



THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

A publication of this kind cannot exist without your support, so we welcome all editorial suggestions and seek contributing editors for essays on a wide range of theosophical themes. And, in the true spirit of dialogue and debate we look forward to letters to the editor, comments, and suggestions for the content and themes of this journal.

Letters intended for publication should be restricted to no more than 500 words. The editor reserves the right to shorten any letter unless the writer states that it must be published in full or not at all. The editor will contact the writer prior to publication date – please include a phone number and or email address with all correspondence.

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Oro-Medonte, ON L4M 4Y8

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# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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77 Spencer Avenue, Toronto ON M6K 2K4 | paulj\_carroll@yahoo.ca

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## OBJECTIVES:

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

To encourage the Study of Comparative religion, Philosophy and Science.

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

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

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A reminder that yearly dues are due.



## COMPASSION

*Ashley McFadden*

If you have ever watched the wildlife shows on public television programs, you have seen episodes of one animal in the wilds chasing and killing another for its food. Even though we may realize that this is nature at work and that it is the survival of the fitness operating in the world of jungle, it is difficult to watch. At least, it is for me.

The animals in these cases do not set out to harm another animal for the pure enjoyment of it. They operate by instinct and kill for food or to protect their cave and young. Further, they are unsympathetic to the needs and desire for life of the victim. Yet, they do not perform in this way as a matter of cruelty. They take no particular enjoyment in the act, but only satisfy an animal need. They lack the capacity for compassion as we know it. It is this compassion that curbs such behavior in ourselves.

Some people take examples of animal life and theories regarding the survival of the fittest to justify their own behavior. This is somewhat of a stretch, unless, of course, one wants to remain an animal only. Humans do act like animals at times, too often in fact, which is why we have to have an international consciousness regarding human rights.

Unlike the animals in the wilds, humans are capable of critical thinking and

reason. They can choose to exercise a sympathetic response to others or they can enjoy their cruelty inflicted on others. The latter is a sadistic person. Like animals, some humans can be totally without sympathy or compassion for the needs of others. They are indifferent to another's desire for peace and life. We have seen this cruelty throughout history on a large scale.

However, not all human cruelty is large and dramatic. Sometimes it is small and everyday, so small that it becomes almost socially acceptable. However, can we discriminate when or when not to be cruel, or to what degree? That's like saying that a person can be honest ... sometimes. One is either honest or they are not.

One is either cruel or they are not. Yet, in our lack of attention or laziness, all of us fall into a small cruelty now and then- exerting our anger at the poor clerk who answers the phone to take a complaint and letting him or her have it. Or, there is the off the cuff remark that damages a person's confidence. Or, there is the self-righteous superiority over other people's opinions and views...the sarcasms and witty cuts. The list goes on.

Why do people do so? Is it the animal nature coming out? Not necessarily,



for the animal nature is about survival, not about cruelty. Nature isn't cruel; it simply is.

We humans, however, have another nature, as it were, a spiritual consciousness, a soul consciousness. It is an aspect of our dual consciousness and it gives us a conscience. It is that part of us that feels regret over harm done, that feels remorse for being cruel. We can choose to obey it or we can conveniently bury the better part of ourselves.

We choose to be either cruel or compassionate, and there is no philosophy, no ISM, and no logic that can truthfully bridge the two for one's own comfort. One is either locked in the gross materiality of their animal nature, or they can choose to accept that they are born in nature and destined to transcend and rise to a spiritual state. Between these two views, there is no middle ground.

A sympathetic person is rarely cruel. They see in a different way. Kindness and gentleness are their norm, and they look out as much as they look in. Whether they see a person in need, or they see their brother or sister in pain, they have a sense of the Golden Rule. They have a deep, intuitive unity with the phrase, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and some people even actually attain that ideal. This requires charity, sympathy and above all compassion.

Further, compassion exists in its most apparent form when the opportunity affords one NOT to be compassionate. And when the choice is made,

compassion rings out loud and clear.

The person who is more prone to cruelty lacks compassion. They evaluate most experience in terms of - "How does this effect me?" They rarely look at a situation simply for what it is; that is, a situation that is about many things and not just them. The insensitive person gathers everything as relative only to themselves. Their conceit deludes them into thinking that they are the center of all things. They analyze the situation only in terms of whether or not it benefits them. If it does not please them or make their world secure and unchanged, their responses can be rather cruel or least indifferent.

The clerk at the grocery store whose tape ran out on the machine, did not make that happen to ruin our day. Yet, how many people wait patiently while she reloads the tape again as opposed to giving exasperated looks.

An employee did not get into an accident simply to miss work. Yet, how many employers will immediately ask, "When will you be back?"

The person who experiences a profoundly painful situation does not respond soulfully to that pain in order to avoid being chipper. They do not go through a dark night in order to avoid being pleasing to a shallow friend. Yet, so often a person in grief will be avoided like the plague until they return to their "normal" self, and everyone's world can be safely the same again.



The person who evaluates everything only in terms of how it effects them has missed the big lesson in life. They have missed the basic message of the great masters of compassion; they have missed the ultimate binding purpose of religion, and they have missed the mystic word of love. They have missed the truth of life. To the mystic there is one truth, one Source, one Soul, one body.

They miss the messages, by ignoring them or perhaps by despising them. To hear such messages requires a lack of selfishness. It requires a forgetfulness of our own small self. A self-centered individual cannot acknowledge the universal messages, because their world is small and held bound within their own cranium.

This person is in desperate need of the great messages. And, for those of us who try very hard to be more kind than cruel, insensitive people can not only be sad to witness, but also irksome.

However, the person on the spiritual path must at all times respond from a deep, inner understanding. When we do, even the unthinking and cruel are seen as another broken person.

Whether a cup or a person, something that is proven needs mending. We cannot help the mending by responding in a similar fashion of anger or a similar weakness. We may perhaps express our disappointment, but it is not a disappointment that is concerned only with its own

peace. Rather, it is that profound disappointment that sadly understands human frailty too well.

Perhaps we will come to the aid of an innocent person unable to defend themselves against a powerful bully. Or, perhaps we will simply stand in peace. In whatever manner, we must help a bitter and broken person to "lighten up", by pouring light on them. Perhaps, small doses of light will lead them respond to a greater light. Cruelty cannot survive long in the climate of charity.

