

# THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

Quarterly Official Organ of The Theosophical Society in Europe—Federation of National Societies

CHAIRMAN AND EDITOR—Mrs. Claire Wyss, Bruderholz str. 88, 4000 Basle, Switzerland.  
ASSISTANT EDITOR—Mrs. Greta Eedle, 35 Stile Hall Gardens, London, W.4, England.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT—  
c/o 50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1, England.

## THE INNER NATURE OF MAN AND THE WORLD OF TODAY

Condensed from a Lecture to the Swedish Summer School

BY CLAIRE WYSS

Man today is, to all outward appearances, a bundle of complexes, but it is surely false to assume that most people have no philosophy of life or only a vague philosophy. What has changed, as against earlier times, are often the authorities which decide what that philosophy of life shall be, what the world is and what we can expect of it. One of those new authorities is technology.

Technology has given birth to a mass of unlimited expectations. It is surrounded by an almost mystical reverence; miracles are expected of it. We also allow technology to make decisions for us in daily life and with regard to the immediate and the distant future. Everything that is not in conformity with the "progress" of technology is regarded as hopeless and beyond remedy.

It could not but be useful for a civilisation which has so many research institutions to investigate some day very seriously the meaning and the value of our present-day activity, to ask to what extent we are laying foundations for human happiness or in fact preventing it; to what extent technology and its instruments are our servants or our masters, to what extent we allow it to deprive us of the very foundation of our life, our feelings, Nature, our humanity, the Eternal; to what extent we allow ourselves to be involved in a war of all against all for the sake of a few apparent material advantages. Even today, the heavy death roll of the road leaves us cold, blinded as we are by the interests of so-called "progress."

I should like to quote from an economist, H. Hauswirth, the Manager of the Swiss Sample Fair in Basle, on the question where all our activity is leading. "Each of our contemporaries is brought to reflect on the problems of our world which has now become undivided. Such reflection is probably possible only if we also find the necessary tranquillity to think 'in silence' about all that crowds in on us daily and hourly. How many people can still do so today? And, if I ask this question, I must unfortunately bring up a second important question: How many people still want to do so today? Is not the increasing prosperity in the western world or in the whole industrialised world with its mania for enjoying the day (and the night) badly equipped to lead our thoughts and aspirations towards inner enlightenment, to make us adjust our lives to something like a hierarchy of values?"

It is perhaps some comfort to know that these problems are not new. Did not the incomparable Blaise Pascal write in his *Pensées*, back in the 17th Century: "All man's unhappiness comes from one source—that he cannot remain at rest in a room." Of course Pascal did not mean that we should spend our days from morning till evening shut up in a room, but he was convinced that we should from time to time take the trouble, alone in the quiet of our own home, to settle accounts with ourselves. He was aware that we human beings can only help each other once we have ourselves found inner peace and overcome all fear of everything that afflicts us inwardly and outwardly.

From the theosophical point of view, the picture of modern man is probably very similar, but Theosophy gives us the possibility to discover something of the causes which make the situation in the

world what it is. We know that man is a whole, compounded of the heavenly and the earthly man, and, as is said in *The Secret Doctrine*: "... if we separate him for one moment from the Universal Whole, or view him in isolation, from a single aspect, apart from the 'Heavenly Man'—the Universe—we shall fail most ingloriously in our attempt."

Very few people know this fact and therefore they also know very little of the deeper values of life. We have seen that technology and science are not sufficient to solve world problems; they could perhaps do so if their discoveries were applied wisely. But that this is not so easy is obvious from the fact that man knows little of the deeper values of life and his own nature. He is, seen superficially, a bundle of complexes, but as soon as we see him as a whole and consider his origins, we have a completely different picture of him. Young people are particularly interested in this aspect and I had several times the experience during my trip through Greece and Yugoslavia that young people who had come into touch with Theosophy asked above all questions, to which they had so far found no satisfactory answer, concerning who and what man is and why the situation in the world is such that it cannot be accepted without protest.

I agree with Miss Helen Zahara who says in an article that "This is where the Ancient Wisdom has its greatest contribution to give to the development of human knowledge and understanding, not by tossing out modern knowledge, which would be absurd, for it is of great value if rightly used, but by complementing it and enriching it."

The truths of the Ancient Wisdom, if they are applied and understood properly, could work miracles. They teach us that the true man is divine and immortal, that the divine spark in him is part of the universal spirit, that there is only One Divine Life which ensouls all creation and that this Divinity is the basis of our being. For that reason the brotherhood of man is one of the most fundamental principles in nature. If this were recognised by a larger proportion of mankind, it would lead to wonders in the torn world of today.

