

ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

VOLUME XXI

JULY, 1955—SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

NUMBER 5

THE HIDDEN SIDE OF MUSIC

By SYDNEY T. BUTLER, L.R.A.M.

(Continued from May)

It is sometimes said that each person has his own organic note. It would be more correct to say that he is a *chord*. His "temperamental" note is stronger than the rest on the physical plane, and that preponderance is carried through the emotional and mental planes, presumably right through to the Monad. Vibrating around and through them will be overtones, the total effect being that of an aeolian lyre. But if the emotions of the person are uncontrolled, and the mind full of various prejudices, there will be inharmonious sounds—that is, discords.

In India, the science of organized sound has been practiced for ages. A particular combination of letters and words, put together by "one who knows," and called a mantram, is a familiar accompaniment of religious ceremonial. The average European or American listener, perhaps new to the practice, on hearing a Hindu sing one phrase perhaps twenty-five times, is inclined to be contemptuous of such "vain repetitions." Not so the occultist. He knows that when the worshipper begins his mantram, in a very short time the subtle vehicles become harmonized to a great extent. Worldly thoughts are forced out by equalizing vibrations.

Some years ago an interesting series of notes were taken by an advanced clairvoyant at a performance of part of the trilogy of Wagner's "Ring of the Niebelungs." The member of the audience concerned was a music student, a girl of about seventeen. She had spent the afternoon in studying the score of the work to be performed in the evening; and before the performance she seemed rather listless, and indifferent. The physical body showed signs of delicate health but toward the middle of the first act a great difference in her health aura was noticed. The vibrations of the music had made it flow with new vigor. Streams of light played in her mental vehicle like long waving tentacles. As one familiar *motif* after another floated up from the general vibrations of the music, thought forms already there from the previous study of the music, were strengthened until they filled the aura with opalescent light. As the emotion caused by her comprehension of the music and appreciation of its beauty grew upon her mentally, the vibrations penetrated

(Continued on Page 42)

THINK FOR YOURSELF

By H. K. SCHOLEFIELD

Certain key "punch" words are known to be so outstandingly effective in advertising and selling that they have become stereotyped and banal, yet unless we are alert in defense of the privacy of our opinions we allow them to penetrate our subconscious and accomplish the fell purpose for which they are employed in a constant onslaught on our minds, our pockets and our national way of life. Among such words are "New," "Amazing," "Modern," "Thrilling," "Exciting," "Luxurious" and "Sophisticated," and a little conscious alertness regarding them as they impinge upon us daily and hourly, in season and out of season and eternally, is well worth the effort in its effect of extracting their poison and leaving us free to generate a little original thought.

Beware the dulcet tones of the "Representative," the "Promotion Expert," "Engineer," or "Sales Consultant." These are glorified appellations for fancified modern editions of what used to be Joe Doakes, the drummer. Beware of the "sales talks" that slowly but surely poison our power to use our brains ourselves for ourselves, no matter in how small a degree. Beware the cloying repetition of the siren song about "Our new, amazing model of the thrilling, modern, luxurious Whinging, so glamorous and so essential for sophisticated living. Only 10% down and as many as 30 months in easy payments." By the time this higher-education peddler runs out of breath he may have us sold, tied to the wheel, hypnotized, addle-brained and deserving to pay the penalty of 30 months of very uneasy payments indeed as punishment for refusing to form our own decisions and failure to reject intrusion upon our private mental preserve.

It is one of life's many lessons, to be learned only the hard way through experience and through trial and error. Here in the Southwest there is a foolish custom by which men are expected, if not required, to discard a felt hat on a certain day in Spring and buy a new straw hat which in turn must inevitably, imperatively be thrown away on a specified date in the Fall. Each change requires purchase of a new hat regardless of the good or perfect condition of the previous season's hat. To use last year's hat would not, could not be "Modern," "Sophisticated" or

(Continued on Page 43)

THE OCCULT INTERPRETATION OF OMAR KHAYYAM

Drink heartily!

