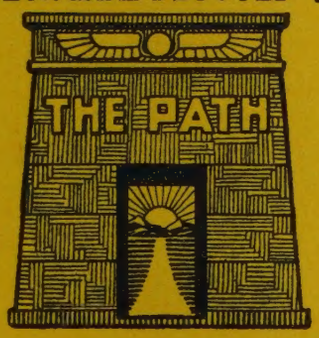
# THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY




THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

**Vol. XXXIV—No. 10** **August, 1946**


*HOW may we obtain a resumption of divinity? It can not be obtained by too much speaking, nor by argument. It can be obtained only by taking the position. Always we act in accord with the position assumed. So let us take the highest position. We must affirm it. How else can we gain a knowledge of immortality than by taking the position of immortality? If we take the high position, we not only act in accordance with the position taken, but we come to a realization of it within ourselves, where is all perception of it, all fulfillment of it.*—R.C.

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A U M

There is one director; there is no second. I speak concerning him who abides in the heart. This being, the director, dwells in the heart and directs all creatures. Impelled by that same being, I move as I am ordered, like water on a declivity. There is one instructor; there is no second different from him, and I speak concerning him who abides in the heart. —*Anugita*

# THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXIV August, 1946 No. 10

## FREE MEN

ONLY the man who knows himself, as soul, is "free." It is said that Socrates, during his imprisonment and trial, was the only free man in Athens. It is said, too, that the Galilean Christ was the only free man who watched the nailing of his body to the Cross. And when Giordano Bruno perished in the fires of the Catholic torturers for daring to speak a form of truth that was known as heresy, the mark of a free man was also upon him. These three men—and there have been, of course, unnamed thousands more—were fighting a fight to the death to break the bondage of ignorance which fettered their fellows. They had already attained their own "freedom." The essential superstitions and hatreds they fought against in the shape of the "totalitarianism" of their times have not been dispelled, though the hold of false doctrines of Self has been weakened by each example of fearlessness in the face of material oppression. In this day, the chains which hamper the soul have new names—but they are still chains.

This is, perhaps, the most desperate series of centuries in the whole drama of man's evolution. It is difficult because, in man's further "descent into matter," materialized social institutions make it almost impossible to maintain individuality and learn the purposes of soul. But in the fierceness of the soul-struggle is a hint of the high stakes which may be won. A few great statements managed to find their way into the jumbled Christian Bible, none more occult than the admonition attributed to Jesus—"Come ye out and be ye separate." The man who can face and solve the real problems of this age will be able to stand firm anywhere, at any time. But to do this he must know himself, trust himself, and be *willing* to stand

out and be separate when principle demands. Before he can help others fully he must himself become a free man.

He projects the spirit of freedom by establishing his life on principles and standing firm upon them. Our present society is not primarily concerned with principle—for principles are derived from a true understanding of philosophy, and Western civilization has given itself little opportunity to become philosophical. A new race of men must evolve within the old. They must be men of action, but first of all, they must have the knowledge that some call Theosophy. Theosophy is to help men live lives of awareness, lives enlightened and "freed" by knowledge of the purposes of soul, lives thus emboldened with the courage to stand up and be counted on the side of justice in the smallest details of communal life.

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## SHADOWS AND REALITY

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence—that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. . . . I have read in a Hindoo book that "There was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. —THOREAU

# THE PROMULGATION OF THEOSOPHY

TOO much attention has been paid by several to the opinions of men in the world who have a reputation in science and in scholarship. Their opinions are valuable in their respective fields, but the ideas of the world should not be permitted to dwarf our work or smother our heart's desire. These owners of reputations do not entirely govern the progress of the race.

The great mass of mankind are of the common people, and it it with them we have chiefly to deal. For our message does not come only for the scholar and the scientific man. In spite of scholars, in spite of science, the superstitions of the people live on. And perhaps those very superstitions are the means of preserving to us the almost forgotten truth. Indeed, had we listened only to those learned in books, we would long ago have lost all touch with our real life.

If we believe in our message and in the aim of the Society, we ought never to tire telling the people that which they can understand. And the rich as well as the poor are the people to whom I refer. They need the help of Theosophy, for they are wandering very close to the marshes of materialism. They must have a true ethic, a right philosophy. Tell them of our great doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Tell of these with confidence, unshaken by opinions of others, and that confidence of yours will beget confidence in the hearer. Science and exact scholarship are factors in our progress, but although they are important, the mass of the people are more important still. You cannot scientifically prove everything. But if you are sure, as so many of us are, that we are immortal pilgrims, then tell the people plainly and practically how they have been here before in other bodies, and will be here again to suffer or enjoy just as they may have decided in their other life, and they will believe it. They will soon come to that belief because these laws are facts in nature, facts in their own real experience. Were I to attend only to scholars, I should be able to do no other work, while all the time my fellow-creatures—not scholars and in the vast majority—would be deprived of the spiritual help it was my duty to give them.

We are really working for the future, laying the foundation for a greater day than this. We are all coming back together to carry

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NOTE.—This article is from an address given by Mr. Judge in London, at the close of the European T.S. Convention, July 15, 1892, and is here reprinted for the first time. —Eds. THEOSOPHY.

on this work if we now take up all our opportunities. We must act from duty now, and thus be right for the future.

Our duty is to recognize the great human soul with which we have to deal and for which we should work. Its progress, its experience, its inner life, are vastly more important than all our boasted civilization. That civilization could easily be swept away, and what would be left? Your country could be frozen up solidly in a few weeks, were the Gulf Stream deflected from these shores. Mines have honeycombed your land, and a good earthquake might easily shake all your material glories to destruction beneath the sea. What then could remain save the human experience, the experience of the soul? But no cataclysm can destroy your thoughts. They live on. And so all the work that you do for the inner life of man can meet with no destruction, even though records and books and all the ingenious works upon this outer plane were swept out of existence. If then you believe in this mighty doctrine of Reincarnation, do not be afraid to tell it.

But do not, as Theosophists, confine yourselves to the intellect. The dry or the interesting speculations upon all the details of cosmogony and anthropology will not save the world. They do not cure sorrow nor appeal to those who feel the grinding stones of fate, and know not why it should be so. Address yourselves therefore to using your intellectual knowledge of these high matters, so as to practically affect the hearts of men.

Our debt to science is very great. It has levelled the barriers and made freedom of thought a possibility. Science is our friend, for without its progress you would now, at the order of the bigot, all be in the common jail. It has combated the strength and cut the claws of bigoted churches. And even those iconoclasts, such as Robert Ingersoll, who often violate the sentiment and ideals of many good men, have helped in this progress, for they have done the tearing down which must precede the building up. It is our place to supply the new structure, for the churches are beginning to find that they must look into subjects which once were kept out of sight. A sign of this was seen at a recent Council of the Methodist Church in America, where their brightest lights declared that they must accept evolution, or they would go down. The only church which does not publicly as yet proclaim on these matters is the Roman Catholic. It is so sly that I should not be surprised ere long to hear of its throwing its mantle over all our doctrines publicly, and saying that such had always been its doctrine. But if that step be taken it will be the fatal one. So even that need give us no fear.

We are working with and for the great unseen, but actual, Brotherhood of Humanity, and in our efforts, if sincere, will have the aid of those our Brothers who have perfected themselves before us and are ever ready to help on the human family. So if we are firmly fixed in that belief, we can never weaken.

I have heard some words about our pretending to be undogmatic, or that our claim to freedom is against the fact. I do not hold such an opinion. Our Society is, as a body, wholly unsectarian. It must always be so. But that does not affect the inevitable result of so many joined in one effort. A large number of us must have come at last to a common belief. This we can boldly say, and at the same time also that no enquirer is obliged to subscribe to those beliefs. For this we have the warrant, not only of our own statutes, but also that of the oft-repeated declarations of H. P. Blavatsky. If I have a belief which works with all the problems that vex us so much, then I will tell it to my fellow who has joined these ranks. If wrong, the interchange of thought will correct me; if right, the truth must at last prevail. In this, Brotherhood means toleration of opinion, and not a fear of declaring the beliefs you hold, nor does that declaration negative in the least the claim to unsectarianism.

This Society is a small germ of a nucleus for a real outer Brotherhood. If we work aright the day must come when we shall have accomplished our aim and formed the nucleus. If we had five hundred members in the Society loving one another with true hearts, not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief—we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts. And this is our work in the future, the work traced out for us by those Masters in whom so many of us firmly believe.

If we only have patience, what a glorious, wide, and noble prospect opens up before us!

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## One True Idea

There is no method of reform so powerful as this: If alongside any false or corrupt belief, or any vicious or cruel system . . . we can succeed in implanting one incompatible idea, then without noise of controversy or clash of battle, those beliefs or customs will wane and die. —Duke of Argyll

# THE RELIGION OF NATURE

## I

> The silent worship of abstract or noumenal Nature, the only divine manifestation, is the one ennobling religion of Humanity.
>
> —*The Secret Doctrine*

NATURE is a unity pervaded by the universality of spiritual intelligence. No man whose heart is warm and open needs to be instructed in this truth by formal religions and philosophies. Yet Nature reveals her full spiritual meaning only to those who are fully natural men, and these are but few during cycles of materiality.

The dogmas of every theology have arisen from a central weakness attributable to the dual nature of man; confusions and fears growing from inner struggle have been transferred to the self-satisfying belief that *nature* is evil, inharmonious, and therefore responsible for human discomfiture. The Christian Devil, a crude creation personalizing the supposed evil of the natural world, is but one device for avoiding the central problem of knowing, controlling and using wisely the psychic energies of the "lower self." This self, the non-self-conscious center of animal energy which serves as the medium of experience for the soul within, is not evil, and only thinking makes it so.

