



American Theosophist

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The decision to establish this magazine was not a sudden one. Since taking up the work of lecturing on Theosophy three years ago I have constantly felt the need of "a publication devoted to the teaching of elementary Theosophy." There are excellent periodicals for students, *The Theosophist*, of Adyar, India, the *Theosophical Review*, of London, and others, and in this country *The Messenger*, *The Word*, and *Fragments* but, so far as I know, there is nothing giving especial attention to elementary teaching and designed to meet the necessities of those who know little or nothing of the philosophy. An important work in a ripe field awaits such a publication. As city after city has been left behind in the lecture work, many hundreds of people, who have been temporarily interested by hearing a few lectures and reading a few books, drop back into the old rut. While all have probably received at least something that will remain it is only the very few who have become so deeply interested that they take up the study systematically. To keep in touch not only with those, but also with the majority who have attended the lectures, and retain the interest that has been aroused, by reaching them regularly with matter similar to that which first attracted their attention, seems well worth while.

It is an interesting fact that when people come a number of times to hear a lecturer, and become interested in his method of presentation, they will buy his published works in preference to the much superior books of far abler authors. It is this desire for more from somebody they have heard that makes such a periodical possible; and the number of subscriptions handed in by the Albany audience, upon the announcement of the future appearance of this publication being made, proves that the magazine has before it a field of genuine usefulness.

While it is the mission of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST to do elementary work, and give especial attention to the needs of young students and the general public, it is hoped that it will prove to be of genuine interest to the older students. It will make a specialty of Theosophical news from the different countries and will have articles from time to time from various contributors that will be of value to all who are seeking occult enlightenment.

L. W. ROGERS.

SCIENCE PROVING OCCULT HYPOTHESIS

It is most interesting to observe how science is steadily confirming the teachings of occultism. The more science learns about physical matter the more reasonable does the Theosophical hypothesis become. People who are skeptical about spiritual facts used to say that as consciousness could not exist without a body, as there could not be life apart from matter, and as matter must occupy space, the notion that human beings survived bodily death was merely the result of a longing for immortality. It was held that such a belief was not even within the limits of probability. But within the last few years science has done wonders in proving that our conceptions of matter are wholly erroneous. Professor J. J. Thompson's experiments proved beyond question that the supposed ultimate atom is a complex body composed of countless "corpuscles" and that what science had been regarding as an indivisible particle of matter is really a miniature universe with its corresponding dimensions. Lenard has given to these component parts of the atom the name of "dynamides" and has made calculations from which it appears that the proportion of matter to space in what has been called the ultimate atom is at least as little as one to one million! With nearly the whole of what we call matter having been shown to be electric force the liberal wing of the scientific army, led by Professor Thompson and Sir Oliver Lodge, is beginning to enquire whether the whole of matter cannot be reduced to force. Experimental investigation is being hotly pushed and with every new discovery the conservatives lose ground. But whatever the final issue may be research has gone far enough already to revolutionize the long accepted ideas of matter. Even if we look at it from the ground of the conservatives, matter, as we are accustomed to regard it, almost ceases to exist, and the so-called solid is only apparently solid. If we apply Lenard's calculations to the human body, for example, it would show the actual amount of ponderable matter to be so little as to be almost imperceptible, and prove the occult declaration, that the particles of the body are separated by space as the planets are, to be scientific truth. And so we seem to have arrived at the point where we may say, with the endorsement of even the conservative scientists, that the life and consciousness of each one of us is functioning through a body composed of the merest grain of ponderable matter; while the liberal school declares, in the language of Professor Bigelow, of the University of Michigan, that logical deductions from the experimental evidence so far obtained show that we may "have a universe of energy in which matter has no necessary part."

THE THEOSOPHICAL STANDARD OF BROTHERHOOD

Young members of the Theosophical Society will have observed that of the three objects of the Society the forming of a nucleus of universal brotherhood is mentioned first, and will recall that when they became members somebody explained to them that this was the only shadow of a creed the Society had and that an acceptance of the principle of brotherhood was the only thing required as a qualification for membership. Here, then, is evidently the heart of the Theosophical movement—brotherhood; the one thing of all things that cannot be overlooked or neglected, if Theosophy

is to be a living thing to us and not an empty skeleton used for intellectual gymnastics.

Intellectual development is a necessary thing and a most desirable thing, when balanced with the essence of brotherhood, and a dangerous thing when it is not. The wise Theosophist will acquire all possible knowledge, will studiously search the literature of occultism that he may know as much as possible of nature's laws and processes, that he may comprehend his own evolution. But he will also carefully develop the heart qualities as he thus advances. He will not forget that to propagate the principles of brotherhood is the essential thing and that his part in it is of transcendent importance to his evolutionary progress. As he moves through the routine of daily duties the background of his activities will be the thought that the realization of his brotherhood with all that lives is the goal he seeks, and he will endeavor to get into sympathetic touch with the lives of those about him. He will play the role of brother to his neighbors and acquaintances, seeking every opportunity to be helpful and scrupulously avoiding every antagonism or criticism. He will long remember the good and quickly forget the ill, and make an earnest effort to win the friendship of every individual life he knows, from the most exalted characters he encounters to the stray dogs on the street.

