

# THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST

*Official Organ of  
The American Theosophical Society*



Vol. XXII

JANUARY, 1934

No. 1

ENTRANCE "OLCOTT" AMERICAN NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS



• UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ADYAR •





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A NEW YEAR...

A NEW VISION

MUCH more shall We be among you during the coming years, for We, too, are of that Universal Brotherhood from which sometimes We are sought to be excluded. Brotherhood does not stop short at humanity at either end, whatever some may think, and We hope that, as time passes, a place may be found for Us in your midst. We are content to wait your pleasure, for We can serve the world whether Our existence is recognized or not. Yet it is, perhaps, not too much to hope that the Theosophical Society, **Our** Society as well as yours, may some day recognize Us as facts, and not merely as plausible and logical theories. Some there are among you who know Us well, and whom We have instructed to testify to their knowledge among you and in the outer world, in the hope that more and more may cast aside the veils which blind them to the recognition of Those who love the world so well and whose treasure house will open to all who bear in their hands the key of Brotherhood. But We impose Ourselves upon none. Those who so desire may seek alone, may tread alone their pathway, though We know that there will come a time when they will have had enough of loneliness. We do not thrust Ourselves where We are not wanted. Yet the world needs Us, and We could give even more abundantly could We but gain a wider welcome.

From *A Message from an Elder Brother.*

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*formerly* THE THEOSOPHICAL MESSENGER

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## The Neutrality of the Theosophical Society

By DR. GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

(Closing Talk of Summer School, 1933)

*Editor's Note: In view of the questions on this subject arising from Mr. Wood's Manifesto, it seems well for the information of our members that Dr. Arundale's views expressed at Olcott should also be here by made known.*

YOU AND I have to realize that the Theosophical Society does not belong to us, is not to be maneuvered by us, is not to be brought down to the level of our lesser understanding, is not to be imprisoned and restrained within our own individual conception of life. The Theosophical Society is a powerful instrument in the hands of the Elder Brethren and They use it to mighty purposes.

Take the case of Krishnaji. It was desired that a messenger should go forth from the Great White Lodge to do a certain most important and very difficult work; a work far more cosmic in its nature than we recognize; a work the nature of which probably not more than two or three people have the slightest comprehension. Krishnaji is a world force and although his appeal is very definitely to individuals, he is nevertheless working more on the macrocosmic planes than on the microcosmic planes. He is dealing with great and fundamental principles

which the average individual must find exceedingly difficult to translate into terms of the lower consciousness. He is in fact striving to make Nirvana a living reality in the outer world, a heroic and almost impossible task, but a task which he must labor to achieve as a kind of background for new life. I am entirely at-one with all that he says, but he has the task of tasks in his effort to make people with limited consciousness break through those restrictions and enter into a freedom which is beyond the emotions, beyond the mind, and even beyond the Buddhistic consciousness.

When it was determined that Krishnaji should come as a destroyer and regenerator, it was decided that to the Theosophical Society the privilege should be given of ushering him in and standing by him in the very early days, and to its two greatest members, Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater, was assigned the duty of guarding him in youth against many attacks and many difficulties. It is the

splendid karma of the Theosophical Society thus to have been able to give to Krishnaji protection and the support he needed in the beginning of his great mission.

But now the time has come for the Theosophical Society to carry on its own work, even as equally Krishnaji must follow *his* own path. He is perfectly right to free himself from the Theosophical Society; his resignation from the Theosophical Society was vital to the great work he has to do. His dissociation from our teachings and our work generally was inevitable. He has his job and, whether entirely perfectly or not, he knows magnificently how to do it. He knows what he is about and I sometimes wish some of us knew as well what we are about. We may say that we have helped him. We wish him "God-speed!" If the time should ever come for the world to reject him, he knows where his friends always are. I do not attend the camps, not because I do not love him, not because I have not an intimate comradeship with him which has lasted from innumerable lives, but because he has his work to do and I have mine. I am among those, as are you also, who are chosen to guard the Theosophical Society. It is our job and we will do it, and he will do his job. In the meantime the work of the Theosophical Society goes forward as does that of Krishnaji. It is the greater service to Krishnaji and the greater duty of the Theosophical Society for each to go his own way. The individual members may, and indeed should, always have goodwill and friendliness and affection for him, and are wise to take whatever they want and whatever they can from his great teachings, as well as from all other great teachings. But the Theosophical Society will render service, such as it has rendered to Krishnaji, to other people from time to time, and it must never have any exclusive or even any definite connection with any one. We must preserve the neutrality and the independence of the Theosophical Society so that it may help at all times whenever help is needed.

The same, of course, applies to the Liberal Catholic Church. The Lord Himself sent the Liberal Catholic Church into the world. The Lord is no less behind that Church than He is behind Krishnaji. The Theosophical Society gave a helping hand to the Liberal Catholic Church, but now it must stand on its own feet apart from the Theosophical Society; away from it. As Krishnaji fulfills his mission so must the Liberal Catholic Church achieve its own destiny, but neither must be allowed to color the work of the Theosophical Society.

Then we have another great movement, that of Co-Masonry, which gives the same teaching in another form and to it also we owe a similar obligation. Perhaps, in addition, the educational work should be included since it has also been ordered by the Lord Himself, but here again we have to be careful that any educational work we undertake shall never at any time compromise that independence of all movements, of all specific forms of truth, which the Theosophical Society must ever maintain. To us have been specifically committed the great principles given statement by H. P. B. Those basic teachings we must guard, those we must cherish, those we must stand for because those have been definitely charged to our care. As for all others, we wish them God-speed, glad to have given aid, and perhaps in a time to come, if they should require it, we will again give assistance and send them forth.

It is evident that the dignity and worth and high purpose of the Theosophical Society demand this wonderful independence so that the Elder Brethren may have many irons in the world fire, each of which is shaped to do its own particular work without seeking to be like other irons which are in the selfsame fire. We add to our dignity and to our nobility and to our purpose, and we become increasingly true to our duty, when we stand aloof, free to all that works for truth, whether in our way or any other way, but going our appointed way with clear vision and unswerving steadfastness.

## The Builder

By JAMES W. FOLEY

I am the builder of castle and hall,  
And I lay the stone in the temple wall;  
I lay the stone and I raise the tower,  
And mine is the glory of strength and power,  
For I am the builder. Oh hear me sing  
The song of the sledge as its echoes ring!  
I am the builder. Who walks with me  
The glory of cities upraised shall see  
And the towers that rise to the arch of the skies,  
For I am the builder. Come walk with me!

I am the builder of forest and glade;  
I am the hand that has hewn and made  
The peak of the mountain, the caves of the sea.  
I am the maker of worlds that be.  
Yes, I am the builder of suns and seas,  
The master of human destinies.  
I am the builder. Who walks with me  
The glory of souls risen up shall see.  
And I build with the soul that is clean and whole,  
For I am the builder. Come walk with me!

# Adyar and Dr. Besant

By MAX WARDALL

WITH the approach of Adyar Day, 1934, our thoughts turn instinctively to our late President. It was she who gave so great a light and warmth to this remarkable center. It was her home and probably remains the theater of her chief activities.

Visitors to Adyar will never forget the white robed, silver crowned President as she went her round of duties in the Adyar Compound, stopping beside some half-naked Indian working on the road, talking to him in her deep kindly voice, giving a smile or a gracious nod to each laborer as he passed.

Britishers found it hard to account for Dr. Besant's love of the Indians. To the average Englishman living in India, the dark skinned natives were just an inferior and not very interesting race. Social intercourse with them was sometimes a duty, but rarely a pleasure.

Theosophists in general were better able to appreciate and understand A. B.'s passionate devotion and loyalty to this crushed and poverty ridden nation. Those who knew her very well sensed in her an amazing kinship to the Indian people. Except for her fair skin she was undoubtedly in all essentials a Hindu of the Kshatriya type. Her character, mentality and spiritual outlook were definitely and distinctly Indian. Often have I heard her say, "India is my home, and Adyar my shrine."

