

# The Eclectic Theosophist

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## A WORD OF THANKS

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It may be of interest to review here a list of what we have published in the last twelve months:

\*\*Completed publication of 12 Theosophical Manuals:

*What is Theosophy? A General View of Occult Doctrine* by Charles J. Ryan; *Reincarnation: A Lost Chord in Modern Thought* (in collaboration with Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton) by Leoline L. Wright; *Evolution: Who and What is Man?* by Henry T. Edge; *Man's Divine Parentage and Destiny: The Great Rounds and Races* by Gertrude W. Van Pelt, M.D.; *Cycles: In Universe and Man* by Lydia Ross, M.D.; *Hierarchies: The Cosmic Ladder of Life* by Gertrude W. Van Pelt, M.D.; *The Astral Light: Nature's Amazing Picture-Gallery* by Henry T. Edge; *Psychic Powers* (in collaboration with TPH London) by Helen Todd.

\*\**H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement* by Charles J. Ryan (first edition 1937), with important new appendices which, among others, include Letters from H. P. Blavatsky to the American Conventions 1888-1891, and Later Point Loma History.

\*\**Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. I, a first-time compilation of the articles by William Q. Judge mainly published in *The Path* of 1886-1896; compiled and edited by Dara Eklund.

\*\**Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History* by Kenneth Morris.

\*\**Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom-Religion* by Judith Tyberg, 2nd ed.

\*\**Wind of the Spirit* by G. de Purucker, 3rd printing.

## THE GOLDEN RULE

HENRY T. EDGE

The Golden Rule shows the way of realizing the unity of living beings; and this is specially brought out in the injunctions to forgive our neighbor. But if this is only to mean that we suppress our anger towards him, while still continuing to imagine ourself his victim, the real forgiveness has not been achieved. In the greater fullness of life to which we aspire, and to which the Teacher points the way, we shall see that

our neighbor is actually part of our own Self, and then all feelings of animosity or conflict will seem absurd. In our present darkness we have falsely separated a unit into two halves, one of which is supposed to have been injured by the other. Forgiveness consists in the dispelling of this illusion.

This Rule is the prime maxim of conduct for the disciple in any system of practical religion or philosophy which aims at self-realization, and which sets before the aspirant the Path of Wisdom and Attainment. And truly it must be so; for it is self-seeking which binds a man down to the illusions and frustrations of his mortal life; and to escape, it is necessary to give up this law of self-seeking in favor of a higher law. It may be said, perhaps, that the strict following out of such a law, in the way (for instance) of the Sermon on the Mount, is too much to ask of an ordinary man. But, while the heights may be left to the comparatively few who feel themselves ready to scale them, even the most ordinary man is every moment faced with the choice between selfish and unselfish conduct, and must choose the one course or the other. With the ideal ever before him, and with an understanding of its rationality, he will be enabled to choose the right course, thus preparing himself for what awaits him in the future. For the day must come for every man when compromise will no longer be possible and he must choose definitely which path he will take. Never was the practice of unselfishness more needed than today, and it will help people to achieve it if they are not hampered by materialistic forms of religion and science which accentuate the lower aspect of human nature.

— *Theosophy and Christianity*,

Ch. IV, "The Bible — Fundamental Teachings"

## ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

The killing of a human being by the authority of the state is morally wrong and also an injury to all the people; no criminal should be executed no matter what the offence. If the administration of the law is so faulty as to permit the release of the hardened criminal before the term of his sentence has expired, that has nothing to do with the question of killing him . . . .

All the modes of execution are violent, whether by the knife, the sword, the bullet, by poison, rope, or electricity . . . . When then the mere physical body is so treated that a sudden, premature separation from the real man is effected, he is merely dazed for a time, after which he wakes up in the atmosphere of the earth, fully a sentient living being save for the body. He sees the people, he sees and feels again the pursuit of him by the law. His passions are alive. He has become a raging fire, a mass of hate; the victim of his fellows and of his own crime . . . . He has become a menace to the living . . . . Floating as he does in the very realm in which our mind and senses operate, he is forever coming in contact with the mind and senses of the living. More people than we

suspect are nervous and sensitive. If these sensitives are touched by this invisible criminal they have injected into them at once the pictures of his crime and punishment, the vibrations from his hate, malice and revenge. Like creates like, and thus these vibrations create their like. Many a person has been impelled by some unknown force to commit crime; and that force came from such an inhabitant of our sphere.

—Reprinted from *Echoes of the Orient*, pp.465-467, (*The Path*, Sept. 1895), extract from an article "Theosophy and Capital Punishment"

### AND WE QUOTE . . .

#### Tolerant — only of Sincerity

. . . The true Theosophist knows his Theosophy better than that. He knows in his heart the fundamental truths. One of these truths is the unity in Spirit of all creatures. Another is that the highest being reflects but a minute fraction of Universal Mind. By the very nature of our constitution not one of us in this life can ever comprehend the Whole. At best we can hope only to glimpse a small facet of Truth.

Because the true Theosophist knows this, he is tolerant of the sincere beliefs of others, knowing that as likely as not they are but different aspects of Truth. But he is not tolerant of evil and deceit and hypocrisy; only of sincerity.

His one desire is to show to others, if he can, the unity underlying the seeming diversity of Truth. Above all he longs to make the whole of humanity conscious of its divine origin.

Not for nothing was G. de P. an advocate of 'fraternization'. Because he above all others of his time was a true Theosophist; he knew that the true Theosophist must in his very nature be all-embracing, and be able to meet with respect and tolerance the members of other societies holding convictions different from his own.

