely put to me as a fact, I cannot ignore it. For The Society, to me, is the object of my deepest love and service, my life is given to it, it embodies my ideal of a physical-plane movement. And I would rather make myself ridi-

culous by tilting at a windmill—such as I believe this idea to be—than run the smallest chance of leaving to grow within The Society a form of personal idolatry which would be fatal to its usefulness to the world. In The Theosophical Society there is no orthodoxy there are no Popes. It is a band of students, eager to learn the truth, and growing ever in the knowledge thereof, and its well-being rests on the maintenance of this ideal.

Ever your sincere friend,

ANNIE BESANT

THE PASSING OF PROMINENT THEOSOPHISTS

DR. SOLOMON

DR. JACOB E. SOLOMON, L.M. & S., Bene-Israelite (Indian Jew), born at Poona in 1884, married in 1913 Sarah Ezekiel.

Joined The Theosophical Society in 1912; during war service at Basra in 1915-17, he established the Dar-es-Salaam Theosophical Lodge and was its President; at Ahmedabad with wife worked for The Society and all allied activities; specialized in occult healing; a well-known figure at every International Convention.

Was Hon. Sec., Sanitary Association and Red Cross, Ahmedabad; Hon. Div. Sec. for Gujarat Baby and Health Week Association; Treasurer, Released Prisoners' Aid Society; Probation Offi-

cer, Ahmedabad Child Protection Society; Member, Ahmedabad D.L.B. Medical Committee; Executive Committee Member, S.P.C.A., Ahmedabad.

—From the *International*

Theosophical Year Books

One of the stalwarts of our Society has left his physical tabernacle which had become of late unfit to house the radiant spirit which was ever bubbling with enthusiasm to express more and more of the Divinity within him. In the passing of Dr. Jacob E. Solomon the Indian Section has sustained a great loss, and Ahmedabad Lodge in particular, which will be difficult to fill. The good doctor was the life and soul, and a veritable pillar of strength, in the Theosophical, Masonic and social life of

Ahmedabad. He gave the best of himself to the cause of Theosophy. He was also an ardent social worker and for many years Hon. Secretary of the Baby Welfare and Health Week Association. His work was appreciated by the Government and he was awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind and Jubilee Medals for his selfless services.

Dr. Solomon was also a very earnest Mason. In all his work Dr. Solomon was supported by his gentle, amiable wife. Both of them extended their kind hospitality to our Theosophical lecturers and workers. Their home in Ahmedabad was ever open to all Theosophists and had become as much a centre of Theosophy as the Lodge itself.

Dr. and Mrs. Solomon had gathered around them a large circle of friends by their loving, gentle and obliging nature. Their loving thoughts and ours go to both our dear friends at this juncture.

D. D. KANGA

PANDIT G. KRISHNA SHASTRI

The Bombay Chronicle reports the passing of Pandit G. Krishna Shastri at Bombay on 7 November 1940 at the age of 78.

The Pandit was admitted to The Theosophical Society on 18 November 1897, and found a common interest with Colonel Olcott in the development of the Oriental Section of the Adyar Library. From 1901 to 1906 he was in charge of the Library, and published a succession of religious and philosophical treatises in English, Malayalam and Tamil, two of his best known works being *Practical Vedanta* and *Democratic Hinduism*. He was an un-

assuming and erudite Samskrit scholar, willing to sacrifice everything for Truth.

SRI KONA SOUNI BABU

You will find in our roll of honour, the name S'rī Kona Souni Babu, who was what we townsmen might in our arrogance call "a poor villager." He was an agriculturist, who drove a bullock cart to supplement his income, and wandered all over the District, singing Theosophical songs specially composed for him in Telugu. When I had the honour of sitting in his cart once, I asked him if he did not find any difficulty in paying annual dues. He replied: "*I earn eight annas a day, sir. Can I not pay eight days' earnings for the upkeep of The Theosophical Society I love so much?*" *Of course he could, if he would.* When I get piteous appeals to my heart for remission of dues, which press so heavily and so on, I cannot stop my head from remembering our friend from the village. Perhaps it is the habit of counting our earnings, per month, that makes all the difference. Eight annas a day is presumably much more than a mere fifteen rupees per month. So God bless S'rī Kona Babu.

—G.N.G. in *The Indian Theosophist*

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The Indian Section of The Theosophical Society assembled in Jubilee Convention at Benares, at its closing meeting, passed a resolution to express their appreciation of, and place on record their sense of loss by the passing during the past year of:

Mr. P. R. Green, of Bombay;

Dr. Solomon, of Amedabad;

Mr. Jaywant, of Benares.

