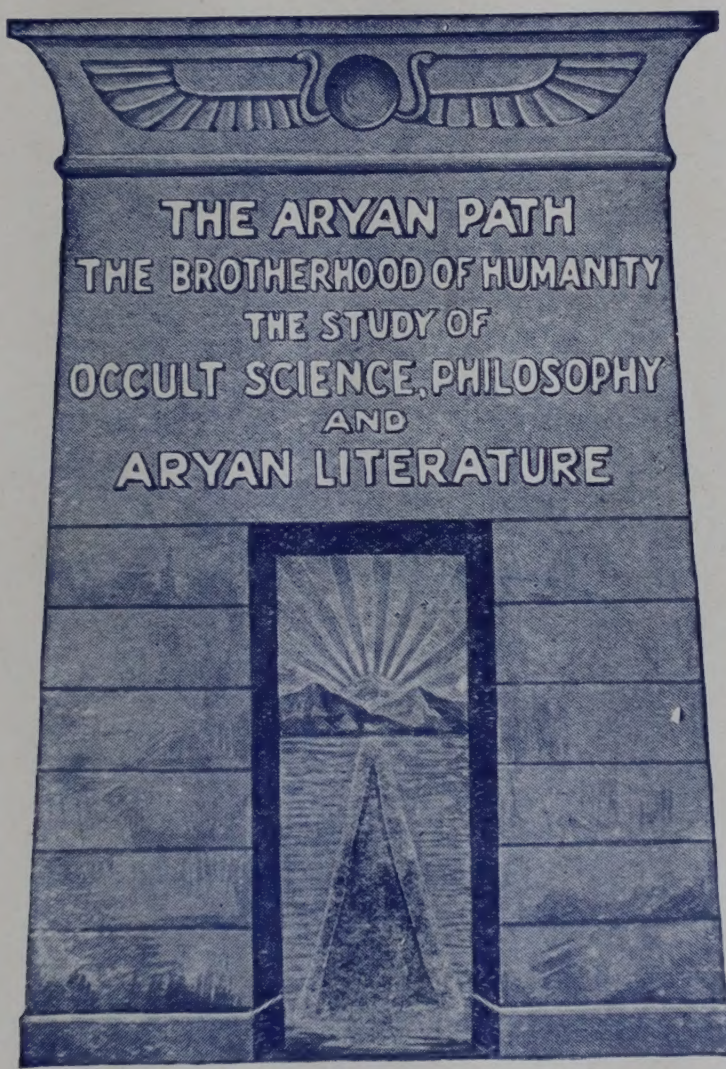
THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



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February 17, 1948

Old and time-honoured errors—such as become with every day more glaring and self-evident—stand arrayed in battle-order now, as they did then. Marshalled by blind conservatism, conceit and prejudice, they are constantly on the watch, ready to strangle every truth, which, awakening from its age-long sleep, happens to knock for admission. Such has been the case ever since man became an animal. That this proves in every case *moral death* to the revealers, who bring to light any of these old, old truths, is as certain as that it gives LIFE and REGENERATION to those who are fit to profit even by the little that is now revealed to them.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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(a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour ;

(b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study ; and

(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th February 1948. VOL. XVIII. No. 4.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th February 1948. VOL. XVIII. No. 4

THE TWIN DOCTRINES

Reincarnation and Karma are twin doctrines. The process of successive lives for the same Human Soul on earth and the workings of his Karma are indissolubly interlinked. Man's freedom from rebirth implies his freedom from the bondage of Karma also. The Law of Periodicity or of Cycles is the chief manifestation of Karma as well as of Reincarnation.

Both the doctrines are simple to understand in their primary aspects: As you sow so you reap on every plane of being; man is the creator of his own destiny and feels in the present the effects of his past sowings. But a score of questions follow and present a hundred lacunæ which demand light. As the student reads and studies, his problems grow and his questions multiply. All that is written and recorded, all that is said and heard, produces more questions, more puzzles, more problems. Till he comes upon the statement reiterated in a dozen places and more—"pertains to the domain of the Mysteries."

All Knowledge proceeds from the known to the unknown; new knowledge is the extension of old knowledge. Between what is actually known, *i. e.*, experienced in realization and what is being learnt there is a difference. There are two aspects to our knowledge: one which through experience has become part of our very nature, and then that learning which remains still to be assimilated and which may be lost if not successfully assimilated. So with a student grappling with the twin doctrines bridged by the arch of the Law of Cycles. A person finds no difficulty in accepting the general principles of Reincarnation and Karma. But each student comes to a ring pass not of ready acceptance. A little study and that ring expands, but it always remains and presently refuses to recede. What is learnt by the Human Ego in the long past is partially and hazily and indirectly remembered as study progresses, but the time is reached when puzzles and problems stay put.

Is the end reached? Can nothing be done? The end is not reached and certainly something can be done. Application or Practice has become an absolute necessity if further knowledge is to be acquired. An ounce of practice with the knowledge already acquired leads to a ton of new knowledge. Purifying and making porous the human brain to the direct light of the Inner Ego enables the student to recover knowledge of all his previous existences.

Unless the student *lives* in and by the light of the truths of Reincarnation and Karma he can not grow in Wisdom and gain Peace which is Power. To see by the mind the truth that "the hands which smite us are our own" is not difficult; but to live by the light of that bit of Wisdom is most difficult. Let a person try to apply that piece of instruction and he will encounter the furies which circulate in his own blood. And yet the truth that the hands that smite us are our own is merely a paraphrase of the truth that as you sow so shall you reap. Or take another—"Verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or in another life." This will be assented to, though questions will arise like—"Then how about free-will overcoming fate?" But when some insight into the doctrine of Resist Not Evil, and so into the real nature of resignation is gained, the problem will not continue to puzzle and a proper reconciliation of free-will and fatalism will take place. But the practice of true Resignation,

most intimately connected with the teaching of Higher Indifference or Vairagya, is the first requisite. Without that practice deeper aspects of Reincarnation and Karma cannot be understood.

Freedom from the round of births and deaths means that the Emancipated Human Soul has become the Master-Server of the Great Law of Karma. We are slaves, most often unwilling slaves, of Karma-Nemesis. Soul-progress means wearing out the fetters of that slavery and the hands so set free acquire the powers of selfless service of the races of mortals.

Four are the aphorisms which give the prescription for curing the disease of Soul-slavery. If we labour intelligently at these four, not only in mentally perceiving their truth but also by their practice in daily living, we will, however slowly, emerge from the state of slavery into one of soul-freedom. To take care of our thoughts and words, to help others by words and deeds, to see the trends of collective Karma which influence us and to adopt measures of (*a*) repression, (*b*) elimination and (*c*) counteraction—these are necessary aspects of self-discipline. Without Self-Discipline imposed by the Soul on the Senses the Soul cannot get its liberty from the latter. In formulating our own Discipline of Daily Living these four aphorisms should not be omitted. What are the four ?