The essence of brotherhood is the *realization* of the unity of all life, not the intellectual assertion that it is true, and such realization simply cannot come to any being who harbors pride, cultivates envy, enjoys criticism, and rolls gossip under his tongue as a sweet morsel. These are the materials of which the wall separation is built and every thought along that line is a dagger-thrust at the heart of brotherhood.

A CASE OF SPIRIT IDENTITY

By S. E. WINSTON.

When I read of the latest work done by the Society for Psychical Research, and like organizations, it seems to me the only thing that doubts Thomases can continue to question is the identity of those from whom the communications come from the other side. I do not know how well Professor Hislop may be satisfied that he is really talking to Dr. Hodgson (by the way isn't this the same Hodgson that made the skeptical report about Madame Blavatsky?) nor what he relies upon for identification of his departed friend, but there have been some instances where, at least so it seems to me, identity has been established on as good evidence as anybody can ask for. Such a case was well known to the acquaintances of W. J. Stillman, the journalist and artist who was a friend and associate of Emerson, Lowell, Holmes, and other literary lights of that day.

But first let us take a look at some of the objections raised by people who see no grounds for accuracy in psychic research and think that everything yet discovered in that field can be explained by disordered nerves, with a certain amount of hysteria. How, they say, can we know that a person getting messages by automatic writing is not furnishing them himself, although he may not be conscious of it? And if he writes something that he is ignorant of and the person to whom the message is sent recognizes it as dealing with facts known only to himself and the dead, how do we know that it is not telepathy? And if even we admit that consciousness exists independent of physical matter how do we

know that the communication comes from our dead friend? How can we possibly identify a person we cannot see or hear?

Well, when we come to think about it, we do identify people constantly in business affairs without seeing them. Our friend may be five hundred miles away, talking over a telephone. The wires may be in such bad condition that we cannot recognize the voice but there are other things that fully satisfy us about his identity. We also identify absent people by their handwriting and by their peculiarities of expression. We cannot reasonably expect any better methods of identification from the other side than we accept here. The motive is a thing also to be considered. If a man here impersonates another by talking over a telephone, or by imitating his handwriting, he has some motive for it. People do not ordinarily go about trying to mislead others concerning their identity unless there is some purpose back of the fraud. Here it may be to get possession of another's money, or property, or in some way to gain at another's expense. But what would be the motive, or the gain, in deceiving the psychic investigator? Granting that it might be occasionally done as a playful prank, as such things are done here sometimes, still that can hardly be the regular order of things. Does it not require more credulity to believe that in psychic investigations covering many years there is always somebody at hand to impersonate somebody else than to believe that, as a rule, communications are what they claim to be? I am referring to communications got by investigators of good sense and judgment, and under conditions where there is little or no chance for fraud, and not to the work of the many tricksters who get audiences of credulous people to pay an admission fee to see phosphorescent lights in a dim room and hear some hysterical girl declare that a thinly disguised masculine face looking out of the cabinet is "dear old Grandma!"

Unless the doubters can find something besides telepathy to rely upon for an explanation of messages received by automatic writing, slate-writing and in other ways, their occupation will be gone pretty soon, for there are too many cases where telepathy explains nothing. This is true of the Stillman case and those who desire to have it in the author's own words will find it detailed at length in his "Autobiography of a Journalist." But to the story.

It appears that Stillman had a friend whose daughter found herself, much to her surprise, developing the power to write automatically. Having heard of the matter and desiring to prove for himself whether there was anything of fact in such alleged communications, Stillman got the consent of his friend to have a seance with the girl. He had previously been studying art in London and was about to return. Immediately upon beginning the seance the youthful medium was taken possession of by an entity claiming to be Turner. Stillman asked his questions *mentally*, requesting Turner to write his name. The only reply was an emphatic shake of the head. The young artist then asked if he would give some advice on painting, remembering that the great painter had volunteered it some time before his death. This was met with another decided negative. Feeling convinced that he was foolishly wasting his time and that nothing would come of further effort Stillman declared the seance at an end. But the young girl sat silent and apparently helpless. Then, after a moment, she slowly rose with the air of decrepitude, crossed the room, took a lithograph from the wall and, bringing it back, went through the pantomime of stretching a sheet of paper on a drawing-board, sharpening a pencil, tracing the outline, selecting a water-color pencil and the wash-

ing-in of a drawing, broadly. Then, with pencil and pocket handkerchief *began taking out the lights*. "Do you mean to say that Turner rubbed out his lights?" asked the incredulous artist. The answer was an emphatic affirmative. Stillman then asked if the central passage of sunlight and shadow through rain in the well-known drawing, "Llanthony Abbey," was done in that way and was answered by another emphatic affirmation.