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried whence?

And, without asking, whither hurried hence!

Another and another Cup to drown
The memory of this impertinence!

"Impertinence" here means triviality, Omar apparently feeling that the play on words—"hither hurried whence" and "whither hurried hence"—is somewhat unworthy of a dignified Sufi philosopher. So he quickly calls for another glass of wine, and another, to make him forget that he has so forgotten himself.

At least that is the conventional explanation, which is about as wrong and stupid as all the other conventional explanations of this great occult masterpiece.

We have labored in vain if by now readers of this series are not convinced that the only way to interpret Omar—or any other esoteric writing—is to pick the words to pieces—literally to dissect them—to dig out their true meaning.

Omar, the questioner, asks in what the Germans would call a *Wortspiel*, "Where did I, without asking, come from? Where am I, without asking, going to?" Then he seemingly wants to obliterate his own questions by getting drunk. But note that he doesn't answer them. He inquires—and then apparently abandons his line of inquiry in favor of the winecup.

Actually he leaves the reader, the student, the pupil to answer them, which we may now attempt to do.

Where *did* we come from without asking? From nowhere. We came "hither" at our own request. The Constitution of the Universe, like the Constitution of the United States, does not constrain anyone to go anywhere unless he wants to so long as he keeps within the law. And the Ego who incarnates is incapable of breaking the law, though his personalities may and do. But when each of us came "hither," we did so because our Egos had so ordained.

No one is forced into incarnation—a fact which one set of objectors to rebirth do not realize. The dim-witted re-

(Continued on Page 43)

ANCIENT WISDOM

FOUNDED BY L. W. ROGERS
In 1935

published monthly at
320 Merchants' Exchange Bldg.
St. Louis 2, Mo.

CHARLES E. LUNTZ, Editor

ANCIENT WISDOM PRESS, Publishers

Entered as second-class matter Sept. 25, 1936, at the post office at St. Louis, Mo., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Subscriptions: 1 year \$2.00; 6 months \$1.20; Canada and abroad, 1 year \$2.50. Single Copies, 20 cents

THE CONVENTIONAL IS NOT NECESSARILY THE TRUE

Convention is the great god of modern living. To do as others do—better, if possible, but always along conventional lines. To attend conventional churches. To talk about conventional things. To accept ideas sanctioned by convention. These give conventional people (the huge majority) a feeling of conventional wellbeing, of respectability, of "belonging."

And, by the same token, the unconventional is regarded askance by followers of the conventional. And unconventional people are avoided, even boycotted, by their conforming neighbors. We do not have to go far to prove this. Most Theosophists have had the experience, when asked by some new acquaintance as to their religious affiliation, if they have replied "I am a Theosophist," of noting an uneasy changing of the subject. The inquirer does not want to be unmannerly but unwittingly betrays a slight shock at this unconventionality.

Because of this some Theosophists will cover up by mentioning a church they occasionally (or frequently) attend or by denying any sectarian affiliation or in some other way dodge the question. Anything rather than forfeit the esteem of an acquaintance by confessing to something so unconventional as Theosophy. That is for them to decide, although the present writer admits to a rather impish delight in observing the fidgety reaction of the questioner, startled by the answer he always proudly gives, "Why, I'm a Theosophist." There is a nervous throat-clearing as a rule—a sort of mental backing away from the unexpected avowal of unconventionality—and an unspoken "let's skip the whole thing."

Occasionally, of course, a different result follows. It was the writer's turn to be startled when the question was asked by a man newly-introduced in the home of a very religious friend. The customary answer was given and the usual shrinking off awaited. Instead the booming reply was, "Grand! So am I."