(1) No. 12. Karmic causes already set in motion must be allowed to sweep on until exhausted, but this permits no man to refuse to help his fellows and every sentient being.

(2) No. 13. The effects may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.

(3) No. 26. The sway of Karmic tendency will influence the incarnation of an Ego, or any family of Egos, for three lives at least, when measures of repression, elimination, or counteraction are not adopted.

(4) No. 27. Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted.

A WORD TO WORKERS

"I DO NOT KNOW."

"I" is one of the words Confucius would not allow his disciples to use, as careful readers of this magazine know. U. L. T. platform workers answering questions are also advised to avoid it as far as possible without affectation. Restraint in this apparently small matter has saved many from falling into often serious difficulties. But there is one statement in which "I" may and should be used, namely: "I do not know."

H. P. B. has said that all students of Theosophy, must consider themselves at best "Pupil-teachers," and we are reminded that the U. L. T. is a group of students more or less advanced, none of whom presume to teach or to do more than pass on, as accurately as they can, what they "have heard."

This transmission is a matter of the greatest importance. Hence the thought "*Thus have I heard*" should be the mental accompaniment to every statement one makes. Now, it does not take the student long to find out how vast the scope of Theosophy is, and inquirers often take us far afield or, unconsciously to themselves, hie us away into regions where even the well-informed student feels lost. A point may easily come up regarding which he has never "heard" anything. No one can be thoroughly well versed in every department of "the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy," and no one need be ashamed to admit his ignorance. Ashamed he should be if the skandhas, acquired in our modern world of contests and emulation and the struggle to hold one's own, drive him against his U. L. T. convictions to save face by beating about the bush or giving an explanation of his own, instead of making the simple admission: "I do not know."

Some students maintain that to admit ignorance weakens the prestige of the platform. "Why go to meetings," they imagine people in the audience saying to themselves, "when the representatives of Theosophy cannot answer inquirers' questions ?"

The Theosophy of H. P. B. and her Masters attracts and holds the very opposite type of man or woman.

So let us remember that we are at best but pupil-teachers of our great philosophy, and that popes—whether their infallibility is recognized by the whole world or only by a handful of inquirers at a Theosophical meeting—are out of place in our fraternity.

A VISION OF A BETTER WORLD

ARTHUR E. MORGAN'S "EDWARD BELLAMY"[1]

[The following address on a great biography of a great man, given in a Discussion Group meeting of the Indian Institute of Culture at Bangalore on November 20th, 1947, will be of special interest to students of Theosophy.—EDS.]

The author of this biography of the man whose *Looking Backward*[2] has been perhaps more widely read outside America than any other book by an American writer is himself well-known both as a great engineer and a great educationist. A. E. Morgan headed the Tennessee Valley Authority for five years—and he was for many years the President of Antioch College, a pioneer in advanced educational experiment and the author of the thoughtful and widely read monthly *Antioch Notes*.

Bellamy (March 26th, 1850—May 22nd, 1898) was more than an economist who dreamed of a Utopia. In Mr. Morgan's words:—

> His was not a one-track mind that had found a panacea. His was a universal personality, interested in and sensitive to everything that is vital to the human spirit.

He had already established a name for himself in literature before he devoted his energies wholly to planning a better social and economic order. No less a critic than William Dean Howells had hailed him as second in romantic imagination only to Hawthorne.

To psychology he had given much original thinking on the problem of freeing men from the mental incubus of guilt and fatalism by directing their minds forward to their possibilities, not backward to their failures and mistakes.

Perhaps the highest level of his contribution was in philosophy and Mr. Morgan published a separate volume on this aspect of his thinking.[3] He writes here:—

> As to how he possessed himself of the thinking of India we do not know. He seems to have had sources other than Emerson and Thoreau. Be that as it may, there runs through Bellamy's writing a strain of thinking which could seem to have no other source. And he was no mean agent for transmitting the values of the East.

He early renounced orthodoxy, but he was no extremist and in discarding rites and dogmas he kept the spirit of religion. His very orthodox mother, whom his defection from the Church had greatly pained, said that he was the most Christ-like person she had ever known. He wrote, apparently in his early twenties,

> that a man may safely at all times say forth the best that is in him and save nothing through fear he should exhaust the fertility of his soul. For the soul is not comparable to the earth that can be exhausted, but it is joined on to the illimitable, inexhaustible sea of the universal illimitable soul, that fears not exhaustion. Therefore speak forth; every spoken inspiration is a relief that makes room for a new supply.

What gave his writing permanent value, Mr. Morgan writes, "was an underlying philosophy, and what might be called his religion—that is, the commitment of his mind and spirit to the concept of the brotherhood of man as an expression of that unity of all things which he called 'The Soul of Solidarity.'"

Edward Bellamy was born in Chicopee, a Massachusetts town in transition to an urban and industrial economy. His father was a Baptist minister, genial, popular, rather self-indulgent in the pleasures of the table; his mother, austerely kind, holding the ideal of self-discipline and trying to instil high purpose into her four sons. The family background, to which Morgan attributes much of Bellamy's underlying fineness, is reflected in the formula which Bellamy worked out:—

> To retain the child's zest for the pleasures of life while possessing the ascetic's or stoic's power of re-

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[1] *Edward Bellamy*. By ARTHUR E. MORGAN. (Columbia University Press, New York. $5.00)

[2] *Looking Backward*. By EDWARD BELLAMY. (The Modern Library, Random House, New York. $.95)

[3] *The Philosophy of Edward Bellamy*, with comments by Arthur E. Morgan. (King's Crown Press, New York)

nouncing them without a pang whenever it may be needful, that is the ideal of philosophy.

His open directness and sincerity may have lain at the root of his turning from journalism and the law as professions, after trying both. He felt, apparently, that in neither could he hold fast to his clearly formulated purpose in life. The quest for the meaning of life early engrossed his attention. He makes the hero of *Eliot Carson*, an unfinished autobiographical novel, say:—

> "This life is a mystery, men say, and therefore leave it as such and go about their business. This life is a mystery, I say, and therefore do no other thing until I solve it, in some measure at least."

Mr. Morgan comments:—

> A rash and foolish attitude on the part of a young man?...No, it is not rash for a young man to neglect temporal affairs and to pour the whole of life's energy into this greatest of all issues....Were his will and desire strong enough to put aside these great issues of the meaning of life, and to lead him to go about his routine business, that would have meant death to his soul. There are many dead souls in living bodies. There are some processes which will not wait—among them that of a young man or woman searching for a way of life.

Bellamy's sensitiveness to human misery and his demanding sense of justice were strengthened by his visit to Europe at the age of seventeen, when he was shocked by the wretchedness of the masses, the idleness and pleasure-seeking of many of the rich. He became conscious of an inferno of poverty beneath modern civilization, in the development of which America represented only an earlier stage. In the days of his editorial writing he was, Mr. Morgan writes, a knight-errant, attacking wrong wherever he found it, but it was not until 1886 that he sat down deliberately to work out the scheme which was published in *Looking Backward* in December 1888 and elaborated in *Equality*,[1] to which the last of his failing strength was given, and which appeared in 1897.