Compassion is a supernatural light. Compassion raises a mean person bound only by self-serving things to a person who loves higher things. Compassion transforms us from a person who is concerned only with how situations affect them, to a person who participates in life with love and divine scrutiny.

Compassion refashions us according to the soul. We become as a mirror reflecting an inner Light and the more we allow God and Cosmic to work through us, the more our little human traits will reflect the Source of all fine traits.

I will end this discourse with a fitting quote from one who knew this so well:

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing." – Paul



## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANADA REFLECTIONS

An article written in the year 1917 by Geoffrey M. Shurlock in my opinion may shine some light on this questions. The title is Theosophy's Appeal. At the back of the mind of everyone who approaches the study of Theosophy, either through genuine interest or mere curiosity, there must be some question as this: "What has this philosophy to offer me? In all this whirl of new ideas that has swept upon us in the last fifty years, what message does it bring to me, that entitles it to a hearing?" To judge by question that are sometimes asked, hesitancy in taking up this question seems to arise often from misunderstanding. Some think that such a study is of value only to minds interested certain lines of metaphysics; that it cannot be brought down to earth, so to speak. Nothing can be further from the truth; Theosophy is not so much a body of doctrines that must be accepted as a life that must be lived; and it is this, above all that entitles it to a hearing in these days when preaching without ever pretending to practice is altogether wide spread. Theosophists have been told that the most necessary work for their Society to do is to spread the teaching of the essential divinity of man as the basis of the universal brotherhood, and the two other teachings of Reincarnation, and Karma. There is nothing in this message which a child could not fraps; hence it is that speakers from this platform dwell so insistently on these truths, simple and

yet universal in their application and appeal, which, when they become ingrained in man's being, influence his outlook in the most extraordinary degree. Once a man really believe that he will be born again and again, he can look on this life with a proper perspective: neither desiring to shuffle it off as a curse, nor esteeming it his one and only chance to devote himself to curse, nor esteeming it his one and only chance to devote himself to pleasure, in view of the most uncertain future. He looks on it as a day's travel in great pilgrimage, crowded with opportunities and experience, and understands that it draws its value from the glorious whole, of which it is a part. Nor is his future any uncertain, since he is building in the present, and its meanness or its beauty lies in his hands. So when a man comes to apply to his life such a truth as Karma, the law of cause and effect, he is only accepting a law which he never dreamed of questioning in the everyday workings of nature, but which for ages we seem to have been trying to ignore our moral responsibility. We have tried to believe that we could do as we please, and then, hiding behind another's sacrifice, escape the effect we had set in motion. Such a belief roots firmly in the black soil of selfishness which is the most complete expression of man's lower nature; small wonder then, that it dies hard. But, still worse, it has been given out as a religious teaching- this idea



which outrages utterly the sense of justice and fair play which we deem indispensable to a fine character. If, then, those who feel attracted to this philosophy, go no further into it than to make these simple truths a part of their life, they will have done themselves a great service: they will have brought into play a balancing power, comforting and encouraging that will enable them to look on life much more calmly and intelligently. Is

there any one who doubts the need of such beliefs today/ and as great the need, just so wide will be Theosophy's appeal.

The magazine will continue to publish articles that we hope will stimulate thought and direct our readers to look within. The Canadian Theosophist welcomes article's, submitted by our readers.

## STUDY IN CONSCIOUSNESS – *continued*

### 6. THE BREAKING OF THE BONDS.

For the breaking of the bonds of Desire, recourse must be had to the mind. Therein lies the power which shall first purify and then transmute Desire.

The mind records the results which follow the appropriation of each object of Desire, and marks whether happiness or pain has resulted from the union of that object with the embodied Self. And when, after many appropriations of an attractive object, it has found the result to be pain, it registers that object as one which should be avoided in the future. "The delights that are contact-born, they are verily wombs of pain."

Then arises strife. When that attractive object again presents itself, Desire throws out its harpoon and seizes it, and begins to draw it in. The mind,

remembering the painful results of previous similar captures, endeavours to check Desire, to cut, with the sword of knowledge, the attaching bond. Fierce conflict rages within the man: he is dragged forward by Desire, held back by Thought; many and many a time Desire will triumph and the object will be appropriated; but the resulting pain is ever repeated, and each success of Desire arrays against it another enemy in the forces of the mind. Inevitably, however slowly, Thought proves stronger, until, at last, victory inclines to its side, and a day comes

when the desire is weaker than the mind, and the attractive object is loosed, the attaching cord is cut. For that object, the bond is broken.

In this conflict, Thought seeks to utilise against Desire the strength of Desire. It selects objects of Desire that give a



relatively lasting happiness, and seeks to utilise these against the desires that swiftly result in pain. Thus it will set artistic against sensual pleasure; it will use fame and political or social power against enjoyments of the flesh; it will stimulate the desire to please the good, to strengthen abstention from vicious delights; it will finally make the desire for eternal peace conquer the desires for temporal joys. By the one great attraction the lower attractions are slain, and cease to be any longer the objects of desire: "Even taste (for them) turneth away from him after the Supreme is seen". The very energy of Desire can tear it away from that which brings pain, and fix it on that which brings bliss. The same force that bound is made to serve as an instrument of freedom. Wrenching itself away from objects, it will turn upwards and inwards, attaching the man to the Life whence he came forth, and in union with which consists his highest bliss.

Herein lies the value of devotion as a liberator. Love, turning to the Supreme, sees Him as eminently desirable, as an Object for intense desire, and this burns up attachments to objects that keep the heart in bondage.

Only by the Self as Thought can be mastered the Self as Desire; the Self, realising itself as the life, overcomes the Self embodied and thinking itself to be the form. The man must learn to separate himself from the vehicles in which he desires, thinks, and acts, to know them as part of the Not-Self, as material external to the life. Thus the energy that went out to objects in the lower desires becomes the higher

desire guided by the mind, and is prepared to be transmuted into Will.

As the lower mind merges itself in the higher, and the higher into that which is Wisdom, the aspect of pure Will emerges as the Power of the Spirit, Selfdetermined, Self-ruled, in perfect harmony with the Supreme Will, and therefore free. Then only are all bonds broken, and the Spirit is unconstrained by aught outside himself. Then, and then only, can the Will be said to be free. CHAPTER III.