The rule of religion over men's minds has tended ever to obscure opportunities for discovery, in nature, of the purpose of all consciousness of all degrees—the evolution of soul. We of our age are still poor Nature interpreters—despoiling the grandeur by misuse of her wealth and refusing to learn her many proffered truths. We suffer from the shortsightedness of egocentricity. The so-called "savages" of ancient times lived much closer to a harmony with All Nature than ourselves. A lecturer on Natural Religion (Gifford Lectures, 1924-25) perceived something of the spiritual tragedy which has occurred when he summed up the history of natural religious attitudes. His central thoughts may be represented by some passages condensed from his Introduction:

> The general trend of civilized thought for centuries has been gradually emptying the external world of all spiritual contents and reducing it to a welter of unconscious forces. This process of despiritualizing the universe has been a very slow and gradual one, lasting for ages. Yes, the gods of Greece are gone, and only poets are left to mourn their departure. Yet atoms and electrons into which modern science resolves the material world are as truly beyond the reach of our senses as are gnomes and fairies, and any other spiritual beings.

To truly go "back to nature" and the natural in a spiritual sense is difficult. We are, as it were, unaccustomed to the task, yet it is a task we must perform lest we lose our sanity completely in the machinery of a civilization where external, material values reign supreme. But there is a secret and valuable point of departure within each man—for he still wishes to find meaning in his own life.

The actual, enduring purpose for every individual is to find and feel more of his place in relation to *the whole of life*. More than any specific achievement of knowledge, it is *fundamental* orientation which is desired—and which is necessary. The attempt to understand one's real "roots" often expresses itself through philosophy and religion as a means both of reaching a unified explanation of all natural phenomena and acquiring a broad sense of purpose which can suffice in transcending adversity, as well as in enjoying that which is harmonious. Life, men intuitively know, is travail and difficulty, as well as pleasure, and for that reason none can feel secure unless he can integrate sorrow, as well as joy, with a sense of purpose.

Surety and strength are of greater value than enjoyment, though there must indeed exist a higher synthesis of the two. Often this synthesis has been found by those who live close to the harmonies of nature—the nature philosophers and nature lovers. There seems to be both balance and purpose in the natural world, capable of heightening a *sense* of balance and purpose in those men whose intuitions are sufficiently awakened. And is it not philosophically sound to expect precisely this? A deep feeling for nature is expressive of an ability to live in harmony with the very conditions of existence.

Today, as always, it is extremely difficult to "find one's place" if the search is undertaken in the shifting sands of politics and economics. One reason for this may be that the majority of men, whose composite tempers construct the community institutions of politics and economics, are themselves basically disorientated. Between the many concepts of what constitutes the best "state" and the best economic institutions, the individual finds himself in the position of trying to determine a single fixed and true pattern in the movements of a kaleidoscope. Yet, while institutions, and man's ideas concerning them, incessantly change, two things remain constant: the perceptive ability of the Self within, and the eternal background of Great Nature. Herein may lie sufficient explanation for the fact that men who are genuine lovers of the world of

stars, planets and living creatures often reach a calmness or basic sense of orientation possessed by but few of their dominantly political brethren.

What is "Great Nature"? The scientist may answer, "matter in motion according to fixed, ascertainable laws." And the same scientist, by way of preface to his definition, might disapprove of the words "great nature" because he felt them to have mystic overtones incompatible with the "scientific spirit." For the scientist typically studies in segments what the ordinary mortal calls nature, concerning himself with a specialized field of observation, and dismissing any intimation that all studies of value must be related to an idea of total meaning, a single perspective by which to view everything together, from atoms to planets and suns. If the scientist follows in the tradition of specialization, he may become a good technician, but he will also tend to be a poor interpreter of nature for himself and his fellows. Nature yields her most important secrets to those who seek her for all that she is, and not for those who make a single peremptory demand.

It was no historical accident which made the theosophy of Pythagorean teachings so directly responsible for the birth of modern science in the sixteenth century. During mediaeval times, Aristotle, the founder of Western scientific materialism, held sway over men's minds so dominantly that it was exceedingly difficult for Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo to prove that the earth revolved around the sun. The testimony of the senses, in the best Aristotelian manner, apparently proved that all the planets and the sun rotated around the earth. The whole world of science was in the same predicament of limitations as is the individual scientist who today declines to interest himself in the problem of relating his particular discoveries to a pattern of total meaning.

Copernicus and Kepler found it necessary *to deliberately disregard the testimony of the senses* in order to replace the geocentric system of Ptolemy with the harmonious simplicity of the heliocentric theory. They were thinking in the terms of religion—the religion of nature, and not in the terms of so-called empirical science. They were thinking of mathematical proportions because they were convinced, as were their Greek instructors, that nature is a harmony. From this intuition have grown the most important discoveries of science, including those of Isaac Newton and of our own contemporary, Albert Einstein. The invention of the telescope, for example, was impelled by Galileo's belief in the astronomy which he could not prove until *after* the telescope was available.

Many other names, in the shadowy fringes of the "scientific" limelight, are those of men who actually worshipped "noumenal Nature," who *felt* beauty, harmony and meaning first, and founded new theories upon that feeling. The writings of Giordano Bruno and Jacob Boehme, to name but two, were of tremendous suggestive importance to Isaac Newton, and to the infant science of physics. The work of the greatest physicists and mathematicians has been "nature study," originally prompted by intuitive belief in natural philosophy. A Copernicus, as well as a Thoreau, derived inspiration from nature. From this perspective, can be appreciated the hidden meaning of man's instinctive veneration for genuine science, as opposed to the constricting dogmas of religion.

Thus mathematics and physics, the most formal and formidable departments of science, are in their philosophic inception close to every man's capacity for appreciation of Nature and joy in her manifestations. For the great and original thinkers in both departments really speak a simple language, telling us in technical terms what many men, who never read books, know at least partially within their own hearts and with their feelings: Nature, the totality of life, is a source of inspiration to man. Given this recognition, men can search for a philosophy of proportions in their attempts to encompass nature, and subsequently use specific investigation for a deeper penetration beyond those veils which intuition has already pierced.

In varying degrees, Pythagoras, Plato, Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton and Einstein worshipped nature as a *whole,* and their devotion—even when partial—opened their intuitive faculties to the illumination of specific truths. "We are taught all this," said the great Copernicus, "by the harmony of the world, if we will only, as the saying goes, look at the matter with both eyes." Another passage from the father of modern astronomy is in sharp contrast with the tone of many materialists of our own age, who never managed to serve *exact science* nearly as faithfully as did the technically-handicapped Copernicus: "In the middle of all stands the sun. For who, in our most beautiful temple, could set this light in another or better place, than that from which it can at once illuminate the whole? Not to speak of the fact that, not unfittingly, do some call it the light of the world, others the soul. . . . Trismegistus calls it the visible God, Sophocles' Electra, the All-seer."

Even Einstein, though reflecting the scientific agnosticism of his age, has recently written that "the concept of the Oneness of all knowledge can be stated with definite intent." Also that "as re-

gards space and time, the universe is infinite." Were he to add that the universe is also infinite in respect to *intelligence,* he would cross the last boundary between materialism and theosophy and see "our" world as a world everywhere and in all its parts alive with an inner, causative, spiritual intelligence. Einstein, like many another great scientist, has learned much of the harmony and balance which nature can teach man, but his religion lacks a vital element —a conviction of his identity with the *ensouling essence* of all living things. Were he and some other physicists to spend more time among living things, as do sympathetic naturalists, perhaps a feeling for an all-pervasive Spiritual Principle would emerge.

If we turn our minds to the simple nature-intuitions of "primitive" peoples, we may often come closer to "noumenal nature" than when in the company of great modern physicists—though in both instances the source of inspiration has been the same. The American Indians of an as yet unspoiled continent *felt* the oneness of life, treated their younger animal brethren with a certain sober dignity even at the kill, and knew what they meant by the Great Manitou, or spirit of all nature. Their religion—more an intuitive feeling than a formulated philosophy, we may say—sounds a dim echo of the ancient Pantheists.

The Red Indians' glorious predecessors along the unmarked trail to the One Source, the Pantheists of almost forgotten history, possessed, in addition to intuition, a powerful *reasoning* faculty. They were not, as moderns often misconceive them, atheists. In *The Secret Doctrine,* the ancient Pantheists receive their vindication and proper interpretation in H. P. Blavatsky's words: "They did not deny a Creator, or rather a collective aggregate of creators, but only refused, very logically, to attribute 'creation', something finite, to an Infinite Principle, the ever invisible spirit and Soul of Nature, changeless and eternal."

Nor are these thinkers of old without their more recent supporters and comrades. Madame Blavatsky offers evidences that both Leibniz and Spinoza were Pantheists, great philosophers in their intuitive perceptions. "Spinoza recognized but one universal indivisible substance and absolute ALL, while Leibniz perceived the existence of a plurality of substances, hence . . . while Spinoza was a *subjective,* Leibniz was an *objective* Pantheist."

To trace the progress of man's thought from pantheistic worship of one living God to the imprisoning conception of a *Personal God* is a bitter task for the nature-lover or the theosophist. The Personal God, H.P.B. further writes, "was the first Karmic effect of

abandoning a philosophical and logical Pantheism, to build, as a prop for lazy man, 'a merciful father in Heaven.' . . . Having commenced by being synonymous with Nature, 'God,' the Creator, ended by being made its author." It is the image of Great Nature, the creative Force for good, as for evil, represented by the Initiates under the mysterious form of the God Pan, whence were derived the horns and hoofs of the mythical and symbolical figure of Satan. Thus, from the one all-pervading source of invisible Nature, man has created both God and Devil, and lost sight of the one great Whole of which they represent but personified attributes or manifestations.