The romance which runs through both is but the connecting thread. A young man in Boston falls asleep in 1887 and awakens in 2000, to find a transformed world. The nationalization of all industry and equality of distribution of work and of wealth are the basis of his economy. Private capital and the profit system, which Bellamy claims inevitably leads, through profit, rent and interest, to the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few and the exploitation of the many, are no more. The total wealth of the Nation has been tremendously increased by the elimination of former waste through competition, with advertising, duplication etc.; by inventions; and by the equal distribution of income, which has stimulated production to equal consumer demand, as distinguished from the "effective demand" of present-day economics. The work is carried on by an industrial army, in which every man and woman serves from the age of 21 to that of 45, when each becomes free to follow whatever activity he may choose. Education continues for all until the age of 21. From 21 to 24, each serves in the ranks of unskilled labour and may be delegated to any tasks. All the unpleasant tasks incident to a civilized society, except the many which invention has eliminated, are shared by all, who are under a rigid discipline until reaching the age of twenty-four. Then each enters upon a trade of his choice or begins professional training. Advancement and honours, first choice of desirable assignments etc., depend strictly on performance in the lower grades from which, through regular ranks, promotion is possible up to the headship of one of the ten great Departments, whose heads form the National Cabinet, and finally to the post of General-in-Chief or President. All elections to the higher posts are by those who have finished their term of service in the industrial army; all appointments to the lower ranks are from above. Women have equal income and status but are enlisted in a separate branch of the industrial army, the woman at the head of which sits in the President's Cabinet, with an effective voice in whatever concerns women.

There is no money, but each is given a non-cumulative credit of approximately $4,000 a year (only children receiving less), and this can be spent exactly as each chooses. The Government will provide anything anyone wants and will pay for out of his income, the price depending in each case on the labour cost of products. Equality of income is justified by the overwhelming proportion of the value of the output of each which is con-

[1] *Equality*. By EDWARD BELLAMY. (D. Appleton-Century Co., New York. $3.00)

tributed by society, without which the individual could eke out but a miserable existence.

There is foreign trade in Utopia, but as all the nations at approximately the same level of economic development have emulated the plan and others are being educated up to it, there is no difficulty in handling the whole body of imports and exports between nations on the basis of a balancing of credits, supervised through a loose international federation.

The most significant feature of Bellamy's Utopia is the emphasis on human brotherhood and the solidarity of the sentient world. He writes in *Equality* :—

> ...the great wave of humane feeling, the passion of pity and compunction for all suffering—in a word, the impulse of tender-heartedness...was really the great moral power behind the Revolution....It contemplated nothing less than a literal fulfilment, on a complete social scale, of Christ's inculcation that all should feel the same solicitude and make the same effort for the welfare of others as for their own.

The movement which sprang into existence to work for the ideals of *Looking Backward* was called the Nationalist Movement, "Nationalist" referring to the nationalization of production and distribution and not being used in its modern sense. In this movement Theosophists played an important, though not the only, rôle, looking upon it as promising a practical advance towards the Universal Brotherhood for which Theosophy stands. The first Nationalist Club was formed in December 1888 and by June 1890 there were 127 Clubs in 27 States. In her *Key to Theosophy* (1889), Madame H. P. Blavatsky highly commended the movement.

> The organization of Society, depicted by Edward Bellamy, in his magnificent work "Looking Backward," admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step towards the full realization of universal brotherhood. The state of things he depicts falls short of perfection, because selfishness still exists and operates in the hearts of men. But in the main, selfishness and individualism have been overcome by the feeling of solidarity and mutual brotherhood; and the scheme of life there described reduces the causes tending to create and foster selfishness to a minimum.

This gave a tremendous impetus to the flocking of Theosophists to the Nationalist Clubs and in 1890 Madame Blavatsky found it necessary to remind the American Theosophists that "if Nationalism is an application of Theosophy, it is the latter which must ever stand first" in their sight.

> Theosophy is indeed the life, the indwelling spirit which makes every true reform a vital reality, for Theosophy is Universal Brotherhood, the very foundation as well as the keystone of all movements towards the amelioration of our condition.

Bellamy was understandably impatient for practical advance towards his Utopia, and welcomed the taking up of some of the Nationalists' "First Steps" by a new political party. The People's Party had a brief career in which it shelved most of Bellamy's propositions.

Meantime the great educational work which the Nationalist Clubs had been doing had been checked. The Theosophists were convinced that "no lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old" and the turning of the movement into political channels resulted in their dropping out and the early decline of the Nationalist Clubs. Bellamy, Mr. Morgan thinks, had mistaken for achievement the facile popularity which *Looking Backward* commanded, whereas it presented only the opportunity for achievement, which only strong leadership could have brought about. The physical energy of Bellamy was not equal to the task and he had no follower capable of assuming the lead. Mr. Morgan thinks it is perhaps as well, considering the record of followers' sidetracking great movements.

> His vision and faith remain, perhaps to be the incentive of men or movements in cases where purpose and opportunity shall coincide.

Bellamy underestimated the time necessary for the change from industrial feudalism to industrial democracy, though he wrote in *Equality* :—

> Not...until popular government had been made possible by the diffusion of intelligence was the world ripe for the realization of such a form of society. Until that time the idea, like the soul waiting for a fit incarnation, must remain without social embodiment.

One of Bellamy's most important contributions was the opposition which his ideals and his influence have successfully offered to Marxian Socialism in America. He opposed several items

in its programme. He repudiated class hatred and irreconcilable class conflict, holding the rich no less than the poor the victims of a bad system. (Many of those attracted to the Nationalist Clubs were men of means and prominent citizens.) He insisted on orderly and progressive development ("Evolution, not Revolution") and he upheld the freedom of the individual and also the morality which the Marxians regarded as a bourgeois product, to be set aside when the needs of the revolution demanded. He wrote :—

> There can be but one science of human conduct in whatever field, and that is ethical. Any economic proposition which can not be stated in ethical terms is false. Nothing can be in the long run...sound economics which is not sound ethics.

His ideas blended with the National cultural pattern and many of the Nationalist proposals have been enacted into law. The social legislation of the last century in America, and many of the New Deal policies trace back to Bellamy's influence. His optimism is encouraging. "Nothing that is unjust can be eternal," he wrote in 1893, "and nothing that is just can be impossible."

Mr. Morgan is frank in repeating the criticisms levelled against Bellamy's Utopia and in offering some of his own. Some of these are that it would involve regimentation, though Bellamy insisted on freedom of expression, freedom to change jobs, etc., that the grading system was open to abuse and favouritism; that too much centralization was dangerous, the example being cited of the collapse of Peru which had a comparable economy for centuries before the Spaniards came; and that others might not possess the social engineering genius shown by Bellamy himself. Whether honours and distinctions will be effective or worthy incentives, once the pressure of economic necessity is removed, is also questioned.