But don't expect this to happen very often. It has happened to the writer

only one other time (in a railroad club car). Ordinarily any unconventional admission—and Theosophy is *very* unconventional—arouses a sort of unspoken displeasure, ranging from mere mild resentment to violent indignation. Or, in the case of Theosophy, there may sometimes be detected a gleam of amused contempt that anyone should hold such "outlandish" beliefs. This is especially probable if the amused person himself believes either in annihilation at death or in eternal hell for "sinners."

Many Theosophists have been brought up in the ways of conventional thinking and have a natural respect for them. It should not be construed that Theosophists are any less conventional in outward things (with the possible exceptions of churchgoing, vegetarianism and such) than their neighbors. But in ideas they are and must be highly unconventional. It is far from conventional—in this half of the globe—to hold such concepts as reincarnation, karma, a plan and purpose to life, the existence of invisible planes and bodies, the fact of clairvoyance, and many other things almost or quite exclusive to Theosophy.

The outer world knows not of them or, knowing them, dismisses them as myths—and keeps on believing its own religious or scientific myths which often are indeed fearful and wonderful. With scientific facts Theosophy has no quarrel—indeed embraces them, for they too are Theosophy. But with such scientific myths as, for example, that life is a mere complex of atoms dissolving at physical death, Theosophy will have nothing to do. And neither, we may add, will a great many enlightened scientists.

Conventional thinking has always plagued the world and held back its progress. It is unnecessary to stress what conventional beliefs did to western learning a millennium ago. And the dark ages they brought about yielded only to such unconventional believers as Luther, John Huss, and that unconventional old sinner Henry VIII. The world owes its progress to the unconventional thinkers and doers. The conventional would keep it stagnant and *in statu quo*. And the world's gratitude has been to persecute, torture and deride these breakers of conventional thought images—*iconoclasts*, the dictionary calls them.

The conventional may be true—but if it is, it is due to the efforts of the unconventional of long ago. Look what our ancestors of even a century past conventionally believed. Observe in your own living room, kitchen, garage, the conventional wonders of today. Is there a single one of them that conventional thinking of 1855 would have conceded to be possible? Could they in their wildest dreams have even imagined such things as television, electric stoves, the slick 200 horsepower auto-

mobiles, to say nothing of jet planes and atomic energy. Even that inspired dreamer Edward Bellamy, writing in the late eighteen-eighties, could only foresee broadcasting by telephone. Radio did not enter his mind and as for TV, the concept appears to have been not remotely imaged by him. Yet a few years later our own C. W. Leadbeater clairvoyantly foresaw both. (See ANCIENT WISDOM March 1935).

So reincarnation is not accepted by conventional thought? Neither was psychoanalysis fifty years ago, or the possibility of heavier than air machines a hundred years ago, or the poor old outmoded steam locomotive two hundred years ago, or the existence of the western hemisphere five hundred years ago. Anyone can go on from there and make his own list. And he will need plenty of writing paper for the purpose if he wishes it to be exhaustive.

How foolish appears the conventional thinking that either rejected these possibilities outright or never gave them a thought. How shallow conventional thinking really is when, with its wooden sword, it challenges the sharp rapier of the unconventional thought that has brought about all these comfortable things the conventional now regard as their own.

To be unconventional is not to be sensational, not to go out of one's way to be conspicuous, not deliberately to be different for the sake of being different. Mere eccentricity is a stupid thing which stamps the eccentric as lacking in balance. But unconventionality of thought—if it is constructive unconventionality—marks the individual as not only a pioneer but a person of moral courage—for it takes moral courage, and lots of it, to challenge the conventional. Often the latter are fearsome folk who gladly would annihilate the unconventional thought that necessarily affronts their own, and in the past, when they had the power, they would and did annihilate the thinker too—or at least his physical body.

So we close with this word of suggestion: Do not reject anything merely because it is conventional. It may be true. But do not accept anything merely because it is conventional. It may be false. How many conventional ideas of the past have proven false!—nearly all of them. We feel we can make this suggestion in good grace for it is unlikely that you would be reading ANCIENT WISDOM if you were a conventional thinker.