In this incarnation at least, Dr. Besant was born far from the Himalayas in an atmosphere of meticulous order and Victorian propriety. This new India into which she was ushered at the age of forty must have been greatly different from the glorious India of other lives. She must have been overwhelmed with egoic memories and with a great compassion for the land of her adoption. Be that as it may, we know that while traveling in India she endured the sweltering heat, the noise, filth, flies and dust, the strange food concoctions, the squalor, poverty, the swarming beggars and the sublime confusion of this modern India with an almost incredible serenity. While other white skinned people languished and sickened under these blazing skies, she thrived and flourished. While other Europeans lay prone and prostrate after a short day of labor, she pressed on with buoyant energy and unflagging zeal, rarely working less than sixteen hours a day. These facts show that Dr. Besant was something more than a guest in the land of Mother India. She really *belonged*.

For many years sincere and able students have gone to Adyar to be ripened by her strong currents of life — psychologists, philosophers, mathematicians and aspirants for the spiritual con-

sciousness. Many had great learning and were seeking understanding through minds choked with details. Adyar took them all into her ample bosom. She poured her life blood through their veins, quickened them with her radiant aura. With supernal fire she consumed them and prepared them for a vital resurrection. In the midst of the throng, and at the heart of Adyar, stood the President, the serene and unimpassioned focus of the Great Radiance.

Because in this White City she had repeatedly been honored with visits from the Brothers of Light, A. B. spoke always of Adyar with a peculiar reverence. One gathered from her words that Adyar was much more than a place, more that a rich repository of ancient scriptures, more than a storehouse of spiritual refreshment, more than an earthly Devachan where hovering guardians of peace cast sheltering wings across the blossoming compounds. To her it was a place of Great Work, where the torrents of force from the Himalayas were caught up in the Adyar funnel and transformed into healing waters for the relief of a parched and fevered humanity.

She once said, "If the American Section will stand solidly behind Adyar and continue its support, it will grow into one of the greatest spiritual centers the world has ever known. It will stand five hundred years hence as a living testimonial to the unifying power of the Divine Wisdom."

With this tradition behind us and the Great Ideal before us, we look forward with keen anticipation to February 17, when we shall be permitted once more to do homage to this work-house of the Masters in a substantial way.

In 1933 the response to our appeal was regrettably small. Due to a condition of anxiety and depression that harassed us all, we gave less than one thousand dollars to Dr. Besant for the Adyar Fund. This is an average of about thirty cents per member, substantially the price of a seat in a picture house. It is not very much to invest in an indestructible heritage. This year we shall do better. We are not quite so beset, and we have wider vision.

It is an aid to our vision to remember that this day, February 17, is a symbol of three events which loyal Theosophists will ever remember: the burning of Giordano Bruno at the stake in 1600, the birth of Bishop Leadbeater in 1847, and the death of Colonel Olcott in 1907. Why these three widely spaced happenings should each have occurred on February 17 we do not presume to know, but somehow they seem to belong together, and give zest to our determination to stand solidly behind Adyar for the greater glory of mankind.



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## Editorials

### A Happy New Year to You All

#### *Adyar Day*

February 17 is a day of remembrance — of Colonel Olcott, his death; of C. W. Leadbeater, his birth; of Giordano Bruno, his sacrifice; of Adyar, its splendid purpose.

This year there is a special need and a special reason for generous contributions. The need arises from the deficiency of funds from all sources for the past year or two. The special reason is that the Society has a new treasurer at Adyar and will soon have a new president. Let America continue her encouragement of those who are responsible for the welfare of Adyar, by renewing in generous measure the support of former years through the Adyar Day collections and individual and lodge donations.

We make this appeal despite the needs of Theosophy in America, knowing that Adyar is the heart and that if the heart is kept strong, the whole body of the Society will be cared for. If Adyar were but an administrative headquarters, all the love and care and generosity showered upon her would hardly be worth while, but Adyar is something to cherish for its inspiration as "the Masters' home," for Adyar, beyond any other spot except Shamballah, has been made sacred by Their presence until it has become the world's center of inspiration and of blessing.

February 17 will be a day of remembrance. Let the American membership cease for a moment to live for the American Section; let it be reborn to a realization of its responsibility to its international center; let it recognize in sacrifice that great responsibility, that it may thereby give power to Adyar to more greatly fulfill her purpose.

#### *Unfounded Fears*

There is always a tragic side to controversy. If one can see the fundamentals clearly, a war of words provides an interesting study of the complexities that can arise on a very simple foundation.

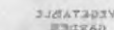
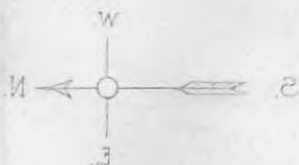
And if a few fears can be brought to bear, what a structure of misunderstanding results.

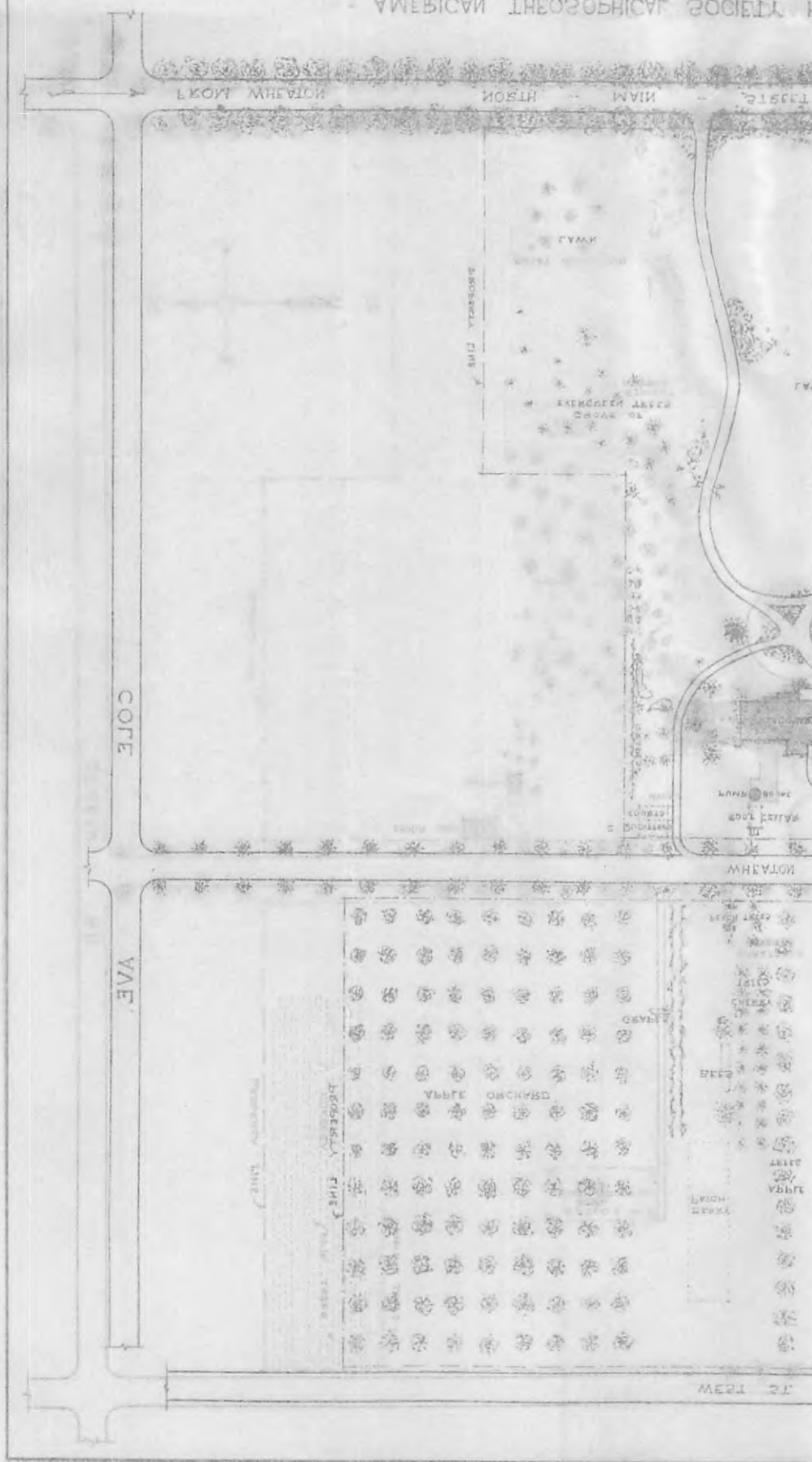
Mr. Jinarajadasa says that the message from Dr. Besant to the Indian people, received after her death by Bishop Leadbeater, was asked for in the belief that Mr. Telang, the General Secretary of the Indian Section, had requested it. Mr. Telang now explains at length that because of his well-established reputation for avoiding any manifestation of belief in psychic communication, because of the nature of his conversation with Bishop Leadbeater a day or two earlier, because of the remark as to his disbelief with which Bishop Leadbeater had handed him the message, because of this and because of that, there could have been no reason to suppose that he wanted a message from Dr. Besant to the Indian people. Further, he contends that his reputation will be injured, and in any case, why such a message to the Indian people?