CORRESPONDENCE

ABOUT HITLER

A correspondent writes from England :
DEAR DR. ARUNDALE,

Just after reading what you said in the September THEOSOPHIST about Adolf Hitler, I found this ancient study in *Karma* printed in a corner of *The Times* of 14 October 1940. It does seem to fit. And, to me, it opens an intolerable vista of compassion for his unremembering future lives :

"The pirate, potentate, or usurper, who in despite of justice has destroyed thousands upon thousands, cannot by dying once pay the penalty for them. He has invented for himself a false religion, has made presumption and blasphemy his constant companions, has rejected divine ordinances and overridden laws, has violated women and children, has levelled cities to the ground, has set fire to houses with their occupants, has ravaged territories, and therewith has destroyed the identity of provinces, of nations, or even of a whole race. How can such a one, having a destructible body, bear enough and long enough to pay a penalty commensurate with his enormities, seeing that death will anticipate his deserts and mortal nature is incapable of bearing the punishment for even one of his crimes?"
ATHENAGORAS THE ATHENIAN (*circa* A.D. 180).

"SURVIVAL AND RETURN "

In the article by Mr. James Cousins in the August number, 1940, page 427, of THE THEOSOPHIST, reviewing the two books by Shaw Desmond on (1) *After Sudden Death*, (2) *Reincarnation for Everyman*, the phrase is used : "'Ireland' (officially now Eire)." This is misleading to the world at large, where THE THEOSOPHIST circulates, as well as offensive to loyal members of The Theosophical Society, in the Province of Northern Ireland, who have taken and are taking the most strenuous stand possible, to retain the Province within the United Kingdom, and are loyal to King George, and fly the Union Jack. They decline to be involved in any "neutrality" such as that declared by the Government of Eire ; and maintain the just rights of a population equal to that of New Zealand and a territory equal to Wales, to have its own Parliament, and to resist all efforts overt or insidious to bring it into surrender. Dismemberment of the Empire or Commonwealth of Free States is surely alien to the Great Plan, in which such a Federation is a preliminary to a World Federation however remote in the future.

Belfast

JOHN BARRON

Sept. 14th, 1940

BOOK REVIEWS

The India That Shall Be. Signed articles by Annie Besant from "New India." Price Re. 1-12-0. T. P. H., Adyar, Madras.

For about fifteen years Dr. Besant conducted her newspaper *New India*. When she considered the time was ripe, she purchased *The Madras Standard* and converted it to *New India* thereby to work for India to become a New India. She toiled for long years, and finally, to crown her work she drafted or rather inspired the drafting of a Bill by name "The Commonwealth of India Bill," and managed to get it introduced into the British Parliament where it was read once or twice and there it stopped.

Dr. Besant toiled hard to secure Dominion Status for India, but failed, because hers was a lone hand and parties did not co-operate with her.

Time, energy and money spent by her for political work was such that she became an exhausted person and died.

She often wrote leading articles and signed them so that people might know that the views expressed by her paper were her own and not of some leader-writer in the office.

Subjects dealt with in these signed articles were of variegated nature "of perennial interest, and are as useful and instructive reading today as they were when written, and as they will be tomorrow." All the articles written by her are verily "of definitely historical interest," and any writer today may take any article and with slight alteration

adapt it even for "leaders" in the newspapers.

Her appeals to unite were so passionate and touching that they bear directly upon today's greatest problem of India—namely the need for unity.

About constitutional struggle she wrote in great detail and this subject forms Part II of the book. She had been loyal to the core and dared to call a spade a spade. Her hits were direct and thrusts so sharp that her paper had to pay security very often. With dauntless spirit she again and again suffered confiscation of security, but phoenix-like she appeared as many times as she was put down. She was finally interned by the Pentland Government of Madras.

Dr. Besant had a good deal of influence in England and made very good use of that influence; boldly she wrote and keenly noted every move of commercial people who started (to wit, Lever Brothers) industries in India because cheap labour was available in India.

She made the Indian question of reform her hobby—no, not a hobby only but a life interest, and worked as no Indian ever worked.

A word about the power behind the compilers. In 1939-40 were compiled most useful booklets on *The Besant Spirit* and *India's Living Traditions* and the like, and now this book has been brought out. An indefatigable devotee of Dr. Besant alone could make

possible this labour of compiling, and the reading public should be thankful to Dr. Arundale. His foreword is a clearer review of the book than this reviewer could ever write.

A. K. S.

The High Purpose of War. Vol. 6 of The Besant Spirit Series. T.P.H., Adyar. Price 8as. for Vol. 6, and Rs. 2-12-0 for the set of 6 volumes.