*DESIRE (continued).*

#### 1. THE VEHICLE OF DESIRE.

WE shall have to return to the struggle in the Desire-nature, in order to add some useful details to that which has been already said; but it is first necessary to study the Vehicle of Desire, the Desire-Body or Astral Body, as this study will enable us to understand the precise method in which we may work to subdue and get rid of the lower desires.

The Vehicle of Desire is made up of what is called astral matter, the matter of the plane above the physical. This matter, like the physical, exists in seven modifications, which relatively to each other are like the solid, liquid, gaseous, etc., sub-states of matter on the physical plane. As the physical body contains within itself these various sub-states of physical matter, so does the astral body contain within itself the various sub-states of astral matter. Each of these sub-states has in it coarser and finer aggregations,



and the work of astral, as of physical purification, consists in the substitution of the finer for the coarser.

Moreover, the lower sub-states of astral matter serve chiefly for the manifestation of the lower desires, while the higher sub-states vibrate in answer to the desires which have changed, by the intermixture of mind, into emotions. The lower desires, grasping after objects of pleasure, find that the lower substates serve as medium for their attractive force, and the coarser and baser the desires, the coarser are the aggregations of matter that fitly express them. As the desire causes the corresponding material in the astral body to vibrate, that matter becomes strongly vitalised and attracts fresh similar matter from outside to itself, and thus increases the amount of such matter in the constitution of the astral body. When the desires are gradually refined into emotions, intellectual elements entering into them, and selfishness diminishing, the amount of finer matter similarly increases in the astral body, while the coarser matter, left unvitalised, loses energy and decreases in amount.

These facts, applied to practice, help us to weaken the enemy which is enthroned within us, for we can deprive him of his instruments. A traitor within the gates is more dangerous than a foe outside, and the desire-body acts as such a traitor, so long as it is composed of elements that answer to the temptations from without.

Desire, as it builds in the coarser materials, must be checked by the mind, the mind refusing to picture the passing pleasure which the possession of the object would entail, and picturing to itself the more lasting sorrow it would cause. As we get rid of the coarser matter which vibrates in answer to the baser attractions, those attractions lose all power to disturb us.

This vehicle of desire, then, must be taken in hand; according to its building will be the attractions that reach us from without. We can work upon the form, change the elements of which the form is composed, and thus turn the enemy into a defender.

When a man is evolving in character, he is, however, confronted with a difficulty which often alarms and depresses him. He finds himself shaken by desires from which he shrinks, of which he is ashamed, and despite his strenuous efforts to shake them off, they none the less cling to and torment him. They are discordant with his efforts, his hopes, his aspirations, and yet, in some way, they seem to be his. This painful experience is due to the fact that the consciousness evolves more rapidly than the form can change, and the two are to some extent in conflict with each other. There is a considerable amount of the coarser aggregations still present in the astral body; but as the desires have become more refined, they no longer vivify these materials. Some of the old vitality none the less persists therein, and although these aggregations are decaying they are not wholly gone.



Now although the man's Desire-nature is no longer using these materials for self-expression, they may yet be thrown into temporary activity from outside, and thus take on a semblance of vitality as a galvanised corpse might do. The desires of other people—desire-elementals of an evil kind—may attach themselves to these disused elements in his astral body, and they may thus be stimulated and revivified, and cause him to feel as his own the promptings of desires he abhors. Where such experiences are undergone, let the bewildered combatant take courage; even in the inrush of these desires, let him repudiate them as none of his, and know that the elements in him they utilise are of the past, and are dying, and that the day of their death and of his freedom is at hand.

We may take an example from dream, to show this working of effete matter in the astral body. A man, in a former life, was a drunkard, and his after-death experiences had impressed deeply on him a repulsion for drink; on rebirth, the Ego in the new physical and astral bodies impressed on them this repulsion, but there was none the less in the astral body some matter drawn thereinto by the vibrations caused in the permanent atom by the former drunkenness. This matter is not vivified in the present life by any craving for drink, nor any yielding to the drink-habit; on the contrary, in the waking life, the man is sober. But in dream, this matter in the astral body is stimulated into activity from without, and the control of the Ego being weak over

the astral body, this matter responds to the drink-craving vibrations that reach it, and the man dreams that he drinks. Moreover, if there still be in the man a latent desire for drink, too weak to assert itself during waking consciousness, it may come up in the dreamstate. For physical matter being comparatively heavy and hard to move, a weak desire has not energy enough to cause vibrations therein; but that same desire may move the much lighter astral matter, and so a man may be carried away in a dream by a desire which has no power over him in his waking consciousness. Such dreams cause much distress, because not understood. The man should understand that the dream shows that the temptation is conquered so far as he is concerned, and that he is only troubled by the corpse of past desires, vivified from outside on the astral plane, or if from within, then by a dying desire too weak to move him in his waking moments. The dream is a sign of a victory well-nigh complete. At the same time it is a warning; for it tells the man that there is still in his astral body some matter apt to be vivified by vibrations of the drink-craving, and that therefore he should not place himself during waking life under conditions where such vibrations may abound. Until such dreams have entirely ceased, the astral body is not free from matter that is a source of danger.

## *2. THE CONFLICT OF DESIRE AND THOUGHT,*

We must now return to the struggle in the Desire-nature, to which reference



has already been made, in order to add some necessary details. This conflict belongs to what may be called the middle stage of evolution, that long stage which intervenes between the state of the man entirely ruled by Desire, grasping all he wants, unchecked by conscience, undisturbed by remorse, and the state of the highly evolved spiritual man, in whom Will, Wisdom and Activity work in co-ordinated harmony. The conflict arises between Desire and Thought—Thought beginning to understand the relation of itself to the Not-Self and to other separated selves, and Desire, influenced by the objects around it, moving by attractions and repulsions, drawn hither and thither by objects that allure.

We must study the stage of evolution in which the accumulated memories of past experiences, stored in the mind, set themselves against the gratification of desires which have been proved to lead to pain; or, to speak more accurately, in which the conclusion drawn by the Thinker from these accumulated experiences asserts itself in face of a demand from the Desire-nature for the object which has been stamped as dangerous.