There is hope for the world in the recognition of Truth wherever it may be found. There is only spiritual death in self-righteousness and intolerance. Theosophists everywhere should take care always to have a clear vision, and an eager eye for Truth; and they should flee as from the plague from exclusiveness and spiritual pride, the deadliest of sins in those who pretend to spiritual knowledge. Just as there is less separation between the spokes of a wheel the nearer one gets to the hub, even so is there less difference between ourselves and our brothers the nearer we come to the Divine Center of all things.

—Elsie Benjamin, *Bulletin* No. 70 (June 1951), of Corresponding Fellows Lodge

#### The Supreme Sacrifice

It is only when the mystery of humbleness is fully realized that the disciple is capable of pure unselfish love, which can lead him through the desperate well of loneliness which must engulf each aspirant, like an encircling sea fog. Losing sight of his guiding star, he will believe himself utterly deserted and alone, but the illusion will pass when the brilliant radiance of Universal Love can break free from its bondage to the personal, when the separate life is surrendered to the One Life.

It is a journey of hardship right to the end, but the landfall will be reached, and with what inexpressible joy and wonder must the pilgrim gaze at last at those golden cliffs of his native land. With what delight must he draw his boat on to those beloved sands warmed by the morning sun.

Who would turn back now to the dark seas? There are those who do, those who hear the cry of their brothers lost at sea, those who forsake the well-earned rest, and turn back to pain and suffering in order to help them. They are the Masters of Compassion, and theirs is the noblest Path of all: at the threshold of light, to renounce the reward and turn back to the darkness, this is the supreme sacrifice, and such a choice will be open to every disciple at the journey's end.

—Joan Sutcliffe, in "The Dory", *The Canadian Theosophist*, May-June, 1975

#### Both Wisdom and Method

Shankaracharya, in *Self-Knowledge* and *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, provides a wealth of instruction about meditation and particularly the relation between *Viveka* or discrimination and *Vairagya* or detachment. Anyone attempting to apply these teachings will find that it is difficult, but he will also learn that it is extremely enjoyable. If thoughtful, he will conclude that, by definition, there could not be any fixed technique of meditation upon the transcendent. Technique is as particularized a notion as one can imagine, a mechanistic term. A *techne* or skill has rules and can be reproduced. On the other hand, that which is transcendental cannot be reproduced. It does not manifest, and it is beyond everything that exists, so there can be no technique for meditation upon it.

Another way of putting it, an older way and perhaps less misleading, is that of the Dalai Lama in his book *My Land and My People*, where in a few pages he explains that the teaching of the Buddha is both wisdom and method. They go together. Wisdom is meaningless to us unless there is a method. But the method itself cannot be understood unless in relation to wisdom. He says that there is a distinction to be made between absolute truth and relative truth. In other words, wisdom is your relationship to knowledge, and that relationship involves the means you employ. It is skill in the use of what we call knowledge, but skill that is neither rigid nor final in its modes of embodiment. There is a natural allowance for growth in oneself and within others.

In this arena of inner growth, he who really knows does not tell, partly because he knows that what is essential cannot be told, in the Socratic sense in which wisdom and virtue could never be taught. But partly also he chooses not to tell when telling is of no help. The Buddha, the Master of skilful means, said that whichever way you go — telling little, telling much, or keeping quiet — in every case you have created karma. There were times when the Buddha told nothing. There were times when he told a great deal merely by telling a fairy story but saying through it much more than is ordinarily possible. There were times when he said very little and even this sometimes became a bone of contention among his disciples. We are dealing with the karma involved in human encounters, and this karma must not be physicalized and only understood literally and exoterically. That is our whole tragedy. We have a physical conception of telling and of silence, but that is because we still have not understood that the real battle is going on between that subtle and rarefied plane of consciousness where the true suns are, and that boisterous plane of consciousness which is the astral light, where there is an immense array of inverted shadows and images . . . .

—From an article "By Their Fruits. . ." in *Hermes*, Santa Barbara, California, May 1, 1976

## AND WE QUOTE . . .

## For All That Lives

Forgetting oneself, it seems, is remembering a Greater Self . . . There is no price too great to pay in order to become aware of the voice of the Greater Self. Blavatsky and the other chelas and Teachers assure us that getting acquainted with it is the most wonderful experience in the world.

What a splendid thing it would be to have the power of self-expression that could frame an effective message to the world about this 'Imprisoned Splendor' that lives in the secret heart of everyone! No price would be too much for the ability to communicate to others this soul-saving Wisdom of the Gods. If the world only knew that there is a KARMIC Power pervading all life which makes each man his own judge, jury, and teacher; and that we live life after life, learning, growing, aspiring, becoming better and vaster as those lives go on until — wonder of wonders — we awaken to the full realization that we are children of a deathless Godself, and that we will have a chance later on, through initiation, to meet that Self face to face and become glorified by its splendor, and reach out and embrace the whole universe with Divine Love, Compassion, Pity for all that lives!

—George Cardinal LeGros, *Messiah*, Aug. -Sept. 1975

## What Have You Lost?

In this age of guru-jumping, when we witness in both west and east a rush for yoga, drugs, mantras, occult powers, psychic gifts, masters, gurus and adepts, we are all too often reluctant to face up to the fact that self-knowledge, self-transcendence, the spiritual illumination, the creative life, are to be found in the hidden recesses of man's own being, for consciousness is the critical factor in human growth and therefore in man's inherent ability to solve the very problems he himself has created . . .