These declarations, were all that was needed to confirm Stillman's suspicion that whatever else this phenomenon might be it was no communication from Turner. So sure was he that Turner could not have worked in that way that he gave up the matter in disgust and abruptly closed the seance.

Six weeks later Stillman was in London and calling upon Ruskin one day told him of the experience. Ruskin declared the contrariness of the medium in the early part of the sitting to be entirely characteristic of Turner. The drawing in question was in Ruskin's possession and eagerly it was brought down for examination. After close scrutiny the young artist and the great art critic agreed that, beyond dispute, the drawing had been done in the way described.

THE ADYAR BULLETIN

The *Adyar Bulletin* has been established by President Annie Besant and the initial number, January, gives evidence of its value in the Theosophical field. Its primary purpose is to furnish a medium of intelligence between the unattached members and the headquarters of the Society. Speaking of the isolation of members-at-large, Mrs. Besant says:

"How little do we know, for instance, respecting our members in South America, or in South or West Africa, in Egypt, in Persia, in China. Yet they are scattered everywhere, animated by the same hopes, the same truths, the same ideals, and we ought to know each other and to exchange greetings now and then."

The *Bulletin* will be issued monthly. The January number contains newsy letters from correspondents in various countries and notes of travel by Mrs. Besant in her usual eloquent style. Such a publication will be a boon to the widely scattered unattached members. It may be obtained by others by sending the equivalent of two shillings sixpence to the office of the *Theosophist*, Adyar, Madras, India, or to any agent of the *Theosophist* in America.

THE advice to be sure you're right and then go ahead is good enough, but the trouble with some people is that they take so much time getting ready to go ahead that they never go at all.

IT is curious how little misfortunes come in combinations. By an odd coincidence two of the contributors from whom articles for this number of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST were expected fell ill at the moment which prevented the work being done.

News of things Theosophical will be thankfully received from our friends everywhere. It should reach the office by the 15th of the month to be *certain* of appearing in the following issue, but a later date is better than none. The magazine will be mailed about the first of the month.

HINTS TO YOUNG STUDENTS.

The very young student of occultism—he who is just beginning to learn that there is a deeper meaning in life than he had suspected,—who has but recently come into contact with Theosophy's explanation of the purpose of life and the method of human evolution,—often has the idea that there is some particular bit of information which, if he can but secure it, will enable him to quickly develop clairvoyance and rise into the possession of great spiritual power. He has an impression that there are certain formulas which the teachers can hand over to him, if they will, that can be used as a key to unlock the storehouse of occult knowledge. If the beginner would make rapid progress in evolving the divine powers within him he should put aside such notions and realize at once that all any teacher can do for him is to point out the way in which he can help himself and that knowledge of the path to be followed will come to him in exact proportion to the earnestness of his desire to find it. He should remember that every day his slowly growing wisdom and spiritual strength are being tested by the little affairs of his daily life. It is extremely important for him to study the literature of occultism, to read and learn all he possibly can from those who have information to impart, but something more is necessary. As he acquires these spiritual truths he must strive to live them, to shape his daily life by them. Fortunate indeed is he who can make his inner spiritual development keep pace with his intellectual acquirement of the facts. To discover a spiritual truth and then make no use of it in the evolution of one's character is quite as bad, if not worse, than to remain in ignorance of it; for responsibility is measured by opportunity.

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The idea that anybody can put the beginner quickly into possession of spiritual power is as erroneous as it would be to suppose that by handing him a diploma a university president can give a young man an education. This notion that Theosophy has occult wealth to be handed over in a lump sum—to be conferred instead of earned—is usually accompanied with the desire to be conspicuously helpful, to quickly undertake some work, the benevolence of which is at least equaled by its dramatic method: to become one of the invisible helpers who has the power to work in his astral body during the hours when the physical body is asleep. That is a most laudable ambition and a worthy thing to attain. But the point that should be understood about it is that the way to it is through actual spiritual development and not by the immediate opening of astral sight. The first step toward being an invisible helper is to become a visible helper, to cultivate the desire to help by exercising our benevolent impulses on the human beings about us. When we have actually become of service on the physical plane, when we have utilized the opportunities of our daily life to assist others, and have thus proven that the thing we really desire is to be helpful and not merely to possess occult power, we shall have taken the first necessary step in the realization of our ambition.

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If the beginner is anxious to know how rapidly he is getting on in spiritual development he has only to watch his daily life. His first work is to get control of his physical body and make it obey his will. Therefore if he can see that he is growing less irritable, that trifling things are losing their power to annoy him, that he is not so easily thrown off

his balance as he used to be, he knows that his will is becoming established in its power to direct the physical and astral mechanism through which it functions. It is always to the little things, rather than to great events, that he should look as tests of the new powers he is developing. His fitness to pass the portal, later in his evolution, toward which he is now directing his first uncertain steps, is not determined by one supreme occasion, like an examination for entering some university, so much as it is being determined by the thoughts and desires of his daily life; and it is the little things, the small problems of the daily life that are hourly testing his judgment, his sincerity, his courage and his patience. Unless he begins to be successful in meeting these he cannot hope to become even a candidate for greater tests of his powers.