Mr. Morgan admits that Bellamy was a zealot, but if he saw his Utopia as the necessary first step, he did not consider it final. He brought out very plainly in his books as also in a conversation quoted that he considered that there would be "a whole infinity beyond."

How the early pattern of Bellamy's thinking forecast his mature mind is interestingly sketched by Mr. Morgan, who brings out also his literary charm, his subtle humour, his living what he preached, his passion for wholeness. Bellamy saw society as an organism and Mr. Morgan elaborates the simile of the various organs, concluding :—

> And now comes the unprecedented job of organizing and adapting them into a synthesis which will be a brotherhood of man, a federation of the world. That is the great need which impressed itself on Bellamy's mind and spirit, and which is the burden of his social message.

Here may very appropriately follow Mr. Judge's comments on Edward Bellamy's work. In his *Path* for March 1889 appeared "Theosophical Aspects of Contemporary Thought and Literature" which contains a notice of Bellamy's remarkable story "To Whom This May Come." We reprint this article in full :—

THEOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT AND LITERATURE

I

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. III, pp. 384-387, March 1889.—EDS.]

It is not long since it was said that the stories had all been told; that authors now could do no more than retell them in variations, merely clothed in new garments, according to the various aspects of individual points of view. The new realm for imaginative creation to be opened up to literary activity by Occultism, was then scarcely suspected, but now it is seen that an apparently boundless field is spread out for the exploration of those who can appreciate the conditions upon which it can be entered. To the thoughtful student there is much instruction to be gained from the way in which these new means are availed of, and it is exceedingly interesting to follow its development in current literature. Scarcely a month passes in which some magazine does not testify to the fertility of the new soil by a story founded upon some phase of Occultism. There are two ways in which authors appear

to cultivate this ground. One is that of the average constructor of stories, who simply regards Occultism as an interesting mine for intellectual exploitation, and, without any true comprehension, merely seizes upon the external aspects of the subject, and arbitrarily invents all sorts of phenomenal occurrences, usually out of all accord with psychic or occult laws.

The second way is that of those writers who have the organization of the true poet; the faculty to look upon that which is invisible; it appears as if such were unconsciously guided by some unseen influence that directs their work into thorough harmony with the great truths; their minds seem illuminated by the white light that now shines upon men's souls as never before in the history of the present race. So unerringly does what they say tally with the subtler meanings, that it seems as if no writer who "reads up" on the subject merely for the sake of intellectual diversion, and to obtain some novel material with which to please his readers, could thus achieve truth to occult facts. It requires a finer texture of the mind, pervaded by the solvent of true spiritual sympathy, to reach these higher results. These latter writers appear to be one form of the many and diverse instrumentalities chosen to lift the souls of the race on to higher levels of thought, fitting them for the reception of more truth.

In *Harper's* for February of this year gives a remarkable story of this character. It is called "To Whom This May Come"; by Edward Bellamy, the strikingly theosophical nature of whose stories has several times been alluded to in this department of *The Path*. The present story surpasses its predecessors in this respect, and is characterized by thought high and noble in its spirituality. It is, in reality, a chapter of pure Occultism in the guise of a story. It seems like a prophecy of the condition that humanity shall attain in some of the more exalted races to be evolved upon our planet at some time in the far distant future. Mr. Bellamy has a remarkable faculty—which is that of the scientific thinker in the highest sense; the man who beholds things in the light of imagination held in control by law—of supposing a certain condition of existence, either physical, psychical or spiritual, and then depicting life as it must necessarily be under such conditions. This he does with rare consistency and power of verisimilitude.

This story of his is that of a race of mind-readers, descended from Persian Magi, exiled something like 2,000 years ago, and shipwrecked with their families, upon a group of inaccessible islands in the Indian ocean, the faculty of mind-reading, being hereditary, is cultivated and perfected, according to the laws of evolution, until they have no need for the imperfect method of communication by speech, and have therefore voluntarily lost the power of so doing, the loss being considered by them a gain. The narrative is ostensibly that of one of our own race shipwrecked on their shores.

It will be perceived that one of the chief attributes of perfected human brotherhood must be the faculty of sharing the thoughts of others as if they were our own. Therein lies that extension of the individuality which makes all men one with each other, which makes our brother really ourself. This faculty is to-day possessed by the Masters, who thus realize in themselves the brotherhood and oneness of humanity, and its occasional, though imperfect manifestation in ourselves shows that it is rudimentary in the race, and can be developed by the proper training. Therefore, in this tale, Mr. Bellamy has simply allegorized a great truth.

Here is a fine picture of the feeling of one who first comes among such a race:

> I imagine that the very unpleasant sensations which followed the realization that I was among people who, while inscrutable to me, knew my every thought, was very much what anyone would have experienced in the same case. They were very comparable to the panic which accidental nudity causes a person among races whose custom it is to conceal the figure with drapery. I wanted to run away and hide myself. If I analyzed my feeling, it did not seem to arise so much from the consciousness of any particularly heinous secrets as from the knowledge of a swarm of fatuous, ill-natured, and unseemly thoughts and half-thoughts concerning those around me and concerning myself, which it was insufferable that any person should peruse in however benevolent a spirit. But while my chagrin and distress on this account were at first intense, they were also very short-lived, for almost immediately I discovered

that the very knowledge that my mind was over-looked by others, operated to check thoughts that might be painful to them, and that, too, without more effort of the will than a kindly person exerts to check the utterance of disagreeable remarks.

And here the consequence:

"How shall I describe the moral health and cleanness, the breezy oxygenated mental condition, which resulted from the consciousness that I had absolutely nothing concealed! Truly I may say that I enjoyed myself. I think surely that no one needs to have had any marvellous experience to sympathize with this portion of it. Are we not all ready to agree that this having a curtained chamber where we may go to grovel, out of sight of our fellows, troubled only by a vague apprehension that God may look over the top, is the most demoralizing incident in the human condition?

It is the existence within the soul of this secure refuge of lies which has always been the despair of the saint and the exultation of the knave. It is the foul cellar which taints the whole house above, be it never so fine. What stronger testimony could there be to the instinctive consciousness that concealment is debauching, and openness our only cure, than the world-old conviction of the virtue of confession for the soul, and that the uttermost exposing of one's worst and foulest is the first step toward moral health? The wickedest man, if he could but somehow attain to writhe himself inside out as to his soul, so that its full sickness could be seen, would feel ready for a new life. Nevertheless, owing to the utter impotence of words to convey mental conditions in their totality, or to give other than mere distortions of them, confession is, we must needs admit, but a mockery of that longing for self-revelation to which it testifies. But think what health and soundness there must be for souls among a people who see in every face a conscience which, unlike their own, they cannot sophisticate, who confess one another with a glance, and shrive with a smile! Ah friends, let me now predict, though ages may elapse before the slow event shall justify me, that in no way will the mutual vision of minds, when at last it shall be perfected, so enhance the blessedness of mankind as by rending the veil of self, and leaving no spot of darkness for lies to hide in. Then shall the soul no longer be a coal smoking among ashes, but a star set in a crystal sphere.