I think it is our duty as Theosophists to show, to prove by our example, that life is something more than material comfort and a game of chance. We should prove by our lives that the conditions under which we live are only to be considered as forming a part of call on our long journey to perfection, that they give us opportunities to have experiences which are necessary to make us understand that, since we are part of the One Life, we could, by our action, raise the whole a little and change the situation in the world. The cause of what is negative in the world can be traced to a great extent to the fact that man isolates himself, that he no longer feels himself part of a whole, that he is not conscious of Unity. There could be no racial discrimination, no divisions in religion if man would realise this fact; relations between individuals would also change and lead to a more peaceful and happy life.

How should we therefore live in order to show the world how it could become happier?

We see that the world is in constant movement, nothing in it endures. In this

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## COMPETITION

The complaint is often heard, especially in non-English speaking countries, that there is a dearth of modern theosophical works. Sometimes it is said that certain books are out of date or too complicated, that they contain too many Sanskrit words, or that they do not deal with current problems, or again that they lack a proper pedagogic approach. In addition, some books, while retaining their essential value, need to be brought up to date, taking into account the progress of science. Taken as a whole our teaching is not considered to be sufficiently progressive and co-ordinated, and is too much left to the initiative of the individual.

It is not for us to judge whether these criticisms are valid. Besides, the situation is very different from one country to another, and even from one branch to another.

Hence, in order to encourage all those who are attached to our philosophy to produce modern work, The Theosophical Society in Switzerland (Meyer Foundation) has decided to institute a competition. In this way it hopes to contribute to the improvement of the diffusion of our ideas. This is an experiment, and the co-operation of all members is requested.

We hope especially that young members, who sometimes criticise the imperfection of our teaching methods and our way of life, will participate in this friendly competition.

### RULES

1. The competition is open to all members of the Theosophical Society. Also invited to participate are the various branches, groups of research workers, etc. These will, however, be entitled to only one prize.
2. The competition involves the presentation of an unpublished text treating one or other of the following topics:
  - (a) Theosophy in general;
  - (b) its specific teachings (reincarnation, Karma, the energy of thought, cosmogenesis, etc.);
  - (c) the relationship between theosophy and science (geology, zoology, physics, psychology, sociology, economics, etc.);
  - (d) the relationship between theosophy and life under any of its aspects;
  - (e) ethical problems.
3. The time limit has been fixed for 31st December, 1970. It can however be extended at the request of a participant.
4. In principle, the text should be long enough to be published in book form. However, shorter works presenting a certain originality, either from the point of view of the subject or that of presentation, will be accepted.
5. The competition should be as broad as possible. For this reason, no strict rule has been fixed with respect to the length of the entries, their subject matter or their presentation. Those who have something to say should be free to express it.
6. The entries can be presented in French, German, English, Italian or Spanish, and possibly even in other languages.
7. The text must be typed and sent in 5 copies (one on thick paper plus four flimsies). It should be easily legible, with about ten words to a line and 28-30 lines to a page, with adequate space between lines. These should be sent by registered mail to THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN SWITZERLAND,  
c/o M. Georges Tripet,  
Avenue Dumas 29,  
1206 GENEVA (Switzerland).

8. Documents illustrating the text (photographs, diagrams, etc.) can be sent in one copy only if their reproduction presents too much difficulty.
9. The results of the competition will be communicated directly to participants, and possibly published in theosophical journals.
10. If the presentation of a work involves certain expenses for carrying out experiments, for photos, etc., participants can describe their difficulties to the undersigned, and the Swiss section will examine the possibility of assisting them.
11. The competition is experimental. For this reason, people interested in participating are invited to inform the undersigned immediately, indicating the subject they envisage treating. They can perhaps be assisted in their work or put in touch with other researchers.

### PRIZE

To stimulate initiative and to demonstrate its interest in our headquarters and various centres, the Theosophical Society in Switzerland will award three prizes.

- A. FIRST PRIZE. A return ticket by plane, economy class, from any point in Europe (including the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland) or the Middle East to Adyar. The stay in Adyar, at our Headquarters will be paid for three weeks at the period chosen by the candidate.

If the first prize is awarded to a member of India or America, a return plane ticket, economy class, from India or America to Huizen (Netherlands), together with three weeks stay at our European Centre will be given.

If the prize is awarded to a person not fulfilling the above conditions of residence, then a ticket or sum of money not exceeding Swiss Fr. 5500 will be given.