And ANCIENT WISDOM is a very unconventional paper.

THE UNINHIBITED

Man's happiness in life is in proportion to his lack of inhibitions. There are people who move through existence so hemmed in by powerful thoughts of this or that thing they must not do—

lers what revelation may await us when artists (in every possible medium) become utterly devoted to the Plan of the Great Architect of the Universe.

(The End)

(Editor's Note: The Devas referred to in the closing paragraph of Mr. Butler's article are known in Theosophy as Gandharvas, or Angels of Song.)

THINK FOR YOURSELF

(Continued from Page 37)

"New," and without those qualities we are induced to consider ourselves shamed, abashed, degraded and rather less than human. In fact to be seen without a felt hat in November or a straw hat in May is to precipitate upon ourselves the implication that we ought to keep off the highways, and had better look for the nearest damp stone and crawl under it.

This writer rejects all that propaganda *in toto*. We wear a felt hat when it is raining or when our head is cold, otherwise we wear none. The hat-check banditti are as much opposed to our system as we are to theirs; we think they could easily find employment of a nature useful to society. We wear our felt until it shows signs of hearty usage, and if we are behind the styles it gives us great cause to rejoice in our freedom from bondage to that false god, "Fashion," whose feet are of clay and whose entire corpus is likewise of clay.

Our radio is a table model for the reason that in buying it we desired a device to produce talk and music, not a piece of decorative furniture. Our furniture is 25 years old and, being in good repair, will last another 25, and if it is not "modern" it is comfortable and easily kept dust-free. We use several household appliances so out-dated that they completely lack the modern sheet-metal camouflage draperies by which washing machines are made to simulate a square cabinet containing an encyclopedia, and cost much more in consequence, with access to the working parts for lubrication and servicing made highly inconvenient and expensive. Our automobile is of the 1941 vintage but has clean fenders and so much unused mileage in it that we may use it very happily for another decade if a supply of spare parts remains available. The low tax rate per year on this old model is very consoling and fully repays us for its lack of new, amazing sophistication.

It is evident that advertising always addresses the below-average intelligence and makes its assault upon the immature and the moronic mind. The reasons are clear enough. The other kind is not open to attack, nor are its numbers sufficiently great to be as profitable as with the more numerous people who prefer not to think, which hurts their heads. All wise fishermen apply their efforts to waters where fish are biting. In many instances, as when orders are taken by door-to-door demonstrators, the commissions and

costs of selling equal or exceed the cost of the product. When we are required to pay \$50 for the service of having \$25 worth of appliances brought to our attention, it is fully time to refuse to buy.

Many devices can be obtained as factory-rebuilt items in a previous year's model without exorbitant sales commissions and without glamour-appeal or stimulation by use of the word "Modern," by which prospects are led to imagine that they will look like Mr. and Mrs. Noah in the ark if seen driving last year's auto, and can hardly consider themselves respectable in last season's clothes. The Chinese have a saying that there are two kinds of people who can afford to dress in rags: the very poor and the very rich. The former do so of necessity, the latter because they are wealthy enough to enjoy comfort in disregard of public opinion. Being numbered among the largest group, who are neither rich nor poor, we find wisdom lies in the middle course of avoiding public attention altogether by looking as unimportant as possible, which never was difficult.

All of which is part of what must be learned the hard way, as most of us are doing. The penalty for keeping up with the Joneses is so very high that sooner or later we are forced to take a fresh view of the whole problem and discover that it is quite needless to attempt to keep up with the Joneses and that the opinions of the Joneses are utterly worthless and almost always in error. If we, too, are in error, as we are so often in so many respects, it is far better for us to do our own thinking, make our own mistakes and discover the fact ourselves than for us to be guided by the false doctrines of others. It is entirely safe to say that it is better for us to be wrong under our own efforts than right through following another man's thought. A child can never learn to walk alone until the parental hand is withdrawn and some tumbles are experienced to stimulate more careful and determined effort.