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There are many ways in which the young student in occultism can begin the cultivation of the character qualities he must possess before he can go far in his efforts at conscious evolution,—scores of things he can do in the line of character building that will lay an enduring foundation for the spiritual power he would attain; and let it be well understood that all such work done in the beginning will save him much trouble, and give him great satisfaction, later on. The reward for his pains will be rich indeed. He who erects a fine building upon a weak and illy-constructed foundation is no more foolish than he who does careless work in the foundation he lays for his temple not built with hands. Every flaw in the foundation is a menace for the future; and is not that precisely why the testing is so constant and continuous? The things that ceaselessly test us, that sometimes appear to bar our further progress, should be as welcome as the ring of the inspector's hammer on the car-wheels before one's train leaves the station, or as the test of plumb and square in the house-builder's operations.

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An excellent thing for one to do when he is first coming into a knowledge of Theosophy, and is beginning to seek the way forward by its guiding light, is to ask himself in what particular traits he is lacking and then earnestly set about acquiring them. It is usually not difficult to find some weak points. Is there sound moral courage? Does he ever fear to express an opinion that he feels ought to be expressed, but which he knows to be unpopular? Is he firm in defense of the truth, as he sees it, or does he take refuge in silence when he instinctively feels that he should speak? Moral courage he must have and he should begin to inspect his daily conduct and seek to strengthen his character in this direction. And so he may run down the scale of his virtues and his frailties, critically examining each point, until he comes to things we usually consider as of no importance. Is he careless about the waste of time? Is he only half awake to the value of every hour of his waking consciousness? Has he begun to realize that the average man fritters away in an aimless sort of fashion by far the larger part of his physical lifetime, and makes but correspondingly feeble progress, instead of which he could, if he would, so use that wasted time that it would count tremendously in quickening his evolution? If he does understand that fact he will begin to take account of his waking hours and ask what he has to show for them. He will scrupulously cultivate the habits of promptness and punctuality. If he has an appointment at a certain hour he will not arrive fifteen minutes later, nor five minutes later. If he has letters

requiring replies he will not permit them to lie about unanswered awaiting the vague and uncertain time when he happens to feel like writing. Among his earliest lessons should be this fact: that procrastination is not only "the thief of time" but also of other people's time and that responsibility for careless conduct by no means ends with his personal loss. In many directions he will find opportunities, if he seeks them, to strengthen his character and perfect his armor against the coming day of a mighty conflict. Great things are possible only to strong souls and it is from the trivial events of daily life that strength is won. Until we have become masters of the small there is nothing great awaiting us.

VEGETARIANISM

It is with a feeling that vegetarianism deserves to be better understood that it has been decided to give it a department in the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST. Comparatively little attention has been paid to this subject in occult literature, and yet both on account of the important part it plays in the purification of the physical body and because of its humanitarianism it should have the most careful consideration.

There is the utmost need of exact information about the properties of various foodstuffs, their value as body-builders, and their general and specific physiological effects. Many persons who earnestly desire to avoid flesh as a food have made the effort to become vegetarians only to abandon it after a year or two because they found their health deteriorating and their physical vigor disappearing. When they believed it had finally become a choice between returning to the old diet or losing good health they wisely gave up the experiment. There are doubtless some rare cases in which a vegetarian diet is not possible,—cases in which the physical heredity is such that it would be unwise to adopt it. But they are probably very rare and there is every reason to believe that in the great majority of cases where failure has occurred,—where the physical strength did not keep up to the usual mark—the difficulty was a lack of knowledge about food.

Perhaps there are few subjects about which so many fantastic and fanatical ideas have been grouped as about vegetarianism. When the reaction against using the flesh of animals as a food set in it moved many to the other extreme and a cry was raised against all animal products. The majority of the earlier vegetarian restaurants operated in the United States were directed by, or took their ideas from, an organization that held such extreme views on the subject that even dairy products were tabooed. The result of such a course soon proved too much for even the vitality of fanaticism and a modification was introduced. Other vegetarian cults, with mighty enthusiasm and small judgment, put forth the edict that man should live upon nothing more earthly than fruit and nuts. Naturally enough their style of existence did not last long and while it did last was of no particular benefit, except to the bank account of the doctors. Then there was the cult that rejected everything but cereals and others that refused to have anything cooked. Everybody seemed to be looking for a method of subsistence that differed from everything else in vogue but nobody appeared to search for a sane and scientific diet.

It is well enough known that there are certain elements required to sustain the body and keep it up to its normal condition of vigor, and that

unless these are supplied good health cannot be maintained. It is also quite commonly known that all these elements are to be found in the vegetables, grains and nuts and that experiments among athletes and soldiers have again and again shown that meat is not a necessary factor in strength and endurance. But it is not well understood *what* vegetables are necessities and which are of little value nor what kinds of food one must chiefly rely upon, when he discards meat, to act as a reliable substitute for it. As a result of this lack of information we frequently find our vegetarian friends dining upon a spread of generous proportions, the deceptive bulk of which may contain less than two per cent of body-building materials! Of course vegetables are most excellent food but alone they are not sufficient. A physical body of a given size requires, among other things, a certain amount of albumens. *It must have them*, and one cannot possibly consume enough vegetable matter to supply them.