The Theosophical Publishing House has performed a notable service in collecting the scattered utterances of our great departed leader on War, general and particular, and incorporating them in this attractive booklet, purchasable at a popular price. If any of us falter in our faith, her ringing words of utter confidence, based on clear vision of realities, supply the tonic that we need. Though meant for the war-stricken peoples of quarter of a century ago, little change is needed for present application, for nations did not then avail themselves fully of the great opportunities she pointed out, and find themselves faced today with the same challenge, for the victory could not then be full since the conditions were not fulfilled.

One of the most interesting articles is that describing the Aryan Empire of the twentieth century, the destined development of the Indo-British Commonwealth of peoples. Though she was ready to adopt that name for the coming federation, as more acceptable to many, it is made clear that Annie Besant had no dislike of the word Empire, and perhaps we are now in a position better to realize the wisdom of her point of view, for we have learnt

the value of a personal head—a King-Emperor—as a focus of unity and a living symbol and sacrament of divine rulership; moreover, an ill-timed pacifism has let us down, and we see more use than we did for military strength and organization of power, in fact for a realistic relation between small nations and greater ones. The choice for the world again is between the dark empire and the White Empire, and though the victory of the latter may be delayed if we fail in the heroic spirit, yet it finally cannot fail, and the world will again be rid of monsters.

H. V.

What is Your Will? By Mrs. Rhys Davids. Rider and Co., London. Price 6/-

This is a highly original book, with an arresting title, and should be of value to many readers who may be led by the author's literary eminence to wander with her into new fields of thought. She frankly owns the sources of her information to be psychic, and Theosophists will find much with which to disagree in her descriptions of the worlds beyond death. It is difficult for people of western birth and education to realize the necessity for a long training in Yoga, before discrimination can be trustworthy between truth and illusion, and dear ones who have passed beyond death, and find means to communicate, find far too easy credence when they describe the topography of some intermediate plane which they take to be highly spiritual.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is that entitled "Worlds and Lives," in which the truth of reincarnation is convincingly stated, and the urgent need

for it to enrich western thinking and willing. "Our own tradition of the certainty of lives and worlds, as part of the life of every man, we have largely lost, both in this world and the next. To rebuild a worthier tradition we yet lack the will. . . . Men in the mass can be very mighty willers. There are crises in history when the will of a group of men, or of a whole people, will do the almost impossible. . . . When once the word, the 'more word' to welfare, gets at men to go forward, or to hold fast, nothing can check, nothing can draw aside."

These are brave words, full of point just now!

H. V.

The Ancient Wisdom, the Hope of the World. By Morley Steynor. The C. W. Daniel Co., Ltd., London. Price 6/-

This is a useful book for the present age as in it are to be found answers to many questions which are engaging the minds of thinking people today.

The author believes that "just as the Renaissance illumined the intellectual darkness of Europe in the fifteenth century, throwing its welcome light into the dark and cobwebbed corners of men's minds, so today the Renaissance of the Divine Wisdom is slowly but surely illuminating the still greater spiritual darkness which envelops like a black pall the strife-exhausted, superstition-enslaved world of today."

Besides a number of illuminating essays on such subjects as "The Ancient Wisdom," "Cosmic Consciousness," "Reincarnation," "Vaccination," "Vested Interests," the author has in-

cluded a three-scene, two-character play, entitled "The Evolution of Two Egos," a parable and a dream dealing with some problems of Religion.

Some of the articles have appeared in such magazines as THE THEOSOPHIST, *The Occult Review*, *Progress Today*, etc., but it is hoped that by reproduction in book-form they may reach a wider public.

The letter-press is excellent.

I. M. P.

Annie Besant as Woman and as Leader: Reminiscences of Sri Prakasa, B.A., LL.B., (Cantab.), Barrister-at-Law, M.L.A. (Central), as child, boy, youth and man. T. P. H., Adyar. Price Re. 1-12-0.

This is a charming book. Mr. Prakasa writes naturally and frankly, just as he saw and understood Dr. Besant, his own father, Dr. Bhagavan Das, and others, in a variety of many incidents and some events. Incidentally, he tells a lot about himself, revealing much of the working of Indian psychology today, which is interesting and helpful to understand Indian problems. But all the strands are well woven to make a book worthy of printing about Annie Besant by a son of India.

Dr. Arundale writes an appreciative Foreword. And the last 70 pages are notes which are interesting and informative about persons, terms and incidents that come into the book.

No quotation can give a real idea of the book—it must be read to be appreciated, and it will be enjoyed by all who care at all for Dr. Annie Besant.

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