The simple answer is that Bishop Leadbeater, despite all the circumstances with which he was quite familiar, did think that Mr. Telang wanted a message to the people of his Section.

Denuded of all the fuss and explanation, the message remains — a message splendid in its power, inspiring and challenging not only to India, but to every nation, and permeated with the great love of her Master's Motherland which was so deeply felt by Dr. Besant. Let the message stand on its own intrinsic merits, regardless of its source. Dr. Besant would be the first to say to live the message, and ignore the messenger. Such a message needs no authority, although many may believe.

Two letters written by Dr. Besant in 1926 when she was in the United States to Dr. Arundale in Australia were found by Mr. Jinarajadasa and circulated. He explained that he discovered them when searching for another paper. He had already decided not to be a candidate for the presidency and had issued his statement "Why I Do Not Stand." Although the letters had been in his hands for some months, as Dr. Arundale had for years







been placing in his care documents bearing Dr. Besant's touch or signature for their future value as a part of the Society's archives, Mr. Jinarajadasa had not previously read them.

Besides material entirely irrelevant to the present subject, the letters contained the following:

"Minneapolis, June 9, 1926. As you are to succeed me as president, I think you should come over here next year. This is our most numerous Section and you must win its affection before the election of 1928."

"Houston, October 12, 1926. Master said that you were to become president and I took it for granted it would be in 1928. You know that I always "jump" to do anything He even hints at. Besides I think you would make a splendid president."

A number of supporters of Mr. Wood are protesting against the circulation of these letters on the ground that they will influence the judgment of the members. Some quote Dr. Besant as having stated that she would not give any indication as to who should be her successor, saying that to do so would be contrary to the constitution of the Theosophical Society, which provides for the members to elect whom they wish. Others explain that these letters of 1926 had nothing to do with the desire either of the Masters or of Dr. Besant as to who should succeed to the presidency following her death, but referred only to the election of 1928.

Such are the differing opinions to which we in America give a hearing for their informative value, but we may well take issue because Dr. Besant makes it so clear in the latter letter that, as always was her custom, she "jumped" to do her Master's will, thinking at the moment that it applied to 1928. That she learned it did not so apply is abundantly evident since she herself stood for election in 1928, as she would never have done had the Master's choice of Dr. Arundale been intended to take effect at that time.

Be that as it may, the objection voiced to the circulation of the letters is that they will restrict the freedom of the members to follow their own inner leading and that they will feel bound to act upon authority rather than on their own sound thinking and intuition; and it is urged that members do their own thinking and vote for their new president because they want him and his point of view, and for no other reason.

Most heartily do we respond to this principle. Members in America will certainly vote for the president they want, guided not by authority but by their own intuitive appreciation and appraisal of any data presented for their consideration.

Why all this confusion-creating fear? Members of the Theosophical Society have too frequently heard Dr. Besant's admonition that blind following is never in order; that to follow any authority contrary to reason and good judgment is a role of weakness, not strength. Every member knows this in his own heart. So why should we be troubled or permit these small matters to loom

out of all proportion as ominous dangers? Mr. Jinarajadasa recognized that to many the letters would be informative and of value; that to others, who do not believe in the Masters or Their messenger, they would have no significance and by them would be disregarded. Any other view is to characterize the membership as blind and unthinking, and with this we strongly dissent, preferring rather to depend upon the outstanding qualities of our members, and upon their abilities of impersonal thinking and clear vision. Only confusion and uncertainty can result from a lack of faith in the discriminating judgment of our members.

One could hardly expect Mr. Jinarajadasa, to whom the Masters are fact and experience, to withhold such letters. That would be rather serious karma to ask him to accept, but surely the members remain just as free as ever to choose their new president, and to express their own opinions. To many the letters will be confirmation of opinions previously independently arrived at; others will reason and weigh and come to conclusions equally their own, bringing their intuitive sense of true values into play; some will say they do not recognize the validity of any "messages," but they too will use their intuition.

There is no cause for fear that the members of the Theosophical Society will fail to follow an unprejudiced vision, realizing that the critical lower mind alone cannot dependably make great choices. We are not instructed by these or any other letters; the Masters seldom instruct; we are but given opportunity to perceive intuitively and accurately. Let intuition, not argument prevail.

### *In Their Strong Hands*

Reprinted from *The Theosophical Messenger* of August, 1932.

It is natural perhaps that there should be some thought in our lodges as to the successorship when our great President, Dr. Besant, gives up her physical leadership in the Society as of course some day she must. Those who realize that she is still no less our leader actively guiding our work despite her physical incapacity, hope, with a strength that is almost a demand, that she may long stay with us, that her great wisdom may continue to guide as it has done throughout all of the years and as it is still doing.

As to her successor, it is profoundly to be desired that those great Masters Who founded the Society and Who instructed H. P. B. and Col. Olcott and Who have nominated and have instructed his successor will similarly indicate under whom we should presently continue to serve Them. Surely we need not speculate or be concerned and may safely leave in Their strong hands the guidance of Their Society, keeping ourselves ever ready by reverence toward Them to recognize and follow Their leadership. No others know the need of the world as They know it, and Their Society dedicated to serve Their world as They direct may well be content to place itself always in Their hands.

# The One Man

By A. J. HAMERSTER

(Treasurer of the Theosophical Society, Adyar)

**T**HE President is dead. *Le Roi est mort*. And in nine months' time we shall cry: *Vive le Roi*.

Live the President. In the meantime, momentous is the choice we are going to make. The future of the Theosophical Movement depends on it.

We have come again to one of those critical points in the Society's career, which will mark either a steady, though perhaps slow, fall or a steadier rise even than that lying behind us in the reign of her, the loss of whose physical presence we now lament.

Speaking of the progress of science, but his words being even more applicable to spiritual matters, a man of science has noted down this fact of experience that:

"Great advances only come from single personalities and not from societies, no matter how excellent the persons may in general be, of which they are composed. Such societies should therefore see their province exclusively in protecting or forwarding the work of the single and all too rare individuals who show themselves to be beginners of progress in any direction." (Philip Lenard. *Great Men of Science*. London, 1933.)

If that is so — and who shall deny it when remembering Jesus, Mohammed, H. P. B., Annie Besant — then to us the choice of the *single man* or *woman* to lead us for at least the next seven, and let us hope many years more to come. It is the outstanding, the big man or woman we need; *the One and the only One*, as H. P. B. said of Annie Besant.