Our condition today may well be likened to that of Nasrudin who was discovered one day searching diligently on the ground outside his house. The friend who came upon him asked, 'What have you lost?' 'My key,' replied Nasrudin, whereupon the friend also got on hands and knees to aid in the search. After some little time, the friend said, 'Just exactly where did you lose your key?' Nasrudin replied simply, 'In my house.' 'But why,' expostulated the friend, with no little sense of irritation, 'are you looking for it out here?' 'Because,' responded Nasrudin, 'there is more light out here than in my house.' . . .

If we really mean business in our effort to find the key to the resolution of our afflictions, we will enter the dark of our own house — the hidden realms of consciousness, the mind and heart, and in spite of coming on many aspects of our nature that we would prefer not recognizing, that we may even find unpleasant or disagreeable, we will persist in our search for the true key of understanding, the key which turned correctly will unlock all the doors of the world, letting in the light of a new day. Amazingly, when we are willing to enter the darkness of our own house, we soon discover that the true light by which the search may be undertaken is there within — in the Immortal Self, of which any external light is really only a dim reflection.

Joy Mills, "Man's Time Has Come", *The Theosophist*,  
March 1975

## ANOTHER THEOSOPHICAL PROPHECY

. . . But without trying to drag the daily press of this country into the path of Oriental knowledge, we will proceed to record another prophecy or two.

The first will seem rather bold, but is placed far enough in the future to give it some value as a test. It is this — The Sanskrit language will one day be again the language used by man upon this earth, first in science and in metaphysics, and later on in common life. Even in the lifetime of the *Sun's* witty writer, he will see the terms now preserved in that noblest of languages creeping up in reviews, appearing in various books and treatises, until even such men as he will begin perhaps to feel that they all along had been ignorantly talking of 'thought' when they meant 'cerebration' and of 'philosophy' when they meant 'philology,' and that they had been airing a superficial knowledge gained from encyclopedias of the mere lower powers of intellect, when in fact they were totally ignorant of what is really elementary knowledge. So this new language cannot be English, not even the English acquired by the reporter of daily papers. . . . — but will be one which is scientific in all that makes a language, and has been enriched by ages of study of metaphysics and the true sciences.

William Q. Judge: *Echoes of the Orient*, p.16;  
also in *The Path*, May 1886.

## SANSKRIT TERMS: THEIR POWER TO INSPIRE

J. G. Patterson

Extract from an article "Are Sanskrit Terms Really Necessary?" in *The Theosophist*, June 1975. —Eds.

Sanskrit terms are our most priceless possession and could be used freely in our literature and even in our public lectures. Eastern philosophies are today marching into the West as Christian missionaries once marched into the East. In the cities of the world we now find Prana Restaurants and Dharma Bookshops. Karma, nirvana and ahimsa are now in the dictionaries of the Western languages.

How can we Theosophists who have had Sanskrit terms to ponder over for a hundred years throw away our most powerful tool and allow it to be used by those with lesser backgrounds of spiritual understanding?

There are other reasons, of course, why we should use Sanskrit terms.

So many Sanskrit terms come in direct succession through the Puranas and Upanishads from the Ancient Vedas in which the truth was taught by sound and heard by the chela. Many of these words and aphorisms still have this mantric value which can stimulate our higher modes of understanding.

They seem to hold the whole truth in layers of meaning and as our minds comprehend one layer the words themselves seem to lead us towards the next layer of meaning. In this way they expand our awareness and excite our intuitive understanding.

That well known word karma means action in all its aspects. The translation "as you sow so shall you also reap" contains only one aspect of the meaning of this word and limits our understanding. It cannot convey the idea of balanced action which contains no reaction — *karmalessness*. Reaction is implied in the simile of bouncing a ball against a wall and receiving the forces of its return. But a further study of karma suggests that the wall is a concept of perfection against which the action and therefore the reaction are measured.

Let us briefly look at the word *Nirvana*, the full meaning of which appears to stretch away beyond the scope of our intellect. Houlton in his dictionary defines it as the final state of human evolution where Divine Wisdom is fully attained and the consciousness expands to embrace the One Life. H. P. B. describes it as a state of absolute annihilation of everything connected with matter or the physical world of sense impression — a state of indifference to all sensibility.

The missionaries used this concept of annihilation to belittle Hinduism.

There is no satisfactory English equivalent except perhaps the masterly summation of the aims of Tibetan Buddhism: "To barter the vortex of the world for boundless bliss."

*Dharma* is usually translated as duty, but it is far more than this. Annie Besant suggests that in the ancient Sanskrit it means the essential nature of a thing — that which makes it what it is externally, hence the 'Laws of its Being'. It has its roots beyond the personality level, and when consciousness works in accordance with the Laws of its Being it is liberated gradually from the limitations of the world of *Mâyâ*. Such ideas cannot be conveyed by the simple word duty.

Illusion is a very inadequate translation of the Sanskrit *Mâyâ*, which brings our thinking to an unsatisfactory dead end. If we dwell on the idea that *Mâyâ* is the cosmic power which renders possible phenomenal existence and the perception thereof, we have a concept which draws out our thinking.

The quality of Sanskrit terms to draw out our thinking and deepen our understanding is essential to the life and well-being of the Theosophical Society in the future. Their power to inspire seems limitless, and we can confidently expect that their validity will last through the second century of the Society's existence.