The habit of grasping and enjoying has been established for hundreds of lives, and is strong, while the habit of resisting a present pleasure in order to avoid a future pain is only in course of establishment, and is consequently very weak. Hence the conflicts between the Thinker and the Desire-nature end for a long time in a series of

defeats. The young Mind struggling with the mature Desirebody finds itself constantly vanquished. But every victory of the Desire-nature, being followed by a brief pleasure and a long pain, gives birth to a new force hostile to itself that recruits the strength of its opponent. Each defeat of the Thinker thus sows the seeds of his future victory, and his strength daily grows while the strength of the Desire-nature diminishes.

When this is clearly understood, we grieve no longer over our own falls and the falls of those we love; for we know that these falls are making sure the secure footing of the future, and that in the womb of pain is maturing the future conqueror.

Our knowledge of right and wrong grows out of experience, and is elaborated only by trial. The sense of right and wrong, now innate in the civilised man, has been developed by innumerable experiences. In the early days of the separated Self all experiences were useful in his evolution, and brought him the lessons needful for his growth. Gradually he learned that the yielding to desires which, in the course of their gratification injured others, brought him pain out of proportion to the temporary pleasure derived from their satisfaction. He began to attach the word "wrong" to the desires the yielding to which brought a predominance of pain, and this the more quickly because the Teachers who guided his early growth placed on the objects which attracted such



desires the ban of Their disapproval. When he had disobeyed Them and suffering followed, the impression made on the Thinker was the more powerful for the previous foretelling, and conscience—the Will to do [336] the right and abstain from the wrong—was proportionately strengthened.

In this connexion we can readily see the value of admonition, reproof, and good counsel. All these are stored up in the mind, and are forces added to the accumulating memories which oppose the gratification of wrong desire. Granted that the person warned may again yield when the temptation assails him; that only means that the balance of strength is still in the wrong desire; when the foretold suffering arrives, the mind will recall all the memories of warnings and admonitions, and will engrave the more deeply in its substance the decision: "This desire is wrong". The doing of the wrong act merely means that the memory of past pain is not yet sufficiently strong to overbear the attraction of eagerly anticipated and immediate pleasure. The lesson needs to be repeated yet a few times more, to strengthen the memory of the past, and when that is done, victory is sure. The suffering is a necessary element in the growth of the soul, and has the promise of that growth within it. Everywhere around us, if we see aright, is growing good; nowhere is there hopeless evil.

This struggle is expressed in the sad cry: "What I would, that I do not; what I would not, that I do". "When I

would do good, evil is present with me." The wrong that we do, when the wish is against the doing, is done by the habit of the past. The weak Will is overpowered by the strong desire.

Now the Thinker in his conflict with the Desire-nature calls to his aid that very nature, and strives to awaken in it a desire which shall be opposed to the desires against which he is waging war. As the attraction of a weak magnet may be overpowered by that of a stronger one, so may one desire be strengthened for the overcoming of another, a right desire may be aroused to combat a wrong one. Hence the value of an ideal.

3. THE VALUE OF AN IDEAL. An ideal is a fixed mental concept of an inspiring character, framed for the guidance of conduct, and the formation of an ideal is one of the most effective means of influencing desire. The ideal may, or may not, find embodiment in an individual, according to the temperament of the man who frames it, and it must ever be remembered that the value of an ideal depends largely on its attractiveness, and that that which attracts one temperament by no means necessarily attracts another. An abstract ideal and a personal one are equally good, regarded from a general standpoint, and that should be selected which has, on the individual choosing it, the most attractive influence. A person of the intellectual temperament will usually find an abstract ideal the more satisfactory; whereas one of the emotional temperament will demand a



concrete embodiment of his thought. The disadvantage of the abstract ideal is that it is apt to fail in compelling inspiration; the disadvantage of the concrete embodiment is that the embodiment is apt to fall below the ideal.

The mind, of course, creates the ideal, and either retains it as an abstraction, or embodies it in a person. The time chosen for the creation of an ideal should be a time when the mind is calm and steady and luminous, when the Desire-nature is asleep. Then the Thinker should consider the purpose of his life, the goal at which he aims, and with this to guide his choice, he should select the qualities necessary to enable him to reach that goal. These qualities he should combine into a single concept, imagining as strongly as he can this integration of the qualities he needs. Daily he should repeat this integrating process, until his ideal stands out clearly in the mind, dowered with all beauty of high thought and noble character, a figure of compelling attractiveness. The man of intellect will keep this ideal as a pure concept. The man of emotional nature will embody it in a person, such as the Buddha, the Christ, Shri Krishna, or some other divine Teacher. In this latter case he will, if possible, study His life, His teachings, His actions, and the ideal will thus become more and more strongly vivified, more and more real to the Thinker. Intense love will spring up in the heart for this embodied ideal, and Desire will stretch out longing arms to embrace it. And when temptation assails, and the lower desires clamour

for satisfaction, then the attractive power of the ideal asserts itself, the loftier desire combats the baser, and the Thinker finds himself reinforced by right desire, the negative strength of memory which says: "Abstain from the base", being fortified by the positive strength of the ideal which says: "Achieve the heroic".

The man who lives habitually in the presence of a great ideal is armed against wrong desires by love of his ideal, by shame of being base in its presence, by the longing to resemble that which he adores, and also by the general set and trend of his mind along lines of noble thinking. Wrong desires become more and more incongruous. They perish naturally, unable to breathe in that pure clear air.

It may be worth while to remark here, in view of the destructive results of historical criticism, in the minds of many, that the value of the ideal Christ, the ideal Buddha, the ideal Krishna, is in no way injured by any lack of historical data, by any defects in the proofs of the authenticity of a manuscript. Many of the stories related may not be historically true, but they are ethically and vitally true. Whether this incident happened in the physical life of this Teacher or not is a matter of small import; the re-action of such an ideal character on his environment is ever profoundly true. The world Scriptures represent spiritual facts, whether the physical incidents be or be not historically true.



Thus Thought may shape and direct Desire, and turn it from an enemy into an ally. By changing the direction of Desire, it becomes a lifting and quickening instead of a retarding force, and where desires for objects held us fast in the mire of earth, desire for the ideal lifts us on strong wings to heaven.

