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The World's Congress of Religions.

FIVE THOUSAND YEARS ago the Kali Yug, or Iron Age, of the Aryan Race began. The Guardians of Humanity, those Masters who constitute the Great Lodge of Adepts and Mahatmas, foreseeing the dark period of spiritual depression which was to follow, sent to the aid of humanity, one of the greatest of Avatars, or spiritual Teachers, Krishna. His death marked the beginning of this cycle, the first five thousand years of which will close in 1897. The key note of truth thus sounded seems to have lost little of its original force for more than two thousand years, and not until the time of Buddha was the condition of mankind such as to demand a restatement of the old truths. Within two hundred and fifty years of his death, during the reign over India of the great and good Buddhist king, Asoka, con-

ceptions of men had already become, owing to the onward rush of the Iron Age, so diversified that this king called together the first Parliament of religions of which we have any authentic, exoteric record. This might doubtless be classed as a purely sectarian, or Buddhistic Congress; yet it was more. Early Buddhism, even as Max Muller admits, was but a very slightly modified Brahmanism, and only grew into a rival of that religion with later times and as Brahmanism became more and more corrupted by caste, and by creeds and ceremonials which gradually buried its original philosophy under a mass of metaphysical rubbish. So that this Congress assembled by King Asoka, being convened before any real separation into sects, was practically a World's Congress of Religions, especially as we learn from the inscriptions of this king that perfect tolerance of religious opinion was commanded to be observed throughout all his domains. There have been many religious assemblages since; notably, that of Constantine, in which Christianity received a far more dreadful betrayal than followed upon the kiss of Judas; but the truth had become too deeply buried, the grip of the Iron Age too firm, for any universal Congress. That such a Congress has actually been convened, and in a Christian country, is a most

*Stenographic Report by Miss Clara Brockman of a Lecture, given Oct. 22, at San Francisco, by Dr. Jerome A. Anderson, Delegate.

hopeful sign of the times. That it has been due to the Theosophical Society, or, rather to those Masters who are the Real Founders of the Theosophical Society, there can be but little doubt. It matters not who are the direct agents, it is the Theosophical Society which has forced attention to, and recognition of, these humane, divinely ethical and supremely philosophic "Heathen" religions of the East. Its literature, its—to the West—strange theories of karma, reincarnation, brotherhood, evolution, and so on, have permeated every avenue of human thought, until the very stage draws dramas from this source. Men have pondered in their hearts if its doctrine of the real brotherhood of man and of the common origin of all religions could be true, until as a result of the mighty wave of interest so aroused the Parliament of Religions was made possible.

What was intended by this Parliament, and what was accomplished? The object of its founders was to have every religion represented upon the floors of the Parliament by that religion's best and most learned expounders. In this way, it was intended to contrast the great religions of the world, with the hope that the most tolerant and most enlightened people would find in them many great and similar truths. There was also a hope, probably, among those who attended, that each representative religion would be shown to be the best. So that the rivalry of our Western civilization, which makes us take each other by the throat in our efforts to get ahead of our fel-

lowmen, appeared even in this, the Parliament of the World's Religions. But something more than this was accomplished. For, when all of these religions, Buddhism, Brahmanism, Mohammedanism, Christianity (represented by its numerous sects), came together and talked their faiths over in the presence of that great gathering and of each other, it was evident that there was in every religion so much that was common to all, that a spirit of tolerance for each other's opinions and a recognition of the underlying brotherhood of humanity was undoubtedly the chief result.

The Parliament at-large was such a vast thing that it goes far beyond the power of any one person to report it. The Theosophical Congress was allowed two days, Sept. 15th, and 16th, and it may be interesting to give some data as to where, when and how it met, and the *personnel* which constituted this our own Congress. The place of meeting was in a new building, the Art Palace, upon the Lake Front, at the foot of Adams Street, Chicago. This building consisted of a number of halls, some of them moderate in size, some larger, the two principal ones being capable of holding at least three thousand people each. It was characteristic of this civilization, and an object lesson upon the teachings of Theosophy in relation to the higher and lower consciousness, that at this Congress for the spiritual unification and elevation of mankind, the voices of the speakers should have been almost drowned out by the rush, roar and hurry of the competitive traffic of our age. Right

in the rear of the building ran the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad, and there was such continual uproar among the engines and cars, that, in the very midst of the deepest philosophical and spiritual discussions, the voices of the speakers would often be drowned by the "business" Babel of our nineteenth century competition, thus forcibly illustrating the teaching of Theosophy that this sense consciousness of ours, in its violence and uproar, is the means of either dimming or entirely preventing us from hearing the voice of our Spiritual or true Self.

At first, the Theosophists were assigned a hall with a capacity of about 250. In five minutes after the doors were opened it was filled to overflowing. Then the managers gave us a hall capable of holding 1,500 people; but in a few minutes that, too, was jammed, and then they assigned us two halls adjoining, in which to hold overflow meetings. It was most gratifying to us and to the Managers of the Society to find such an intense interest in Theosophy, and such remarkable audiences. We began in the 1,500 hall, and, for the last two sessions of the Congress, we were transferred to one of the larger halls, capable of holding three thousand people, and we filled it completely. Without attempting to convey any contrast between our Convention and others, the truth may be told at all times. It so chanced that, at the Sunday night upon which we held one of our principal meetings, the Presbyterians had their principal gathering in an adjoining hall.