### WITHERED LANGUAGE

In the *Saturday Review* for Nov. 15, 1975, Benjamin DeMott, a frequent contributor, turns his discussion of a current novel, *Guerillas*, by V. S. Naipaul, into a brief essay on the impoverishment of contemporary language. Speaking of the hero of this story, Mr. DeMott says:

The reason why Peter Roche is shadow, not substance, the reason why neither he nor we can touch his commitment, is that the terms necessary for the dramatization of that commitment are no longer utterable. Like many another writer on political subjects nowadays, V. S. Naipaul has been victimized by the withering away of the language of altruism; convention dictates that the selflessly giving political man must present himself as an enigma, must declare himself inexplicable, must discover no expressible reason for his being. Incapable of naming his "virtue", he stands before his own decency in puzzlement and ultimately vanishes as a person, devoured by profound — and profoundly inexpressible embarrassment. There are novels whose failure tells us more about where we are, what we've cut loose from, and what the cutting-loose costs, than do a hundred formally successful works. Looked at as political fiction, *Guerillas* is one of them.

The situation in literature is somewhat as Nietzsche put it years ago. In *The Twilight of Idols* he explained the meaning of his often quoted description of the assassination of "God" in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, saying:

We have abolished the true world. What has remained? The apparent one perhaps? Oh no! With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one . . .

So language breaks down without the meanings born in us from the true world — the world of ideals where the conception of man as altruist, as a soul committed to the service of his fellows, gains its reality. Modern man has been trying to live in the "apparent world," cut off from its spiritual source, for some time now, with result that literature and the arts are rapidly withering. Critics such as Mr. DeMott seem aware of this self-deprivation and are calling for a return to those convictions about the nature of man which can restore vital meaning to language.

Scholars have lately become increasingly aware of this failure of modern language to embody serious meanings. In the *American Scholar* for the Autumn of 1974, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., made a different analysis:

The rise of mass communications, the growth of large organizations and novel technologies, the invention of advertising and public relations, the professionalization of education — all contributed to linguistic pollution, upsetting the ecological balance between words and their environment. In our own time the purity of language is under unrelenting attack from every side — from professors as well as from politicians, from newspapermen as well as from advertising men, from men of the cloth as well as from men of the sword, and not least from the compilers of modern dictionaries who propound the suicidal thesis that all usages are equal and correct.

A rereading of H. P. B.'s article, "The Tidal Wave," [*Lucifer* Nov. 15, 1889] seems appropriate, in connection with commentary of this sort.

Aptly, Mr. Schlesinger quotes from Emerson to point the moral of his discussion of the decline of language:

"A man's power to connect his thought with its proper symbol, and so to utter it," said Emerson, "depends upon the simplicity of his character, that is, upon his love of truth, and his desire to communicate it without loss. The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language. When simplicity of character and the sovereignty of idea is broken up by the prevalence of secondary desires, the desire of riches, of pleasure, of power, of praise . . . words are perverted to stand for things which are not."

Eventually, we may think, the words "for things which are" die out of current speech. This is the charge made by Mr. DeMott. Meanwhile, Emerson's counsel is still the only solution: remove the corruption of man and the restoration of language will follow in due course.

Reprinted from *Theosophy*, February, 1976, the Section "On The Lookout".

### SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

**Question** -- Are not proponents of the idea of reunification of all Theosophical Societies NOW perhaps defeating their own ends if they continue their propaganda indicating that they have a direct pipe-line to the Masters, voice the Masters' thoughts and feelings, know just what the members of the White Lodge desire, and therefore are in a position to tell all other Theosophists worldwide what to do -- which is to follow their (the proponents') program? I have studied the literature on this subject over several years and must admit to a growing irritation. As I know the ECLECTIC and all Point Loma affiliated members have been strong and steady supporters of the idea of fraternization among Theosophists for several decades I would like to hear your views on this matter.

**Iverson L. Harris** -- I share the querent's irritation. Why seek to bolster one's pet plan by claims that it is inspired or endorsed by the Masters? If a plan is good, why not let it stand on its merit? It savors of delusion, or imposture, or at the very least of unsureness about the plan if one must depend for its acceptance on the alleged support of unseen Masters, whose endorsement can only be accepted on faith and not on personal knowledge. As H. P. B. herself says in THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY:

The tree is known by its fruit, and as all Theosophists have to be judged by their deeds and not by what they write or say, so all Theosophical books must be accepted on their merits, and not according to any claim to authority which they may put forward. . . . I say again, every earnest Theosophist regrets today, from the bottom of his heart, that these sacred names and things have ever been mentioned before the public, and fervently wishes that they had been kept secret within a small circle of trusted and devoted friends. -pp. 300-01

Speaking specifically of the reunification of all Theosophical Societies, is it quite honest to quote part of what a prominent Theosophist writes, so far as this is 'on all-fours' with one's pet thesis, and then to omit the following lines which reveal a far broader and more realistic view of the Theosophical scene than are the views of a one-track mind? I refer to Mr. Pierce Spinks' editorial comments on President John B. S. Coats' address at the 99th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, December 26, 1974. Mr. Spinks in his magazine *Theosophists Reunite* quotes the President's words:

There are those who press for unification of all Theosophical groups once again into one united Society.

Mr. Spinks injects his own approving comments on the foregoing, but fails to report Mr. Coats' next paragraph:

Whilst this could be regarded in some ways as a very fine achievement, and a worthy offering on the occasion of our Centenary, I think that since freedom has always been one of the main features of the Theosophical way of life, other groups and societies, based on similar principles to our own, but differing in administration, must reach many people whom we in our Society have not been able to reach so far.