I have heard it said that great men are suppressive or oppressive to smaller men; that Napoleon, for example, suppressed his generals very much. But who so speaks, forgets that without Napoleon his generals would have been nowhere. The great are the making of the small. The saint is the salvation of the sinner, the hero of the coward, the genius of the mediocre. It is the latter especially we have to combat within ourselves. Not that the big and the great suppress, but that the small and mediocre oppress and stifle life.

May we then rise to the occasion, may we delve deep within ourselves to find and contact the great we ourselves really are. Only so shall we be able to rise above all the small misgivings of our hearts and minds, which find their source in nothing else

but egotism, personal pride, wounded vanity, race prejudices and all sorts of acquired biases.

One is an Indian, we cannot elect him. Another is a Bishop, we cannot elect him. A third is a woman, we cannot elect her. So the wearisome tale of petty objections goes on *ad infinitum*, in as many variations as there are candidates and voters. But what has all this to do with the real thing, the all-important question? Is he or she the greatest of possible candidates? And above all: Is he or she the biggest channel for the Masters' life and force?

Without this consideration always kept in mind, the Society will fall down to the level of any other ordinary society with more or less spiritual objects, very well managed from a purely worldly viewpoint probably, but destitute of the special link with the "Inner Government of the World," which has made the Theosophical Society until now occupy such a unique position among sister movements.

It is for this that the Society exists, for the "protecting and forwarding of the work of the single and all too rare individuals," (to quote part of the same sentence again) who supply to us this link with the "Occult World."

"All too rare individuals!" Indeed, so rare that we cannot afford to be prodigal, so rare that among a plurality of candidates there can be only one, and he *the* only one who will do, who will be the best, the biggest, the greatest under the circumstances.

I have heard Bishop Leadbeater remark several times in these days, that from Annie Besant to any successor will mean a drop. She was of the greatest among the great. And it is already a large ambition for her successor to strive to reach up even to her knees. Therefore do not believe anyone who announces himself as greater than she, as superior in knowledge, as knowing better than she. The best thing to do is to choose one of whom we may expect that he will follow as closely in her footsteps as she did in those of H. P. B. Only thus shall we be certain of safeguarding the real inner life of the Theosophical Society for another period of years. Let us then strive our utmost, purging ourselves of all smallness, to choose one who really reaches up at least to her knees, instead of one who only just comes up to her toes.

Adyar, October 1, 1933.

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Without courage there cannot be truth, and  
without truth there can be no other virtue.—  
Scott.

# The "Olcott Lecture"

By E. NORMAN PEARSON

THE national convention of 1933 will undoubtedly pass into theosophical history as one of the most momentous ever held by the Society in the United States of America.

At that convention the Greater America Plan was adopted and a new era in theosophical activities for our country began.

Consistent with that plan and, I venture to suggest, of great importance to our work in the future, was the idea advanced that there should be delivered at each annual convention a lecture on Theosophy to be known as the "Olcott Lecture." This suggestion received the unanimous approval of the delegates present.

The resolution (which was published in full in the November issue of *THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST*, Page 257) reads, in part, as follows: "... at each annual convention of the American Theosophical Society there shall be delivered a lecture to be known as the 'Olcott Lecture.' A Committee of Selection shall be appointed by the National President . . . any member may submit to this Committee of Selection (in such manner as may be decided so as not to disclose the identity of the writer) the manuscript of the proposed lecture. The Committee shall carefully judge all manuscripts submitted, and the member submitting the manuscript which, in the opinion of the Committee, is the best, shall be invited to deliver his (or her) composition at the next following annual convention of the American Theosophical Society, such member to be the guest of the Society during the convention period. In making such selection, the Committee of Selection shall consider particularly *the extent to which the composition throws new light upon the understanding of Theosophy . . .*"

In advancing this suggestion, three thoughts were particularly in mind:

- (1) To encourage original thinking and research work among the members of the Society.
- (2) To provide an avenue whereby such contributions might be given out publicly, to be shared by other members and by the general public.
- (3) To encourage the development of new lectures of high caliber and to assist in the discovery of such talent as may be unrecognized within the ranks of the Society.

Thus is provided a new avenue of service which, when properly recognized, may prove to be a tremendous factor in the development of our work. The "Olcott Lecture" should, in future years, be one of the outstanding features of every national convention.

There exists no greater barrier to the success of any movement than limitation of vision; than narrowness of outlook.

Such, in the Theosophical Society, should be shattered, for surely the greatness and glory of our work is beyond all understanding.

The world, caught in the web of "Avidya," suffering from its own errors, standing with its back to the light of spiritual vision as it ardently pursues the things of earth — *needs Theosophy more than it needs anything else.*

It is not necessary that my feeble pen should try to tell of the greatness of our opportunity and the importance of the work which is ours to do, for, not many years ago a Great One sent a message and in that message was perhaps the most challenging statement ever given by one of the Elder Brethren:

"We say to you: You have the power to do more in the immediate future than any other body of men and women has ever achieved before."

Surely *that* — and nothing less — is the work which lies ahead.

So we need great leaders and great thinkers and great speakers; we need those who are great in vision and those who live greatly and nobly, for only in this way can a great work be accomplished.

And beginning, perhaps, unheralded, in the world of modern thought, I believe the "Olcott Lecture" plan can — and must be — developed to command an ever widening circle of attention, throwing an ever increasing light upon our understanding of Theosophy and become, in time, an event of major importance to man's understanding of life and of the worlds in which he must live.

The first "Olcott Lecture" will be given at the national convention of 1934.

To whom shall go the honor of its delivery?



Ideas must work through the brains and arms of good and brave men, or they are no better than dreams.—*Emerson.*



# If I Were President

## THE ELECTION MANIFESTO OF ERNEST WOOD

**A**S I HAVE consented to accept nomination as a candidate for the office of president of the Theosophical Society, the voters have a right to expect from me a Declaration of Policy. First, then, to be quite formal, if elected I would preserve the Constitution of the Society in spirit and letter. Regarding the office of president as a purely executive position, I should try to preserve a just and even attitude to teachers and students holding different views of Theosophy. I should make it very publicly and clearly known that the Society (in common, it may be said, with all progressive scientific societies) commits itself to none of them, either temporarily or permanently, although it is profoundly, even fundamentally, committed to a policy of brotherhood. My idea on this point is that the Society is not a brotherhood of creeds or a chorus of orthodoxies, but a brotherhood of seekers for ever more and more perfect expressions of love and truth. I would maintain also that the Society does not need the aid of other organizations to fulfill its purposes, and that any activities which it may deem necessary or useful to that end should be incorporated into its constitution and carried on under its control. The greatest object of my solicitude would be that golden step on the stairway of the temple of wisdom, an open mind. What to the individual is an open mind, to the Society is the open platform, where the white dove of truth may halt and place her weary and generally unwelcome foot. A clean life, an open mind and a pure heart will surely lead on to brotherliness for all and an unveiled spiritual perception. Even those who believe in the Masters must not try to make Them into a belief; rather let us say with H. P. B. that "the pure element in the Society is love and devotion to the truth, whether abstract or concentered in the 'Masters.'" (See *Mahatma Letters*, Page 484.)

So much for policy. As to material matters, I should like to lay much emphasis on making *The Theosophist* a very modern magazine, likely to attract the attention of the best minds; I should like to cultivate our membership among reading people in addition to those more disposed to attend meetings and lectures; I should like to have more frequent official conventions or congresses of the Society in different countries (somewhat on the model of the British Association for the Advancement of Science); and I should like to see Adyar a busy and happy community of workers and students, with a corner for the old and more than a corner for the young, and a welcome for visitors from far and near.

My opinions as to the Society's functions are, in fact, much the same as those expressed by

Colonel Olcott with great lucidity in his last important lecture. (See *The Theosophist* for August, 1906). I will therefore quote from him:

"The secret of the persistent vigor of the Society is that its platform is so drafted as to exclude all dogmas, all social contests, all causes of strife and dissension such as are begotten of questions of sex, color, religion and fortune, and make altruism, tolerance, peace and brotherliness the cornerstones upon which it rests . . . .