It is to be remarked that in the foregoing there is in the literary style a notable similarity to that of the writer of *Light on the Path*. There is the same exquisite imagery, the same beauteous, graceful garb befitting lofty thought, and it seems as if behind them both there might be the same guiding Master hand, even if to the writer unknown. Here is another glorious passage:

> Self-knowledge means to the mind-reader...nothing less, indeed, than a shifting of the identity. When a man sees himself in a mirror, he is compelled to distinguish between the bodily self he sees, and his real self, the mental and moral self, which is within and unseen. When in turn the mind-reader comes to see the mental and moral self reflected in other minds as in mirrors, the same thing happens. He is compelled to distinguish between this mental and moral self which has been made objective to him, and can be contemplated by him as impartially as if it were another's, from the inner ego, which still remains subjective, unseen, and indefinable. In this inner ego the mind-readers recognize the essential identity and being, the noumenal self, the core of the soul, and the true hiding of its eternal life, to which the mind as well as the body is but the garment of a day.

The statement that "this race which makes so little account of physical beauty is itself a singularly handsome one," recalls the words in *Through the Gates of Gold*: "In due proportion to the completeness of his indifference to it is the strength and beauty of his personal self." We shall surely be privileged to hear more from the mind that has given us this noble story, and the message intended by it. "To Whom This May Come," will undoubtedly be received by many glad hearts.

The very next month W. Q. Judge published a second article under the same caption and we reprint it below. The Theosophical student will do well not to pass by what is implicit in these two reprints. The importance of the influence of Theosophical ideas on literature is very great indeed.

II

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. IV, pp. 20-21, April 1889.—Eds.]

The story in the February *Atlantic*, to which we have been indebted for a number of admirable occult stories during the past few years, is of quite another flavour from Bellamy's "To Whom This May Come." "The Gift of Fernseed" is by Harry Perry Robinson, a young Englishman who has been living on the Northwest coast for some years; it is most weird in conception and related

with striking realism. It is a tale of the black magic wrought by a malevolent Indian medicine man upon Arthur Sayce, a young physician, in whose name the story is told. Sayce drinks a drug at the hands of the Indian, which has the effect of making him invisible, but retaining all his senses but that of touch. This is accomplished by effecting a kind of disintegration that takes place in every particle of his body, dissolving the coarser physical, and leaving only the finer and invisible particles of the second principle, the vehicle of life. This process is accompanied by the most intense pain, and here the author tallies well with what is related of the transformation effected in the various *yoga* practices, also attended with extreme pain; only in this story it is effected by artificial means that dissolve the physical elements, while in the former the physical body remains apparently intact, but in reality changed in nature by the discipline to which it has been subjected. It is also a fine touch that Sayce, while in this enchanted condition, was enabled to make himself manifest to animals and to sleeping persons; for animals, existing nearer nature than we, are more susceptible to impalpable influences, and these have the guidance of instinct, while in our sleep we return to Nature ourselves, and are then unconsciously upon the same plane upon which Sayce consciously found himself. From what we are told of suicides and others who are prematurely torn from their bodies by violent death it seems as if theirs must be a similar state to that here described, until they are released by the "second death." It is a shudderingly powerful tale and the reader is made to sympathize keenly with the Indian wizard's victim, in the keen mental tortures of his condition. The sorcery of the tale has a bright relief in the figure of Father Francis, the unselfish and saintly mission priest.

Many a Theosophical student has doubtless felt the relationship inherent between their faith and the higher socialistic ideas, for the latter are based upon Universal Brotherhood also; showing the evils of Individualism, the essential selfishness of competition in business, and the sense that only by working for the whole can the true welfare of the individual be promoted. The philosophical Socialists write like intuitive Theosophists. For instance, these words by Laurence Gronlund in the chapter on morals in his *"Co-operative Commonwealth."*

> The religion of the future, besides, will lay special stress on our *interdependence;* it will teach men that the only way in which they can enter into vital relations with the Great Mystery is through *Humanity;* Socialism, in other words, will elevate religion from being a narrow personal concern between the individual and his maker into a *social concern between Humanity and its Destiny.* Humanity will not become a *god,* as Comte would have it, but *the* mediator between man and the Mystery. When at some time you are lying sleepless in bed in the solemn hours of the night, do what I often have done: project yourself into space and fancy the insignificant little planet which is our dwelling place rolling swiftly past you, swarming with its ant-colonies of kings and beggars, capitalists and workers, all in the hollow of the hand of that Great Mystery! Is not that a train of thought that should make manifest to us the "solidarity," the interdependence of mankind? What is more natural than that each of us should desire and try to help our species along on the road to its destiny, since the ability has mercifully been granted us to cooperate with that Will of the Universe which our own nature suggests to us?

In his *Ça Ira! or Danton in the French Revolution,* Gronlund rises to still loftier heights, and his view of the shaping of the course of events by the intelligent will of "the Power behind Evolution" constitutes the basic thought of the work, like the motive of a grand symphony.

STUDIES IN "NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA"

II

Though the *Gita* is the Book of Devotion, it is also the Book of Action. There is no escape from action for anyone—from the Self, Krishna, who says "If I were not indefatigable in action, all men would presently follow my example, O son of Pritha. If I did not perform actions these creatures would perish," to man, whom the principles of his nature "will impel" to act, even if his personal will tries to remain inactive. Therefore it is important to bear in mind Krishna's command: "Act!"

The question is not, therefore, to act or not to act, but how to act. Though all actions must

be willingly and will-fully performed they are surrounded by the smoke of desire and it is difficult to know what is right action, and what is right performance of action.

It is illuminating to find in the Eighteenth Discourse of the *Gita* that after Krishna has laid down the philosophy of right performance of right action, he gives the final injunction to Arjuna in these words:—

> Thus have I made known unto thee this knowledge which is a mystery more secret than secrecy itself; ponder it fully in thy mind; act as seemeth best unto thee.

Here is the key to the right performance of right action. Any action performed without study of the right principles of action will be wrongly performed and turn out to be wrong action. Each man must learn to act in terms of his ever-increasing knowledge of right principles. As Mr. Judge points out, the *Gita* is "indeed the book of the great mystery; but that problem was never solved for anyone; it must be settled and solved by each one for himself." Therefore all men are on the path of return when they consciously and wilfully act, even wrongly, if the action is in terms of their best knowledge, and if it is self-induced. Even Bhishma and Drôna and the other enemies meet their end in Krishna's mouth; they are not plunged into outer darkness, wrong though their actions were. Both Arjuna and Duryodhana had first consulted their higher natures, for they had both appealed to Krishna for help. Duryodhana did not trust the Self, but put his faith in men and arms; Arjuna put his faith in the help of the Self and only wanted Krishna by his side. But it is important to note that both combatants had approached the Self and put their difficulties before It; both had acted in terms of their existent knowledge and experience. Duryodhana must go through the experience again and again till he, too, learns to rely on the Self and not on arms and men.