Why did Mr. Spinks omit this portion of President Coats' address? Is it because he is a persistent proponent of reunification in *form*, while continuously expressing impatience with and criticism of others who are convinced that reunification in outward administration is not only presently impossible, but is of relative unimportance in comparison with *spiritual* unity and universal co-operation, regardless of administrative differences.

**Question:** *In a recent number of HARVARD MAGAZINE in the column "Any Questions?", an inquirer asks for an explanation of the fact that some ancient languages seem to have appeared on earth 'full-fledged', highly inflected and of philosophical sophistication, which apparently conflicts with the usual theory that human language evolved from the crude grunts and cries of man's animal forebears. The professor who tackled this problem for the magazine and its readers, after considerable circumlocution, seemed to evade the question itself, Can THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST throw any light on this matter?*

**Helen Todd:** Yes; but this is a vast subject. Really to understand it, you would have to read Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, chiefly the Section titled 'Anthropogenesis'. There are, however, smaller books and manuals which present the salient points on the general subject of man's evolution; by a study of such books you might find the above puzzle almost answers itself.\*

We might state here briefly that Theosophy does not postulate a one-track end-on evolution from the simplest forms of life to the advent and development of man; rather, the picture is one of hosts of lives in various stages of evolution, all, however, linked together by a common destiny, but each group primarily impelled, not according to the Darwinian theory of natural selection, but by an indwelling Spark of Life, sometimes called a Monad. In other words, the urge to grow, the impulse, is from within; and the *bodies* these monads build for themselves—the process science studies —

are those best suited to their present stage of evolution, spirit and matter working together.

The history of man's evolutionary development stretches much farther back into the past than historians have ever dreamed of; it is marked by enormous cycles-within-cycles, and bearing the influence at periodic times of advanced beings who have traversed a similar course in far past ages and are ripe with the wisdom garnered from their earth experiences. The development of language is obviously inextricably woven into the fabric of that history. Philologists have not fathomed its mysteries; and though many scholars have made valiant attempts to do so, they lack certain keys.

Pertinent to our present subject is the question: What *were* the beginnings of the "highly inflected and philosophically sophisticated" languages? The answer is to be found in the history of Sanskrit, the acknowledged mother of the Indo-European (Aryan) languages, which even today bear some of the characteristics of their distinguished progenitor. Sanskrit is "a storehouse of philosophical and religious terms, for the history of the development of Sanskrit was contemporaneous with that great event of which Occult History tells — the bringing of profound universal truths to the mankind of the early Fifth Race by compassionate-hearted god-men, who had already evolved through the human stage."\*

Though an ancient language, Sanskrit is by no means dead. It is very much alive in the present, not only through the precious legacy of the sacred books of India, many of which are studied by western scholars; but, largely through the influence of the modern Theosophical Movement, classes in the study of the language are multiplying yearly. Because of its philosophical profundity it is bound to add a new perspective to every phase of modern thinking.

**Question —** *Why in recent years is the word Theosophy, which used to be spelled always with a capital T, now spelled theosophy (lower case t) in publications of various branches of the Theosophical Movement?*

W.E.S. — We don't know and we don't do it. Is it, presumably, a succumbing to what is thought to be in the mode, in the season's style, an effort *not* to appear out of the current swim of things? Or again a needless fear of seeming dogmatic? A proper noun in English grammar is still capitalized. Of course English has no Academy to decide matters of grammar and syntax, as do France, Italy, Spain and other countries. Good usage is our standard. But why should it be considered good usage to speak of "theosophy" and in the same breath, say, of Christian Science, Science of Mind, Buddhism, Christianity, etc., etc.? Even the use of the small *t* in the adjective *theosophical* is inconsistent with the accepted use of the adjectives Christian, Buddhist, etc., though we bow to this adjectival pressure. Employing the lower case *t* in the word *theosophical*, however, could also well come into general use to mean broadly a liberal occult viewpoint, just as the word catholic now connotes one with comprehensive or liberal sympathies. If so, preserving the capital T to describe strictly Theosophical activities, assemblies, pronouncements, teachings, etc., may well still have proper and logical use.

\*Read, for instance, *Man's Divine Parentage and Destiny*, by Gertrude van Pelt, M.D.

\* "Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom-Religion" by Judith Tyberg

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST, *Special Spring Issue 1976*, "The Feminine Principle", Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill.

The Spring special issue of *The American Theosophist* emphasizes co-equality of the Feminine Principle with the Masculine, and de-emphasizes the idea of separation of the two throughout cosmological philosophy. This is good, for belief in separateness in basic concepts has caused chaos in thought and confusion in action. This has resulted in increased bewilderment in an unhappy world already freighted with emotional distortions of the role sex plays in human life.

"Three Pieces on Birth and Womanhood", a poetic paean praising womanhood as experienced by author Virginia Burden; an essay by Catherine R. O'Connor, C. S. J., "The Feminine as Unitive in Teilhard's Cosmology"; and "The Buddhist Feminine Deities," by Eleanor Olson, demonstrate the diversity of this issue's content. In the article by O'Connor, Teilhard's deep penetration into his own soul is revealed, and then — at least in the quotations given — his daring is almost apologized for by attempting to place his self-discoveries within a shaky framework of Church concepts. It is as if he feared heretical thinking on his part and sought to rationalize cosmic truths with his earlier accepted beliefs. To me it is like trying to pour the full splendor of the Sun into a chalice of limited measure.