- B. SECOND PRIZE. A return plane ticket, economy class, from any point in Europe to our European Centre of Huizen, or from any point in America to our American Centre of Wheaton, or from any point in India to our Headquarters in Adyar, together with a stay of two weeks in one of these centres, at the date chosen by the candidate.

An equivalent award in value will be made to participants in South America, Australia, etc.

- C. THIRD PRIZE. A coupon of Swiss Fr. 500 for the purchase of books in one of our publishing houses in India, America or elsewhere.

In special cases, the jury can on request pay the prize in kind.

### THE JURY

The jury will be constituted when we know the numbers, quality and nationality of the participants.

In all cases, the entries submitted in a given language will be examined by at least two people of that language; and if the work deals with a special field (geology, medicine, etc.) one or more specialists will be co-opted.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY  
IN EUROPE  
FEDERATION OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES  
Theosophy in Action

*From the Chairman*

## Annual Report of the Theosophical Society in Europe 1968/69

The most important event in the year under review was the European Congress held at Swanwick from July 19th to 26th, 1968. About 20 countries were represented amongst those attending. The General Secretaries of England, Sweden, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Scotland, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Wales and Yugoslavia and the Organising Secretary for Northern Ireland took part; the Young Theosophists were also represented. At the Council Meetings the elections of new officers were held, with the following results: Chairman: Mrs. C. Wyss; Vice-Chairman: Dr. N. Lauppert; Treasurer: Miss I. von Tresckow; Executive Committee: Mr. W. Slater, Mr. C. Berg, Miss M. Anderson, Mrs. A. Stephan, Mrs. R. Tripet, Mrs. H. Saetay and Mr. J. Brandt (co-opted). So this is the first report of the new Chairman. The key-note of the Congress was: "Breaking the Mind Barrier." This proved a very interesting subject, as shown by the excellent talks given. A Congress number of *Theosophy in Action* was issued, in which nearly all these talks appeared. It was a very beautiful congress; Swanwick is an extremely suitable place for gatherings like this.

The Executive Committee met during the Congress in Swanwick and again at the end of January, 1969 in Basle. Meetings of the British and the Pays Latins Regional Committees were also held in Swanwick. The German-speaking Regional Committee met in Swanwick, during the Regional Summer School in September, and again in January, 1969 in Basle.

The German-speaking Regional Summer School in Picni in September, 1968 was well attended, members from Yugoslavia, etc., also being present. Mr. and Mrs. G. Hodson were the guest speakers. The key-note "Yoga and the Spiritual Path" produced ideas for excellent lectures and discussions.

There was no Pays Latins or Scandinavian summer school in 1968 and, as far as I know, no other summer school in the period from the end of July, 1968. The Young Theosophists held their annual camp in North Jutland from July 10th to 31st.

The International President, Sri N. Sri Ram, was not able to attend the Congress, as he was still in America as the guest of the American section. He had to undergo an operation during his stay there. A few members, including the Chairman, met him at London Airport on his way back to India. He was still rather tired but had recovered well.

The Vice-President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. James Perkins, were active in the U.S.A. during the year under report. I should like to welcome Mr. Geoffrey Farthing, the new General Secretary of the English section in succession to Mr. Leslie Leslie-Smith, who gave the section his precious services for a period of four years.

Mrs. Mila Grubacevic is the new General Secretary of the Jugoslavian section. The retiring General Secretary, Mr. Anton Jesse, is to be congratulated on his work in reviving the section.

It is with regret that I report the death of two prominent and beloved members of the Society—Professor J. E. Marcault, France, and Mr. L. Lorenzana, Spain.

As already mentioned, a new Treasurer was elected in the person of Miss Ilse von Tresckow, in succession to the retiring Treasurer, Mrs. Rachel Tripet. Both Miss von Tresckow and the Chairman are therefore new to this work, but I must say that she is a very great help and we work together very well—as well as we can! I should like to mention also Mrs. Greta Eddle, Assistant Editor of *Theosophy in Action*. Without her help the paper would not be what it is. I should not like to omit our Vice-Chairman, Dr. N. Lauppert. In his capacity as a lawyer, he is very useful and helpful and always ready with excellent advice. Most valuable help is given to the new Chairman by Mary Anderson, especially with English texts. As we live in the same house, we can work together, and this fact makes the work easier and happier! Many thanks to all those helpers.

### THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

Single copies, from Theosophical bookstalls, 2s. Od. Yearly subscription, including postage, 8s. Od. (see leaflet enclosed).