Now, the Presbyterian is a great sect, and has spent millions of dollars in attempting to convert the heathen, some of whom were represented upon our platform. It has no peer in the amount of money expended for church purposes; the great Methodist Church even coming second. There were many of the church's noted preachers on hand that night, to deliver lectures in that hall. Our hall was packed full, and, while Mr. Judge was speaking, Dr. Barrows, the Chairman of the entire Parliament came upon our stage, asked him to pause a moment, went forward upon the platform, and said that owing to the fact that it had been announced in the city that the Presbyterians would hold their Congress in that hall, instead of the adjoining one, there was no question but that many had gotten into the wrong place; that there was no audience in the other hall to listen to those men who had come so far to speak, and in justice to them he requested that all who were there by mistake would follow him out. He marched out with a great deal of confidence as it seemed to us, but not a single soul followed him, and when he opened the doors to let the Doctor out, twenty-five or thirty came in to our already packed hall. And this twenty-five or thirty represented almost as large an audience as had gathered to hear the Presbyterian divines, for we were told that less than a hundred were in the adjoining hall. This but illustrates the hold which Theosophy has upon Western thinkers.

Now, as to the *personnel* of our Congress. Upon the platform, at one time, were to be seen prominent representatives of Brahmanism, Buddhism, Christianity and modern Agnosticism, as well as those who had been identified with many of the Protestant faiths, with Spiritualism and other isms. First came Professor Gyenandra Nath Charkavarti, a Hindu high caste Brahman. He was, it seems to me, the central figure of the entire Congress. Even Annie Besant, with all her wonderful oratorical powers and great reputation, certainly had to yield the palm on this occasion to Professor Chakravarti. Picture to yourselves a large, portly man, weighing, perhaps, over two hundred pounds, of a yellowish cast of countenance, quite light for a Hindhu, with a most beautiful, spiritual expression when you caught his eye; but who when not speaking or conversing seemed to retire within himself as though a veil dropped over his eyes and he communed with higher intelligences. He was a most remarkable man; his eloquence was simply marvelous. His command of the English language was greater than that of any speaker there, although he was a foreigner and a "heathen Brahman." He is professor of mathematics in the college at Allahabad, India, brought over by the Theosophists of England and America to represent Brahmanical Theosophy at this Congress. And he did it grandly and well. His enunciation was clear and beautiful. He spoke in a high pitch, not using a single word in the chest

register common to English speaking people. This had a peculiar effect at first, but after a few minutes, when one had caught the rhythm of his intonation and the poetry of his language, it was like the most beautiful music. He had a peculiar way of dwelling on the letter M. Every time this letter occurred, he rang it out or dwelt upon it in a way which produced the most remarkable effect. It almost seemed as though he were using it as a mantram, giving this intonation with an object beyond the mere verbal meaning; although this may not have been so. But the effect was marvelous. There was in the appearance of Professor Chakravarti a peculiar lightness and spirituality which, connected with a stout personage, carries with it the impression which we so often get from Catholic priests. Physicians know that celibacy has a certain well marked effect upon the physique, and these priests bear upon them the impress of this chastity. This expression of perfect purity coupled with the greatest physical and intellectual strength Professor Chakravarti had in a marked degree. It seemed as if all struggle against the lower nature had been long unnecessary, so completely was spirituality dominant.

Next in interest to Prof. Chakravarti came Annie Besant. It is useless to attempt to describe her; most of you have seen her; many of you have heard her, and know what a master of eloquence she is. It was considered a great acquisition by the managers of this Congress when she consented to come and speak at Chicago. She was

at her best. Seldom has a tide of eloquence ever flowed from human lips greater than came from those of Annie Besant. She fairly divided the honors with Prof. Chakravarti. The principal topics were assigned to these two; they came to present Theosophy to the West, and they did it well.

William Q. Judge was there as the head of the American Section, and he also did grandly. While not possessing the eloquence of Mrs. Besant, nor the beautiful, poetical imagery of Prof. Chakravarti, there was that running throughout all his talks which appealed to the common sense of his audiences. He presented Theosophy in the light of reason, and drove it home to his hearers by the use of the most common, simple and plain language. He was a power throughout the entire convention.

Following him was Miss Muller, representing Christian Theosophy; going upon the platform as an avowed Christian, and doing her part successfully. Then came Dr. Buck, of Cincinnati, one of the foremost Theosophists, as also one of the foremost scientists, of to-day.

Then came our good and learned Buddhist Brother, H. Dharmapala, bringing home to Western hearts some of the beautiful conceptions of, as well as historical truths about, that great religion.

Mrs. Cooper-Oakley was also there, and Claude Wright from London. Bro. George Wright of Chicago, had charge of local matters during the entire proceedings, and to his efforts the success of the Congress was largely due. Besides, there were Theosophists from the East, from the North, from the

West and from the South—a most complete gathering of the clans.