#### *4. THE PURIFICATION OF DESIRE.*

We have already seen how much may be done in the purification of the vehicle of Desire, and the contemplation and worship of the ideal, which has just been described, is a most potent means for the purification of Desire. Evil desires die away, as good desires are encouraged and fostered—die away merely from want of nourishment.

The effort to reject all wrong desires is accompanied by the firm refusal of thought to allow them to pass on into actions. Will begins to restrain action, even when Desire clamours for gratification. And this refusal to permit the action instigated by wrong desire gradually deprives of all attractive power the objects which erstwhile aroused it. "The objects of sense ... turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body. The desires fade away, starved by lack of satisfaction. Abstention from gratification is a potent means of purification. There is another means of purification in which the repulsive force of Desire is utilised, as in the contemplation of the ideal the attractive force was evoked. It is useful in extreme cases, in which the lowest desires are tumultuous and insurgent,

such desires as lead to the vices of gluttony, drunkenness and profligacy. Sometimes a man finds it impossible to get rid of evil desires, and despite all his efforts his mind yields to their strong impulse, and evil imaginations riot in his brain. He may conquer by apparent yielding, carrying on the evil imaginations to their inevitable results. He pictures himself yielding to the temptations that assail him, and sinking more and more into the grip of the evil that masters him. He follows himself, as he falls deeper and deeper, becoming the helpless slave of his passions. He traces with vivid imagination the stages of his descent, sees his body becoming coarser and coarser, then bloated and diseased. He contemplates the shattered nerves, the loathsome sores, the hideous decay and ruin of the once strong and healthy frame. He fixes his eyes on the dishonoured death, the sad legacy of shameful memory left to relatives and friends. He faces in thought the other side of death, and sees the soil and distortion of his vices pictured in the suffering astral body, and the agony of the craving of desires that may no longer be fulfilled. Resolutely he forces his shrinking thoughts to dwell on this miserable panorama of the triumph of wrong desires, until there rises within him a strong repulsion against them, an intolerable fear and loathing of the result of present yielding.

Such a method of purification is like the surgeon's knife, cutting out a cancer which menaces the life, and, like all surgical operations, is to be avoided unless no other means of cure remain.



It is better to conquer wrong desire by the attractive force of an ideal, than by the repulsive force of a spectacle of ruin. But where attraction fails to conquer, repulsion may perhaps prevail.

There is also a danger in this latter method, since the coarser matter in the vehicle of Desire is increased by this dwelling in thought on evil, and the struggle is thereby rendered longer than when it is possible to throw the life into good desires and high aspirations. Therefore it is the worse method of the two, only to be accepted when the other is unattainable.

By higher attraction, by repulsion, or by the slow teaching of suffering, Desire must be purified. The "must" is not so much a necessity imposed by an outside Deity, as the imperial command of the Deity within, who will not be denied. With this true Will of the Divinity, who is our Self, all divine forces in nature work, and that divine Self who wills the highest must inevitably in the end subdue all things to himself.

With this triumph comes the ceasing of Desire. For then external objects no longer either attract or repel the outgoing energies of Atma, and these energies are entirely directed by Self-determined Wisdom; that is, Will has taken the place of Desire. Good and evil are seen as the divine forces that work for evolution, the one as necessary as the other, the one the complement of the other. The good is the force that is to be worked with; the evil is the force that is to be worked

against; by the right using of both the powers of the Self are evolved into manifestation.

When the Self has developed the aspect of Wisdom, he looks on the righteous and the wicked, the saint and the sinner, with equal eyes, and is therefore equally ready to help both, to reach out strong hand to either. Desire, which regarded them with attraction and repulsion, as pleasure-giving and paingiving, has ceased, and Will, which is energy directed by Wisdom, brings fitting aid to both. Thus man rises above the tyranny of the pairs of opposites, and dwells in the Eternal Peace CHAPTER IV.

#### EMOTION.

##### 1. THE BIRTH OF EMOTION.

EMOTION is not a simple or primary state of consciousness, but is a compound made up by the interaction of two of the aspects of the Self-Desire and Intellect. The play of Intellect on Desire gives birth to Emotion; it is the child of both, and shows some of the characteristics of its father, Intellect, as well as of its mother, Desire.

In the developed condition Emotion seems so different from Desire that their fundamental identity is somewhat veiled; but we can see this identity either by tracing the development of a desire into an emotion, or by studying both side by side, and finding that both have the same characteristics, the same divisions, that the one is, in fact, an elaborated form of the other, the



elaboration being due to the presence in the later of a number of intellectual elements absent from, or less markedly prominent in, the earlier.

Let us trace the development of a desire into an emotion in one of the commonest of human relations, the relation of sex. Here is desire in one of its simplest forms; desire for food, desire for sexual union, are the two fundamental desires of all living things—desire for food to maintain life, desire for sexual union to increase life. In both the sense of "moreness" is experienced, or, otherwise stated, pleasure is felt. The desire for food remains a desire; the food is appropriated, assimilated, loses its separate identity, becomes part of the "Me". There is no continued relation between the eater and the food which gives scope for the elaboration of an emotion. It is otherwise in the sex-relation, which tends to become more and more permanent with the evolution of the individuality.

Two savages are drawn towards each other by the attraction of sex; a passion to possess the other arises in each; each desires the other. The desire is as simple as the desire for food. But it cannot be satisfied to the same extent, for neither can wholly appropriate and assimilate the other; each to some extent maintains his or her separate identity, and each only partially becomes the "Me" of the other. There is indeed an extension of the "Me", but it is by way of inclusion and not by way of self-identification. The presence of this persisting barrier

is necessary for the transformation of a desire into an emotion. This makes possible the attachment of memory and anticipation to the same object, and not to another object similar in kind—as in the case of food. A continuing desire for union with the same object becomes an emotion, thoughts thus mingling with the primary desire to possess. The barrier which keeps the mutually attracted objects as two not one, which prevents their fusion, while it seems to frustrate really immortalises; were it swept away, desire and emotion alike would vanish, and the Twain-become-One must then seek another external [350] object for the further self-expansion of pleasure.