Now, while a vegetarian need not be either a physician or a scientist or a food expert to live in health and comfort, he does require a knowledge in the rough of food values and how to select with intelligence the things required to sustain life, and it is the intention to discuss these subjects in every number of this magazine. It is hoped that the information given, drawn partly from experience and partly from those who have an expert's knowledge of the subject, will prove to be of practical value to those who desire to enjoy life without taking life.

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Vegetarianism is not a Theosophical dogma. There are Theosophists who are good vegetarians and there are good Theosophists who are not vegetarians. Vegetarianism is important but freedom and tolerance are more important.

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Vegetarianism is for those whose conscience revolts against animal slaughter and for those who have determined to purify the physical body even though it may cause some inconvenience. Nothing whatever is to be won without effort.

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The time will come when feasting upon the bodies of animals will be regarded with the same horror with which we now look upon cannibalism.

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A very good way to begin vegetarianism is to first give up meat and continue fish and the various sea foods for some months. Among the vegetables peas, beans and lentils come nearest to being substitutes for flesh but some physicians who have made a special study of foods do not recommend their use after one is well settled in vegetarianism. Milk is doubtless the nearest approach to a perfect food, not a thing to be regarded as equal to meat but in every way its superior. Rice cooked exclusively in milk is highly recommended, while "cottage cheese" and other milk products are excellent.

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One of the mistaken notions about vegetarianism is that it necessarily restricts one to a very few articles of diet. But if only flesh foods are dropped, the flesh of living things,—and that is the kind of vegetarianism the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST stands for—there is a bewildering variety of food remaining. The trouble is that people are so used to making meat the center of their dietary world that they are at first confused by the idea of excluding it. But with the first awkwardness past they discover that a never-ending variety of food can be had without any kind of meat. A

little thought and ingenuity will soon show that there is really no difficulty in abandoning the savage customs of our barbarian ancestors.

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The following recipes may be used as meat substitutes, since they contain at least 10% of albumens. Rice, or any cereal in fact, when cooked in water contains about 2% of albumen or body building material. When cooked wholly in milk it contains 10%.

RIZ AU LAIT.

1 cup rice; 1 quart milk; 1 tablespoon sugar; ½ teaspoon salt. Wash the rice carefully. Put all ingredients into a double boiler (have plenty of water in the lower part of the cooking dish, so you will not have to watch it.) After the milk, etc., reaches the boiling point set it on the back of the stove to cook slowly for four hours. If you use gas, turn it as low as possible,—merely keeping it at the boiling point is sufficient.

This is excellent either cold or hot. It makes very delicious rice pudding. For this purpose, add another quart of milk, 1 beaten egg, 1 cup sugar, or more if you like it very sweet, and cinnamon or other flavoring. Pour into a baking dish. Place on the top, slices of buttered bread covered with cinnamon and sugar. Bake about an hour. When done it should not be milky when you stick a knife into it. Equally palatable served hot or cold.

VEGETABLE FRY.

12 oz. rice; 8 oz. lentils; 4 onions sliced and chopped; 1 handful chopped celery; 2 teaspoonfuls curry powder; 1 teaspoon salt; 2 oz. butter or oil. Place all ingredients in a double boiler with enough water to cover, and cook, adding more water if necessary. It should be quite dry when finished. Stir in the butter or oil and then turn out into a dish to get cold. When stiff, cut into slices and fry.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[Questions for this department should reach the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST before the 15th of the month. Those not thought to be of general interest will be answered by mail if the necessary postage is enclosed for the reply.]

"Why cannot the spiritual evolution be continued in the invisible world instead of returning here for reincarnation?"

Answer: Spiritual evolution does continue, but the lessons being learned are not the lessons that are acquired in physical life, and until the lessons which the physical plane can teach have been learned there remains the necessity for reincarnation. Each plane has its particular purpose in evolution, as various books have their various purposes in a schoolroom. We would not think of asking why a pupil cannot as well get an understanding of mathematics from a book on grammar, as from one on the science of numbers; or of asking why, when he has finished a term at school and began the summer's vacation, he cannot somehow become a graduate without returning again to his books. There are qualities for the evolution of which no plane but the physical furnishes the necessary environment.

"As to being vegetarians, are we not to some degree obliged to kill off the animals to prevent them crowding us out? Wouldn't they overrun the earth if unmolested by human beings?"