It is easy to condemn the constant barrage of advertising, the newspaper pabulum addressed to moronic minds, the blatant, endless clack of radio and television plugs and the million-and-one assaults upon our subconscious. But condemnation is the wrong attitude and does no good. The constructive course is to ignore all of it and brush it aside as we come to rely upon our own independent decisions, uninfluenced and uncontaminated by all this stream of hypnotic glamour. As more people do this, the nuisance will subside of its own accord as it becomes unprofitable.

(The End)

OMAR KHAYYAM

(Continued from Page 37)

mark, "But I don't want to come back," ignores the obvious truth that if it is nature's law that we *must* come back, the fact that we don't want to will cer-

tainly not prevent our doing so. The "don't want to come back" brother (or sister) probably doesn't want to die either, but die he will one of these days for such is natural law. However, though he must come back, he himself, his own Ego, decides when that event will take place. No one pushes him into incarnation—the decision is his own. But it is a decision he will inevitably make when the right time comes.

That right time is when the last drop of the distilled essence of experience of the previous life cycle has been absorbed into the Ego. Then comes what the Easterns call *trishna*, the thirst for more experience of the lower planes to hasten the evolution of the Ego. And he can no more resist that thirst than he can, while alive down here, commit suicide by holding his breath. Some things, of which this is one, are so compelling that it is virtually impossible to refrain from doing them. Man must breathe, he must eat when hungry, drink when thirsty, sleep when completely fatigued, open his eyes if he is not sightless, and perform other natural functions which have been placed beyond his power to reject without mortal injury to his physical system.

Similarly on the Egoic plane, the impulse to reincarnate when the hour strikes is an all-consuming desire—the kind of desire that is in no way astral but purely spiritual. He cannot resist it and he doesn't want to. When he reincarnates it is the one thing above everything else that at such a time he craves to do. He *asks* to come back. He *demand*s to come back—and this includes the poor foolish creature who is quite sure he will never *want* to come back.

After eating a full meal in the evening, one may rise from the table feeling that never does he even want to see a plate of food again, let alone eat it. In the morning, however, he will have no difficulty, if in health, in disposing of a hearty breakfast. The analogy is perfect. The personality, sated with life's experiences for good or ill or both, may die almost gladly—happy to be released from the woes of this "vale of tears." Some centuries hence his Ego will again be eagerly house-hunting, seeking a new personality to provide the spiritual material he must have for his progress and which can only be gained via the vale of tears route.

So much for the "hither" part of Omar's problem. What of the "whither"? Into that "hence," too, he is not hurried without asking. The Ego knows and acquiesces in all decisions made on his behalf by the karmic agencies. We are informed that at a certain stage in his evolution he is even consulted as to the details of the coming incarnation and at a still later step, makes the entire decision himself, and he certainly knows whether his personalities will be hurried when they leave the physical plane. He should; he has had severa

THOSE HOT SUMMER MONTHS ARE "NOT SO HOT" FOR ANCIENT WISDOM INCOME

★ ★ ★ ★

Everybody seems to forget ANCIENT WISDOM in July and August—everybody, that is, but the people we owe money to. They are right on the job expecting checks as usual . . . and, of course, we don't blame them.

But with readers not bothering to renew expired subscriptions until vacations are over, with the extra kindly donations on which we have to depend reduced to a mere trickle, it isn't only the heat that makes us sweat.

So . . . could you send a good thought in our direction, followed, if possible, by a subscription or two for someone you think may be searching for the kind of thing ANCIENT WISDOM offers? And, if you can spare it, perhaps a little help toward keeping down that yawning deficit on operations which will be staring us in the face for the next two months.