But the real Pantheism never completely disappears, and we may turn to some of our modern naturalists for evidence that an understanding of the universality of all life can grow from the simplest and most direct study of nature. In noëtic perceptions of the beauty and meaning of natural processes lie the beginnings of a rebirth of genuine "Pantheism," arising from the spirit of a *living* science which reads aright the book of Nature.

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## Up-Hill Work

Selfishness is essentially conservative, and hates being disturbed. It prefers an easy going, unexacting *lie* to the greatest truth, if the latter requires the sacrifice of one's smallest comfort. The power of mental inertia is great in anything that does not promise immediate benefit and reward. Our age is pre-eminently unspiritual and matter of fact. Moreover, there is the unfamiliar character of Theosophic teachings; the highly abstruse nature of the doctrines, some of which contradict flatly many of the human vagaries cherished by sectarians, which have eaten into the very core of popular beliefs. If we add to this the personal efforts and great purity of life exacted of those who would become disciples, and the very limited class to which an entirely unselfish code appeals, it will be easy to perceive the reason why Theosophy is doomed to such slow, up-hill work. It is essentially the philosophy of those who suffer, and who have lost all hope of being helped out of the mire of life by any other means. —H.P.B.

# THE CYCLE'S NEED

## Time of Choice

THE pall of "realism" lies heavy on the present age. The "era of disenchantment" referred to in the first chapter of *Isis Unveiled* has blanketed the world with gloom, spreading a dull, gray fog of apprehension that smothers the hopes of ordinary men, and leaving to philosophers, madmen and fools the task of formulating the future course of mankind.

The mad, the foolish and the wise gain this circumstantial unity from the fact that, in normal times, they are all three rejected by the mass of mankind. Hence it is that their voices can be heard only when the masses find themselves leaderless and alone, when the mantrams of yesterday's Utopias echo dully in the bleak morning of betrayal, and the day to come has no new prophecy to regenerate the popular faiths of the past.

Rising with the grim ascendancy of despair, the madmen lead the wild rebellion of those who reject both the tragedy of human failure and the discipline of turning failure into growth. The demonic themes of Kali Yuga are shrill with the notes of their mindless revolt. The logical inheritors of the rule of a civilization which founds its security upon atomic bombs are the madmen—those whose intellectual processes are so grooved to universal destruction that nihilism has replaced the ethical resolves of sanity.

The foolish and their followers expand mere sentiments to the scope of a panacea. An attempt to construct a social philosophy out of the flabby materials of wishful thinking, these doctrines lack the angry drive of repressed, irrational desire. The foolish represent the lukewarm of humanity, the purely psychic beings, dissociated from will, from Manas, and with only a reflected energy of the kamic impulse. The foolish are so lacking in intellectual and moral perception as to be wholly unaware of the shallowness of their optimism. Like the doctor who kept repeating that there was "nothing serious" the matter, even after his patient had died, the apostles of foolishness live upon the phantoms of dead hopes, reciting the necrology of lost causes.

A time such as the present bears many analogies to the moment of choice destined to overtake the entire human race in the great cycle of the distant future. It is a time of endings and beginnings. The evolutionary principle involved is that stated in *The Secret Doctrine:* The "Ego, progressing in an arc of ascending subjec-

tivity, must exhaust the experience of every plane." In this case, the "exhaustion" is of the energy provided by previous evolutionary impulses. Looking back upon recent centuries, it is impossible to find a single race-mind conception which has today the power to inspire mankind to dynamic action. Religion, science, politics, philosophic speculation—none has any savor for the modern man. Religion, to him, is a Church, the symbol of pious reaction—powerless for good, morally weak, intellectually childish. The nineteenth-century dream of scientific progress has dissolved into the "air-conditioned nightmare" of twentieth-century gadgetry, while the more serious members of society are laying careful plans for underground cities, deep enough, they hope, to escape the menace of the atomic bomb. Science threatens to turn the planet into a vast burrow where each man may hide from the inhumanity of his fellows. Politics—the politics of eighteenth-century liberalism and materialistic radicalism—has nothing new to offer, and the old slogans are not enough. Regulated competition cannot exist in a totalitarian world. Materialism chokes off the breath of freedom, recreating society in the pattern of the hive. Speculative philosophy, long the avocation of scholars, never touched the common man at all.

Such old forms of cultural motivation represent experiences which have been "exhausted" by Western man, who is, therefore, in the position of one who has been released from past illusions, and has found no new dream of hope and progress. At such a time, some men will listen to the wise. As the bewilderments of the interim cycle of transition increase, the number of men willing to seek the truth will grow, while others are slowly drawn to the path of madness, or fling themselves into atavistic currents of blind belief. These are the choices of the present, brought to the race by the compulsion of events, which will be ever more insistent as the cycle moves onward.

What do the wise say? H. P. Blavatsky wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 635):

> We would that all who have a voice in the education of the masses should first know and then *teach* that the safest guides to human happiness and enlightenment are those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity; and that nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality prevail in the countries where the people take their precepts as the rule of their lives.

This is the teaching which must make its way amid the clamor of conflicting claims, the threats, counter-threats and accusations of the hour—which must penetrate the shells of scepticism and revive the famished longings of the human spirit. This is the word of the wise—simple, direct, and profoundly true.

In the present, this doctrine of the ancients and the evidence of its applicability to all human problems are in the custody of the very few—the yeomen of the Theosophical Movement in its interim phase. The work of those few is clearly outlined in the concluding pages of *The Key to Theosophy* as a work of preservation, consolidation and preparation.

The troubled middle years of the century present the successive impacts of preparatory events—the effect aspect of the genetic years of the cycle. Each blow accomplishes another disenchantment, exhausting one more key experience of this plane of psychomanasic evolution. The corresponding *causes,* the spiritual and moral events that are to shape the human sense of "reality" for future centuries, will be the work of the Teachers in the last quarter of the century. Thus the present task, for theosophists, is the building of a solid foundation for the constructive work to come. They have, so to say, to prepare the "lower mind" of the race for a further incarnation of the higher Manas. The Teachers will need workers who can be depended upon to stand firm during the terrible moral cataclysms of the last half of the twentieth century. They will need disciples who are efficient as well as ardent, who have touch with the common mind as well as intuitions of spiritual truth.

The great need of the present is the finding and fostering of devoted individuals who are determined to remain sane, even as the world about them succumbs to the madness of the Kali Yuga. Sanity, in this case, means a firm reliance on moral principles, upon the ancient verities which have descended to mankind from the remotest antiquity. It means an invincible conviction that no good can come to race, nation or family from methods or actions that ignore or deny the soul-nature of man. It means readiness to face dreadful disaster, when averting that disaster seems to mean desertion of principle. Sanity, in the modern world, requires men and women who refuse to drift with the psychic tide that sweeps countless others on to destruction.

Civilization, in the best meaning of the term, implies the general recognition of basic moral standards—principles by which men may guide their lives and judge events and circumstances. When

moral standards are lost, civilization dies; there is no longer a common cultural foundation for human action. Men revert to their individual moral resources, while the community life tends to degrade instead of serving as a common inspiration.

The source of all civilization lies in the teachings of the Sages, which, when applied, create an atmosphere of aspiration and moral striving. The simple truth is that there can be no civilization without these teachings. In a transition age, men have the difficult task of transferring their allegiance from a corrupt to a faithful presentation of the Wisdom-Religion. If it were simply a matter of the reflective comparison of philosophic ideas, and if philosophy were an enduring interest of the many, this transition would proceed as a natural evolutionary process. But the fact is that the philosophic conceptions of a civilization never remain "on high," separate from the life of the people, but are applied in countless ways in all the ordinary customs and activities of daily existence. Corrupt ideas, therefore, inevitably corrupt society in all its aspects, and the regeneration of a civilization involves much more than a new declaration of principles or a political revolution. Transition, fundamentally, is moral rebirth.

Transition, in the modern world, is different from the "new beginnings" of past evolutionary cycles. The Fifth Great Race started afresh on the virgin lands of central Asia. The Pilgrim Fathers came to a land all but untouched by man. But the moral transition demanded of mankind in the twentieth century offers no new and clean place of nature. The nucleus of future World Brotherhood has to draw its sustenance from those who are deeply involved in the material structure of the old order. The foundations of the new civilization must be truly "metaphysical," existing first in the minds of men who live and act according to the material patterns of the old. Transition means that death and rebirth go on simultaneously.

There is, in everyone, a potential madman, fool, and sage. Today, these tendencies are precipitating in patterns of social relations as well as in individuals. As the cycle continues, they will become increasingly apparent, until, finally, all men will be compelled by circumstances to choose between the three. Those who would help with the founding of the great civilization of the future must now begin to discriminate and choose, lest there be some, in years to come, who fail only because they were not warned in time. Transition means that men *must* choose.

# AMONG YOUTH-COMPANIONS

"MAX," said Boyd, suddenly, "have you ever felt the almost uncontrollable desire to go out and break every convention that 'crosses your path'?"

Max, not so impulsive as his companion, gave the question his serious and thoughtful consideration before replying, simply, "No."

"Well," said Boyd, aggressively, "I have. In fact, I do right now. And furthermore," he continued, in his rather argumentative manner, "I'd think theosophists would be among the first to expose conventions for what they are—forms based on superstition rather than on knowledge. After all, blindly following a custom or a tradition is no different, essentially, from following a person, and if theosophists oppose the one, they should oppose the other. Don't you think so?"