Answer: As nearly all the animals we kill are carefully reared for the express purpose of being slaughtered the plea that we are obliged to kill them in self defense is rather a lame one. Even in the depth of the wilderness, where the wild beasts are many times the human population, the latter is never "crowded out." We are continually being frightened by things we imagine would happen if we should pursue a different course than the established one. But when we enter upon the new course we usually find that our bogie-men were only shadows. Nature can always be relied upon to maintain the proper balance. An illustration of animals

becoming serious pests to a country is the case of the rabbits in Australia, and this was the result of men thoughtlessly introducing these animals into an environment where their propagation in vast numbers became possible. No doubt nature will remedy even that blunder in time. At one time a large number of anxious people got the notion that unless something were done to regulate the increase of the human race it would ultimately crowd itself to death, and Malthus became famous. But looking back now we can see that they worried over shadows and wasted a deal of energy for nothing. One might suppose, to think of the freedom of hawks and owls, that there is no reason why they should not multiply until the sky would be alive with them; and yet, although we pay no attention to the inhabitants of the air they give us little trouble. It is not by our fears that we should determine our conduct, but by our conscience.

"If, as Theosophy teaches, the body is constantly wearing out and being rebuilt with new matter, and the soul is immortal, why do we grow old?"

Answer: We do not grow old. It is only the physical body that ages and this is because, while it is true that new matter is being constantly built into it, the life forces being put forth by the ego vary during the existence of the physical body. Up to a certain point it is like an in-coming tide; then the ego begins to withdraw his forces, to turn them inward, and the physical body gradually loses the power it once possessed to reject the worn-out matter; and while the process of rejecting the old and accepting the new does not cease it is no longer vigorous enough to prevent worn-out matter preponderating. Hence the condition we call old age. But the ego, the self, is always young. We may look old to others but we never seem old to ourselves.

"What one book at a low price would you recommend to a beginner in the study of Theosophy?"

Answer: If the beginner is so unfortunate that he must restrict himself to one book perhaps there is no small volume that contains more of practical value than "Man and His Bodies," by Annie Besant. It is a book that no new student can well afford to overlook if he means to study occultism instead of read a little about it for amusement.

"The separation of families in the next world is not a pleasant thought. Will there be a final meeting?"

Answer: When the teachings of Theosophy are rightly understood it will be seen that the desire to be with our friends and relatives is the guarantee that we shall be with them. Temporary separations are inevitable, and although we may regard them as unpleasant they are not without their necessary part in our evolution. These temporary separations will be brief in proportion to the strength and sincerity of our affection. But while, from the physical plane view, it may seem that the separation from one who has passed through the astral life before we reach it is long a survey of the complete journey from the home plane of the soul through the physical and back again will show the error. If two souls of about the same development are much attached to each other here and one dies even forty years, or more, before the other and therefore has, let us presume, passed on from the astral life fifteen or twenty years before the other enters it, still he will have scarcely begun the long life of the mental plane before the other has finished with the astral plane; for it should not be forgotten that the length of the sojourn on the mental plane, at our stage of evolution, is several times the combined length of the physical

and astral life. Thus the opportunity for long association together, under the most favorable conditions, is dependent only upon the desire to be together.

"What is the best cure for the blues?"

Answer: To be usefully busy. People who have the "blues" think too much about themselves and their personal affairs. One can brood over a trifle until it fills the whole horizon and throws everything out of correct proportion. A good way out of such a mental condition is to look about for somebody who has a real trouble, not an imaginary one, and then help him with his problem.

WORK IN THE FIELD

An engagement that was unique, personally pleasant and morally profitable was that at the Sahler Sanitarium at Kingston-on-Hudson, about midway between New York and Albany. Ten days were spent there and eight lectures delivered to very appreciative audiences averaging, perhaps, about one hundred or a little more. This rather remarkable institution is conducted largely on the New Thought lines and for this reason many people there were in full sympathy with progressive ideas. A few had read much of the Theosophical literature and one or two might be called students of occultism. They are constantly coming and going and are gathered from all parts of the country. They were voracious buyers of reading matter and, considering the small size of the audience, surpassed anything yet experienced, having invested \$64 in Theosophical literature. "Man and His Bodies," "Invisible Helpers" and "An Outline of Theosophy" were the favorites, and 280 copies of my lectures were purchased. As most of these people will have returned to their homes some time ago all this literature is now scattered through a number of the States. A considerable amount was sent to friends by mail from the Sanitarium, in fact was purchased for that purpose.

On account of these people being away from their homes for a short time no class or other organization was formed. It is worthy of note that out of the Kingston-on-Hudson engagement grew the coming one in Boston, April 5 to May 3. Dr. Sahler had said to the audience that no charge was made for the lectures at Kingston, and no collections were taken. I added to this the information that we were willing to go anywhere, without payment, if an audience was furnished and there was no hall rent to pay. A couple of ladies present passed the information on to the Metaphysical Club, at Boston, and an engagement was soon booked. The engagement at the Sahler Sanitarium was the first experience of the kind I have had in field work. Heretofore in places where there is no Branch of the Society we have always been obliged to pay hall rent and incur a heavy expense for advertising. To have a hall and an audience furnished saves much time, labor and money. People in a sanitarium often find time dragging monotonously and welcome a lecture eagerly. The possibilities in this direction are worthy of careful consideration by our lecturers.