When we come to the topics of the Congress, Theosophy along general lines was assigned to Professor Chakravarti, William Q. Judge and Annie Besant. One of these was to attempt to give of these his proper position in presenting its teachings to the public, one would say that Professor Chakravarti represented the spiritual element, William Q. Judge the intellectual element and Annie Besant the emotional element throughout the proceedings, meaning all the time, by these terms, their very highest expression and also, that each of these three touched upon all these different elements. But it was Professor Chakravarti's duty, and delight as well, to present to those audiences something of the Theosophical conception of spiritual life; it was Mr. Judge's work to present Theosophy intellectually and from the common sense standpoint; and it was the part of Annie Besant to bring it home to the hearts of men and show them that all are really brothers. It seemed as though Professor Chakravarti wished to show the relation of man to spirit; of Mr. Judge, the relation of man to man; of Dr. Buck, the relation of man to science; of Miss Muller, of man to woman; of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, of man, the microcosm, to the macrocosm; while my own topic was the relation of man to life and death.

In doing this Prof. Chakravarti presented, in the most beautiful imagery and the most poetical language, a description of the higher

conscious states. He showed us how the clamor of the senses destroyed or inhibited spiritual perception upon lower planes, and how necessary it is for man to retire within himself, to still all this clamor and turmoil of the senses, before the inner, spiritual vision can dawn. He alluded to difficulty with which the true spiritual knowledge from the inner nature of man was conveyed down to and through this sensuous plane, and pointed out the fact that this was the reason for differences in existing religions. One has to still all these lower vibrations which so disturb the repose of the soul, before he can rise above the domain of materiality, and when one does so rise, and obtains a glimpse of spiritual truths, and attempts to impart these for the benefit of mankind, he has to put his teachings in the language of sense perception, and, in the very attempt to do so, many divergences must arise in our conceptions of these spiritual truths, so entirely dissociated from sensuous perception. And he brought it out clearly that we ought to exercise tolerance towards each other's conceptions and religious beliefs, because of this difficulty of bringing them down to this plane. Pursuing this subject, he said that the head of the West must be united to the heart of the East. The East has too long occupied itself, not with the study of spiritual truths, but with metaphysical discussions of the rubbish which has overgrown the spiritual truths of Brahmanism and Buddhism; and, in order to clear this away, it has become necessary to bring

the strong intellect, common sense and matter-of-fact knowledge of the West to bear upon the metaphysics of the East, and that by and through this union, both East and West will be greatly benefitted. He showed also how mistaken Max Muller is in claiming that there is no esotericism in the Brahmanical Scriptures. When talking of brotherhood his similes were remarkable for their beauty. In one instance he likened the spiritual progress of man to a candle, saying that just as the candle affords light by giving up its own life to the flame which consumes it, so only by the fire of self-sacrifice and the destruction of all the lower nature was it possible for one to benefit mankind.

Annie Besant gave most of her time to arousing in her hearers a realization of the real fact of man's love to man. She related one incident which brought this home very forcibly, and showed the existence of the divine spark in every human being. This was a story of a disaster in one of the English mines. She said she had been appalled, in passing through the village, on hearing the foul and filthy language of the miners; in seeing how degraded they were, how they seemed to have entirely given themselves up to their animal appetites and passions; drinking, carousing, dissipating in those ways, which these men, toiling from twelve to fourteen hours a day, deluded themselves into thinking enjoyment. But there was an explosion in the mine, and a fire broke out below, and then these same men, apparently so

vile, so brutal, so selfish, so lost to all which we consider the redeeming elements of humanity, stood about the mine and actually fought with each other for the privilege of going down. One would say to another, "You have a wife and family; I have none; let me go!" What greater evidence could we have than this, that the divine spark is within each, and that it can and must be made to develop into a real human brotherhood.

Dr. Buck made a most able presentation of the relation of Theosophy to Grecian philosophy, and of Theosophy to modern science, showing how far superior, in many respects, are the teachings of Theosophy to those of modern science, and how Theosophy had antedated discoveries which have been recently verified by science.

Miss Muller made a strong presentation of the Christian aspect of Theosophy, showing how Theosophy was the only system of thought which placed woman upon the platform where she belongs—that of perfect equality with man. She paid her respects to St. Paul in not a very complimentary manner. Mrs. Cooper-Oakley made a most learned exposition of the relation of the seven principles of man to the macrocosm, and to the human soul as we find it upon this earth to-day.