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement made in this paper. The European Federation is responsible only for its official notices.

### HOW CAN WE HELP THE WORLD BY THOUGHT?

Brief Summary of a Symposium by five members of the Swiss Section at their Annual General Meeting

Thought is a force at the disposal of all men, but he who knows its power must make sure that his thoughts are positive and constructive. Once one has acquired the habit of constructive thought, one must have the will to persist and discover how one can help. Here our task ends. The Masters of the Wisdom collect these forces and channel them where they will be most effective.

A great power comes into being when our own positive thoughts unite with other thoughts of the same nature. The world will be helped forward in its evolution if we can lead the thoughts of our fellow men to higher levels. This is possible in great simplicity. Above all we must beware of mental laziness.

As we are all connected with one another by thought it is possible to help at the personal level. For instance, one can make a clear mental picture of someone who is the victim of a bad habit and send him ideas that will help him to overcome it, all in a spirit of calm, gentleness and harmony.

There is danger in so-called good thoughts when they come from the mental level alone, and not from the deeper spiritual being of man. For instance, in sectarian and political movements there are ideas which carry people away by their simplicity and logic. These build up into thought forms which last for centuries, such as racial discrimination, exaggerated nationalism, false feelings of honour, etc.

We must help to remove the intellect from its prominent position in the man of today and to set the point of gravity in the spiritual centre. Really helpful thoughts can come only from the spiritual man, which our mental body transmits in the manner of electrical transmitters. We must prepare ourselves for this task by discrimination and impersonal self-criticism.

There are today positive forces at work to which we can add our strength in furthering their development. There is a great awakening of forces which might be called spiritual. The strivings of youth and scientific research provide different points of contact with theosophical teachings. These lay down certain rules of life, such as that only by kindness can man come to Truth, that Truth can move mountains of ignorance and prejudice, and so on.

If we follow these it should be possible to form a real nucleus of brotherhood in our Society and to help our neighbour directly through contact, discussion and direct help.

As our discrimination between good and evil is not yet sufficiently developed because we have not attained to inner spiritual wisdom, we must try to open ourselves as much as possible to the influence of the Masters and put ourselves at their disposal. In this way and in the light of theosophical teachings we may help our fellow men and work towards the construction of a true brotherhood.

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sense everything is illusion, Maya. It is an illusion on our part to cling to it and we must free ourselves from such an illusion . . . we must learn to live in the world, but not be of the world. We must devote our lives to the attainment of self-realisation, which alone can give us freedom and enlightenment. The right way to live in this world is to free ourselves from all excitations and emotional involvement, so that our energies are set free for spiritual interests. This freeing will help us towards a right attitude, a right point of view from which to judge things around us; it will enable us to beware of prejudice, so that we are what may be expected of us: spiritual pillars, centres of peace in the tumult of world events, if we are aware of the One Life, nothing can separate us from our fellow men, all are linked to all. If once this consciousness is firmly anchored in us, we shall see the unity also in all other men and in all beings. After all, the realisation of this oneness is the purpose of our life.

In innumerable incarnations we have always sought the same: the Divine, the Eternal; we have sought it outside ourselves, we have thought that we were finding it in hours of happiness and in hours (Continued at foot of previous Column)

# In Perspective

THE evolutionary mills never cease grinding. Though they may often seem to be slow, their exactness is guaranteed by the just but inexorable law of Karma, working simultaneously at the individual level and at the group (national or racial) and global (whole human race) levels. The world pattern changes constantly, for a great part of the time imperceptibly. We are aware of a shift only when its cumulative effect becomes definite and unmistakable. So, every now and then, we are perhaps surprised by a change of policy among nations, a new relationship between them, or a fresh note in world affairs.

## Two Bogeys

The United States is taking its troops out of Vietnam, in as face-saving a way as possible; the move has to be rationalized. The common sense of the people of America has forced its government to this step. The original commitment of U.S. forces to fight, as it was thought, another Korean war was based on a fallacy—the belief that an ideology can be conquered by arms. The American nation got caught up also in a great fear of Communist Marxism. This led it, among other things, to tolerate the disgraceful incidents of the McCarthy inquisition in the 50's. This irrational fright caused the nation to embark on the fighting in Vietnam, only at long last to discover that even the hideous weapons of modern war are impotent to crush the spirit of a people.