Kingston-on-Hudson is one of the pleasant memories. After three months of the nerve-racking rush and roar of New York, the little town among the peaceful hills of the Hudson seemed like blissful solitude. But

the noiseless country was no more restful than the quiet, thoughtful, serene people among whom we had come, and some friendships were made that shall endure when time and space have vanished.

Reaching Albany early in February a desirable hall was secured and a course of ten lectures advertised. About two hundred people responded and their interest in Theosophy grew from lecture to lecture as they gradually came to understand its beauty and utility. Sunday evening lectures drew the best audiences, which seems to be the general rule everywhere, and then there were usually nearer two hundred and fifty people present. They never failed to hand in a large number of searching questions and gave other evidences of being thoroughly alive. They were the best class of people Albany contains, professional men, teachers, lawyers, writers, physicians, nurses,—the people who do the useful work of the world, the middle stratum of the social structure. There were many requests during the course that a Branch of the Society be formed in Albany and the night following the final lecture between forty and fifty people met to hear more about the Society and its purposes. Most of them took application blanks and these are being gradually returned with signatures. Officers of the new Lodge have been chosen and, at the moment of writing, the first public lecture under the auspices of the Albany Branch is being advertised for Sunday evening, March 29, when I shall talk on the subject "The Life Sublime." The infant organization is admirably officered—a thing of incalculable importance—and has the spiritual life and energy that is the guarantee of a useful career. That the field prepared here by the eleven public lectures will be fully utilized there can be no doubt. The community is in receptive mood. More than a hundred dollars worth of Theosophical literature was purchased by the public during the course of lectures and inquiry shows that the Theosophical books in the public libraries have recently been moving under a new demand. There is no doubt about the people being interested in this philosophy of life that has done so very much for many of us, and the most auspicious circumstances attend the coming of this youngest member of the Society.

The work at Troy was not so successful from the visible side of things. The field was by no means so promising, but as it was but forty minutes away by trolley it could not be overlooked, as lectures could be given in between the Albany lectures. Six lectures and one question meeting formed the program. The audiences were very small, owing to a combination of unfavorable circumstances. Nevertheless more than enough to obtain a charter requested the formation of a Branch. But for a number of reasons they were advised to take membership with the Albany Branch for the present. If they do this the new Lodge will receive more good material that will be a substantial addition to it.

L. W. ROGERS

HAVE you a friend who ought to read this magazine?

THE person who continually talks about his troubles, who catches up every bit of bad news and circulates it, who gloomily informs a sick friend that he knew a man who died of the same malady, is about as useful to a community as an open sewer or a stagnant pool covered with the green slime of stagnation.

PROPAGANDA WORK

Modern Miracles, published in New York, has been running in each issue installments of the lectures delivered by L. W. Rogers in that city in December, together with a brief historical sketch of the Theosophical Society.

In Holland a movement has been started to interest the laboring people in Theosophy somewhat after the plan of the Salvation Army work, —by getting out among them and getting into sympathetic touch with their daily lives.

Among the fascinating subjects in C. Jinarajadasa's lecture course at New York, are: "The Memory of Past Lives," "Our Daily Life Out of the Body," "Our Life Beyond the Grave," "Telepathy," and "Science as a Key to the Mysteries of God."

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa delivered a course of public lectures in New York which opened in Geneological Hall on March 3 to an audience that filled every seat and left many unaccommodated. The lectures were given under the auspices of the New York Lodge.

Miss Edith Ward, who is one of the successful propaganda workers of London, gave a lecture March 10 in one of the London County Council Schools. Her subject was "Thoughts are Things" and a series of lantern slides were used to illustrate the lecture.

The new Central Lodge of New York, and the Newark study group, arranged with Mr. C. Jinarajadasa for a week of propaganda work in March, the time being divided between the two places. The Central Lodge has moved into permanent headquarters at No. 1 West 103rd street, where Mrs. Mary M. Dunn is in charge as Secretary.

The next Theosophical Congress to be held in Budapest, Hungary, next year, will deal with a most interesting propaganda proposal. It is submitted by the Hungarian Section and reads as follows:

"To erect at the expense of all the members of the whole Society a Theosophical School where specially fitted members may be trained as teachers for propaganda. Further details of plans and means of executing them will be given at the Congress."

The Harrogate Lodge Propaganda Committee, of Harrogate, England, has announced sixteen lectures to be given in four towns of the Midlands, where Theosophy is practically a stranger. Two lectures a week will be given in a town, and parlor meetings will follow. Traveling libraries will also be introduced. The lectures will be delivered by Mr. James I. Wedgwood, Miss Hilda Hodgson-Smith, Miss Edith Ward and Mr. Ernst Wood, —a quartette of hard workers.