Max smiled as he replied, "Of course, my opinion may be colored by the fact that I am not constitutionally a 'rebel.' I don't find it difficult to fit in with most of the mores of our civilization, so perhaps *I'm* prejudiced, too," he added, with a sly glance at his companion. "Still, the fact that many conventions are based on 'superstition,' as you say, does not entirely destroy their significance. Many of H.P.B.'s writings are devoted, directly or indirectly, to uncovering the real meaning and purport of the universal traditions which moderns are pleased to call superstitions. Perhaps we ought to decide what superstitions really are, before we tackle the problem of what we ought to do with them."

Boyd lost no time in answering. "I would say that a superstition is anything based on hearsay rather than on first-hand knowledge. To put it another way, I would say that it is blind belief. It is not simply that the statements of someone else are accepted without proof, but that they are often accepted without even the sanction of the *feeling* that they are true. I am perfectly willing to grant that there are other important criteria for judgment besides the rational faculty—there are feelings, intuitions, 'hunches,' so-called, that are part of every judgment. But with superstitions, I feel that every one of these criteria is ignored and fear is the only factor."

Max was so long silent that Boyd thought he had not been listening, but just as he was about to say something more, Max began to speak. "Don't we sometimes tend to be a little harsh in our judgments of the motivations of other people?—in many ways, I mean. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get even a glimpse into the real workings of another's mind, and it is dangerous to pass judgment

on the meager evidence which is all that is available to *us* of the internal condition of any other person. It's too easy to slide into the habit of thinking of men in the mass—considering them as something different from ourselves. They are not. Separate any individual from the mass which we deplore as slow-moving and unthinking, and we will find him much the same as ourselves, with hopes and longings, dreams and ideals, and with fears, it is true—even as we have fears—but always with a certain degree of surety in some part of his nature, some conviction and proved knowledge which lies at the center of his being.

"Well, all this wasn't aimed at you, Boyd," he added, grinning at his friend. "Anyone who belongs to a minority, and in some sense almost everyone does, is tempted to regard those not susceptible to his particular vision with a certain degree of Olympian disdain. This is a common disease among intellectuals, who grow progressively farther and farther away from mankind the more they perceive its imperfections. If, after taking a good look at our fellows, we once in a while turned the same 'impartial' gaze on ourselves, perhaps a healthy sense of unity with the 'ignorant masses' might result."

Boyd's serious face showed that he recognized a pertinence in his friend's remarks, and there was a touch of becoming humility in his voice as he said, "You may not have been aiming that at me, Max, but I *do* see a certain application to my own state of mind. To get back to the original question, though, what fault have you to find with my definition of superstition?"

"Specifically, nothing," replied Max, slowly. "But I should like to soften it a little. I don't think that it is only fear that dictates 'blind' acceptance of an idea. There is, in humble folk, a reverence for the past, for the traditions which represent the fundamental convictions of their predecessors as expressed in their habits of action and processes of thought. And perhaps a little of that reverence might not be out of place with us today, who require the gilt to be fresh on whatever we touch, and discard what is old as irrelevant."

"Well," interposed Boyd, "there are superstitions and superstitions. I'm not saying that all conventions are senseless, but many are, and I would advocate deserting *them* entirely."

"Maybe I'm playing rather heavily on the key of caution today," Max admitted, a little apologetically, "but very often we may discard a thing as pointless simply because we cannot plumb its

depth. Perhaps this is the case with many of the conventions for which we can see no justification at all.

"You spoke of the possibility of its being the theosophist's duty to lead the way to freedom from the bonds of convention. Perhaps theosophists have a higher duty—one that is not even suspected by many who are quite capable of exposing the inadequacy of various standards accepted by the world. Mr. Crosbie once said, speaking of U.L.T., 'we look to the *spirit,* and care only for that.' We might take that as a keynote for the highest function which Theosophists can perform in this cycle—to search out the spirit of any act, or thought, or custom; to trace its origin, discover its purpose, and thus revitalize its meaning. Superstitions are made, not simply by blind belief, but by blind belief in *forms*. If men sought for the spirit in any and all occasions, instead of attaching themselves to the fleeting forms which embody that spirit, their adherence could never be entirely irrational and 'unfeeling'."

"If that's the case," was Boyd's quick rejoinder, "I should think you'd want to abolish the forms altogether!"

"It's evident that *you* do, at any rate," Max laughingly replied. Then, returning to his wonted deliberation, he continued, "and there's this to say for your case. In certain cycles, during the 'childhood' of humanity, organizations, forms and institutions are natural and right. In other cycles, they are a downright perversion. This would seem to be such a cycle, when we read the statements of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. on the crucial position of the *individual* as the source of all inspiration and the focus of all power in this age."

Catching a gleam in Boyd's eye which seemed to say, "I knew you'd 'come around' some time, old boy!", Max hastened to add: "Please don't misunderstand me, now! I merely admit that there are times when conventions are more necessary than they are at other times. However, this doesn't mean that I'm going to mount the black steed of iconoclasm and trample them all down! Mr. Judge, as you know, repeatedly asserted that this is a *transition age,* in which all systems of religion, philosophy and science are undergoing great changes. We are too anxious to destroy things. And, looking around us today, we can see plenty of forces working on the destructive side. They are necessary—they are useful. But there is also need for those who have a fuller knowledge that they can 'build' with.

"Then, too, when something has outlived its usefulness, don't you think it will meet its natural dissolution? If our emphasis is on creating something better, the undesirable and worthless elements will disintegrate all the sooner, being deprived of the sustaining power of our thoughts."

"That's true," agreed Boyd, thoughtfully. "There are many to help in the work of destruction, but never enough to overcome social inertia, and find ways to re-embody the ideals that once animated the old traditions."

"That's just the way I feel about it," Max responded. "And that's probably why I seem so conservative, Boyd," he added, as an afterthought. "You see, people resent the idea of wholesale destruction of social forms—they don't like to think that so many of the things they do, should not be done. Now, we know from our own experience that if we change our fundamental attitude of mind, we see old habits in a new light and that we need to change them. The point is that in this case the impulse comes from understanding, and therefore the necessity for reform is clearly felt."

"Well, that's the work of the individual theosophist, isn't it, then?" queried Boyd, and his tone indicated that Max's words had had their effect.

"Yes, and there are any number of things each one can do," Max answered. "The only common denominator that theosophists need to have is *positive* action. Read Mr. Judge's article, 'Iconoclasm Towards Illusions,' and you will find much of your own attitude exemplified there. 'The change from dogma or creed to a belief in law and justice impartial will bring perhaps some tears to the soul, but the end thereof is peace and freedom.' The theosophist is not asked to tolerate dogma, but to expose it wherever he can—always taking care to show where the truth can be found. The man who destroys another's faith without being able to offer a better in its place is no less bound by form than the person he undertakes to help—for he cannot transcend the forms he has destroyed. What is needed is not simply iconoclasts, but *builders*."

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It makes no difference to me whether I teach or am taught.

—COMENIUS

# THE BLESSINGS OF PUBLICITY

A WELL-KNOWN public lecturer, a distinguished Egyptologist, said, in one of his lectures against the teachings of Theosophy, a few suggestive words, which are now quoted and must be answered:—

"It is a delusion to suppose there is anything in the experience or wisdom of the past, the ascertained results of which can only be communicated from beneath the cloak and mask of mystery. . . . Explanation is the Soul of Science. They will tell you *we cannot have their knowledge without living their life.* . . . Public experimental research, the printing press, and a free-thought platform, have abolished the need of mystery. It is no longer necessary for science to take the veil, as she was forced to do for security in times past," etc.

This is a very mistaken view in one aspect. "Secrets of the purer and profounder life" not only *may* but *must* be made universally known. But *there are secrets that kill* in the arcana of Occultism, and unless a man *lives the life* he cannot be entrusted with them.

The late Professor Faraday had very serious doubts whether it was quite wise and reasonable to give out to the public at large certain discoveries of modern science. Chemistry had led to the invention of too terrible means of destruction in our century to allow it to fall into the hands of the profane. What man of sense —in the face of such fiendish applications of dynamite and other explosive substances as are made by those incarnations of the Destroying Power, who glory in calling themselves Anarchists and Socialists—would not agree with us in saying:—Far better for mankind that it should never have blasted a rock by modern perfected means, than that it should have shattered the limbs of one per cent even of those who have been thus destroyed by the pitiless hand of Russian Nihilists, Irish Fenians and Anarchists. That such discoveries, and chiefly their murderous application, ought to have been withheld from public knowledge may be shown on the authority of statistics and commissions appointed to investigate and record the result of the evil done. The following information gathered from public papers will give an insight into what may be in store for wretched mankind.

England alone—the centre of civilization—has 21,268 firms fabricating and selling explosive substances. But the centres of

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NOTE.—This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer,* August, 1891.

the dynamite trade, of infernal machines, and other such results of modern civilization, are chiefly at Philadelphia and New York. It is in the former city of "Brotherly Love" that the now most famous manufacturer of explosives flourishes. It is one of the well-known respectable citizens—the inventor and manufacturer of the most murderous "dynamite toys"—who, called before the Senate of the United States anxious to adopt means for the repression of a *too free trade* in such implements, found an argument that ought to become immortalised for its cynical sophistry:—"My *machines,*" that expert is reported to have said—"are quite *harmless to look at;* as they may be manufactured in the shape of oranges, hats, boats, and anything one likes. . . . Criminal is he who murders people by means of such machines, not he who manufactures them. The firm refuses to admit that were there no supply there would be no incentive for demand on the market; but insists that every demand should be satisfied by a supply ready at hand."