The Russians have behaved just like the Americans, and they too have to learn that while force may compel temporary conformity under protest, it cannot deny a nation's freedom of thought—and in the end action. The Russian bogey has been private enterprise, as the United States one has been Communism. Both are largely fantasies projected by one-sided mental attitudes. It is a universal human trait to project on to an enemy or supposed enemy the qualities in oneself that one is not willing to own up to and to face. And this is just what the nations also do—they are aggregates of human beings. Both American and Russia were suddenly pitched into being super-powers without having opportunity to learn a little wisdom in the use of unparalleled strength on a global scale. The whole world suffers now while they are learning.

## China the Third Factor

The entrance of China on this earth-wide scene brings in another balancing factor, however much the other two giants may dislike it. This is a good thing. When only two forces are involved in some sort of equilibrium, it is bound to be precarious because a comparatively small tilt towards one or the other may prove highly dangerous to whatever stability there is. But where even an uncertain balance depends on three forces, the risk of some violent disturbance of that balance is much less. If the present threat of war between Russia and China led to large scale fighting, then the United States would run grave risk of being seriously affected; and this would be a certainty if nuclear warheads were used, as would be highly likely. She is unlikely to contemplate such possibility without bringing every available pressure and persuasion on to both antagonists. Meanwhile, a more realistic and less prejudiced attitude to China, several decades late, would seem to be now inevitable. Let us watch and see what happens.

## Common Market

Since the fall of de Gaulle there has been much talk about the Common Market and the chances of Britain joining it. Most of the discussion and speculation is far too narrow. After its bright promise, EEC has run into many difficulties. If it is to have a future that is worth while, then its scope must be widened. Negotiations merely with possible British membership are beside the point now. If talks are to be effective they must envisage all the free nations of Europe working together and, later on, those that may become free. Only on such a basis, and then in a world setting, could anything of permanent value emerge. The world needs not politicians but statesmen of vision. There are a few, but far too few.

# THE ROAD TO WORLD PEACE

EXTRACTS FROM AN ADDRESS BY RICHARD COUDENHOVE-KALERGHI IN HIROSHIMA, NOVEMBER, 1967

Humanity is moving steadily towards World War III, towards the atomic war of destruction, towards the greatest catastrophe in human history. The collective suicide of all nations is involved, the cruel slaughter of hundreds of millions of men, women and children. The world's greatest cities would be turned into ruins, fertile plains into deserts, great civilizations would disappear forever.

Every man and every woman, every political party, every government and every nation ought to mobilize to fight this terrible menace to international peace: World War III.

Some men seem to believe that World War III might be waged without atomic arms. They propose an agreement between the atomic powers to destroy all atomic weapons and all factories producing them. But no nation could be sure that its opponent would not hide a stock of these arms for eventual use in the hour of defeat. Facing this possibility most statesmen would consider it their duty to do the same in order to be ready to meet any unfair surprise.

Therefore the only way to avoid atomic war is to assure international peace and to hand over all atomic bombs and all factories producing them to an international authority. This can only be done by the creation of a World Confederation, strong enough to assure international peace. Every nation lives in permanent danger of being attacked, of being involved in a third World War, which might break out any day. A World Confederation is bound to come, perhaps by the end of our century. This World Confederation will either be the result of a third World War or the instrument to prevent it.

Throughout the world hero-worship has become a kind of religion. The hearts of men are attracted by war, even though their intelligence rejects it. Any plan for world peace is contrary to the instinct of this society of warriors. Pacifists are considered cowards. Heroes must be ready to face atomic war, even if it means the end of the human race.

The only hope for world peace lies in the fact that humanity is not only composed of men; that more than half of all human beings are women. Men love war, but women love peace. There is no peace on earth because international relations are almost exclusively directed by men, potential warriors, not by women, real or potential mothers. Were a secret plebiscite to precede every war, it is certain that the great majority would vote for peace.

In the fact that recently women have begun to share power with men lies a great hope for permanent peace. The twentieth century revolution of woman against the age old domination of man is one of the greatest events of our time. For only two generations women have had equal votes and equal educational opportunities, but they are not yet equal. Most men and women still believe in the moral and intellectual superiority of the male. As long as this prejudice exists, the domination of man will survive. The

## Drugs and the Mind

Professor S. Rose, an English biologist, recently discussed a question on which many people have fears—Can drugs change minds? He emphasizes what enlightened educationalists have long known, that our minds are moulded by the environment of early childhood, 'which stamps an indelible mark on our brains and almost ineradicably affects the way we view the world.' The brain has extraordinary resilience when treated with chemicals. The effect of many drugs is relatively impermanent; doses have to be increased and taken more frequently or the person reverts to a former state of mind. Professor Rose adds: 'The ways to change men's minds permanently are two and two only; by the use of rational argument and by changing the structure of the society that has made them the way they are.' A change of attitude and outlook to the theosophical truth of wholeness and interdependence is the key to both these problems.