To return to our savages, desire-united. The woman falls sick, and ceases, for the time, to be an object of sex-gratification. But the man remembers past, and anticipates future, delight, and a feeling of sympathy with her suffering, of compassion for her weakness, arises within him. The persisting attraction towards her, due to memory and anticipation, changes desire into emotion, passion into love, and sympathy and compassion are its earliest manifestations. These, in turn, will lead to his sacrificing himself to her, waking to nurse her when he would sleep, exerting himself for her when he would rest. These spontaneous moods of the love-emotion in him will later solidify into virtues, i.e., will become permanent moods in his character, showing themselves in response to the calls of human need to all persons with whom he comes into contact, whether they attract him or not. We shall see



later that virtues are simply permanent moods of right emotion.

Before, however, dealing with the relation of ethics and emotion, we must further realise the fundamental identity of Desire and Emotion by noting their characteristics and divisions. As this is done, we shall find that emotions do not form a mere jungle, but that all spring from one root, dividing into two main stems, each of these again subdividing into branches, on which grow the leaves of virtues and of vices. This fruitful idea, making possible a science of the emotions, and hence an intelligible and rational system of ethics, is due to an Indian author, Bhagavan Das, who has for the first time introduced order into this hitherto confused region of consciousness. Students of psychology will find in his Science of the Emotions a lucid treatise, setting forth this scheme, which reduces the chaos of the emotions into a cosmos, and shapes therein an ordered morality. The broad lines of exposition followed here are drawn from that work, to which readers are referred for fuller details.

We have seen that Desire has two main expressions: desire to attract, in order to possess, or again to come into contact with, any object which has previously afforded pleasure; desire to repel, in order to drive far away, or to avoid contact with, any object which has previously inflicted pain. We have seen that Attraction and Repulsion are the two forms of Desire, swaying the Self.

Emotion, being Desire infused with Intellect, inevitably shows the same division into two. The Emotion which is of the nature of Attraction, attracting objects to each other by pleasure, the integrating energy in the universe, is called Love. The Emotion which is of the nature of Repulsion, driving objects apart from each other by pain, the disintegrating energy in the universe, is called Hate. These are the two stems from the root of Desire, and all the branches of the emotions may be traced back to one of these twain.

Hence the identity of the characteristics of Desire and Emotion; Love seeks to draw to itself the attractive object, or to go after it, in order to unite with it, to possess, or be possessed by, it. It binds by pleasure, by happiness, as Desire binds. Its ties are indeed more lasting, more complicated, are composed of more numerous and more delicate threads interwoven into greater complexity, but the essence of Desire-Attraction, the binding of two objects together, is the essence of Emotion-Attraction, of Love. And so also does Hate seek to drive away from itself the repellent object, or to flee from it, in order to be apart from it, to repulse, or be repulsed by, it. It separates by pain, by unhappiness. And thus the essence of Desire-Repulsion, the driving apart of two objects, is the essence of Emotion-Repulsion, of Hate. Love and Hate are the elaborated and thoughtinfused forms of the simple Desires to possess and to shun.



## 2. THE PLAY OF EMOTION IN THE FAMILY

Man has been described as "a social animal"—the biological way of saying that he develops best in contact with, not in isolation from, his fellows. His distinctively intellectual characteristics need, for their evolution, a social medium, and his keenest pleasures—and hence necessarily his keenest pains—arise in his relations with others of his own species. They alone can evoke from him the responses on which his further growth depends. All evolution, all the calling out of latent powers, is in response to stimuli from without, and, when the human stage is reached, the most poignant and effective stimuli can only come from contacts with human beings.

Sex-attraction is the first social bond, and the children born to the husband and wife form, with them, the first social unit, the family. The prolonged helplessness and dependence of the human infant give time for the physical passion of parentage to ripen into the emotion of maternal and paternal love, and thus give stability to the family, while the family itself forms a field in which the various emotions inevitably play. Herein are first established definite and permanent relations between human beings, and on the harmony of these relations, on the benefits bestowed by these relations on each member of the family, does the happiness of each depend.

We can advantageously study the play of Emotion in the family, since here we have a comparatively simple social unit,

which yet affords a picture in miniature of society at large. We can find here the origin and evolution of virtues and vices, and see the meaning and object of morality.

We have already seen how sex-passion evolves, under stress of circumstances, into the emotion of love, and how this love shows itself as tenderness and compassion when the wife, instead of being the equal mate, becomes helpless and dependent, in the temporary physical inferiority caused, say, by childbearing. Similarly, should sickness or accident reduce the husband to the temporary physical inferiority, tenderness and compassion will flow out to him from the wife. But these manifestations of love cannot be shown by the stronger without evoking from the weaker answering love-manifestations; these in the condition of weakness will have as their natural characteristics trust, confidence, gratitude, all equally love-emotions coloured by weakness and dependence. In the relation of parents to children and of children to parents, where physical superiority and inferiority are far more strongly marked and persist for a considerable period of time, these love emotions will be continually manifested on both sides. Tenderness, compassion, protection, will be constantly shown by the parents to the children, and trust, confidence, gratitude, will be the constant answer of the children. Variations in the expression of the love-emotion will be caused by variety of circumstances, which will call out generosity, forgiveness, patience, etc., on the



part of the parents, and obedience, dutifulness, serviceableness, etc., on the part of the children. Taking these two classes of love-emotions, we see that the common essence in the one class is benevolence, and in the other reverence; the first is love looking downwards on those weaker, inferior to itself; the other love looking upwards on those stronger, superior to itself. And we can then generalise and say: Love looking downwards is Benevolence; Love looking upwards is Reverence; and these are the several common characteristics of Love from superiors to inferiors, and Love from inferiors to superiors universally.

The normal relations between husband and wife, and those between brothers and sisters, afford us the field for studying the manifestations of love between equals. We see love showing itself as mutual tenderness and mutual trustfulness, as consideration, respect, and desire to please, as quick insight into and endeavour to fulfil the wishes of the other, as magnanimity, forbearance. The elements present in the love-emotions of superior to inferior are found here, but mutuality is impressed on all of them. So we may say that the common characteristic of Love between equals is Desire for Mutual Help.

Thus we have Benevolence, Desire for Mutual Help, and Reverence as the three main divisions of the Love-Emotion, and under these all love emotions may be classified. For all human relations are summed up under the three classes: the relations

of superiors to inferiors, of equals to equals, of inferiors to superiors.