Every man must, by repeated efforts in repeated lives, resolve the Great Mystery for himself. At times he will, as did Arjuna, lose the memory of the knowledge gained in the past when faced with the dread battle, but this is no cause for despondency. One thought directed to the Higher for help will bring back the knowledge that was his, and he can even ask for a repetition of the Teaching. The "listener" to the sacred words can read again the "sacred dialogue," can "listen to it with faith" and do His Will or bidding.

But between the knowledge glimpsed or gained and its outer expression in action is a dreary place of despondency for, as St. Paul wrote, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." This place is the real pause between two states of consciousness, the dread place of indecision which fills the heart with fear. The cry is always "As I am of a disposition which is affected by compassion and the fear of doing wrong, I ask thee which is it better to do? Tell me that distinctly!"

Mr. Judge, with his unfailing sympathy and humaneness, draws attention to this state. He shows where the real danger lies, where the real fear should dwell, and where the real courage. Once a step in Nature has been taken, *there is no return*. Once any knowledge has been acquired, there is no return to the previous state of ignorance; once a step has been taken in the forward march of evolution there is no real return. Most men are afraid to go forward, for the road seems, and is in fact, unknown, whereas behind are the familiar path and surroundings of the past. What is not realized is that between the future ahead and the past behind is the edge of the abyss, the present. The future is not an abyss; it is a Path, dark and unknown, but nevertheless a path. The present can go forward to the future but it can never rebecome the past. Therefore the unknown of the future is infinitely less to be feared than the return to the past. The return is against the law of Nature, the forward march is in line with natural law and therefore not to be feared but courageously entered upon.

This teaching has often been given before, but realization comes slowly. The phrases, "Look not behind or thou art lost," and "One single thought about the past that thou has left behind, will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew," are familiar, but not yet alive to the reader.

A pause between the past, which was familiar but which has been left behind, and the future which is ahead, must be made while the traveller communes with his higher nature, as did Arjuna. For the Higher there is no time as we know it, and as much knowledge and strength and wisdom can come in a flash during that momentary pause as can be absorbed. Mr. Judge points out what should be the thought during this moment of silence—it should be the examination of motives and desires. In them lies the Will to succeed, or to fail. The opposing forces are also made up of desires and ensouled by motives, and at this stage the combat, as in the *Gita*, is pretty even. (A careful reading of the description of the powers and strength of the armies of Dhritarâshtra and of the Pandavas shows this), but the balance of power lies with the side which is in line with Nature's evolutionary law, with Krishna. Therefore Duryodhana says that though his warriors are "practised in the use of arms, armed with divers weapons and experienced in every mode of fight," and commanded by Bhishma, they are not sufficient, while he realizes that Arjuna's forces are sufficient, though lead by Bhîma.

It should be noted that Duryodhana acknowledges *defeat before* the battle begins but resolves to stand by Bhishma who symbolizes tradition, law and order as they existed in the *past*. Arjuna, though mentally disposed towards final victory, also makes his first stand on tradition, law and order, for his arguments against the fight are in terms of the traditional ideas of duty—that conception of duty which was his before he found himself faced with the actual battle, but which, having passed the abyss, he is beginning to doubt. He cannot tell whether it is better to win or to lose and says: "My understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty."

He asks for definite orders, he wants a simple command, he asks that Krishna shall dispel "this doubt of mine completely." All men long for a command when faced with indecision and the fear of doing wrong, but they must learn to make their own decisions based on knowledge. This is the Path of Return, which each man must walk by himself, for it is his own evolution that he is fulfilling. The place of indecision is the place of the real conflict of duty. With expanding knowledge the idea of duty changes. Can he keep up with the new order? He can, if he appeals for assistance.

Mr. Judge says that in the fight each man *has* the assistance of the "general will of nature" when he is on the path of evolution, but those who are real disciples *may invoke* it.

> This assistance is...the heritage of every true student and may be invoked by the real disciple when he has arrived at and passed the first abyss.

Who is the disciple? Even he who "listens" to the Sacred Dialogue "with faith and not reviling," thereby invoking that help.

The first necessity is to study the right philosophy. Krishna begins by telling Arjuna what is action and what inaction, and how to perform right action. To attain to the state of "calm that results from a broad philosophical foundation" is necessary, for only so can man see that inaction is a state attained by acting without being the actor. "Be not thou the actor," says Krishna.

It is difficult to act without feeling, and the endeavour to do so often results in hardness of heart or passivity, so Mr. Judge reminds the reader that "sympathy and emotion are as much parts of the great whole as knowledge" and should not be disregarded. In fact, without sympathy and emotion no knowledge can be really attained, for the effect of sympathy and emotion for others is that it draws the attention of Those who feel for and help others, and They begin to give the right knowledge of how to employ that sympathy and emotion. Because of Arjuna's sympathy for those who were to lose their lives on the battlefield Krishna gives the marvellous discourse on death, a discourse not only of value as portraying what happens at death and beyond, but of immense value to the living. It shows very clearly the relation of the inner man to the outer, the false personality, lightens up the idea of the possibility of acting without being the actor, and gives so great a vista of LIFE that the troubles of one existence loom less large. With the line of connection between lives becoming clearer it is easier to say "This is just what I

desire" when anything happens that is annoying to the present false personality, though it will take lives before the recognition of the truth of this becomes a realized fact.

The power of illusion is strong and it is untrue to pretend that the false personality wants things when it does not; it is also false to accept passively whatever comes. A nettle passively held will irritate the flesh; grasped firmly it will have no effect. But he is untruthful who says, "I like the sting." Only when the consciousness is more firmly rooted in the inner man can it be truly said that "this is just what I desire." All life's experiences must be firmly grasped and the will brought into operation. The false personality must be taught to do the bidding of the inner man and, though it will feel that it is being cheated at first, in fact it is being enriched. It is a truism in all branches of life that to give is to hold, but without a broad philosophical foundation how shall the truth of this be seen? To give is to let life flow through the vehicle unimpeded, to let Nature's Life Force flow, perfecting Its work through the channel of the inner and the outer man. Each man must learn to say with truth "I am not the actor, I am not the emotion I feel, I am not the desire I hug to my heart, I am not the ideas I hold or even the ideals that draw me on. I am Krishna, the One SELF in all. It is myself whom I meet in my friends and my enemies. I am everywhere in the whole universe. All that in my lower self impedes the free flow of the One is false, and sullies the One clear stream. All that in my false appearance changes is not real." Why struggle and strive to alter the false by the false? Why not cut asunder with the sword of spiritual knowledge all doubt, and realize that he who is devoted to the SELF is Krishna's best beloved? Only thus is there freedom, only then can man say:—

> By thy divine power, O thou who fallest not, my delusion is destroyed, I am collected once more; I am free from doubt, firm, and will act according to thy bidding.