As to the lesson of the Congress. One of those Masters whom it is the delight and the pleasure of Theosophists to serve, has said the one thing which Western civilization needed above all others was

tolerance. If any of us had been asked what we most needed, we would probably have answered knowledge, or wisdom, or justice. And yet this Being, who represents the very flower of human evolution, selected as that which humanity most needs to-day, a *tolerance* for each other's beliefs, and particularly for each other's religious beliefs. And this was the great lesson of the Congress. The fact that all the religions of the world were called together in a Christian country, and invited and permitted to state their beliefs freely and fully, and that these were listened to in a spirit of tolerance and a willingness to recognize the good in each, is a most hopeful sign of the times. And this Parliament of Religions has been brought about, as we believe, by the efforts of the Masters, working by and through the Theosophical Society. Twenty-five years ago, such a Congress would have been impossible. Or, if not that, it would have been unsuccessful, or would have broken up in a row, as did many such conventions in the early days of Christianity. But it is the continual hammering at the world which has been done by the Theosophical Society, and the teaching that there *are* common truths in all religions, and that men *are* all brothers, which has enabled this Congress to be held. The thousands who attended will take away to their homes something of the same spirit which prevailed during its sessions, where many heard, for the first time, the truths of these great religions, many of them older than Christianity, and many of them grander, purer and more philosophical.

This Congress was the entering wedge, the stepping stone, towards a wider dissemination of the real truth; an effort in the direction of correcting the gross errors and misconceptions which so pervert and corrupt Christianity. It has also taught people to do that which every Theosophist should make it his duty to do: to seek out the truths common to all religions. We have had enough fighting, enough blood-shed, enough enmity among men, arising from misconceptions of what true religion really is. These misconceptions we have to correct. We have to teach men how they have wandered away from the truths which all religions have in common, and to show them how each is trying, in different places and in different ways, to make mankind better, happier, purer and holier. And along these lines can all the religions of the world join hands and work for the elevation of humanity, the first step of which union has been taken in this the great World's Parliament of Religions.

There has been organized at the Headquarters in New York, a scheme for enabling all members of the Society to join a general quiz and correspondence class. Subjects for topical study will be assigned, correspondence carried on, questions answered and questions asked, and a general supervision over students exercised. Enquirers address W. Q. Judge, 144 Madison Ave., New York.

Brother Burnett, of Sacramento, spent several days with us this month; also Mrs. Kelsey, of Stockton,

Our Hindu Brother.

MR. D. H. DHARMAPALA, who has lately been with us, has been well known to most of the members of the Theosophical Society as an earnest Theosophist, giving most of his time to the work in Ceylon and India; and more recently, as the editor of the journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society.

On looking about for suitable representatives of the various faiths the Managers of the Parliament chose Mr. Dharmapala as the leading exponent of Buddhism. He went to London, where he spoke at the Blavatsky Lodge, and then, in company with Mrs. Besant, Miss Muller, and Professor Chakravarti, came on to New York, where he and Professor Chakravarti lectured to a crowded meeting of the Aryan Branch. The same evening, Mrs. Besant lectured before the "H. P. B." Branch at Harlem, to a large audience. On arriving in Chicago, Mr. Dharmapala was invited to speak on Buddhism in a leading Unitarian pulpit, which happened to be vacant that Sunday. His audience was so pleased with what he said, that he became, practically, the lion of liberal Christian society during his stay in Chicago. He lectured three or four times in Unitarian Churches, which were always overcrowded. At one lecture before the Chicago Branch, over eight hundred people were turned away.

With the exception of the Theosophical, probably no Congress attracted greater attention than that of the Buddhists.

At the close of the Parliament, Mr. Dharmapala came on to San Francisco. All the daily papers published long and favorable interviews. On the evening of his arrival, he addressed a crowded meeting of the Golden Gate Branch, of which the following are brief extracts:

"I speak to you as I speak to my own dear friends and brothers in my own country. It was some ten years ago that I joined the T. S., and I think it was about fourteen years ago that I first heard of the Society. What I heard made me give my closest attention to the subject, and the more I read of the Theosophical literature, the more I became fascinated with it, the more I was drawn nearer to the Founders of the Society. Then I read the "Occult World," and then some writings of my dear and revered teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, and then I thought that the Society opens up the inner vision of life, and I had better give my whole time to this great work. Then I joined the Society, and since 1884, I have given all my time to the interests of this great movement, and the result of my admission is that I stand before you to-day. From my home in Ceylon, I travelled about from village to village, from town to town, speaking to the people about the work of the Theosophical Society. From Ceylon, I went to India, and there I travelled over the greater portion of that large continent, everywhere finding a welcome, given simply because I was a Theosophist. There are no Buddhists in India; all are Brahmans; but they gave me a fraternal welcome, because they saw in me a member of the Society. Two and a half years I worked in India, and then came into correspondence with Dr. Barrows, the Chairman of the Parliament of Religions, and received his invitation; and I attended, and represented my own faith, as taught by Gautama Buddha. Those who have read the "Light of Asia" know of his life. Having finished that work, I came to see my Theo-

sophical brothers, and am indeed glad to see you all here.

"The Society has done enormous good in Ceylon and in India. It has given a new impulse to all people spiritually inclined. It gave a vitality to the dry bones of the old systems in India. Young men there were brought up under Western education in the colleges. Those who read Herbert Spencer, Tyndall and Huxley, gave up the old so-called superstitions and ancient faiths, and said, 'There is nothing in them, and the one thing to do is to study the materialistic philosophy of the Western thinkers.' Just when India was going to perdition, the Theosophical Society, with Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, came in time to save her from the materialistic grave. The Society has done enormous good in giving a healthy impulse to those yearning for spirituality. To study their own systems and to lead an altruistic life were the tidings Theosophy brought. Theosophy put into scientific form the beautiful truths of the old religions. Young men who did not care to lead a spiritual life found in the Theosophical literature a beautiful field for study, and then some of them gave up their worldly habits and took up the altruistic life, and now work in the interests of the Society."