An essay presenting the concepts on the subject by the gentle Lao-Tzu brings satisfaction. The present tension between the sexes and the struggle of women's 'lib' are touched upon. The priceless myths of the Mother-Principle — Demeter, Eve, Isis, Kali, the Virgin Mary — are cited and symbologies explained. (Surprising that no mention is made of Athene. Though not strictly identified with the Mother-Principle and though she did not spring from a masculine *rib*, she did come forth from the head of the highest god to carry the mighty aegis and become the embodiment of wisdom, reason, and purity.) The importance of the intermingling of the two Principles in the ONE is brought out.

Perhaps the most profound offering of this collection is "Sophia, the Gnostic Archetype of Feminine Soul-Wisdom" by Stephan A. Hoeller. The subject is presented with clarity and appreciation of the veiled Truths that the moving Mystery-tale of Sophia contains. "The gnosis kardias, the wisdom of the understanding heart," the author says, "is still awake and responsive to the ancient admonition of the Gnostics." A comforting thought.

—JALIE N. SHORE

REINCARNATION: *A Lost Chord in Modern Thought*, by Leoline L. Wright, The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, in collaboration with Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1975, pp.105. *Psychic Powers* by Helen Todd. The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England, in collaboration with Point Loma Publications, Inc. 1975, pp. 77

These two small books are the result of a co-operative publishing venture between the Theosophical Publishing Houses of Wheaton and London, and the Point Loma Pub-

lications, Inc., a publishing firm committed to preserving in print a number of excellent works first issued under the aegis of the Theosophical Society of Point Loma, California. The works now under review constitute numbers 2 and 11 in a series known as "Theosophical Manuals," prepared a number of years ago by competent students in the Point Loma Society for the purpose of providing a comprehensive study in the essentials of the theosophical philosophy. The entire series is written with extreme clarity and simplicity, preserving with a strict integrity those teachings which were given to the world through and by H. P. Blavatsky.

The concept of reincarnation is central to the entire theosophical system, and while many books have been written on the subject, the manual by Leoline Wright not only presents the logicity of the concept, but also treats the subject with a deftness found in few longer works. She addresses herself principally to the enquiring mind which demands direct answers to basic questions: Where was I before I was born? Why do I not remember previous lives? What is the purpose of it all? Is reincarnation compatible with the Christian view of life and death? Succinctly and yet tellingly written, the manual on *Reincarnation* traces the belief through all the world's faiths and gives evidence of its influence on the thinking of such widely diverse individuals as Virgil and Emerson, Benjamin Franklin and Walt Whitman.

*Psychic Powers*, on the other hand, deals not so much with a fundamental concept of Theosophy as with the application of the theosophical point of view regarding the nature of the psyche and the psychic realm on a topic of particularly relevant interest today. Mediumship, hypnotism, and such psychic powers as clairvoyance, telepathy, automatic writing, psychometry, etc., are discussed with remarkable clarity and perception. Today, as in H. P. B.'s time, interest in what have been called 'superphysical powers' has caused many to attempt the development of those powers without either an understanding of their nature or a recognition of the need for a corresponding ethical and moral development which alone ensures the proper utilization of such powers. This little booklet provides the ideal answer for all those who want to know how to deal with the current interest in psychism and, further, it will aid greatly any one in whom such powers are stirring.

Although the other manuals in this series are not at hand, one must congratulate the Point Loma Publications, Inc., for bringing the entire set back into print. Topics dealt with include What is Theosophy?, Karma, The Seven Principles of Man, Death and the After-Death States of Consciousness, Evolution, Man's Divine Parentage, the Origin of Man and of the Earth, The Doctrine of Cycles, The Ladder of Life, Hierarchies, The Astral Light, and Theosophy and Christianity. The entire set can be enthusiastically recommended for class study as well as for individual study, placing in the hands of the earnest seeker the theosophical keys for a basic understanding of the universe and man.

—JOY MILLS in *The Theosophist*, June 1976

GRAIL YOGA: *The Universal Process of Human Regeneration — the Way to God for Modern Men and Women — the Sacred Science of the Adamic Race*. By Edward E. Thomas and the Editors of 24 Magazine. East Ridge Press, Hankins, New York, 1975. 128 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This is one of those rare books that a reviewer, brought up from childhood on genuine Theosophy, can whole-heartedly recommend to truth-seekers — especially to those steeped in the Christian tradition, who are convinced, with Hamlet, that

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

In reading this small volume, though a Theosophist may not accept all the conclusions of the authors, one feels that it is written, compiled and published by earnest men dedicated to the betterment of their fellows. The several writers are plainly men of worldly experience and sincere spiritual aspiration. They know the value of real Yoga and are fully aware of and warn against the danger of seeking and expecting to find a *guru* qualified mentally, morally and spiritually to guide one to Yoga, or union with the Father in Heaven, the immanent Christ or the Inner Buddha. Much safer and far wiser, they admonish, it is to learn by personal study of the traditional sacred scriptures of East and West, and by a constant effort to practice the divine, universal ethics therein taught to different races and ages by spiritual Sages, who had themselves attained, in varying degrees, Yoga.