That "supply" is the fruit of civilization and of the publicity given to the discovery of every murderous property in matter. What is it? As found in the Report of the Commission appointed to investigate the variety and character of the so-called "infernal machines," so far the following implements of instantaneous human destruction are already on hand. The most fashionable of all among the many varieties fabricated by Mr. Holgate, are the "Ticker," the "Eight Day Machine," the "Little Exterminator," and the "Bottle Machines." The "Ticker" is in appearance like a piece of lead, a foot long and four inches thick. It contains an iron or steel tube, full of a kind of gunpowder invented by Holgate himself. That gunpowder, in appearance like any other common stuff of that name, has, however, an explosive power two hundred times stronger than common gunpowder; the "Ticker" containing thus a powder which equals in force two hundred pounds of the common gunpowder. At one end of the machine is fastened an invisible clock-work meant to regulate the time of the explosion, which time may be fixed from one minute to thirty-six hours. The spark is produced by means of a steel needle which gives a spark at the touch-hole, and communicates thereby the fire to the whole machine.

The "Eight Day Machine" is considered the most powerful, but at the same time the most complicated, of all those invented. One must be familiar with handling it before a full success can be secured. It is owing to this difficulty that the terrible fate intended for London Bridge and its neighbourhood was turned aside by

the instantaneous killing instead of the two Fenian criminals. The size and appearance of that machine changes, Proteus-like, according to the necessity of smuggling it in, in one or another way, unperceived by the victims. It may be concealed in bread, in a basket of oranges, in a liquid, and so on. The Commission of Experts is said to have declared that its explosive power is such as to reduce to atoms instantly the largest edifice in the world.

The "Little Exterminator" is an innocent-looking plain utensil having the shape of a modest jug. It contains neither dynamite nor powder, but secretes, nevertheless, a deadly gas, and has a hardly perceptible clock-work attached to its edge, the needle of which points to the time when that gas will effect its escape. In a shut-up room this new "vril" of lethal kind, will *smother to death, nearly instantaneously,* every living being within a distance of a hundred feet, the radius of the murderous jug. With these three "latest novelties" in the high season of Christian civilization, the catalogue of the dynamiters is closed; all the rest belongs to the old "fashion" of the past years. It consists of hats, *porte cigars,* bottles of ordinary kind, and even *ladies' smelling bottles,* filled with dynamite, nitro-glycerine, etc., etc.,—weapons, some of which, following unconsciously Karmic law, killed many of the dynamiters in the last Chicago *revolution.* Add to this the forthcoming long-promised Keely's vibratory force, capable of reducing in a few seconds a dead bullock to a heap of ashes, and then ask yourself if the *Inferno* of Dante as a locality can ever rival earth in the production of more hellish engines of destruction!

Thus, if purely material implements are capable of blowing up, from a few corners, the greatest cities of the globe, provided the murderous weapons are guided by expert hands—what terrible dangers might not arise from magical *occult* secrets being revealed, and allowed to fall into the possession of ill-meaning persons! A thousand times more dangerous and lethal are these, because neither the criminal hand, nor the *immaterial,* invisible weapon used, can ever be detected.

The congenital *black* magicians—those who, to an innate propensity towards evil, unite highly-developed mediumistic natures —are but too numerous in our age. It is nigh time then that psychologists and believers, at least, should cease advocating the beauties of publicity and claiming knowledge of the secrets of nature for all. It is not in our age of "suggestion" and "explosives" that Occultism can open wide the doors of its laboratories except to those who *do* live the life. —H.P.B.

# THE LINEAGE OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

THE passing, on Jan. 31, 1946, of W. Macneile Dixon, almost without notice by the Western world—without mention, at least, in the American press—marks the end of a notable cycle of philosophy in English thought. The fact that the death of this eminent thinker brought little or no comment on his extraordinary contributions to modern civilization is evidence of the impoverishment of present-day intellectuality. Although the silence of the American press is relieved somewhat by Norman Cousins' reference to Dixon in *Modern Man Is Obsolete,* and by the occasional enthusiasms of other admirers, the full significance of his greatest work, *The Human Situation,* seems to have been lost to the great majority of critics and essayists. Perhaps theosophists alone have the historical perspective that makes possible a just appreciation of his profound analysis of Western culture.

While many have been able to see, in Dixon's words, that, "Prisoners we are of our age," the further diagnosis he offers establishes a unique foundation for criticism of modern thought and the basis for deeply intuitive reconstruction in philosophy. Writing of the "polished structure" of science, he shows that the import of scientific theory is "that the world, life, all things should be wholly senseless, without meaning," and if you ask,

> "What is this power everywhere at work throughout the universe doing, this stupendous energy?" the answer is, "It is doing nothing; it is a lunatic energy, making and breaking, building up and knocking down, endlessly and aimlessly.". . .

The prison of the age is its Materialism, whose subjective limitations confine the human spirit to the gross calculations of the senses:

> On every side to-day you meet with an exaltation of the intellect at the expense of the spirit. You may trust, it is said, your thoughts but not your aspirations. . . . Nature is rent asunder. You enthrone the measuring, weighing, calculating faculty of the human creature. His remaining attributes are irrelevant. But who told you that nature had drawn this line? Where did you learn of this preference? Nature has no preferences. If she has given us deceiving souls, how can you argue that she has given us truthworthy intellects? . . . We should at least, then, aim at a conclusion which the intellect can accept and the heart approve.

Unlike the many generations of mere commentators on Plato, who, as H. P. Blavatsky said, almost all shrink from every passage which implies that his metaphysics are based on a solid foundation, and not on ideal conceptions, Dixon moves from the criterion set

in the foregoing passage to affirm the soul's immortality, disarming his critics by the impartiality of his development. Intuition, he says, which has as great a claim on credibility as reason or science, tells us that the future already belongs to us, "that we should bear it continually in mind, since it will be ours."

> So closely are all human ideals associated with futurity that, in the absence of the faith that man is an immortal being, it seems doubtful whether they could ever have come to birth. . . . Are there any indications in nature or human nature upon which to found this hope?—the hope that even Schopenhauer could with difficulty forgo, when he wrote, "In the furthest depth of our being we are secretly conscious of our share in the inexhaustible spring of eternity, so that we can always hope to find life in it again."

Dixon's approach leads inescapably to the doctrine of Reincarnation:

> And what kind of immortality is at all conceivable? Of all doctrines of a future life, palingenesis or rebirth, which carries with it the idea of pre-existence, is by far the most ancient and most widely held. . . . And though this doctrine has for European thought a strangeness, it is in fact the most natural and easily imagined, since what has been can be again. . . . It 'has made the tour of the world,' and seems, indeed, to be in accordance with nature's own favourite way of thought, of which she so insistently reminds us, in her rhythms and recurrences, her cycles and revolving seasons. "It presents itself," wrote Schopenhauer, "as the natural conviction of man whenever he reflects at all in an unprejudiced manner.". . . from infancy every forgotten day and hour has added to our experiences, to our growth and capacity. All that a child was and did, though unremembered, is still a part of him and is knit up into his present nature. Every day and hour had its value and made its contribution to the mind and soul. So it may be with former lives, each of them but a day in our past history. The universe is wide, and life here or elsewhere might on this view be regarded as a self prescription, a venture willed by the soul for some end and through some prompting of its own, to enlarge its experience, learn more of the universe, recover lost friends, or resume a task begun but not fulfilled.

Whence these majestic conceptions in modern thought? What were the wells of Dixon's inspiration, the lines of his philosophic heredity and descent? To answer these questions, we must turn to the long sweep of English history, finding in the distant past the currents of the larger theosophical movement which have flowed through the centuries, to emerge but recently in a small group of philosophers.

The antecedents of these contemporary idealists were clearly the Cambridge Platonists of seventeenth-century England. Wise in the science of their day, and schooled in precise Cartesian thinking, they nevertheless rejected the materialism toward which Descartes had directed the awakening Western intellectuality. This was a period of dramatic destiny for England and for the West. The preceding epoch had seen the break with Rome under Henry VIII; the educational reforms of the Oxford Reformers, Colet, Erasmus and More, had been established, and Shakespeare's genius had brought to the already rich culture of the Elizabethan period an impersonal profundity unequalled to the present day. In seventeenth-century England, the line of occult doctrine was represented by Robert Fludd and other disciples of the Rosicrucians and Paracelsus; mystical religion was spread by followers of Boehme; the turbulent political history of the time was matched by great religious reforms, the strenuous search for truth being symbolized by John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.* In the middle years of the century, Milton wrote his noble *Areopagitica,* and the next generation witnessed the founding of the Royal Society, and later came publication of Newton's *Principia*—consolidating the Copernican revolution.

Against this colorful background of momentous political and moral events, the Cambridge Platonists offered their wise leaven of philosophy, refining the scientific conceptions and broadening the religious thought of the age. Newton himself adopted the doctrines expounded by Henry More, as the metaphysical foundation for his scientific conceptions. The Platonists, Ralph Cudworth, John Smith, More, and others exerted a truly civilizing influence on all their contemporaries, rendering the moral inspiration of the Renaissance into an English idiom for future generations.

Except for the lonely figure, Thomas Taylor, in the eighteenth century, English thought reveals no similar idealism until the early 1900's, when there appeared a nucleus of philosophers who seemed specially born to carry on the tradition established centuries earlier. A trio of these thinkers may be named as representing a virtual "reincarnation" of the Cambridge Platonists—certainly, a rebirth of their philosophic ardor and mellow humanity.

The first of the three, John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart, an avowed Hegelian, presented a finished argument for Reincarnation in his *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology,* and demolished the theological defenses of the personal-god idea in *Some Dogmas of Religion.* McTaggart was a formal metaphysician who gained the deep

admiration of scholars and the devoted loyalty of his students. Hegel, he said, was concerned with the greater questions of cosmology and general laws, and therefore neglected the obvious application of his philosophy in Palingenesis, or Reincarnation. In McTaggart's books, this teaching reaches a kind of speculative perfection, in academic form.