He then spoke of the efforts of the Maha-Bodhi Society, of which he is Secretary, to regain the Temple of Buddha Gaya, which has been erected over the spot where Buddha received enlightenment. This temple is now in the hands of the Brahmans. It is the purpose of the Maha Bodhi Society to unite the Buddhists of all nations in an endeavor to recover this sacred shrine, and make it again a Buddhistic center. When this has been accomplished, they will establish there an international college, for the training of young men as missionaries.

Buddha's object was to emancipate human kind from the fetters of dogma and theology, and the establishment of this college is a great work.

Buddha taught that all progress is possible to the one who leads a pure life. One must be conscious that he is pure, and then all the hidden truths are revealed to him.

Therefore, Buddha always said before we can enter that path which leads to wisdom we must stand on the platform of a pure life. And then we may aspire to climb and reach the higher stages.

He then recited the Pancha Sila, and explained the pledge which every Buddhist takes at least once a day.

"You will be glad to hear," he said, "that the women's movement in Ceylon is making remarkable progress, and that is entirely due to an American woman, a Mrs. Higgins, who went there at the invitation of the Buddhists, sacrificing her position in America. She was connected with the postal department in Washington, but gave up her place and went to Ceylon; took up the work there, and is now working very hard indeed. She has sacrificed everything, and is giving her services free; working simply for love. We have now about forty schools established under the auspices of the Theosophical Society. During the last six years, Col. Olcott and Mr. Powell, who went from Los Angeles some years ago, and others, all Theosophists, have gone around from village to village, from town to town, preaching to the people the importance of educating their young children.

Under the auspices of the Society, more than forty schools have been opened, and a great impulse is being given to educate the boys and girls in Ceylon. There is a great future through the influence of the schools, and the American people can claim a large share in the help that has been given to elevate the people of Ceylon."

On Friday, October 6th, Brother Dharmapala, as he liked to be called, spoke in Santa Cruz to a crowded hall. A further stay was earnestly desired, but he was obliged to return to San Francisco Saturday night, in order to meet his Saturday engagements.

At three o'clock, on Sunday afternoon, he spoke in the Unitarian church, corner of Twenty-second and Capp streets, his subject being "Buddhism". Rev. Leslie Sprague, the pastor, presided. The church was crowded from the pulpit to the outside stairway. His words were listened to with rapt attention, and elicited many expressions of approval.

On Sunday evening, Mr. Dharmapala spoke at Scottish Hall to an interested and enthusiastic audience, his subject being, "Theosophy and its Relation to the Eastern Religions." Long before the hour appointed for the lecture the hall was crowded to the doors, and every inch of standing room was occupied. An overflow meeting was held at the Theosophical rooms near by. Our Buddhist brother was received with great applause by the audience, and he began by saying:

"I feel very much the cordial welcome I have received here, in New York, and

at the Chicago Parliament of Religions. I bear the warmest affection for the people of America: and the people of Ceylon and other countries bear the same affection to the people of this country, because of the freedom of opinion which they enjoy, and their love toward their fellow men. You enjoy a freedom which very few people on earth enjoy, in having a government based on Democratic principles; and we Buddhists, who base our faith on a system of religion which teaches the broad principles of Democracy, realize the situation that you are in, and we always wish the people of America success.

"Theosophy is just now engaging the attention of the thinking people of Asia, Europe and America. The Theosophical Society was formed with the object of studying the esoteric sciences and philosophies, and it asks every lover of Truth, in all nations and of all creeds, to come upon that platform and freely investigate the religions and philosophies of Asia. Asia is the home of religions. There Christianity, Buddhism, Brahmanism and all the other great religions took their rise. The study of these religions forms an important item just now, and the recent Parliament of Religions has shown, by example, the possibility of bringing together the different faiths, and presenting them to the intelligent mind."

The speaker then gave a summary of the ethical and philosophical teachings of the religions of Asia.

"There have been many misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Buddhism, but the one fact remains that this is to-day the religion of about four hundred and seventy-five millions of people. It was a protest against the priestcraft then prevailing in India, and an attempt to overcome the distrust and scepticism then running rampant there, and to replace it with peace and harmony. With the growth of knowledge and science, and with deeper study, scholars

are finding that the tenets of the philosophy, ethics and psychology promulgated by Buddha twenty-four centuries ago, are almost identical with the most modern discoveries of science, and the latest development of thought of to-day.

"The ethics taught by Christ and by Buddha are identical. Both taught the same love, the same gentleness, the same compassion. To the intelligent mind, the study of religions offers a vast field. Truth is one, and, just as the ocean receives the waters of all rivers, so Truth can receive all the *aspects* of truth found in all religions. Such study frees the mind from prejudice and dogmatism, and teaches one to be tolerant.