A similar study of the Hate-Emotion in the family will yield us similar fruits. Where there is hate between husband and wife, the temporary superior will show harshness, cruelty, oppression to the temporary inferior, and these will be answered by the inferior with hate-manifestations characteristic of weakness, such as vindictiveness, fear, and treachery. These will be even more apparent in the relations between parents and children, when both are dominated by the Hate-Emotion, since the disparity is here greater, and tyranny breeds a whole crop of evil emotions—deceit, servility, cowardice, while the child is helpless, and disobedience, revolt and revenge as it grows older. Here again we seek a common characteristic, and find that Hate looking downwards is Scorn, and looking upwards is Fear.

Similarly, Hate between equals will show itself in anger, combativeness, disrespect, violence, aggressiveness, jealousy, insolence, etc.—all the emotions which repel man from man when they stand as rivals, face to face, not hand in hand. The common characteristic of Hate between equals will thus be Mutual Injury. And the three main characteristics of the Hate-Emotion are Scorn, Desire for Mutual Injury, and Fear.

Love is characterised in all its manifestations by sympathy, self-sacrifice, the desire to give; these are its essential factors, whether as



Benevolence, as Desire for Mutual Help, as Reverence. For all these directly serve Attraction, bring about union, are of the very nature of Love. Hence Love is of the Spirit; for sympathy is the feeling for another as one would feel for oneself; self-sacrifice is the recognition of the claim of the other, as oneself; giving is the condition of spiritual life. Thus Love is seen to belong to the Spirit, to the life-side of the universe.

Hate, on the other hand, is characterised in all its manifestations by antipathy, self-aggrandisement, the desire to take; these are its essential factors, whether as Scorn, Desire for Mutual Injury, or Fear. All these directly serve Repulsion, driving one apart from another. Hence, Hate is of Matter, emphasises manifoldness and differences, is essentially separateness belongs to the form-side of the universe.

We have thus far dealt with the play of Emotion in the family, because the family serves as a miniature of society. Society is only the integration of numerous family units, but the absence of the blood-tie between these units, the absence of recognised common interests and common objects, makes it necessary to find some bond which will supply the place of the natural bonds in the family. The family units in a Society appear on the surface as rivals, rather than as brothers and sisters; hence the Hate-Emotion is more likely to rise than the Love-Emotion, and it is necessary to

find some way of maintaining harmony; this is done by the transmutation of Love-Emotions into virtues.

### 3. *THE BIRTH OF VIRTUES.*

We have seen that when members of a family pass beyond the small circle of relatives, and meet people whose interests are either indifferent or opposed to them, there is not between them and the others the mutual interplay of Love. Rather does Hate show itself, ranging from the watchful attitude of suspicion to the destroying fury of war. How then is a society to be composed of the separate family units?

It can only be done by making permanent all the emotional moods which spring from Love, and by eradicating those which spring from Hate. A permanent mood of a love-emotion directed towards a living being is a Virtue; a permanent mood of a hate-emotion directed against a living being is a Vice. This change is wrought by the Intellect, which bestows on the emotion a permanent character, seeking harmony in all relations in order that happiness may result. That which conduces to harmony and therefore to happiness in the family, springing spontaneously from Love, is Virtue when practised towards all in every relation of life. Virtue springs from Love and its result is happiness. So also that which conduces to disharmony and therefore to misery in the family, springing spontaneously from Hate, is Vice when practised towards all in all relations of life.



An objection is raised to this theory, that the permanent mood of a love-emotion is a virtue, by pointing out that adultery, theft, and other vices may spring from the love-emotion. Here analysis of the elements entering into, the mental attitude is necessary. It is complex, not simple. The act of adultery is motived by love, but not by love alone. There enter into it also contempt of the honour of another, indifference to the happiness of another, the selfish grasping at personal pleasure at the cost of social stability, social honour, social decency. All these spring from hate-emotions. The love is the one redeeming feature in the whole transaction, the one virtue in the bundle of sordid vices. Similar analysis will always show that when the exercise of a love-emotion is wrong, the wrongness lies in the vices bound up with its exercise, and not in the love-emotion itself.

#### 4. *RIGHT AND WRONG.*

Let us now turn, for a moment, to the question of Right and Wrong, and see the [363] relation they bear to bliss and misery. For there is an idea widely current that there is something low and materialistic in the view that virtue is the means to bliss. Many think that this idea degrades virtue, giving it the second place where it should hold the first, and making it a means instead of an end. Let us then see why virtue must be the path to bliss, and how this inheres in the nature of things.

When the Intellect studies the world, and sees the innumerable relations established therein, and observes that harmonious relations bring about happiness, and that jarring relations bring about misery, it sets to work to find out the way of establishing universal harmony and hence universal bliss. Further, it discovers that the world is moving along a path which it is compelled to tread —the path of evolution, and it finds out the law of evolution. For a part, a unit, to set itself with the law of the whole to which it belongs means peace, harmony, and therefore happiness, while for it to set itself against that law means friction, [364] disharmony, and therefore misery. Hence the Right is that which, being in harmony with the great law, brings bliss, and the Wrong is that which, being in conflict with the great law, brings misery. When the intellect, illuminated by the Spirit, sees nature as an expression of divine Thought, the law of evolution as an expression of the divine Will, the goal as an expression of divine Bliss, then for harmony with the law of evolution we may substitute harmony with the divine Will, and the Right becomes that which is in harmony with the Will of God, and morality becomes permeated with religion.



## THE PRE-NICENE EKKLESIA –SOME THOUGHTS FOR EASTER

The mysteries of the Passion of Christ are the same as have been played out in one form or another by all the ancient religions. Over time many of the ideas have subtly changed and taken on new forms but at root they are all speaking of the same dynamic story of the death and resurrection of mankind.

Firstly many of the rituals found throughout the world were primarily founded upon recognition of the cycles of the seasons and the passage of the planets through the heavens. These were intimately woven into the fabric of society and all people would have originally lived in harmony with the rise and fall of these cycles. The more enlightened beings were then able to perceive that these great cosmic movements were mirrored in the life of man and that the creative principles pictured in the heavens and in the changing seasons were also played out in the growth and development of the consciousness of mankind. Each individual having a path to follow that would recapitulate this great outworking.