"One objection which has been rather persistently urged . . . is that while we profess to make fraternity our chief ideal we do nothing to practically illustrate it . . . These views are based upon a total misapprehension of the constitutional character of our Society. Its aim is to float ideas which are likely to benefit the whole world, to give clear and just conceptions of the duty of man to man, of the way to secure peace and goodwill between nations, to show how the individual can secure happiness for himself and spread it around him by pursuing a certain line of conduct, and how ignorance, which has been declared by that great Adept, the Buddha, to be the source of all human miseries, can be dispelled. One of its chief objects is to discover and expound the fundamental basis on which stand all religious systems and to make men divest themselves of every shadow of dogma so as to become tolerant and forbearing toward all men of other faiths than one's own. It was never even dreamt that we should amass capital as a Society to organize societies of any kind, whether socialistic, religious or commercial, and I have set my face from the first against every attempt to make it responsible for the private preferences and prejudices of its members, repudiating in toto every procedure, however seemingly innocent in itself, which could be construed into a breach of our constitutional neutrality. The members of the French Section will recollect that quite recently I had to officially reprobate the passage of a resolution expressing the Society's sympathy for the work of a peace society. Should we once begin this ill-advised departure from the neutral ground upon which we have grown and flourished, and express our collective sympathy with socialistic, temperance, vegetarian, anti-slavery, esoteric, masonic, political and charitable societies, we should soon fall into chaos; our resolutions of sympathy would soon become a drug in the market and all our present dignity would be sacrificed in gushes of uncontrolled sentimentality. It is hard for me to have to utter this word of warning, but I would rather a hundred times sacrifice the friendly opinion of my colleagues than keep silent while

they, in their inexperience, are trying to drag our car to the crest of the slope at whose foot lies the chasm of ruin.

"I hope you all understand that while I am defending the rights of the Society as a body, I have not the remotest wish or thought of interfering in the least degree with the liberty of the individual. Quite the contrary. I sympathize with and encourage every tendency in my colleagues to ally themselves in movements tending toward the public good. I even go further in setting the example of working for the promotion of education among the Buddhists of Ceylon and the Pariahs of Southern India; I am also a trustee and friend of the Central Hindu College managed by Mrs. Besant at Benares, without either she or I, in our work among the Hindus and the Buddhists respectively, attempting to throw the responsibility for it on the Society.

"Another complaint made is that we are responsible for the whole litter of little occult societies. . . . Needless to tell any of you older members, the Society is not only not responsible for these little centers of selfishness and superstition but they are abhorrent to its ideal. . . . The psychic faculty, like a sharp sword standing in the corner of a room, may be used for a good or an evil purpose. The possession of clairvoyance — whether retrospective or prophetic — clairaudience, the power to speak or write in unlearned languages, to move ponderable objects without touch, to read thought, to travel in the astral body, to precipitate pictures or writings upon paper or other material, to see and describe absent persons, etc., are no evidence whatever of purity or elevation of character or spiritual evolution. I have known persons rarely gifted in one or other of these respects who were immoral in habit and false in statement. Patanjali specially warns us to avoid at all costs the following of these perverting psychical powers into the side paths which lead the pilgrim away from the straight road that runs toward the top of the mountain of spiritual development. They are but the spawn floating on the surface of the water over which we must propel the bark of our higher self to arrive at the port of adeptship.

"I wish to impress upon your minds that no more dangerous obstacle lies in the Upward Path than credulity. The first great lesson taught by the Adept Master to his pupil is to use his reason and common sense in all things; no teaching is to be taken as inspired, no teacher to be infallible. 'Act,' wrote a Master to me in the beginning of my pupilage, 'as though we had no existence. Do your duty as you see it and leave the results to take care of themselves. Expect nothing from us, yet be ready for anything.' This was a lifelong lesson to me and I have acted upon it to the best of my ability ever since. In the very early days I had the tendency of taking as almost unquestionable the teachings that I got through Madame Blavatsky. I was afraid not to follow blindly her instructions lest I might unwittingly be disobedient to the wishes of the Masters. But experience cured me of that and threw me back upon the exercise

of my common sense, since which time I have had nothing to regret. I pass this lesson on to you, beginners, in the hope that in the early stages of your career you may be willing to listen to the advice of an elder brother whose experience in physical matters already dates back fifty-five years."

These are my views, but I feel that I must also explain my position with regard to other bodies whose protagonists desire to propagate and practice their systems of organized access to the Masters' power and blessing wherever Theosophists foregather or establish themselves. This is a question to be considered practically as well as theoretically, so I shall open the subject with two typical experiences from among many within my direct knowledge:

One is the case of a lodge. At the time of which I am speaking it showed a deficit of nine pounds in its accounts, and there was much discussion about it — various proposals including a reduction of the already small expenditure on advertising lectures, and the removal of the lodge to a smaller room, comparatively obscure and inconvenient. Scarcely had the removal taken place when up came the question of starting a Co-Masonic Lodge. All the leading members were canvassed on the subject; it was whispered round that the Masters were keenly anxious to have the new movement promoted, and would give of their power and force to or through those who joined it. In a trice the members hustled to ransack their monetary resources, and very soon hundreds of pounds were forthcoming.

It may be argued that this proves that the Theosophical Society was not really wanted by the members and that the Co-Masonic Lodge was what they really cared for. Truly, it is difficult to find many people who care for mere truth and the power of truth, for which the Theosophical Society stands. Even those who were struggling toward it fell before the concreteness and the pomp of a ceremonial movement backed by the statement of an organized access to the Masters' power. The love and brotherhood of the members were beautiful and touching, but the Theosophical Society was no longer the highest thing. The more presentable new members after that were very soon drawn into the arcanum; and presently no one was really "one of us" unless within the more intimate brotherhood. No longer did we hear the words: "Seek us through the Theosophical Society" and "It is our law to approach every such an one (natural allies) even if there be but the feeblest glimmer of the true 'Tathagata' light within him," for organized access took the foremost place.

My second example is that of a Theosophical Federation. It had invited for its president an old and well-known member who had left the E. S. when Dr. Besant closed it in 1928 and had not rejoined when it was reopened; also, although he had occupied a high position in Co-Masonry he had left that too in order to devote himself more fully to the work of the Society. All preliminaries were settled, but the question soon arose: "Who

will satisfy the Masonic and E. S. part of the program, and bring to the occasion the blessing of the Masters?" So a second visitor must be invited for that. That being settled, it was next hinted to the original invitee that perhaps as he was an important person and very busy he would prefer not to come. He replied that he would be disappointed not to meet his old friends, as arranged, so it was decided that both should come. But it was painfully clear who was to be the unnecessary president of the occasion, and who the indispensable visitor.

Approximately this has come within my notice three times lately. *How many hundreds, even thousands, of decisions as to presidents, secretaries, etc., have been made on non-Theosophical-Society grounds, who can tell?* And can it then be said that the decisions are made "without distinction of creed?" If not, in such cases they are no longer *fundamentally* Theosophical Society gatherings, and no mere words can mend the break. In such ways the Theosophical Society has in many places become a mere subsidiary of other organizations, and its own natural leaders are nipped off in the very bud.

I have no fault to find with the weakness of human nature; it is a fact. And I have no fault to find with leaders who try to prevent the effect I have cited, but cannot do so because followers are so often "more royalist than the king." But because of this effect upon the Society I am among those who — while admiring these movements in their proper and dignified places — want to find some way to protect the Society from their influence. I submit that we cannot settle this question without taking into consideration the frailty of human nature, with its consequent effect upon the Theosophical Society, and I would request the societies concerned to devote their energies to the establishment of their own platform and their own gatherings, such as the Theosophical Society achieved after many years of hard work. From my side, I could, of course, allow these organizations no official place in the Society's activities, on its platform or in its programs, except that which is accorded to all religions as subjects of earnest and reverent study and investigation.