L.H.L.S.

# THE DRUIDIC WORLD OF LIGHT

BY D. JEFFREY WILLIAMS

On the occasion of the formation of The Theosophical Society in Wales, Dr. Annie Besant said in the *Watchtower Notes of The Theosophist*:

"I hope much from this banding together of our Celtic brethren in Wales, for they have a special culture of their own, and a form of the 'narrow ancient way' from Druidic sources which should add a valuable ray of light to our ever-widening knowledge."

The following is a translation from the Welsh:

Three essentials of *Gwynfyd*, the World of Light, and the world of "abstract" and universal realities, are (1) *annrwg*, the overcoming of limitations associated with the lower bodies making up a personality; (2) cessation or absence of any want in the sense that *Moksha* (Liberation) completely overcomes; and (3) *annarfod*, realisation of the Eternal.

Three restorations of *Gwynfyd*: (1) original or primordial *Awen*, that is, genius or inherent spiritual powers and capacities of one's Ray; (2) original or primordial love that is universal and all-inclusive; (3) original or primordial memory that is possible to us on the plane where the unity overpowers the separateness, and we share His (the Logos's) consciousness of our universe, and therefore the memory of the Logos, the Universal Memory.

Three attributes with which all living things are endowed: (1) completely distinctive genius or ray; (2) special and inalienable individuality; and (3) powers, capacities and gifts, originally and eternally possessed that belong to no other. (Hence a perfect, "unalloyed," separate, individual self, "of a piece," apart from any other). In the words of the essay on "Karma" at the end of *Light on the Path*, "individual existence is a rope which stretches from the infinite to the infinite."

Three certain and sure foundations of knowledge: (1) To remember and recall all we have passed through and experienced in the lower stages of existence; (2) to be able to pass in memory through every condition as one wishes for the sake of proof and judgment (*er prawf a burn*); and (3) this is obtained in the Circle of Light.

Three excellences of the World of Light: (1) To become one with every nature and kind, and perfectly in one; (2) to share in every genius and capacity, and pre-eminently in one; and (3) love towards everything that lives and is (*pob byw a bod*).

Three things to attain in the state of humanity: (1) the end of *Abred* (evolution in the lower world); (2) Liberty or Liberation; and (3) union with *Gwynfydigion* (Those whose world is that of transcendental Light).

## EDWARD L. GARDNER

Edward Gardner died on June 30th, 1969, having survived his 100th birthday by 31 months. Readers of this journal will remember him particularly for his contributions to the Students' Corner over the period 1944 to 1959. Students welcomed these because of his wide understanding of *The Secret Doctrine*, backed by flashes of intuition, and his ability to express himself in clear, concise terms.

He joined the Society in 1907 and was General Secretary of the English Section 1924-1928. He was always more of a study group leader than a public lecturer and was largely responsible for the theosophical research movement begun in England in 1922, established as the English Theosophical Research Centre in 1934 and subsequently taken up in many other Sections throughout the world. He was the owner of Stamford House, Wimbledon, which he ran as a theosophical community 1926-1940, and he took an active part in the establishment of the theosophical estate at Tekels Park, Camberley, in 1928, now wholly owned by the English Section.

He was the author of a number of books, booklets and articles, and although he presented the material as for advanced students, he always emphasized that the ideas must be brought from the level of the intellect to practical application in daily life.

## HANS KLÄSI

Mr. Hans Kläsi, an internationally known and much beloved member of the Swiss section, died in June. Mr. Kläsi was at one time Treasurer of the section and later President of the lodge in Zurich, before retiring to a chalet in Braunwald, where many members enjoyed his hospitality. During his business life, he built up the "Nuxo" works in Rapperswil, known for excellent products on a nut basis. His employees remember him with great affection. He combined an enquiring and often genial mind with a subtle sense of humour and a very kind heart.

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The decision of the jury will be final and without appeal.

The jury reserves the right to return an entry to its author, asking that he complete it, or give an explanation on one point or another.

Account will be taken, not only of the work's content, but its presentation, its illustrations (photos, diagrams) etc.

Further information can be obtained from the undersigned.

Georges Tripet  
Geneva, May, 1969.