The Easter Passion as recorded in the New Testament and as has come down to us through Christianity is another way of portraying the self-same drama. By removing the accretion of ages, the dogmas and doctrines that have slowly

overlaid the original understanding, we come to realise that this great mystery of the death and resurrection of the Christ is in truth the story of everyman, and we are each working out this drama in our lives – each at our own rate and point of development, but also collectively so that one day the hidden life of Christ will be made known to all people and His work will be completed in us.

Jesus, the human soul, was transfigured on the mount, signifying the unification of the human Soul with the Divine Soul (Christos). This was a temporary thing as he then had to descend the mountain and continue the journey towards Jerusalem – the symbol of Heaven or the Temple. Once the human soul had attained the break through to the Christos and knew something of its power, the human soul was able to ride upon the ass – the animal nature in man and the human personality in which the Divine Nature is asleep but once awaken will hold the reins to guide the human personality.

On Maunday Thursday the ceremony of the washing of the disciples feet is undertaken and symbolizes the purification of the understanding, or the right understanding of the Spiritual Law. It is necessary to undergo this transformation of consciousness



before the more advanced initiations can be taken.

The eucharist is also celebrated. This ceremony is not exclusive to the Christian Church, although they like to think that it is, and represents the essence of the Divine Life being broken and poured out for all in order that we might live: te Wisdom and Love by which we come to know of our Father in Heaven and by which we develop Love by which we come to know of our Father in Heaven and by which we develop and grow into the likeness of the One who sent us forth. "The ancient sacrifice has many aspects ..... The wheat typifies the seed of the Divine which is sown in the body at conception and birth, and the energies and forces presented to the human Soul to permit it to germinate and grow. The Wine of the grape symbolised the Life of the

Soul being poured out into the body for its nourishment." We therefore have the Divine Soul descending into matter in order that the human Soul might have life and substance. The Christianised drama of the Eucharist is the enactment of this Cosmic Sacrifice in which we have to participate in order for the human Soul to receive the life that it is given from the Christos within.

"Therefore the Christos Soul is the Lamb sacrificed from the Foundation of the World, dying in the very Truth from its own Glory, entering into the confines of mortal life to live and to die, then to rise triumphant as the

risen Christos. The Drama of the Eucharist is the symbol of this Sacrifice of the Higher Self for the lower self. It indicates that when the Christ speaks or acts, He then represents the Divine Soul of Man, and when Jesus speaks and acts, he represents the human Soul." (The Cosmic Drama by Richaard, Duc de Palatine)

After the celebration of the Eucharist the soul is lead into the Garden of Gethsamane and we cannot accept this is a historical record for the disciples were asleep – so how do we know what Jesus was undergoing? This account represents to us the human soul's capitulation to the Divine with all the agony of giving up the human traits that we cherish. Jesus went ahead of his disciples to pray, asking them to watch with him, but upon his return Jesus found the disciples asleep. THis happened three times and on the last occasion Jesus told them to "sleep on now" because he knew that the Son of Man was betrayed by sinners. BUT whilst the disciples were exhorted to sleep, they were immediately told to "Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." Thus indicating that the disciples represent a dual aspect - one of the human nature that is put to sleep and the higher aspect that must be aroused in order that all be accomplished. The name Gethsemame translates from Hebrew as meaning oil press; and thus indicates the struggle that takes place when Truth is realised as the one reality. All that is good (the oil) is



pressed out and saved and the error is denied. This can be an agonising process as all the things that have been cherished are relinquished, the idols that have been erected have to be toppled. A press is an emblem of trial, distress, agony, while oil points to Spirit and illumination.

Peter is the disciple that represents faith and it was upon this 'rock' that Jesus said he would build His Church. But in the drama of the Passion it is Peter that denies Jesus three times, thus indicating the role of faith in denying the body of flesh, the mental and emotional nature in man for until our faith is able to look higher we will remain in the world of form – the rock will become a stumbling stone. Peter was given two keys – one to heaven

and the other to hell – thus indicating the role of doorkeeper, the way by which the soul ascends and descends and therefore this faculty in man should be used wisely. In what do you put your faith? The impulsiveness of Peter that is recognised in the Gospels and spoken of must be disciplined, and this faculty continually checked to gain affirmation of right direction, as we see in the account following the resurrection when Jesus asked Peter the threefold question " Do you love me?"

May we this Easter affirm with Peter - "Yea Lord, you know that I love Thee."

*+Leila Boyer  
April 2006*



## TSC SCHOLARSHIP

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Each year TSC awards a scholarship, valued at \$2000, to a student entering University. Priority is given to relatives of a member of TSC. If you know of any student who may be interested, please have them contact Lois Brisbois at [brisl@aol.com](mailto:brisl@aol.com) for more information and requirements.

So far, TSC has awarded seven scholarships to the following young people:

1. Matthew Schmidt, who has graduated in Civil Engineering from Queen's University in Kingston. He is currently working at an Engineering firm in Toronto and will start his MBA at University of British Columbia in September, with a Dean's Scholarship.
2. Bogdan Lyashenko who has graduated from University of Toronto. Bogdan lives and works in Toronto.
3. Cameron Schmidt, who has graduated from Smith Business School at Queen's University in Kingston. He is currently living in Toronto and working for a Consulting Firm.
4. Lua Camargos, who will enter her final year in Bio Engineering at Queen's University in September. Lua works in Vancouver during the summer. She is considering designing clothes for individuals who use prosthetics.
5. Maxwell Browne, who will enter his final year in Structural Engineering at Western University in London in September. He works for a design company in the GTA during the summer. Max is interested in Boat Building.
6. Stella Snow, who will enter her final year in International Relations at Queen's University in September. She works at home in Vancouver during the summer. Stella is interested in studying Law.
7. Kavika Taylor, who is just completing her first year at Smith Business School at Queen's University in Kingston. Kavika also works at home in Vancouver during the summer.
8. I Bogdan Lyashenko, graduated from the University of Toronto last summer, and am currently employed in the field I have studied (Computer Science). Otherwise, I currently live in Toronto, and am pursuing an online part-time Master's degree, also in Computer Science.



THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

Notes:





## THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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