METHODS OF EDUCATION

Education has altered somewhat since Mme. Blavatsky's day, but even now much time is devoted to cramming an ever-increasing flood of facts into the memory. Dorothy Sayers, in "The Lost Tools of Learning" (*Hibbert Journal*, October 1947) justly accuses present-day education of teaching the pupil "subjects" instead of teaching him how to think; of expecting him to pick up detailed knowledge and the power to reason and express himself, before knowing how to handle the tools of learning. Pupils go out into the world at the mercy of the "incessant battery of words"—books and press, radio and films. They do not know what words mean, or how to resist the hypnosis of the spell-binder. Building bigger and better schools and increasing the teachers' burden to nightmare proportions is of little use if the whole basis is wrong.

Miss Sayers suggests a revival of the medieval curriculum which comprised the *Trivium* (Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric) and the *Quadrivium* (consisting of "subjects"). She claims the *Trivium* is appropriate to the stages of the child's mental development. In the first ("Poll-parrot") stage, reasoning is little relished but learning by heart is easy and the child generally takes pleasure in the mere accumulation of things memorized. In the next ("Pert") stage, discursive reasoning develops and the child often disconcerts adults by contradicting, by answering back and by delight in catching them out. The third, the "Poetic" stage of adolescence, though also a trying one for the adults, brings a yearning for independent self-expression, the dawn of creativeness and of a synthesizing power.

In the first grade, Grammar, then, is concerned with the structure of language and includes the material structure of history, geography, mathematics, etc., *i.e.*, dates, key-events, countries, cities, rivers, multiplication tables and so on, gathered together as raw materials for the "subjects." The child can well remember and enjoy what is not fully intelligible. Today, Miss Sayers claims, rational explanation is often forced on the child too soon, though, naturally, intelligent questions should receive rational answers.

Dialectic satisfies the needs of the next stage, when discursive reasoning is "the master faculty." Logic is out of repute today because both its nature and our own make-up are misunderstood, but its value lies not so much in establishing conclusions as in giving a potent instrument for the detection and exposure of false reasoning. The syntax of language, literary narrative and criticism, the problems of history, the moral problems of religion, all afford material for reasoning and discussion. Even mathematics can be fruitfully treated as a branch of logic.

Rhetoric in the last stage helps the awakening imagination that begins to synthesize into realization and creative expression the facts once learnt by rote and coldly analyzed. The syllabus should be more free; appreciation should dominate over destructive criticism; while "mere apparatus" can be allowed to drop, in preparation for more definite lines of work for the *Quadrivium* or university standard. Miss Sayers claims that once the use of the tools of learning is grasped, the mastery of a subject can be acquired far more easily than by the modern methods.

We may note that the medieval system was a legacy through the Romans from the Greek philosophers. It follows the old method of proceeding from Universals (the general principles of learning), to Particulars (the subjects), and it would doubtless be of value to consider the completion of the circuit, the return from Particulars to Universals, as also the real and full implications of the original "subjects" of the *Quadrivium*, arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy, all taught in the Pythagorean occult school.

The Theosophical student can also profitably trace a parallel between the three stages given and the three levels of human intelligence. For what is described in the child's development seems to be a minor sub-cycle, reflecting partially in its own degree the general pattern. The development of perception and memory in the "Poll-parrot" stage seems closely related to the astral body, the seat of the senses, the carrier of memory and itself the structural aspect of man's material instrument. The second stage indicates the activity of the lower mind, that runs hither and thither, that reasons, compares and analyzes —and, one might add, argues and criticizes. The third stage seems to be a reflection of the working of the higher mind, that synthesizes and creates, drawing upon the transmuted memories we call imagination. One has to remember, however, that the "Poetic" stage described in the article, a difficult stage, is conditioned by the larger cycle of the development of the Kamic, desire and passion, nature during the adolescent period, producing the characteristic emotional instability, and colouring all the lesser changes in the period.

By picking up Miss Sayers's rejuvenated conceptions of Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric, we may well find significant lines of thought opening up as regards self-education and child-education, though it must be remembered that here only the tools of learning and the first object of true education are dealt with—"to cultivate and develop the mind in the right direction." The even more important moral aspects that Mme. Blavatsky gives in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 222, Indian Edition) must also be borne in mind,—

> ...to teach the disinherited and hapless people to carry with fortitude the burden of life (allotted them by Karma); to strengthen their will; to inculcate in them the love of one's neighbour and the feeling of mutual interdependence and brotherhood; and thus to train and form the character for practical life.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Many a poet and dramatist has gone to Valmiki's *Ramayana* for inspiration of more than one kind. Not only Kalidas and Bhavabhuti and Tulsidas. Right down to our own times the story of Rama and Ravana, of Sita and Surpanakha has yielded many literary, philosophical and mystical volumes of which, in modern times, *The Dream of Ravan* is an outstanding example. Students of Theosophy will evince more than passing interest in the recently published *Quest for Sita* by Maurice Collis. It is "An Asia Book" published by the John Day Company of New York. The author has not only a lively imagination but seems fairly well acquainted with Theosophical ideas. Using the doctrine of Reincarnation as his basis he introduces the two great souls, Rama and Sita, in their new incarnations as the Sage of Wu Shan and Swallo, the village maid. Mr. Collis refers to Lanka as the Paradise of the Dark Angel, Ravana, and suggests that the *Ramayana* geography has an unearthly and superphysical aspect of reality. The exiled Prince who has retired to the peak of Wu Shan is eager to trace the lineage of his soul, and his sentences bring W. Q. Judge's words to mind. Says the Prince :—

> It is one of the great mysteries. To know who you once were is the key that opens much, especially of the meaning of your present life. But it is not an impenetrable mystery.

There is charm in the story told and it is a literary gem. An interesting turn is given to many an incident of the original *Ramayana* which brings mental refreshment. Read it as a story and be entertained; read it with philosophical insight and it yields instruction.

According to H.P.B.'s amplification in *The Key to Theosophy* of the third object of the Theosophical Movement, it includes one duty of Theosophists which brings us shoulder to shoulder with our Rationalist friends in the attack upon the clerical stronghold. That duty is

> to oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in anything supernatural.

Students of Theosophy will therefore be interested in the article "Freethinkers in Council" in which Mr. C. Bradlaugh Bonner reviews in *The Literary Guide and Rationalist Review* for December 1947 the position of free-thought in the Western world where Roman Catholicism is recognized as its chief foe. The wars and dissensions of the last forty years have offered opportunities by which the Vatican has tried with some success to profit.

To mention but a few of the countries cited, the Vichy Government gave powers to the Roman Church which have been retained and General de Gaulle is a strong Catholic. But, though the Freethinkers have not yet regained their pre-war freedom, they are allowed a monthly broadcast of their views.

In the U.S.A. with its 25,000,000 Catholics, about one-fifth of the population, sectarian religious teaching in State-supported schools is unconstitutional, but the Catholics are reported to be working for it, opposed by the Liberal League and the American Humanist Association, as also doubtless by the Protestant majority, though perhaps less actively.