The second of the trio is G. Lowes Dickinson, essayist and educator, author of an important study of the first world war and a leading British pacifist of that epoch. Dickinson's writings are notable for their simplicity. His *Is Immortality Desirable?* presents the arguments for reincarnation in a less studied fashion than McTaggart's severe logic, but more within the comprehension of the common man. Dickinson's travel essays on the Orient show an intuitive grasp of the difference between the dynamically aggressive West and the impassive, philosophical East.

If McTaggart brought the Hegelian system into individual focus in the doctrine of reincarnation, and if Dickinson, almost alone among Western scholars, revealed a true understanding of Oriental mysticism, Dixon, for many years professor of English literature at the University of Edinburgh, returned to the fountain of Hellenic inspiration and made the grandeur of Greek philosophy a living power in Western thought. *Hellas Revisited,* written during a journey through the region of ancient Greek civilization, recreates the spirit of the classical past for the modern reader. Dixon has written other books of charm and power; one, *The Englishman,* is a delightful appreciation of the Anglo-Saxon race and temperament. But his greatest work, surpassing in universality both McTaggart and Dickinson, and standing above his own previous writings as a mountain towers over humble foothills, is *The Human Situation,* a summation of the best in the Western philosophical tradition.

*The Human Situation* is made up of the Gifford Lectures presented at the University of Glasgow from 1935 to 1937. In them all the Theosophical fundamentals are clearly present. Founded on the thought of the great literary and philosophical predecessors of the West, this book offers a modern synthesis of Plato, Plotinus, Leibniz, Spinoza, Henry More, and scores of other seminal thinkers. Dixon wrote nothing more of equal importance after *The Human Situation,* but this alone has created for him a place among the immortals of modern thought. Dixon is an exoteric Confucius for the West, uniting its several currents of metaphysical thinking and idealistic speculation in one unified philosophy.

The role of such intellectual achievements in the larger Theosophical Movement is suggested by several statements of the Teachers. Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist to whom Dixon will bear close comparison, was said by H.P.B. to be "resting" in an elevated state of *Tribhuvana,* spinning out profound metaphysical conceptions while awaiting the pull of karmic attraction for another earth-life. If Colonel Olcott's hints can be trusted, More had something to do with the production of *Isis Unveiled.* And Mr. Judge, speaking of intellectual studies, referred to the good effects that would come about "through immortal ideas once more set in motion." These thinkers, devoted to "immortal ideas," gave to the world of reflective thinking the best that the Manasic power of their race was capable of. Under the limits set by the cycle, and outside the path of initiation, they worked and served, as great poets have worked and served, as artists and men of genius. They assimilate and supplement the labors of spiritual teachers, affecting the mind of the race in many ways. No better illustration could be found of the "protegés" of the Nirmanakayas, of whom Patanjali said, "In all these bodies one mind is the moving cause." Like the Florentine School of Ficino and Pico, like the German Transcendentalists, Herder, Lessing, and others, and like the American school of Alcott, Emerson and Thoreau, these English philosophers of the twentieth century have helped to prepare the materials of manasic and moral evolution for future cycles of growth in the West.

Always, the test of philosophical teachings is to be sought in the fundamental ideas proposed for consideration. For these English philosophers—lovers of truth—we shall let W. Macneile Dixon speak, taking from *The Human Situation* passages which approximate the basic conceptions of the Theosophical philosophy, and arranging them to correspond with the Three Propositions of the Secret Doctrine.

## I

> We put aside as beyond hope of solution by ours, or any other minds, the nature of "the One," the great Reality or Being, in which they are rooted—a knot which neither atomists nor idealists have been able to untie. In what manner the Absolute can be at the same time the One and the Many we cannot tell, nor could the relationship between unity and plurality in primordial Being be made clear or set forth in human terms.

## II

The Cosmos is "a vast and complex web of life," a concourse or colony of creatures, for each of whom its environment, or forum of activities, is just the rest of the society. It is a hierarchy of innumerable minds, an ascending series of intelligences. . . . And the physical world in its various patterns is the outcome of their combined strivings to that end, the form their interaction takes for us. In their fellowships they find their opportunities, and from their intimacies and rivalries, from their ceaseless intercourse, arise the evolutions and processes which the passage of nature displays. They have . . . achieved a certain stability, an adjustment and equilibrium, such as, despite its convulsions and disharmonies, appear in the regularity and uniformity, the stability and order of nature that we call her laws. Or how else are we to account for these laws? . . . If, as we may well believe, the universe is everywhere and in all its parts alive, the first act in the cosmic drama provided—in the manifestations of these monadic souls, which to us appears as the material world—the earliest and most numerous of its many federations, and became the ground upon which the more closely knit organisms, informed by later or succeeding monads, took their stand; the later life waves flowing through and mounting on the earlier. The laws of nature would then be their consolidated behaviour, their simple, automatic habits. . . .

It is Plato's doctrine, and none more defensible, that the soul before it entered the realm of Becoming existed in the universe of Being. Released from the region of time and space, it returns to its former abode, "the Sabbath, or rest of souls," into communion with itself. After a season of quiet "alone with the Alone," of assimilation of its earthly experiences and memories, refreshed and invigorated, it is seized again by the desire for further trials of its strength, further knowledge of the universe, the companionship of former friends, by the desire to keep in step and on the march with the moving world. There it seeks out and once more animates a body, the medium of communication with its fellow travellers, and sails forth in that vessel upon a new venture in the ocean of Becoming.

## III

Accept for a moment the point of view. Suppose, with Leibniz, the world to be a congregation of separate entities, extending from the dust beneath our feet to the stars above us. A surprising fancy, you think, but let us give it rein. Suppose each individual particle within the Universe bent in its own mode and measure upon the expression and expansion of its separate being, all in a degree sentient, some below, some above what we call consciousness, "less sunk in matter," as Leibniz expressed it, than others. Suppose the world's existing

patterns the outcome of these striving selves. Suppose further—a crucial step—the division we habitually make between the animate and inanimate a needless dichotomy, and the minutest of existing things, the very constituents of the atoms themselves, charged with vital energy, each living and spiritual in its essential nature.

The conclusion of *The Human Situation* strikes a deeply Theosophical note, both memorable and inspiring, presenting the perspective of illimitable soul-evolution, from lowest to highest:

What a handful of dust is man to think such thoughts! Or is he, perchance, a prince in misfortune, whose speech at times betrays his birth? I like to think that, if men are machines, they are machines of a celestial pattern, which can rise above themselves, and, to the amazement of the watching gods, acquit themselves as men. I like to think that this singular race of indomitable, philosophising, poetical beings, resolute to carry the banner of Becoming to unimaginable heights, may be as interesting to the gods as they to us, and that they will stoop to admit these creatures of promise into their divine society.

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## Intimations of Immortality

With respect to immortality, nothing shows me [so clearly] how strong and almost instinctive a belief it is, as the consideration of the view now held by most physicists, namely, that the sun with all the planets will in time grow too cold for life, unless indeed some great body dashes into the sun, and thus gives it fresh life. Believing as I do that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is, it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress. To those who fully admit the immortality of the human soul, the destruction of our world will not appear so dreadful.—Charles Darwin, *Letters*

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## Eskimo Culture

Some curious doctrines of Stone Age Eskimos are discussed by Vilhjalmur Stefansson, naturalist and explorer, in "Primitive People Are Far From Simple" (March *Redbook*). Mr. Stefansson, who lived with the Coronation Gulf Eskimos in Northern Canada for 10 years, first notes that explorers who have lived with savages long enough to use their language will generally agree that on the average they are "more kind, considerate, generous, helpful than we," and that some languages of uncivilized people are better tools for expression of ideas than modern languages. (Students may find background and explanation for this fact in the passage on the symbol languages, *S.D.* II, 439.)

> I know from experience [writes Mr. Stefansson] that two men who speak English and Eskimo well are not going to converse in English unless what they are talking about is some particularly English subject, like the dramas of Shakespeare or the cotton-spinning of Lancashire . . . one page of typed Eskimo becomes more than two pages of typed English. . . . You can say as much in one hour of Eskimo-speaking as you can in two hours with English, and you will say it more precisely as well as more concisely. . . . I feel like putting it even more strongly, and saying that there is less than a tenth the chance of wrong interpretation when you shift from English to Eskimo. . . .
>
> In Eskimo a single noun, like "man" or "house," can have more than a thousand forms, each different in meaning from any other, and the difference is so precise that no misunderstanding is possible . . . if you were to study in succession Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Russian, each till you could think in it and speak in it fluently and correctly, you would find those four languages combined easier to learn than Eskimo alone . . . the most brilliant conversation I ever listened to has been among Stone Age Eskimos.

## Eskimos on Reincarnation

Mr. Stefansson discovered among his Eskimo friends "beliefs that resembled, in a way, the reincarnation theories that we associate with India," although the processes of physical birth are unknown to the Eskimos, as is common with most primitive peoples. Moreover, their theories of rebirth greatly complicate the relationships that parents and others have with children:

> In the Eskimo view, a child is born with a soul as foolish and feeble as the child seems to be and is. Clearly this soul is not com-

petent to look after the welfare of the child. So the mother, the first thing, summons the spirit of some man or woman from where it has been waiting near the graveyard. In some communities this is the spirit of the last person who died; in others it is the soul of the last near relative who died.

The formula is, twice repeated: "Soul of Mary (or John), come here. Be my child's *atka,*" meaning something like "guardian angel."

There is no question of the sex—a boy child may receive either a man's or a woman's soul, and the like with a girl baby.