I suppose I must not leave out reference to Mr. Krishnamurti, especially as it is known that I greatly value his ideas. To his movement I would accord the same position as the others, although I recognize that he is more parallel to the Theosophical Society than they are, when he emphasizes the importance of an unrelenting search for truth, absolutely untrammelled by any creed, or when he attempts, as Colonel Olcott put it, "to make men divest themselves of every shadow of dogma." It would have been silly to form the Theosophical Society with its non-dogmatic constitution (see *The Original Program of the Theosophical Society*, by H. P. B.) had there not been the thought which Krishnamurti now emphasizes that to make any move toward spiritual realization men must rely fundamentally upon

themselves, and allow the flower of their own life to unfold itself from within, with no alien hand trying to open the petals of the rose by external force. Organizations which bring in formularies of belief in dogmas, in persons and in systems are repugnant to his method, and it is only because those have overgrown the Theosophical Society that he speaks disapprovingly of Theosophy in the same breath as the other organizations.

Admiring his clear-sightedness, Dr. Besant hailed him as the veritable incarnation of her conception of the Supreme Teacher of the Occult Hierarchy, which constituted a great recommendation to us to study him. Some, however, wish to exclude his movement from the Headquarters at Adyar, while admitting others "because they are theosophical." However, the Society *has no teachers*. It should unquestionably extend to Krishnamurti the reverent attention given to other teachers of past and present, even though he disapproves of views and practices called "theosophical" by some. The Society is bound by neither side, and cannot label some teachers theosophical and others not; so if it extends courtesies and conveniences to one it must do the same to the other. If any member of the Theosophical Society becomes a spiritual teacher, in that capacity he is simply a private individual, for our Society has none, just as the Chemical Society does not maintain a soap factory.

Our late President, Dr. Besant, recognized something of these dangers, and spoke about them in reference to the E. S. in an important lecture just before her election (see *The Theosophist*, October 1907, Page 33). She said:

"In the T. S. we have a curious mixture. The Exoteric Society is purely democratic — it is only fair to admit this fully. On the other side we have an Esoteric body which is practically autocratic in its constitution... The existence of a secret body to rule the outer Society made the constitution of the T. S. a mere farce, for it was wholly at the mercy of the inner... All the differences that arose between the Colonel and myself were really on this point; he could not believe that I was serious in saying that I would not use the E. S. against him, but slowly he came to understand it... The greatest power will always be in the hands of the E. S., and not in the head of the Society... I know that I exercise a quite unwarrantable power. This is what makes some people say there should not be an E. S. T. But you cannot help its existence; you cannot say to members that they shall not join a secret society, so there is no power in the Society to say it shall not be; we must recognize the danger and try to neutralize it. At any time during the last fifteen years I could have checkmated the Colonel on any point if I had chosen, and I do not see how the Society can guard itself against that danger; it is impossible to neutralize the authority of one to whom thousands look up as to a spiritual teacher."

As regards the Liberal Catholic Church, Co-Masonry and similar organizations, it may be



argued that my attitude implies non-belief in the statements made by prominent clairvoyants as to the Masters' interest in those movements. To this I would reply that the Masters have said that the Theosophical Society is only a fragment of their interest, and have also said that they do not usually try to prevent mistakes. If, however, they founded the Theosophical Society with a certain purpose, I cannot believe that after many decades in which they gave no hint of it, they suddenly wanted to permeate the Society with these other organizations, having other methods, which do differ from that of the Theosophical Society in that they are all sects with creeds, and the Theosophical Society is a great attempt to establish a Society in which no creed shall influence any appointment of any officer or any activity of any branch.

At the same time it is only fair that I should let my own views be known; that I do not consider the psychic experiences of any person whatever (and I have had much experience while working for the Society in a variety of responsible ways for over thirty years) so constantly and completely reliable as to justify any approach toward an autocracy (even if established on "confidence") in the Theosophical Society — unless it openly gives up its old position, as, of course, it may choose to do.

I have received a circular containing two private letters of Dr. Besant's, dated in 1926, now made public in order to show the electors that Dr. Besant and the Master want Bishop Arundale to be elected. If, however, Dr. Besant had wanted to make a nomination she could have done so, and no doubt the Master also could have made His will known; they having abstained, we have this unfortunate attempt to correct their deficiency by publishing old letters. The Society has now in force a suggestion made by Dr. Besant. Wishing to avoid some of the faults of the old method, she wrote: "Why should not two or more names be submitted, and an absolute majority of the votes cast be sufficient for election?" (THE THEOSOPHIST, September 1907, Page 882.) This being so, the fact that she did not use her right to give a nomination seems to me to show that she desired the members to vote with absolutely free judgment, not influenced by her as a spiritual teacher.

Early in 1929, on my return to Adyar from travel, she appointed me Recording Secretary, and about that time gave me her views and what many would call "orders" with regard to the movements associating themselves with the Theosophical Society. She spoke of the danger of crystallization in the Society and the growing influence of other organizations; she reminded me of her decision not to appear again in the Liberal Catholic Church; she gave great praise to the enthusiasm which had brought various movements into prominence in connection with the Society; then she spoke of the difficulty which she felt on account of their pressure on one side, and finally said: "I wish some of you would push equally hard on the other side. It would make it much easier for me." I must go further, and let it be known that she told me that

she had scarcely used her own psychic powers for years, but had been relying upon others.

I am still carrying out her wishes, as well as the principles which I believe to be right. I should, however, feel it much harder to stand against the powerful combination of Bishop Leadbeater (my greatest and most honored friend and benefactor for many years) and his two distinguished pupils, were I not confident of my position with regard to the real Annie Besant and her Master. In any case, I could not admit any injunctive value in Dr. Besant's private letters of 1926. Nor could I expect her or the Master to respect me if I did. Further, they belong to a period of mistaken confidence. It is curious that they should now be used (after Dr. Besant kept the matter private to the end) to implement the prophecy which they themselves mention. As to personal affection (alas that such sacred matters should come into print) I also have in my box some letters, scattered over nearly thirty years, with "My dear son" and "Affectionately yours," and mentioning "great gifts" and great expectations, but let them remain there as unsuitable for election propaganda, or indeed, for general consumption at any time.

But, fellow-members, I implore you to set aside all these personal appeals for your vote. Gather up, my friends, your intuition and your knowledge, with resolve to do what is best for the integrity and usefulness of the Theosophical Society and without regard to occult fear or favor, cast your vote as a stone into the sea of fate — not a little stone, but possibly the stone which may decide much of the future history of the Society. Take your stand on the old declaration: "He who does his best does enough for us;" but if you have not yet the courage for this, stay your hand, I say, and do not vote at all.

Adyar, November 1, 1933

ERNEST WOOD

## Biographical Notes

We feel that it is desirable to circulate some biographical notes on the personality of Prof. Ernest Wood. He joined the Society at the age of nineteen, and was soon made librarian, vice president and then president of his lodge (Manchester City), which was increased three-fold in size in a short time, chiefly by his lectures.

In 1908 he paid a visit to Adyar, and was asked to stay there and write for THE THEOSOPHIST. He has written innumerable articles, for the public press as well as the theosophical magazines, and about a dozen books which show signs of living for a long time. His *Concentration* has reached probably the largest circulation of any theosophical book except *At the Feet of the Master*. His *Memory Training*, *Character Building*, *Seven Rays*, *Science of Brotherhood*, *Natural Theosophy*, and *Intuition of the Will* are all full of originality (for which, in fact, he was given the Subba Rao prize in 1924), the last being described by one American professor as "The wisest book in the world."

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# The Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace

ONE additional milestone on the road to Permanent world peace was established through the Third International Convention for the Roerich Pact and Banner of Peace held November 17 and 18 in Washington, D. C., the first such convention to be held in this country.