When we took over the paper from Mr. Rogers in 1936 it was only half as large as it is today, but the cost of printing it is SIX TIMES as great and other costs have gone up in proportion. There were virtually no complimentary 1-year subscriptions then. Now we send out a hundred new ones every month and have done so for years without ever missing a month.

So may we, with reasonably good grace, ask for a bit of assistance to tide us over the season of oblivion? It's a good cause, don't you think?

Our grateful thanks!

hundred personalities if reasonably advanced and he surely must be aware of what happens to them when they depart from physical existence.

Why then did Omar call for "another and another cup" to drown out his questions?

Because the answers could only come from a higher plane, a spiritual plane, from the Spirit, symbolized so often and so matchlessly by wine.

For the Spirit is not baffled by such questions as these. It knows the answers because it formulates the things which the answers stand for. And by drinking deeply of that cup, imbibing the inspiration which it alone provides, the personality may know the answers too.

(To Be Continued)

THE LAST QUARTER

(Continued from Page 40)

ing of Tsong-kha-pa, who was a Tibetan. Doubtless for this reason the Secret Doctrine mentions no particular year or years but merely "every century, at a certain specified period in the cycle." However, as this period would correspond to the last quarter of the century as reckoned by the A.

D. calculation there is no inconsistency and this is merely mentioned in passing.

So starting as before with 1875, but taking the entire 25 years to 1899 instead of merely the one year, we must certainly admit that this 25-year cycle proves up the theory handsomely. Apart from The Theosophical Society, it witnessed the founding of the Christian Science and allied movements. It saw the liberalizing of the hidebound orthodoxy of the previous years. For the first time on any large scale men began to challenge the religious authority that had held their minds in thrall for 1500 years. Beyond question the last quarter of the 19th century has persuasive evidence to contribute.

And the last quarter of the 18th, with its American and French Revolutions, needs little analysis. The welter of blood that accompanied the latter event was an unhappy karmic consequence of the wrongs suffered by the proletariat for generations at the hands of the nobility. Our own revolution, too, was far from bloodless. But both of these historic upheavals were spiritual milestones in the history of the human race. The consequences of

both have been incalculable.

Two other events decidedly spiritual in their bearing on evolution were:

1792: Denmark became the first country to prohibit the slave trade.

1798: Swiss Republic formed. This little nation, which has been a model for all the others in keeping the peace and its own self-respect, is surely entitled to its place in the "Impulse."

So the Nineteenth and the Eighteenth Centuries may be fairly said to have proved the affirmative side of the question, but the proof is so far only partial. What have the prior centuries to offer?

(To Be Continued)

The world at present doesn't think much of Theosophy. The world didn't think much of Christianity when it was only eighty years old. The world changed its opinion of Christianity. As it will change its opinion of Theosophy.

It has always amazed us that some of the bitterest objectors to reincarnation on earth are quite willing to concede that we may take existence on one of the other planets. Such illogic is incredible. Why prowl around Jupiter, Mars or Saturn, like some ethereal tomcat on the planetary tiles, when we can reincarnate to so much better effect right here?

We like the reply given by one of our members recently when someone inquired if he was a Catholic. "Certainly I'm a Catholic," he rejoined. "I'm a Protestant too and a Greek Orthodox." "What do you mean?" his questioner asked, bewildered. "I mean," he answered, "that I'm all of them in one. I'm a Theosophist. That takes in everything good in all the religions and I don't mean their dogmas and doctrines." Come to think of it, that statement could hardly be challenged.

Psychiatrists say that everyone is a little mad along some line or other. "Everyone," of course, would include the psychiatrists themselves; so perhaps that is the line along which they are a little mad.

HEALING

For the spiritual ministrations of the Healing Group, write the Group Leader, Mrs. Ella Welge, c/o The Theosophical Society, 5108 Waterman Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo.

THE ZODIAC IN KIPLING

Cancer

How can I turn from any fire
On any man's hearthstone?
I know the wonder and desire
That went to build my own.

—The Fires