"Now comes the Theosophical Society which offers the broadest field for study, investigating all systems, taking the good there is in all religions. It presents, to the enlightened, intellectual world, what is best, and asks the inquiring student to accept what is good. It enforces no dogma, asks one to accept nothing on faith."

The speaker closed by saying:

"Theosophy will make a Christian a better Christian, a Brahman a better Brahman, a Buddhist a better Buddhist. Theosophy is the synthesis of all religions."

After the lecture, Mr. Dharmapala hurried to the crowded overflow meeting at Headquarters and addressed the people there for a few minutes.

On Monday afternoon, Mr. Dharmapala met the members of the Oakland Branch at the residence of Dr. Bowman. At eight o'clock in the evening he spoke in Hamilton Hall, Oakland, to an audience which packed the house to the doors, many being turned away. His subject was, "Man; his Mission on Earth." From the Oakland papers we cull the following:

"The audience was composed of the

best-known and most intellectual residents of Oakland.

"Man," said the speaker," according to Buddhism, is the culmination of evolution. He is supreme on this earth. A life of sensualism. Buddha says, is to be condemned. The one who leads such a life cannot comprehend great truths. His mind is obscured. The same is true of one who resigns himself to a life of pessimism. There is a correct medium between the two, which will lead to universal human love and the Brotherhood of man. Mercy and compassion were the teachings of Buddha. Six centuries later, Christ taught a religion of mercy and compassion to the Jews. But there was this difference between the results of the teachings—those of Buddha succeeded, those of Christ failed. The outcome has been twenty-four centuries of religious unity and peace in India, and eighteen centuries of intolerance and strife in Europe. The true religion is for a man to be true to himself and true to humanity; to do good to all; to be merciful and kind; to live purely. That is true religion, and that is man's true mission on earth."

At each meeting at which Mr. Dharmapala spoke, the hall was crowded to the doors; and though many came, doubtless, through mere curiosity, none left without feelings of deep respect.

On one occasion, while watching the dispersal of one of his audiences, he said: "Ah, all these people brought up without a knowledge of Karma! How much work you have to do here!"

Speaking of the work of the Pacific Coast Lecturer, he said: "Yes, that is good, but you ought to have twenty such lecturers." He was very enthusiastic over the work being done on this Coast, and frequently said, "Go on! Go on!"

On Tuesday, October 10th, Mr. Dharmapala left on the steamer Oceanic for Japan, where he goes in the interests of the Bodhi Society. He left with us a deep impression of his great kindness and brotherly spirit. Here again was an illustration of the fact that they who work for the Masters work for humanity. He often referred to the Masters in terms of the deepest reverence—the key-note to success was loyalty and devotion to Them.

Letters to a Student.—No. 7.

Dear Sir and Comrade:

YOUR "panacea" is known to me, 'and well; but "*perfect trust*," "*utter disregard of self*," "*divine carelessness*," and the rest of your formula if obtained in *reality*, would make an Adept. So it is evident that we have not got them.

Man has the power of choice. He can awaken the spiritual will or not, as he may choose. In the Secret Doctrine it says, the Higher Self is powerless *on this plane*, and may be mastered by the lower principles *on this plane*, unless the mind of man conquers these lower principles, attunes itself to those higher planes above it. They are *planes of force*. The body has *its* Samadhi, and every organ has its. That is, the trance or quiescence into which it must be thrown is, *to it*, what the higher Samadhi is to the higher Principles. And all this is effected by the generation and use of a dynamo-spiritual force, to be generated in the magnetic inner body and mind. Every

individual must grow himself, but the right growth of one helps all. Common sense is highly valued in occultism. Even learned students may err in their methods and are not authority.

Pardon the haste incidental to absence. I hope you continue well. I should not feel as you do about silence at Branch meetings, for each should have his turn, and due proportion of time to speak, as all views are in the All, and are useful as lessons.

Faternally,

J. Niemand, F. T. S.

Notes and Items.

THE THEOSOPHICAL LEAGUE has done some very excellent work this month. The members have been indefatigable in their works of charity. Several poor families were housed and fed. A number of sick were visited and cared for; prisons visited and supplied with reading matter; while words of encouragement were given to those weighted down by Karma.

Dr. Griffiths has organized two new branches this month—one at Redding and one at Marysville.

Public lectures in San Francisco, during the past month, have been: The Good Law, by E. B. Rambo; Theosophy, the guide to Human Happiness, by W. J. Walters; Theosophy, its Relation to the Eastern Religions, by Rev. H. Dharmapala; Duty, by Prof. Oettle, of Oakland; The World's Parliament of Religions, by Dr. J. A. Anderson; The Masters, by Abbott Clark.

A Secret Doctrine Class of about twenty members, has been recently organized in San Francisco, and is conducted by Abbott Clark. It meets every Sunday afternoon, from one to two, at Headquarters.

Mrs. Beane has been prostrated for a week by an acute attack of la grippe. Her place has been filled by one of our faithful young members, Miss Ann Bryce.

Mrs. Annie Besant and Professor Chakravarti arrived safely in London, and are now, probably, on their way to India, accompanied by Countess Wachtmeister.