Significant resolutions which should produce far-reaching results were adopted at this Convention, which met in session before representatives of 33 countries as well as delegates from important cultural institutions of the world.

Recommendations were formulated to be sent to the executives of each nation of the world, in which was strongly urged that measures by all the governments be taken to establish as inviolable and neutral at all times the cultural, religious, scientific and educational treasures of the world, in order that these be safeguarded as a permanent heritage for the common benefit of mankind and the progress of the future.

The Hon. Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, was Protector of the Convention and represented the Hon. Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, and read his message. U. S. Senator Robert L. Wagner was Honorary Chairman, while Honorary Presidents were Prof. Nicholas Roerich, creator of the Roerich Pact, who is now in the Himalayas, and Mme. Roerich.

Although Prof. Roerich was unable to be present, he sent an eloquent message to the Convention in which he urged that the world sacredly protect the creative treasures of humanity, not only in

times of formally proclaimed war but in the innumerable cases of human upheaval so tragically frequent.

Excerpts from Prof. Roerich's own stirring words follow: "If the Red Cross cares for the sick and physically wounded, our Pact protects the values of human genius, thus preserving spiritual health.

"There have been those who have asked why we think of protection, when it would apparently be simpler to stop war completely. First of all, let us agree on that which is the most simple, so that, as with the Red Cross, the Banner may significantly summon the conscience of men to the protection of that, which in essence, belongs not to one nation alone, but to the entire world and constitutes the real pride of the human race.

"But physical disarmament alone will not help. There must be a disarming of heart and spirit. Thus the World Banner of Peace, protector of the true treasures of humanity, will be a broad reminder of those forces which must be sacredly guarded as the milestones and guaranty of a radiant future.

"The Pact is a summons to one more step of cooperation, — a summons to the appreciation and cataloging of religious, artistic and scientific treasures and to the establishment of a mutual cultural respect. People understand profoundly that no official decrees alone can transform the material crisis into prosperity. For the heart of man must consent to disarmament and cooperation."

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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He also made a name in the educational field in India, having been the founder of two university colleges (attached to the government universities of Madras and Bombay), principal of one of them for three years, and a writer on the subject for half a dozen daily papers. He was honorable secretary of the Theosophical Educational Trust (which developed thirty-seven schools and colleges) from its inception in 1913 until it was handed over to The Society for the Promotion of National Education, several years later.

In India, his *An Englishman Defends Mother India*, *Occult Training of the Hindus*, and *Dancing Shiva*, show his understanding of the people and his knowledge of the philosophy and literature of the country — his first Sanskrit translation (*The Garuda Purana*) having appeared in "The Sacred Books of the Hindus" series over twenty years ago.

Though an extensive writer, Prof. Wood has not accepted royalties for any of his theosophical books, and in his lecture tours (which appeal to a thinking audience) covering nearly forty countries in all

parts of the world (except South Africa) he has rarely received more than hospitality, though sometimes a part of his traveling expenses as well. In the T. S. he has occupied various posts, his last being that of Recording Secretary since 1929.

He is a man of very simple life, just fifty years of age, of excellent physical strength, though a little short of stature (classed A-1 during the war, when he was instructor to the Electrical Company of the South Indian Defense Force), of exceptional mental ability (sometimes indeed — as at the Convention of 1925 — having exhibited the famed mental powers of the now rare Indian Ashtavadhanis) and of extensive experience in matters requiring tact and organizing ability. In addition to this he says that he feels "just at the beginning of his life." Here, we think, is the man who can take up the fallen reins of our theosophical chariot and drive it forward to great honor and triumph in the world.

SOME SUPPORTERS OF PROF. WOOD

# A Beautiful Service to the Bereaved

**W**ITH the hope of drawing others into a work of far-reaching importance, I outline briefly a particular phase of my own theosophical experience.

About ten years ago, while living in one of the large cities of the United States, I found, after years of search, the Ancient Wisdom and the Theosophical Society. Doubtless, my experience in those early days would be paralleled by the vast majority — constant study, questioning and a great happiness in having at last found the source of wisdom. In due course, however, there came an intense desire to live, not merely understand, Theosophy. The words of the Master, "It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow," troubled me. I knew that I must find some means of daily broadcasting the Ancient Wisdom.

One evening I came upon Bishop Leadbeater's little booklet, "To Those Who Mourn." The very title signified a great need, a period of questioning and maximum susceptibility to truth. I visioned persons being reached who would not otherwise hear of the local lodge of the Theosophical Society and who, even if they did hear, would probably not come to a meeting. Having at least some knowledge, also, of the earth-binding effect of mourning on incarnate souls, I foresaw a great service to the departed, a happier world above, a happier world below. Finally, there seemed no doubt that daily mailings of copies of this masterly-written little booklet would satisfy my urge to make my theosophical life intensely practical.

I commenced with the mailing of one booklet a day. As time went on I increased the daily number, and also, through the cooperation of Headquarters, enclosed with each the pamphlet "Reincarnation — Do We Live on Earth Again?" Since it was a daily duty (and pleasure) and since I lived in a large city, strangers were the addressees. I had no means of determining whether or not the literature was favorably received, helped to relieve sorrow or imparted knowledge. But I had implicit confidence in the result, and the daily activity brought happiness.

After several years I moved to a city in western Canada, where the work was immediately continued, and again fifteen months later, to a larger Canadian City, with increased opportunity for extending the service. By this time I had become convinced that my business opportunities were rather inseparably connected with my theosoph-

ical work, that my craving for change and diversity of experience was being realized because I was cooperating with the powers behind the throne of life.

Several years ago I sponsored the founding of the mythical organization (mythical to the extent that there is really no personnel organization) of the "To-Those-Who-Mourn" Club, for the purpose of broadening the scope of this work. While other Theosophists have not entered upon the work as enthusiastically as I should like, distinct progress has been made, and I hope this appeal may enlist the aid of others.

To you who have not yet found a satisfying form of theosophical service and who would like to be "the sweet presence of a good diffused and in diffusion ever more intense," join with me in this efficacious work. Many of the questions which I know you would like to ask before commencing the work have been anticipated in a form letter, which Headquarters at Wheaton will mail upon request. Just one word of warning. If you must know the results of your work and in order to determine it, insist upon putting your name on the booklets, do not commence it, since you will thereby destroy a great part of the work, not only for the recipient but also for yourself. Absence of knowledge of the sender on the part of the bereaved person will obviate personal considerations and hasten examination. Likewise, the sender will avoid the disappointment that is sure to result from a small proportion of reactions received; and, of more importance, one soon becomes an unconscious believer in the efficacy of "casting bread upon the waters" and the universality of friendship through eliminating the personal reference. Be content, therefore, to add, "with sympathy," in ink, on the cover of the booklet and change the opening salutation from "Brother" to "Friend," and be happy in the knowledge that you have done good, leaving reward to the Lords of Karma.

The "To-Those-Who-Mourn" Club beckons you to a service of far-reaching importance. "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

SAGITTARIUS

P. S. — While I like the nom de plume of Sagittarius, and the idea of the individual remaining in the background in this work, if anyone doubts that Sagittarius is a real person, a letter forwarded through Headquarters will be personally answered.





# The Greater America Plan

## From the Field Director

A happy New Year to you all! May wealth of heart and mind prevent the discomforts of a crumbling economic system from giving us a poverty complex, which is worse than any physical poverty. May in the midst of rapid changes the Peace of the Eternal abide in us, and may the Power that works for righteousness guide all our efforts.

The Greater America Plan has lived through one-third of a year and while it may be too rash to pass judgment on its value now, we may safely state our mere impressions. These are two-fold: First, as a general stimulant the Plan has proved remarkably effective. To many lodges it has really opened a new lease on life, a new era of intense activity. Second, the cultural achievement which the Plan envisages is an ideal that can be but slowly realized. The basic need is for a spirit of constructive discontent with present achievement, which should lead us to revise our methods, one and all, in the impartial light of their effectiveness to reach the ends desired. We shall find then that those ends themselves need clearer definition; also that many of our methods are ill adapted to their purposes. For instance, lodge work for our members: What are its aims? How do we seek to accomplish them? With what regard for the tremendously divergent backgrounds of our members? With what regard for their awakened and their latent potentialities? With what regard for the new members, as well as for the "seasoned" ones; for young and old?