A glimpse of the scope of *Grail Yoga* may be had from a listing of its chapter headings: Chapters 1 and 2, titled respectively, "The Way of the Grail: The Yoga of Our Age", and "What Arose? The Difficulties in Believing the Central Yogic Act of All Times", written by Edward E. Thomas, as was the Foreword signed by him. Chapters 3 and 4, signed by John Burns, are titled "Yoga Means Union: An Interpretation in Eastern Terms," and "Rama Krishna on Yoga," who emphasizes that it is lust for sex and lust for gold that are among the greatest barriers to the attainment of Yoga. Chapter 5, "Prerequisites of Yoga" is by Thomas R. White, Editor of 24 Magazine, "The Magazine of Living the Way — Twenty-four Hours at a Time." Chapter 6, by Henry Woods, is titled "Surya Namaskars" and is an excellent exposition of the value to health of regular, temperate and common-sense yogic exercises, with timely warnings of the dangers of unguided excesses and illusory hopes of resulting spiritual achievements.

On the back of this volume, the Publishers declare: "*Grail Books* are books of the Way of the Grail, the universal search for God — including Esoteric Religion, Esoteric Psychology, Esoteric Philosophy, Esoteric History, Esoteric Science. *Esoteric* means *Inner* or *Interior*— and hence: real, not merely speculative; universal, not sectarian; sacred, not profane; for serious seekers, not for dilettantes."

The inside of the book bears out what is printed on the cover.

—IVERSON L. HARRIS

THE SECRET OF SELF-REALIZATION (1974) by I. K. Taimni. 98 pp. Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras, India.

This is a series of commentaries on the Hindu treatise *Pratyabijna Hridayam of Ksemarâja*, the latter consisting of twenty metaphysical and philosophical aphorisms, which the author describes as a masterly exposition of the essential knowledge which an aspirant needs for treading the path of practical Occultism, and eminently suited for those persons learning the art of meditation through the methods of Yoga. Dr. G. de Purucker, in an article on "*The Six Great Schools of the Ancients*", appearing in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, lists Yoga as "a school of philosophy dealing with emanational

evolution, combined with practice in aspiration and self-training, but incomplete from the standpoint of the Esoteric Philosophy." The aphorisms under review fit perfectly into this description as they address themselves principally to the progress of the Monad as a center of universal consciousness, obscured by limitations resulting from its descent into a human body, but eventually attaining Self-realization by methods and practices set out in the aphorisms. While the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth are presented in brief form, other basic tenets of the occult philosophy are missing.

The first three aphorisms describe briefly the origin and nature of the universe, and the next nine aphorisms explain the existence of the Monad as a center of universal consciousness, descending from that stage to become an individual soul, involved in illusions and subject to the cycle of rebirths. The last eight aphorisms list the techniques utilized in the practice of Yoga for the unfoldment and expansion of one's center of consciousness until it becomes one with the world of Reality. This, the author states, is the real meaning of Self-realization.

The subjects of Reincarnation and Karma are introduced in Aphorism 9. In the commentary it is stated that three factors: *Mâyâ*, *Anu* and *Karma* (Illusion, Centralization, and Karma), as agents obscuring divine consciousness, keep the individual Monad involved in the lower worlds and bound to the cycle of rebirth; that past karma has to be dissipated before liberation can be obtained. This can be accomplished, says the author, by the yogic technique of *Niskâmakarma*, a term passed over in the commentaries but explained in the Preface of the book as self-discipline undertaken to attain Self-realization. The statement that it is past karma and not the Law of Karma that is to be dissipated is implied, rather than explained, in the book.

The commentary on Aphorism 18 discusses quite extensively the yogic techniques used in self-realization, and very properly advises the reader of the dangers involved in such practices before a sound character foundation has been laid and the mind freed from selfish and vulgar desires.

The commentaries are well written and extremely helpful in explaining the philosophical standpoint. The author's frequent references to the descent or the imprisonment of the Monad could be improved by an explanation that it is the Human Monad—a vehicle of the Divine Monad—which becomes involved in matter as part of its progress from an un-self-conscious God-spark to a fully conscious God.

Numerous words and phrases in Sanskrit are to be found throughout the book, some of which, including the title of the aphorisms, are not translated, posing difficulties for the reader. It is regrettable that the publisher did not furnish a brief exposition of the *Pratyabijna Hridayam* and some information about its author or origin.

For those interested further in the philosophy of Yoga, a more comprehensive and practical treatise is to be found in the translation by William Q. Judge of the *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, the founder of the Yoga system of philosophy.

—ALAN SHURLOCK

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*ABC of Satya Dharma and Its Philosophy* by Surendra Nath Sen Gupta, Brahma Mission Press, Calcutta, 440 pp. cloth.

*The Edge of the Universe* by Harold W. G. Allen, 1970, Allen Book Publishing, Downsview, Ont., Canada, 268 pp., cloth.

*Signed and Posted* by A. E. Tomkin, Philosophical Library, New York, second ed. 1974, 124 pp. \$5.00.

*The Ultimate Meaning of Jules de Gaultier*, by Gerald M. Spring, Philosophical Library, Inc., New York, 1975, 72 pp. \$5.00.

*To Baruch a Responsum*, by Paul Dobbs, Philosophical Library, New York, N.Y., 1976.

*Conversations with Sheldon*, by John MacPartland, Philosophical Library, New York, N.Y., 1976.