Mrs. Besant will be accompanied, in her lecturing tour through India, by the Countess Wachtmeister, Colonel Olcott and Prince Harisinghji.

The members in Los Angeles are thoroughly awake, and the meetings are large and enthusiastic.

Brother Claude F. Wright of the New York Headquarters, is lecturing in the Central States.

Miss Ida Wright has been elected President of the Narada Branch, Tacoma, Washington.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Blodgett, of Seattle, have returned from their extended Eastern trip.

The attendance at the San Diego public meetings is on the increase.

Alaya Branch of Santa Ana, is holding prosperous meetings in a public place.

OBITUARY.

MRS. MARY E. GUNN, F. T. S., of San Francisco, closed this life October 4th, 1893, aged 54 years.

Mrs. Gunn has been in the Theosophical Society about five years, being a charter member of Excelsior Branch, San Jose. Hers was naturally an intuitive mind. In her home she was a faithful wife, a loving mother, a kind and real sister. She was a true friend and always to be found on the side of the oppressed. She was the champion of truth, and loyal to her convictions. She will be missed by a large circle of friends.

S. A. H.

Pacific Coast Lecturer's Movements

Redding, Cal.

A GENERAL LECTURE was given Sept. 29th. On Sept. 30th, the "Redding" Branch was organized with five charter members, as follows:

Ruggles Bostwick, President; Mrs. S. S. England, Vice-President; Mr. W. P. England, Secretary; Mrs. L. M. Bostwick, Mrs. Mattie J. Deming.

Theosophical books were ordered for the nucleus of a Branch library. The *Path* was subscribed for, and work begun at once in a way that promises good results.

At the request of citizens, who offered to make all preparations, a second lecture was given in Redding, Oct. 2nd, to a much larger audience than attended the first. The town was agog with interest in Theosophy.

Marysville, Cal.

A lecture given in Marysville, Oct. 11th, was well attended. A lecture given here last year created much interest, and several persons began the study of Theosophy. The greatly increased attendance this year demonstrated the Theosophical maxim: "No good effort is ever lost, but in time produces its corresponding effect."

"Sravaka" Branch was formed. All the charter members are young men and students, J. W. Rupert is President, and Wm. T. Henn, Secretary and Treasurer. Among the number are three high degree Masons and the son of a clergyman. A Branch Library is already started, and systematic meetings and study begun. Press reports were long and commented favorably upon the new Branch. Bro. Wm. T. Henderson contributed much to the success of the work at Marysville by his presence and co-operation.

Chico, Cal.

Two lectures were given in K. of P. Hall, Oct. 7th and 8th. Seven hundred leaflets were distributed.

Editorial.

THEOSOPHY is the religion of science, and the science of religion. It combines all the natural logic and common sense of science (without any of its blind materialism) with the moral force and spiritual power of religion (without any of its superstition.) It is religion without creeds or superstition; it is science without negations or materialism. In the religion of to-day; the emotional nature and the spiritual aspirations are cultivated or excited, at the expense of the intellectual nature and common sense. In the science of to-day, the intellect and analyzing faculties are cultivated to an enormous degree, at the expense of the nobler moral and spiritual nature. Science is divorced from religion, and intellect from spirituality. Theosophy is the union of science and religion; the combination of reason and aspiration; the marriage of intellect and intuition.

By presenting the fundamental moral and spiritual truths underlying the world's great religions, Theosophy will reconcile all sects, religions, nations and races under a common system of ethics. No one is any the wiser for accepting anything on faith and authority. No such thing as vicarious progress is possible. Theosophy does not proselyte. It educates; not converts. It is not fanatical in anything; but is reformatory in everything. It appeals to a man's reason and intelligence, to his experience and intuition, and to these only, for support. A. B. C.

Nature's Universal Law

Of cause and effect is called in Sanscrit Karma. It is the first law of force, formulated by Sir Isaac Newton, viz.: "Action and reaction are equal and in opposite directions." Karma means action; action causes reaction. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." "As ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again." There is no escape from the natural consequences of any thought, word or deed. Pure thoughts, gentle speech and deeds of duty, naturally produce har-

mony, peace and progress. Selfish thoughts, harsh speech and evil deeds are causes which bring about the misery which mankind endures. There is no escape from the suffering except, as Sam Jones would say, to "quit your meanness." Man will attain peace only when he has quit creating bad Karma long enough for the effects to have worked themselves out, and have been replaced by "nothing but grace and good." An old Hindu verse says: "There is no cleft in the rock, there is no depth in the sea, there is no spot on earth or in the heavens, where a man can hide from the consequences of his acts, be they good or evil." A. B. C.

Among the Coast Branches.

Los Angeles Branch, Los Angeles.

D. R. G. F. MOHN, Secretary, writes: The audiences here continue large in numbers, and the questions handed in show deep interest and earnestness. We have with us now another earnest worker, Bro. H. A. Gibson, of Tacoma, Wash. The *Daily Herald* gives us good reports. On the whole, we are getting along nicely, though we have no small struggle financially. Books and leaflets are continually going out. The Branch meetings and Friday evening discussion class are also doing well, and the attendance increasing. Several persons contemplate joining the Branch. Our new syllabus of lectures for the coming two months will soon make its appearance. Trusting in the Masters, we hope to be eminently successful.