# THEISM AND ATHEISM

EXTRACTS FROM A TALK BY GEORGES TRIPET

## III

## A concept acceptable to all?

One is rather given the impression that Schopenhauer starts with an incomplete perception of the world, seeming to turn his back on everything that is good and acceptable in it. He does not seem to give sufficient place to the inner imperatives which drive us in the direction of improvement, of good and of evolution.

But, if we cannot speak either of "the best of all possible worlds" or of "the worst of all possible worlds," we arrive at the basic idea of Zoroastrianism, that of the struggle between Good (Ormuzd; Ahura Mazda) and Evil (Ahriman). Light and Darkness, the one creative, the other destructive, each of them assisted by heavenly hosts; hence an eternal battle at all levels, although Good must triumph over Evil. But how shall it triumph?

We see at once that at the root of this philosophy there is not one god but two. Moreover, it is quite impossible to accept the idea that man had, before his life on earth, opted for good or evil. To do this, he would have had to have knowledge of both. And what of those—and we are all in this category—who do good one day and evil the next? or those who, while treading the path of evil, find their Damascus road? or who, treading the path of goodness, fall away from it?

## Looking through the other end of the telescope

Since we cannot arrive at any certainty when we start with the Creator, whose vast empire is beyond the grasp of the human mind, perhaps we might get a little nearer the solution by taking as our basis something that is lower in the scale of evolution than ourselves, starting, that is, with the creature instead of the creator.

Today we hear of particles of atoms moving, so it is thought, at the speed of light, and in referring to them, scientists admit that we can no longer speak about matter or space, because we are dealing here with measurements of the order of thousandths of billionths of a millimetre. We use the words 'energy' and 'waves' and, whether we like it or not, we are approaching another kind of world, the world that parapsychology and occultism tries to explain, the world of spirit.

Situated as we are, if we cannot claim to know God, we can boast of our ability to know a large part of His creation. As we study it, we arrive at what is perhaps our first certainty: in the unceasing movement from unity to diversity, from the simple to the complex, there exists an extraordinary orderliness, unlimited imagination, undeniable direction—complex indeed and varied, but nevertheless undeniable: none of this can be the result of chance. I say this emphatically, without a shadow of hesitation, knowing that no sincere investigator will ever be able to contradict me.

*There is a plan.* It is for us to try to understand it. There is a force. It is for us to try to discover what it is. And here intuition may come into play, although it is a factor that many rationalists or atheists will not admit.

We are in a privileged position. The biologist of today has at his disposal certain perfected techniques, electron microscopes, radioisotope labelling techniques, selective dyeing, examination by laser beams, etc.

(Here some slides from the Centre Français de Pédagogie Appliquée were shown).

The cell shows us an organized world. The atheist observes it to be so and is forced to recognize it. There can be no question of chance. Now the cell is the basis of all human life, and consequently we must also recognize that there is organization and an organizing entity at superior levels.

## Our way of thinking

Our way of thinking could be divided in the following way:

1. The phase that is based on facts (the cell, the organ).
2. The phase that, starting from facts, is based on reasoning; the cell is organized, so there must be an organizer.
3. The phase over which there is no control: here the function of organizer is attributed to God, Allah, Brahman or any other being.

Let us summarize our study in the following statements:

The ordinary mind cannot imagine a personal God.

We must look at the evolutionary process according to divine and not merely human measurements (light-years, infinite duration, inter-stellar spaces instead of centuries and thousands of kilometres).

As we study the world, we observe an extraordinary harmony and a marvelous complexity which force us to acknowledge the existence of a Plan and of beings who carry out this Plan. On the other hand, there is much evil, many mistakes, many gropings which bewilder us.

But that these mistakes and gropings have, like everything else, a tendency to reach a point of balance, to improve and finally to disappear.

Human beings likewise experience an inner compulsion that drives them to co-operate and get rid of these mistakes. This inner compulsion, the voice of conscience, the commands from within, are active also in evolved doers.

These mistakes do not exist, as it were in their own right; they are experienced rather as a lack—lack of order, lack of love, lack of will.

There is an evolution from the simple to the complex, from imperfection to perfection, flowing forward in waves, starting with the atom and the cell.

This evolutionary process embraces the whole universe and probably also those beings who are more evolved than ourselves.

There is a force that persuades us to believe in a God, a being of whom Nature might be called the outward and visible sign. Seen in this way, it is possible to speak of an omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Principle. Belief in an absolute God whom we can speak to personally and who answers our requests is a help for a great majority of people as yet too immature or not yet ready to face the blank nothingness that would confront them if this kind of God were taken from them.