The State schools, the writer says, are "the bone of contention in all countries." No wonder H.P.B. has stressed "the duty of all Theosophists to promote in every practical way and in all countries, the spread of *non-sectarian* education."

In Czechoslovakia the Czech League of Freethinkers has been recognized by the State as on a par with the Churches. It therefore receives a State subsidy and a Catholic Minister of Education has conceded the right of Freethinkers "to formulate a system of non-religious moral education at a State-organized summer school for teachers," a substantial gain indeed.

The outlook for freedom of thought is reported worst in Italy, where Mussolini's Lateran Treaty bought Papal support for him "at the price of many millions of gold pounds and of the

spiritual freedom of the people." The liberation of Italy has not yet brought liberation from the power of the Vatican and freedom of expression is "freely suppressed." There is a strong Free-thought society and an anti-clerical movement, but to publish criticism of the Church or "affront to the State religion" is to invite imprisonment. In the circumstances, the proposal to hold an International Free-Thought Congress at Rome itself in September 1948, the fourth centenary of Giordano Bruno's birth, is a bold strategic plan.

Mr. Ralph Tyler Flewelling, in his remarkable editorial, "Interlude in Storm" in the Autumn 1947 *Personalist*, sees the inner conflicts of men's minds as the deepest source making for the break-up of our common world.

> The social changes in our mental habitat have been so swift that the mind of the average man is a moral and intellectual chaos. . . . Trained by nearly two centuries in the belief that matter is the sole reality, in material success as paramount, he is unfitted to meet a day when spiritual solutions are demanded if society is not to perish.

The abandonment of materialism by present-day advanced scientific thought has left Western philosophy, based on "scientific materialism," without support. Faith in materialism cannot be recovered and "unless we can turn to a living faith in moral and spiritual realities we are undone." That false and dangerous ideas can be met by physical violence is an ignorant notion: they can be conquered only by greater ideas, he assures us; hence the importance of philosophy in the overcoming of the spiritual separations, without which the inventions that have broken down spatial separation between peoples "but darken the tragedy." "The crisis of the hour," Mr. Flewelling declares, "hinges upon a common *rapprochement* between East and West."

> A philosophy . . . which overlooks the reality of man himself and denies his spiritual nature, can have no contribution to make to a world that perishes for a revival of moral sense.

"No philosophy which, in the hope of avoiding a 'system,' sidesteps metaphysics, can hope to provide a basis of understanding." A philosophy which can do so, Mr. Flewelling writes, "must assume full reality for the spiritual forces that create the values by which men live, such as love, truth, justice, righteousness, integrity, honour."

> Moreover, for permanent results, these must be recognized as a part of the Cosmic Order carrying conviction within themselves, and laden with their own penalties if refused. The kinship of the spirit of man with the natural order must not only be recognized but must become a working principle of action.

The claim as a corollary of this of "the intrinsic worth and sanctity of the human personality" as the basis of political organization need cause no confusion, because Mr. Flewelling's "personality" is the Theosophist's "individuality" and *vice versa;* he rightly calls them antonyms rather than synonyms. "Individualism" (in his sense) "lies behind the untoward aggressiveness of the West," while the completest expression of "personality" is, he says, "to be found alone in complete surrender of the human will to the will of the Cosmos, the Supreme Creative Intelligence, the Real, the One, or God." Such a philosophy of reconciliation fortunately does not have to be created. If Mr. Flewelling will go with an open mind to *The Secret Doctrine* by Madame Blavatsky, he will find what he seeks.

One of England's greatest educationists, Sir Richard Livingstone, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, well defines adult education's subject-matter in *World Review* for November as "anything which helps people to understand better the world in which they live and to make better use of what life offers." He rightly deplores the stopping of education at the ordinary school-leaving age of fifteen or even at the University level. There ought, he thinks, to be opportunities of adult education *for all*, using which "we should be far more intelligent and alive than we are."

> We are in the midst of one of the great social changes in history; it is an attempt to create not merely a just order but a high civilisation in which all play their part.

He describes the residential adult education colleges in the Scandinavian countries and the

few, with shorter courses, which have started in England.

> By such studies people can enrich their minds and lives and can enter worlds otherwise closed to them; ...they are likely to form more intelligent views on public as well as private problems, and to become more fit for our task of creating a great civilisation.

The same ideal of building up an enlightened and broadly sympathetic middle class as the backbone of the nation inspires the promoters of the Indian Institute of Culture at Bangalore, now taking its first steps towards becoming an institution of adult education in the finest sense.

The world's debt of gratitude to India for its pioneering efforts in systematic mathematics was mentioned by Dr. M. R. Siddiqui, Director of Research at Osmania University, at the outset of his Presidential Address on December 22nd at the Fifteenth Biennial Conference of the Indian Mathematical Society, held at Waltair. It was, he said,

> hardly possible to calculate the innumerable benefits that the human race had derived by the use of mathematical discoveries of our ancestors, particularly the discovery of the numerals and of the positional notation in arithmetic.

The reason for our ancestors' preoccupation with numbers, their calculations of the cycles, etc., would be a subject of study that would take investigators far back into the night of time. It might even show that what to us appear original discoveries were, like all knowledge, merely handed on by the great predecessors of the Aryan race. Higher and exalted beings who watched over infant humanity had taught them the sciences and arts, including such an advanced branch of applied mathematics as architecture, with its now lost canon of proportion, which the descendants of primitive men could not have discovered unaided in a million years.

Mr. Hector Hughes, K. C., M. P., writing in *The Times* apropos of the death penalty, pleads for the recognition of degrees of culpability for murder. Obviously, as he points out, there is a great difference in culpability between planned murders systematically carried out and crimes resulting from "passion, shell-shock, war tragedies, broken family life, defective housing, education, health, and other economic and social causes." Especially for those crimes for which a defective economic and social order shares the guilt, it ill becomes society to murder its accessory in crime. Madame Blavatsky writes:—

> Whatever the sin and dire results of the original Karmic transgression of the now incarnated Egos no man (or the outer material and periodical form of the Spiritual Entity) can be held, with any degree of justice, responsible for the consequences of his birth. ...In every respect he is a victim to his environment, the child of circumstances over which he has no control; and if each of his transgressions were impartially investigated, there would be found nine out of every ten cases when he was the one sinned against, rather than the sinner.

But what of the tenth case, say that of a man apparently sane but with a series of poisonings to his credit? From the point of view of criminal justice, does not he merit being deprived of his own physical instrument? No doubt, but the Theosophist would not approve the death penalty even for him. The Law of Karma will assuredly bring him the exact reaction from his evil deeds and for society to murder him in turn would but increase and spread the danger to the living. The man of evil passions thrown violently from his body, by its execution, offers a constant and most potent menace to all whom perfect purity of motive and firm will do not protect against his influence. On the other hand, to let him live out his normal span of life in a prison of the right type may not only ensure a normal death but also give the soul defied by its unworthy vehicle a longer chance to re-establish a measure of control and to gain something from an incarnation that otherwise were worse than wasted.

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