In a recent number of the *Path*, it is said: "Los Angeles T. S. has, through no small struggle by the devoted ones, secured large, airy rooms, centrally located, and making a lecture room seating seventy or eighty people. It is delightful to hear that it has been named Blavatsky Hall, the very term to choose for a region where so much life and work have been paralyzed by small suspicions of H. P. B. and unintelligent carping on her personal peculiarities. There will be no such paralysis if the now active Los Angeles Branch keeps her name and im-

age well to the fore, imitating her devotion instead of pecking at her character, and leaving the disaffected alone to revel in their grumbling. All things look promising."

Wieland, Amador County, Cal.

Mrs. Lulu H. Rogers writes: I am pleased to be able to report to you at least the usual amount of progress in Theosophical work in our correspondence band. The publication of my last report in the *PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST* was the means of adding several to our number who wrote me at once offering help.

This system of correspondence is much appreciated by Fellow's living far from any possible social intercourse with their Fellows. We have added to the original plan of exchange of letters that of an interchange of pamphlets and the smaller treatises on Theosophical subjects. The epitomes of work done in the H. P. B. Class, sent by Miss Brockman are thus exchanged and read by many. Those who have Theosophical literature among our number are willing and glad to help others by the loan of books. Since my last report to you of June 12th, I have written thirty letters in my regular correspondence with unattached Fellow's and twelve to non-members who are interested and inquiring about Theosophy. In this latter work I have several able and willing helpers among our unattached members, who are warmly interested in it. I am convinced that this portion of the work is destined to aid greatly in disseminating a knowledge of Theosophy and I wish that it might be undertaken even more extensively in other parts of the country. I have letters from states as far east as Missouri and Colorado, as well as from all parts of the Pacific Coast.

Dyana Branch, East Los Angeles, Cal.

The former Secretary, Miss Stella W. Hart, was obliged to resign, on account of removal from the city, and Miss Bess Aylsworth has been appointed to fill the vacancy.

Santa Cruz Branch.

Mrs. L. A. Russell, Secretary, writes: By special permission of the Executive Committee of America, we have changed our name from Bandhu to Santa Cruz Theosophical Society. We have rented a hall for Sunday evening meetings, and there is a gradual increase in the attendance. Our regular Branch meetings are still held every Thursday, at eight o'clock P. M. We have initiated three new members this month. Mrs. Littlefield, Sr., a Member at Large here, holds meetings for inquirers every Thursday afternoon; the attendance is from fifteen to twenty. Dharmapala's audience here was too large for the hall; many were turned away. He made a very good impression, and all the papers gave full reports.

Notice to Branch Secretaries.

It is requested that every Branch Secretary on the Coast send to THE PACIFIC THEOSOPHIST a notice of the place, day and hour of holding all public meetings. This will be printed for the benefit of travelling Theosophists.

Brother George Leitch spent several days here, on his way from Seattle to Los Angeles. He is now making a tour of the San Joaquin valley, and sowing Theosophy on the way.

Book Reviews.

Japanese Proverbs.*

THIS little volume is one which ought to be in the libraries of all who love the quaint and philosophical. It is a collection of proverbs of the Japanese which but once more illustrates the common ties binding all men together. The manners, customs and even the thinking of these Eastern people seem to us so unlike ours in the West that one is almost startled to find that they have arrived at identical conclusions with us through what appears to be such differing experiences. Not only is the result

the same, but the language when literally translated makes use of the same words, and more striking still of identical metaphor. Thus "Physician, heal thyself," becomes "The son of a good physician may die in illness;" and the root of all evil" is rendered, "Gold is the greatest enemy in the world." "From a married couple's troubles even a dog will flee," "Too much is as bad as not enough," To the Jaundiced all is yellow," "At the gate of a widow gossips will gather," "The praising customer never buys," "Repay malice with kindness," etc., are all English sayings in another guise. The book ought to have a liberal sale, as it is just such things which bring one into nearer contact with the real life of a people than an hundred books of travel. J. A. A.

*Japanese Proverbs. For sale by the author Ota Masayoshi, Box 1956, San Francisco Price 75 cents

Death, A Delusion.*

A little volume giving an evidently truthful account of certain phenomena of spiritualism, which can be verified by any investigator. "While it may to the author and to others indicate that death is an illusion, still, no amount of such phenomena prove anything to the philosophic enquirer except that there are forces and intelligences both in nature and in the embodied soul unsuspected by Western science. Mere phenomena prove nothing unless they support a reasonable hypothesis, and until spiritualists bring forward a philosophy which explains not only these phenomena but such ethical questions as the appalling injustices which attend birth—to use one out of many arguments—the Theosophist must still decline to believe that the divine Soul within man either finds it necessary or desirable to prove its continued existence by turning tables bottom side up or even writing platitudes as its "communications." J. A. A.

*Death a Delusion; J. Page Hopps. Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., Paternoster Square, London