The universe is growing every moment; creation is a constant and continuous process.

The universe is governed by laws, such as the law of reincarnation and the law of action and reaction; these laws alone make it possible to solve and to come near to the solution of the problems discerned by the inquiring mind.

There are problems which must be resolved and yet which cannot be, save by methods that do not lend themselves easily to explanation or demonstration, in particular by intuition. Among these problems we may mention man's need to develop, to love, to hope, to perpetuate himself in his offspring, to live as a member of a community, and to believe; consequently, every individual must have the greatest freedom in his philosophical and religious ideas.

The tremendous advantage we have in being a little further forward on the evolutionary ladder should prompt us to serious study and investigation. The tenuous means at our disposal, our smallness, our insignificance even in relation to the universe as a whole, should rouse in us a spirit of humility, brotherliness, union, love towards all beings and towards all the kingdoms of nature.

Finally, we have abandoned a somewhat Utopian world and set foot in a very realistic one; we take scientific knowledge into account, and we also take into account those new or embryonic senses which are later to be developed to the full, such as intuition and clairvoyance.

Because of this, our lives can unfold no longer according to casual whims and fancies but according to an almost scientific plan (by meditation, for example), for we know that every thought, feeling and act has its own reaction.

To state the matter in other words, science can become religious and religion can become scientific religion.

## ENGLISH SPEAKING REGIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL 1970

The European Council meetings will be held at St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland, in conjunction with the English Speaking Regional Summer School. Hamilton Hall of the University of St. Andrews has been booked for the week of August 8th-15th, 1970, with the Scottish Section as host.

The Summer School will be presided over by Mrs. Claire Wyss, Chairman of the European Federation, and several of our friends from Europe have already promised to attend.

An attractive and inspiring programme of lectures, discussions and study groups is being arranged. Further details will appear in the next issue of *Theosophy in Action* and in your Sectional Journal, but early notice is given so that you may book this date for 1970.

DORIS M. SLATER,  
Secretary, English Speaking Region.

## YUGOSLAVIA

The Annual General Meeting of the Yugoslav Section was held on June 23rd in Ljubljana, when Mrs. Mila Grubacevic was elected General Secretary. She succeeds Mr. A. Jesse, who was warmly thanked for his services since 1966 when the Section was officially allowed to resume activities.

## BOOK REVIEWS

ON THE WATCH TOWER. Selected Editorial Notes from *The Theosophist*. 1953-1966, by N. Sri Ram. T.P.H., Adyar. 22s.

This admirable compilation by the President's private secretary, Miss Elsie Niswanger, supplies a long-felt need, and brings us face to face with the problems of the second half of the 20th century. By arranging the President's observations on current affairs under the appropriate headings we see with greater clarity how he brings the light of the Ancient Wisdom, and of his own considerable wisdom, to bear on every facet of life. Chapter headings cover a wide range and include truth, evolution, education, economics, the space age, the world scene, modern trends, practical theosophy, etc.

We have here the answer to those who maintain that the Theosophical Society lives mentally in the 19th century and has nothing to offer to the modern world. Lodges everywhere would do well to use it as a basis for study.

GRET A EEDLE.

THE WHEEL OF REBIRTH. A. K. Challoner (2nd edition 1969). *Theosophical Publishing House London Ltd.*, pp. 285, 25s.

This is said to be the story of a man who practised black magic to an extreme extent in Atlantis, and how the adverse karma he then accumulated affected him in all his subsequent lives.

It also shows how, in spite of the constant confrontation of almost overwhelming problems, he gradually neutralised the evil forces he had generated, by developing his inner spiritual nature after many setbacks and failures.

Whether these events actually took place as recounted, or are simply based on inspiration, is not of great importance, since the main value of the book is the deep wisdom it contains, and the clear exposition of the intricate working of the law of equilibrium as it gradually re-establishes harmony where man has made great errors.

H. TUDOR EDMUND S.

WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE, 1851-1896. The Life of a Theosophical Pioneer and some of his outstanding articles. Sven Eek and Boris de Zirkoff, Compilers. T.P.H. London. 27s. 6d.

This slim and very readable volume contains interesting material about the early days of the Theosophical Society and gives a picture of William Quan Judge—co-founder with Mme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott—which is all the more valuable since many of us are neither familiar with the man nor with his work. Reading the articles by Mr. Judge also contained in this book we are reminded of H.P.B.'s comment on his magazine *The Path*, when she referred to it as "pure Buddha."