Under Mrs. Besant's direction a "Bureau of Theosophical Activities" has been established in England with a propaganda department, press department, hospitality department and correspondence department. The propaganda department is to give especial attention to the Midlands and the district immediately north of London. Its scope of work includes public lectures in new territory, collecting nuclei of interested persons and arranging for lectures before clubs and societies.

The various London Lodges of the Theosophical Society have been getting into closer touch with the Christian Church by inviting eminent ministers to go on their public programs. Among those who have acted on the invitation are the Vicar of St. Ethelburgas, Rev. Mr. Lilley of

St. Mary's, Rev. Mr. Voysey of the Theistic Church and R. J. Campbell of the City Temple, the great leader of the New Theology movement in England.

An interesting bit of propaganda work has recently been finished at Berkeley, California, by Irving S. Cooper, President of the San Francisco Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Last year Mr. Cooper organized a large group of people who were interested in psychic research. This year he has been devoting his energies to public lectures, opening with a course of nine, given on successive Sunday evenings. Among the interesting subjects discussed were "Immortality," "The Reign of Law," "The Mechanism of Psychic Phenomena" and "The Way to Inward Illumination." A study class of twenty-five new attendants was organized at the close of the course.

Mr. Ernest Wood, an enthusiastic Theosophist of Manchester, England, gave an admirable illustration last summer of what can be done by one person, with help from nobody. Being an ardent propagandist he resolved to spend his vacation giving spiritual light to others. He selected a few cities so situated that, being a good pedestrian, he could walk from one to the other during the day, delivering a lecture each evening. When he had completed the circuit at the end of the week he began the second round, giving lecture No. 2 of the course in each place. Thus the lectures were a week apart everywhere and each place got the regular course. Mr. Wood got as vigorous an outing as though he had gone to the Highlands for his annual vacation and the public got much valuable information.

Mr. J. H. Talbot has an idea for propaganda work that has unique merit. Recognizing the great value of books that give occult information to the world he is working on a plan to push the circulation of such books through the retail book trade. There is unquestionably a growing public demand for occult literature and if it can be furnished to dealers at a price at which they can profitably handle it a very much larger amount could be put into circulation. One difficulty with the sale of such literature is that the small demand, limiting the size of an edition, has fixed the wholesale price so high that dealers will not consider the matter. If a way can be found to give dealers the usual profit Mr. Talbot believes they will readily buy them, and that would, of course, result in a great increase in the output of occult literature. It would thus reach many thousands of people who never will be reached by the sales at the reading-rooms. Mr. Talbot has been in Boston since January.

HAMLIN GARLAND is contributing to *Everybody's Magazine* a series of articles called "The Shadow World" that may easily be classed with his best work. Dealing with facts that are as familiar to him as the people he described in the work that first gave him literary fame Mr. Garland is at his best in the double role of instructor and entertainer. The initial article appears in the April number of *Everybody's* and describes the unexpected results obtained by a little group of casual investigators in psychic phenomena, and describes it so vividly that reading it is close akin to seeing it.

CENSURE is a source of antagonism. The fault finder is the trouble maker.

THEOSOPHICAL LECTURES IN BOSTON

The lecture engagements of L. W. Rogers for the immediate future are: Metaphysical Hall, Huntington Chambers, Boston, Sunday, April 5, at 4:30 P. M., Tuesday, April 7, at 8 P. M., Friday, April 10, at 3 P. M., Tuesday, April 14, at 8 P. M. and Thursday, April 16, at 8 P. M.

At Huntington Chambers Hall, No. 30 Huntington avenue, Boston, Sunday, April 19, Tuesday, April 21, Friday, April 24, Sunday, April 26, Friday, May 1 and Sunday, May 3. All the lectures in Huntington Chambers Hall are at 8 o'clock in the evening and all the lectures at both halls are free except the last, May 3. Theosophists having friends in Boston will confer a favor on the lecturer, by notifying them.

 PERMANENT ADDRESS

The permanent address of the editor of this magazine will hereafter be the office of the publication, 22 Green street, Albany, N. Y. Correspondents, whether writing about the magazine or other matters, should use that address unless they know certainly the temporary address at the moment of writing. Albany is central enough that mail sent via the office will reach any point in the eastern States in a few hours after arriving at the office.

BE useful and you will be happy.

YOU will find the announcement of the May number of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST on the back cover page.

OBLIVION, as well as memory, has its uses. It is not easy to say which is the better, to forget an injury or to remember a kindness.

IT is of far less importance what people think us to be than what we really are. The good opinion that every man should most eagerly desire is his own.

The price of single copies of the AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST is ten cents, but one sample copy will be sent to any person likely to be interested, whose name and address is forwarded to this office. We will be grateful for the names of any persons whom you think will be pleased to receive a copy.

It is interesting to observe that even the hard-headed, practical business men are awakening to the fact that one's mental atmosphere plays its part in affairs. A district manager of an insurance company at Troy, N. Y., has the following advice on the folder bearing his announcements: "When things look dark, talk happiness; when they look bright, talk more happiness. In the midst of discord, trouble and confusion, talk happiness. Talk health; it is the best medicine."