## Native Intuition

The similarity to the Sanscrit term "Atma" is notable, but summoning a spirit from near a graveyard suggests rather the personal shadow-form of terrestrial desires and passions, than the high and wise soul. But vestiges of the ancient true doctrine remain, as in an Irish folk tradition which requires that a child who dies young shall be buried at a crossroads, so as to be easily "picked up," that is, find a current of rebirth. Where the essential truth is gleaned from such folklore by one with native intuition, the "spiritual fact" thus savored becomes part of an inner faith in hidden realities, transcendental laws and soul progress. Materialism encroaches on the domain of truth when physical processes assume precedence over underlying causes, and learning is limited to that which can be outwardly demonstrated. "The ancients," wrote H.P.B., "knew and could distinguish the *corporeal* from the *spiritual* elements, in the forces of nature."

## Original Wisdom

It is the guardian soul that looks after the child, teaches it to walk and talk, protects and helps it. "This guardian has all the wisdom gained in a long life, and in addition the higher wisdom that comes after death. Therefore the child is wiser than its parents, wiser than anyone who is older, for the memory of the earlier life, the spirit world, fades gradually. I had been living for several years in the homes of Eskimos before I realized why it was they never punished any child for anything."

> . . . when there was a difference of opinion the child was almost necessarily in the right and the physical mother in the wrong; even more serious, the guardian angel might get angry if the decision she announced, through the mouth of the child, were overruled or disregarded. The guardian might even become so discouraged or angry as to leave the child, whereupon the youngster would become stupid or the prey of accident or of disease—likely enough crosseyed, bowlegged or perhaps deaf. . . . With this theory of bringing up chil-

> dren, you have the worst possible urchins at the stage of three to five years. Somewhere in there they usually begin to improve rapidly.

The parents bring this change about, Mr. Stefansson explains, by using an older child as an example of good behavior, fairness, patience, and cooperation. "That kind of talk, constantly repeated, gradually sinks in. By six or seven, most children are speaking in low tones, helping others, watching out constantly for chances to be useful to family or community."

## PARENTAL ATTITUDES

The contrast between this view of childhood, and the "little-devil" theory that perpetuates the recessive influence of the doctrine of original sin, is significant. The key years are three and seven, the first a dawn of self-consciousness and the second a beginning of the moral sense. When the over-all attitude of parents toward children is one of respect for inherent wisdom—whatever the appearances—there must at least be a healthier polarity in the home atmosphere, with more of the sunshine that stimulates growth, and fewer overhanging clouds to threaten and discourage. When parents and educators become able to strike a balance, by means of philosophy, between the opposite poles of too little and too much faith in human nature, or between the dual elements in man, the incarnation and reincarnation of the Thinker will proceed more intelligently and harmoniously.

## REVERSE SCIENCE

A further complication of the lives of Stone Age Eskimos is the ever-present taboo. These people, Mr. Stefansson points out, seek not what to do, and how and why, or positive knowledge, but "what not to do, how to avoid," and their greatest admiration is reserved for those who discover new taboos. The Christian taboos relating to Sunday fascinated them, as did the rules of cleanliness and hygiene. The explorer quotes from his book, *My Life with the Eskimos* (1913), the argument one Eskimo used with telling effect on those of his race who were not admirers of white people: "Our wise men have discovered taboos on food and drink, on clothing and methods of travel, on words and thoughts. But, until the white man came, did we ever hear of Sunday? Did the wisest of us ever realize that a day might be taboo?"

This somewhat saddening devotion to restrictive and constrictive forms epitomizes the indrawing of a dying race, such as the Eskimos are, according to *Secret Doctrine* teachings:

> The majority of mankind belongs to the seventh sub-race of the Fourth Root-Race—the Chinamen and their off-shoots and branchlets. (Malayans, Mongolians, Tibetans, Hungarians, Finns, and even the Esquimaux are all remnants of this last offshoot.) . . .
>
> Redskins, Eskimos, Papuans, Australians, Polynesians, etc., etc. —all are dying out. Those who realize that every Root-Race runs through a gamut of seven sub-races with seven branchlets, etc., will understand the "why."

## The Natural and Supernatural

To appreciate the Stone Age way of thinking, Mr. Stefansson concludes, one must learn "the really simple truth—simple when you grasp it—that in their way of looking at it, there is no dividing line between the natural and the supernatural":

> For instance, if you and I had said to a Mackenzie River Eskimo in 1906, one of us that he had spent the previous winter in San Francisco and the other that he had spent it on the moon, then they would have believed both stories, one of them or neither, purely on the basis of what they thought of our general truthfulness. They knew of many white whalers who had been to San Francisco; they knew of many shamans who had been to the moon.
>
> The native does not marvel at the marvelous, for in his belief marvels are things which every ordinary shaman is able to do, like flying to the moon, traveling below the surface of the earth, visiting people who live at the bottom of the sea. Those things he knows he cannot understand, so he simply takes them for granted. . . .

## Primitive "Naturalism"

> When I showed these local people how to discover caribou on a far hillside by looking through my [field] glasses, they took it as a matter of course, interesting but not wonderful. . . . one of them said to me, "Now that you have shown us the caribou that are here today, please show us also the ones that are coming tomorrow." I had to confess, to their surprise, that I could not do this, whereupon they were considerably more impressed with my failure than they had been with my ability to reveal this day's herd. For they knew of shamans who could look into a pool of water and see things that would happen tomorrow or even next year.

This persistence of a natural view of psychic powers among primitive peoples illustrates H.P.B.'s statement that "Civilization has ever developed the physical and the intellectual at the cost of the psychic and spiritual," and a consideration of this idea will be found in "The Religion of Nature," printed elsewhere in this issue.

## TOLSTOI IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By what may seem a curious coincidence, but is actually the outgrowth of an editorial policy of consistent and increasing merit, Dwight Macdonald's *Politics* for May reprints, as part of a series called "Ancestors," two essays by Tolstoi which are a trenchant criticism of modern science and modern life. Written respectively in 1889 and 1893, these articles are in the current of inspiring iconoclasm familiar to readers of H. P. Blavatsky and Wm. Q. Judge, and may be said to be a commentary on the concluding passage on Science in the *Ocean of Theosophy,* and on the spontaneous generation of humane action, described in H.P.B.'s first Message to the American Theosophists.

Dwight Macdonald, in introducing Tolstoi's essays, takes personal exception to "the religious sentiment that he considered the heart of his values," but identifies Tolstoi as an "extraordinary 'journalist of ideas'," and commends his ability to treat philosophical problems with a high standard of simplicity: "Only a great moral teacher can be at once so simple and so subtle." The paradox recognized here is precisely what lends temporal immunity to true philosophic analysis. It is the paradox that truth, which is simple, suffers from so much complicated misunderstanding, and that basic principles, when perceived, are at once self-evident and difficult to communicate.

## FREE-THINKING ON SCIENTISM

Students will wish to read the Tolstoi material in full, to appreciate more than ever the background for H.P.B.'s championship of this free-thinker whose "unecclesiastical Christianity" she so highly praised. (See THEOSOPHY XXXII, 245, and 306; XXIX, 397; and IV, 197 and 412.) Macdonald's "championship" is also inevitable, as was suggested. He is so thoroughly committed to free-thinking on social questions that no political ism is "radical" enough to contain him, and so insistent on the responsibility of the individual (Lookout, May and July, 1945) that he must approach a philosophy of metaphysics (heresy to so-called "liberals") in order to describe his convictions. Thus Macdonald, in common with theosophists, naturally responds to Tolstoi.

Tolstoi examines human society from the standpoint of human nature, and since he was, in H.P.B.'s words, "the greatest psychologist" of his century, and since human nature changes very slowly, his words have not been outdated, even by the seemingly "new"

events of contemporary history. The problem of atomic energy does not affect his argument that

> our modern men of science . . . have invented for themselves a theory of "science for science's sake," according to which science studies, not what is necessary to men, but everything. . . .

## Reactionary Science

> If the organization of society is bad, as ours is, where a small number of men dominate the majority and oppress them, then every victory over nature will inevitably only serve to increase this power and this oppression. . . . science, instead of spreading amongst men correct religious, moral, and social ideas which would cause all these calamities [of disease, social inequalities and hardships, war, etc.] to disappear of themselves, is occupied on the one hand with the justification of the existing order, and on the other hand with playthings. . . .
>
> Our science in order to become a science and to be really useful instead of harmful to humanity, must first of all renounce its experimental method, which causes it to consider as its business merely the study of what exists, and return to the only wise and fruitful understanding of science, according to which its subject is the investigation of how men must live.

## Radical Human Action

The belief that men need make no individual effort to change the existing order for a better one, but that "some external force acting of itself, whether religion or science," can move society, will make the change more difficult to accomplish, observes Tolstoi. He makes no apology for holding ideals to be necessities:

> Although all these things, straight line, exact truth, and perfect virtue alike, have never existed, not only are they more natural, more known, and more *explicable* than all our other knowledge; but they are the only things we truly and certainly do know. . . . The true reality, that which we truly know, is that which never existed. . . . It is only thanks to the ideal that we know anything at all, and that is why the ideal alone can guide mankind in their lives, both individually and collectively. . . .
>
> When once the love of one's neighbour has become natural to man, the new conditions of the Christian life will come about spontaneously, just as in a liquid saturated with salt the crystals commence to form the moment one ceases to stir it.

Tolstoi's philosophy offers the same basic teaching as H.P.B.'s discussion of "Practical Theosophy" in the *Key to Theosophy*. It is to be hoped that other periodicals will follow Macdonald's lead in reviving Tolstoi's social inspiration.