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

Expressed in the Constitution  
of the Order of Freemasons in the  
Grand Lodge of The Netherlands

#### Art. 2

1. Freemasonry is the inner spiritual impulse which manifests itself by a continual endeavor to develop all the qualities of heart and spirit that are able to raise man and mankind to a higher spiritual and moral level. It embodies the application of the highest art of life.
2. The Order, being an independent part of the brotherhood of Freemasons spread over the surface of the earth, has as an object: to be a mutual center for the cultivation of that art of living. It strives after the all-round and harmonious evolution of man and mankind.
3. It is based on a firm trust in the reality of a spiritual and moral world-order that encourages man and mankind.
4. It accepts as fundamental:
  - acknowledgement of the high value of human individuality;
  - everyone's right to search for Truth independently;
  - the moral responsibility of man for all that he does or leaves undone;
  - the equality of all men in essence;
  - the universal brotherhood of man;
  - that it is everyone's duty to work diligently for the well-being of the community.

#### Art. 3

1. The Order tries to reach its object by bringing into harmony the forms and organizational structure with the principles described in Art. 2 and also by the endeavor to introduce these into Society.
2. It works for this purpose in its own way by the help of symbols and rituals (being the expression of ideals and thoughts of the highest inspiration), partly by promoting whatever can turn a spiritual and moral lack and physical distress into spiritual wealth and physical well-being.
3. It promotes tolerance, exercises justice, promotes neighborly love, and tries to find that which unites men and nations, and to remove that which separates mind and heart, endeavoring to reach a higher unity by the awakening of the consciousness of the all-embracing feeling of brotherhood.
4. It demands obedience to the laws of the country.

#### Threshold Correspondence Courses

Highly recommended are these courses conducted by George Cardinal LeGros (301 North Wall Ave., Joplin, Missouri, 64801), to whom all inquiries should be addressed. Mr. LeGros writes in his *Messiah*, Apr.-May, 1976:

"Threshold Courses are designed to stimulate the higher mental faculties of the student, to awaken his intuitions, and encourage him to move forward on the Eternal Highway of Self-Discovery. We are told that ALL TRUTH IS WITHIN US, and that books, lessons, teachers, etc. can only point the way. Each individual, through self-induced and self-devised efforts, must FIND HIMSELF — his DIVINE SELF — and thereby discover the infinite Wisdom and Compassion already dwelling within him.

"Threshold Course 1 is based on *The Ocean of Theosophy* by William Quan Judge, and consists of questions sent to the student who in turn forwards his answers for correction and comments. He may also submit questions of his own." [Copies of *The Ocean* may be obtained from Mr. LeGros — paper, \$2.50; cloth, \$4.50.]

### ELSA TORNBLAD RESTS AMONG THE STARS

From Helsinki, Suomi, we learn from Sylvi Kohva that on April 5, 1976, Elsa Tornblad of Stockholm "had gone away to the World of Light. We know 'the silence that she loved has taken her.' She loved our lakes and forests."

Those who knew Elsa will never forget her infectious humor, underlying which was a depth of character reflected in her words: "In the next incarnation I hope to have my home near many Theosophical friends. There is not much sense in living if one cannot work for humanity."

#### FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

##### *The Theosophical Manuals*

*Margaret Duncan-Miller, Walton-on-Thames, England.* — The March *Eclectic* made splendid reading. It is very good for those like myself who are more recent comers to Theosophy to know a little about the writers of the Manuals. It shows on what a firm foundation the teaching coming from Point Loma was founded, and this is important to new-comers.

*Eirwen Mellor, Sandersat, Dyfed, Wales.* — I find each Manual (of the 12 Theosophical Manuals recently published) of invaluable inspiration, and look forward eagerly to reading each one.

*Irene Stashinski, Chicago, Ill.* — Point Loma Publications continues with a most impressive list. I've an old battered and tattered — but very loved — set of Theosophical Manuals from way back, and often thought how great it would be to have them in print again. And, voilà! We are deeply grateful for making these and all the other priceless gems available. What a wealth of knowledge and inspiration to us; and more importantly, a privilege to pass these books on to others eager to share in this Ancient Wisdom.

##### *Echoes of the Orient, Vol. I, by W. Q. Judge*

*Emanuel Pekelis, M. D., Jasper, Alabama:* The spiritual and intellectual stature of W. Q. J. emerges radiant and titanic in his own light, not merely reflecting that of one or more of the Masters. No wonder H. P. B. considered him and treated him as an equal. We strongly feel that this book helped even us to make "one more step" toward the PATH.

#### HISTORICAL MATERIAL

\* *Misleading Mayavic Ideations; The Neo-Theosophy of C. W. Leadbeater and Annie Besant*, compiled by Ray Morgan;

\* *Some Reminiscences of William Q. Judge* by E. A. Neresheimer (with additional notes by Iverson L. Harris.)

Those doing special research into Theosophical history, but also all wanting to know unbiased historical facts (the knowledge of which could well color current administrative directives and policies in the various branches of the Theosophical Movement) may be interested in the above listed items. The first can be obtained by writing to Mr. Ray Morgan, 1340 W. Roger Rd., Tucson, Arizona, 85705; inquiry for the second should be directed to Point Loma Publications, Inc., P. O. Box 9966, San Diego, California 92109.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS

Since *Eclectic's* report of May 15, 1976, the following contributions have been received and are acknowledged here with grateful appreciation: E. P. W., \$10.00; N. A., \$20.00; I. S., \$114.96; E. M. G., \$508.75; J. & L. M., \$40.00; Anon., \$75.00; R. H., \$15.00; M. L., \$114.15; Anon., \$10.00; W. L., \$50.00; R. H., \$15.00; J. C., \$50.00; G. D., \$90.00.

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