## CHILD PRODIGY

John (Bo) Feaster, Jr., was 2 years and 5 months old when he discussed matters of state with the U.S. Secretary of State, and afterward granted a press interview in which he displayed his "unusual mental ability" (New York *Times,* April 20). His "faultless recitation" of the names of all the Presidents, and his associating them with the various denominations of bills carrying their pictures, was followed by an account of the heads of various foreign governments, etc., etc. The exhibition was given "under the tutelage of his father," according to the news story, and "Mr. Feaster, who owns a beef cattle farm in Alabama, related that Bo first showed unusual mental prowess when he was 5 months old by saying 'a few words such as daddy, dog and cat'."

> As the boy grew older, [the father] said, he developed a keen interest in everything he saw and heard, constantly pressing his parents for a more detailed explanation of the picture he was looking at, or person he met for the first time. Ofttimes, Mr. Feaster said, the latter would prove embarrassing, but it had its compensations as Bo would be able to remind him of the person's name if he could not remember it.
>
> In his politest Southern manner, Bo . . . thanked his audience in his best German, Greek and Italian for the interview, and walked off with his father with a prospect of visiting the circus during his last night here.

## REMEMBERED LEARNING

There is no indication in the report as to possible physical heredity which might account for the remarkable facility of this child's brain, but the appearance of egos capable of exhibiting intellectual powers at an extremely early age seems to be increasing. In such cases, physical heredity of the family, and the mental heredity of the reincarnating ego who takes on the new body combine to make possible precocious coordination of the soul and its instrument. This possibility is illustrated by Mr. Judge (*Letters that Have Helped Me,* p. 153), who remarked that

> if the inner man has been, say a speller of English, and the mass of atoms composing the body has been also used by those who have been good spellers, then it will be possible for the person to pick up old knowledge. But this goes to show that it is in any case the remembering of what we once learned, and that always depending on the physical instrument we are using at the time.

Less spectacular than the early development of kama-manasic facility is the occasional exhibition in the young child of a remarkable degree of moral percipience, or a rare sense of natural discipline. It is the effort of theosophists and theosophical education to prepare and assist in the early evolution of the higher nature in the child, at the expense of proficiency in the mechanical art of memory-work. Parrotted learning is blighting to real mental evolution in exact proportion as it replaces understanding with information. Thus when those responsible for a child's education encourage largely automatic brain functioning instead of arousing, at every opportunity, the philosophic attitude appropriate to the child's experience—the results are more to be pitied than enjoyed.

### Human Slavery

An unanticipated effect of the late war has been the adoption of a policy toward prisoners of war which recalls the barbarous customs of the Dark Ages. The *Christian Century* for June 12 reports:

> Press reports state that the United States has just about completed divesting itself of its last German prisoners, with the final 118,000 landing in England to take up forced labor there. . . . In England these prisoners are being put to work on farms, in factories and mines. . . . It is generally believed that Russia is holding some 2,000,000 war captives in labor battalions, and that any who come through the experience alive will have reason to count themselves lucky.

The English employers of the former prisoners pay the Government prevailing wages for the work they do, but the Government gives these modern "slaves" 10 cents a day if unskilled, 20 cents if skilled. The *Christian Century* comment is pertinent: "It is estimated that the government will make a profit of about $250,000,000 a year on the transaction. . . . It certainly seems that a socialist government could find a better way to add a quarter-billion to its treasury."

### Psychic Crimes

The special legal problems of a cycle of psychism are suggested by a recent news item from Davenport, Iowa (Feb. 23):

> Merle W. Beall, 24, who told police that he wakes up in the night with a knife or gun after dreaming "of killing people," was held in a mental hospital tonight.
>
> Beall pleaded with police to lock him up for fear he would commit murder. He said he has an irresistible desire to kill when he is sleeping or lying down.

"My actions during the daytime," he said, "are normal, but I receive great pleasure from dreaming of killing people."

He said several times he has awakened at night with a knife or gun in his hands, and can't explain how he got them.

Detective Capt. Thordsen said an investigation is being made to determine whether Beall is involved in any real slayings.

## NIGHTMARE MURDER

This case is paralleled by the tragic experience of a French detective, recounted several years ago by John Nesbitt on the "Passing Parade" radio program (*Reader's Digest,* September, 1944). To sustain his reputation for brilliant work, the detective, Le Dru, kept his slow, methodical research a secret, and worked virtually all night on his cases. He would send in exaggerated reports that, for instance, he had guessed at once some information which actually was obtained only after hours of patient plodding. The strenuous pace he set himself undermined his health, and his nerves gave way until he began to have nightmares in which he himself had committed a murder. Then one day in 1888, after painstakingly following a trail of circumstantial evidence on a baffling murder case, he revealed—and reported to the police—that the murderer had been *himself*. He had apparently walked in his sleep (or in a nightmare), and had committed the crime with entire unconsciousness, as well as without motive. "His attorney," it is told, "who made one of the most sensational pleas in French legal history, proved by reliable medical testimony that Le Dru was dangerous only at night, when his strange mental illness came over him. During the daytime he was as sane as any man." Le Dru was therefore sentenced to life imprisonment, but remained a free man by day, returning each night to be locked in prison to confine the bodily activities of his unconscious "self." He served his sentence thus for fifty-one years, until his death in 1939.

## METAPHYSICAL ROBBERY

A related problem is that of thought thievery, the subject of a suit brought last year by a Fort Meade, Md., private against a Northwestern University professor (Los Angeles *Times,* Aug. 13, 1945). According to the soldier's charge, the professor, a neurologist, while giving him treatments two years before, had implanted an instrument in him through which "unauthorized access is given to a portion of my thoughts." In a petition to the Superior Court, the soldier pointed out that this action by the professor also violated his constitutional rights.

These cases obviously require what might be called a metaphysical law of evidence. Courts are not now equipped to decide on the extent of a person's astral and psychical "constitutional rights," nor accurately determine whether or not they are being violated. Theosophists are reminded that during the last century, when the reality and veracity of the occult phenomena connected with H. P. Blavatsky and Mr. Judge were challenged, neither teacher had any faith that a court "review" would certify the real nature of the phenomena. It was pointed out that the processes could not be understood—let alone judged—except the witnesses were well versed in knowledge of the laws governing the phenomena. This was, of course, simply an extension of the common law that a man be tried by a jury of his peers.

## "The Moral Quality"

The limitation of material evidence in cases involving metaphysical laws and forces is graphically illustrated by Mr. Judge, who cites the case of one who, while asleep, leans over and kills the person beside him. In "Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita" (THEOSOPHY VI, 202), he uses the instance to develop a subtler principle of judgment that takes into account the inner man:

> Equal mindedness and skill in the right performance of duty are the true rules—this is yoga. This right performance of duty means the mental state, for the mere performance of an act has no moral quality in it, since even a machine may be made to perform acts usually done by men. The moral quality resides in the person inside and in his presence or absence. If a human body, asleep or devoid of a soul, raised its hand and took the life of another, that would not be a crime. And oppositely the performance of a good act is no virtue unless the person within is in the right attitude of mind. Many an apparently good act is done from selfish, hypocritical, crafty or other wrong motives. These are only outwardly good.

## Moral Induction

Perhaps the emergence of psychic crimes will bring this principle into greater use, and through "the modern inversion of thought," lead to its application in all human judgment, to the end that the Mosaic law of condemnation and punishment of and by outward acts—with no allowance for the inner circumstances—may be entirely repealed. The "eye-for-an-eye-for-an-eye-for-an-eye-for-an-eye philosophy," as one well-known writer recently characterized it, is inimical to the practice of tolerance and forbearance, and is justly

condemned by those who strive for harmony among individuals, races or nations. Since the faculty of sympathetic understanding is as stimulating to a man's latent good qualities as suspicion and mistrust are productive of *their* counterparts, the true "civilizing influence" is the human capacity for a brotherly attitude toward the rest of life. The counter-opposition to cant and hypocrisy—which are always the sign of moral decadence—will have little success in providing the inner climate of charity, philosophic hope and understanding until some such perception as Mr. Judge outlines becomes the basis on which human action is reviewed by men.

## THE GENEROSITY OF GREAT MINDS

Joseph Wood Krutch, reviewing George Orwell's *Dickens, Dali and Others* (New York *Herald Tribune Book Review,* May 5), finds sympathetic judgment the distinctive quality of great writers. Orwell has noted that in spite of Dickens' obvious limitations as a radical critic of "the system," there "does remain his native generosity of mind," and this has often been enough for "ordinary people" who have "never entered, mentally, into the world of 'realism' and power-politics."

> Dickens [writes Orwell] attacked English institutions with a ferocity that has never since been approached. Yet he managed to do it without making himself hated.

## LITERARY GREATNESS

Following out this idea, Mr. Krutch suggests that—

> the paradox of Dickens is the paradox of most writers even when they seem to be the castigators of the world in which they live. Like Chaucer and like Shakespeare, Dickens ridiculed and denounced, but like them also he accepted more than he rejected and he loved more than he hated. It is not easy to see the world or even any considerable part of it as it is and yet to find the world acceptable. If it were easy great writers would not be as valuable or as much cherished as they are.

Enlightened optimism, as maintained by great writers and superior minds, encompasses both aspects of human nature, both the ennobling and the animalistic tendencies of mind, but is not "cast down"—the first characteristic of a philosopher, Emerson declared, is his cheerfulness. Those who know most about human nature generally find a way to work with the best in their fellowmen.

# THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

## DECLARATION

The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."*

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*Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.*

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signatures will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with. Write to:

GENERAL REGISTRAR, UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS,
Theosophy Hall, 33rd and Grand Ave., Los Angeles (7), Calif.

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