It seems to me that we cannot and should not try to give a uniform reply even to the first of these heart-searching questions. So much depends on the actual situation that prevails in any given lodge. Some will be doing well if they can study and discuss Theosophy together; others may launch a splendid program of educational or other cultural or social activities; perhaps in cooperation with first-class local agencies and experts, and with constant, competent reviewing of all that is done in the light of theosophical principles. But *all* should try to do the *best* they can, which is usually better than what they are actually doing. So few seem to possess the courage of self-criticism, of clearly facing their own limitations. But what of it? Can there be any harm in recognizing one's own limitations, defects, even faults, for people who are thoroughly convinced of the omnipotence of the divine life deep within them; who know therefore that all their imperfections are merely *stages* of

life's endless self-realization; and that each stage must be completely mastered before the next can be achieved?

Of course Headquarters will aid. We are about to launch the first few chapters of the projected Lodge Handbook, which will be a real help to many officers. But Headquarters cannot do what each lodge must do for itself: take hold of itself and mold its functioning "nearer to the heart's desire." The attitude of "someone-else-will-do-it" is one of the most dangerous maladies from which lodges suffer. For instance, in *every* lodge we visited we asked politely for a brief lodge history; so that the value of the experience gained in using different policies and methods might be utilized by us at Headquarters for the compiling of the Handbook. But lo! How many have so far complied with such a sensible request? I dare not publish the appalling figure; but those who made promises will know whether they were kept. There is no short cut to perfection in any work; it is reached only by a ceaseless renewal of effort.

All this applies with special force to a work inaugurated in many lodges under the stimulus of the Greater America Plan, the H. P. B. Training Class. The finest form cannot be proof against a dismal failure if the class is unintelligently or unsympathetically conducted. Its leadership, whether single or collective, must be above any suspicion of self-centered ambition; but it must also have — or by a definite effort *acquire* — a knowledge and wise use of fundamental rules of platform speaking, such as can be obtained in any public library. Otherwise the class is likely to be rather futile.

The really delightful part of it all is that goodwill, self-criticism and steady effort on the part of all of us will make us irresistible! If we let none of our mistakes dishearten us, but take from them the wisdom they conceal, our work will become ever more successful. But the one supreme condition for that consummation is that we shall *pull together* and *do* that which we find it possible to do, along the lines suggested by the experience of the past, and (even more so) by the vision of the future. Let us make 1934 a year of splendid, genuine achievement toward a greater Section, toward a greater Nation and therefore toward a happier World.

## Greater America Plan Honor Roll

Oak Park Lodge, Chicago  
Los Angeles Lodge

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The gods need many a noble man to do their work on earth, they count on me and you.—Goethe.

# Personal Opinions

By L. W. ROGERS

## What About War?

How can war between the nations be avoided? By first renouncing the desire to win the advantage. Some form of selfishness is always at the bottom of *any* trouble. If nations could be turned from the statesman's game of getting the best of all other nations and settle down to the important problem of the greatest possible prosperity for *all* the peoples of the earth, there would then be no reason for armaments because there would be nothing to fight about.

It is quite useless, however, to delude ourselves with the hope that the intensive nationalism of the present moment will quickly give way to the sentiment of the world-wide human welfare; and that leaves us facing an interesting situation. On one hand the advocates of preparedness are demanding more armament and military training; on the other hand, growing pacifist organizations are opposing both. If the pacifist sentiment could grow in all the nations, including Germany and Japan, to a majority public opinion it would, of course, finally put an end to war. But the trouble with much of the pacifist sentiment is that it thinks of *arms in themselves* as the cause of war. They may, indeed, make war more probable, but the *cause* is, of course, the enmities generated by the various forms of selfishness. Recognizing that fact we pacifists should be exceedingly busy in cultivating goodwill between the nations and between individuals everywhere. Whether the national naval and military efficiency should be increased by ten per cent has far less to do with avoiding war than decreasing the world's annual crop of jealousies and enmities by one per cent. It is vitally important that all who understand the underlying unity of the human race shall be active in emphasizing the brotherhood of man, and in pointing out the fact that the very process of evolution must weld the nations into the commonwealth of the world. We can hasten the day by cooperating with nature.

## Good Things Elsewhere

The intense nationalism that so seriously retards the evolutionary movement toward the establishment of the commonwealth of the world is a most interesting thing to the student of human nature.

The race spent a long time in building up the "I" consciousness, so perhaps it is not strange that it is now difficult to think in terms of the "not-I." Nevertheless it has moved forward from the individual to the family, from the family to the tribe, from the tribe to the nation. As a matter of course it must go on from the nation to the commonwealth of the world and a good place to begin the work of building up race consciousness is with *ourselves*. How many American citizens have we who do not think that the United States leads the world in all that is desirable in civilization? How many who do not think that most other nations are "slow" and "behind the times?" How many who do not feel offended when the truth is told about our national defects and unique misdemeanors? Instead of thinking always of our national superiority it is good practice to observe the things in which other nations excel us in various matters and often in the lines in which we are leaders.

Here are a few items observed in various foreign countries: An electrical device for switching railway cars directly *across* the tracks so that a car can be shifted at right angles across a dozen tracks in a few moments instead of being hauled to a distant switch and then being brought back to the designated track; windows in which hinged panes can be opened high up and moderate ventilation secured without moving either window sash. In the United States we wait for a street car in a crowd and when it comes we swarm on it in mob style, the strongest and rudest having the advantage. England is a step ahead of us with a simple railing about three feet high where the crowd lines up. Those who have waited longest are at the head of the line and very properly are first on the car. If anybody is left he will be first for the next car. France is a step ahead of England. Printed numbers are on a post. Each arrival tears off one. No line is necessary and your number gives your correct place. In America when an illegitimate mother disposes of the baby she cannot keep she leaves it on somebody's doorstep. In India she takes it to a foundling's home where she can place it in a cradle without being observed, push a button that rings a distant bell and quietly depart with the knowledge that the baby will have immediate attention. That device has probably saved many a life.

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If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he seen all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.—W. Blake.

# The Inner Life

By CLARA M. CODD

## *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*

Patanjali now describes the obstacles to meditation and the best means for their removal. The main obstacles are nine in number.

**30. The obstacles, such because they exist with mental modification and in their absence do not exist, are:**

1. Bodily disability, such as disease or ill-health.
2. Mental inertia, dullness, lethargy, lack of interest.
3. Irresolution, doubt, wrong questioning.
4. Carelessness, light-mindedness.
5. Laziness, sloth.
6. The desire for material and sensuous things, worldly-mindedness.
7. Erroneous perception, mistaken ideas.
8. Lack of insight and inability to concentrate.
9. Instability of mind, failure to hold the right attitude.



Clara M. Codd

Let us consider each of these nine in detail. From time immemorial in the East perfect bodily health has been the first prerequisite for the practice of Yoga. Concentrated Yoga practices bring about an awakening of higher faculties and supernormal powers. Unless the will is strong, the mind serene and selfless, and the body in a state of perfect equilibrium and health, these faculties will be distorted and warped in their manifestation. The Brahman caste of India are in an ideal situation in this respect. For centuries they have followed very strict rules of diet and living, and have also never intermarried outside their caste. Hence in many cases a body sensitive and pure beyond the generality of mankind. This is one reason why the very advanced and extreme methods of Yoga from the East are not suited to the Western make-up with its very different heredity. Yet even in the lower reaches of meditation, a healthy body will be of great assistance. It is quite evident that pain or discomfort will inevitably distract the mind from the full contemplation of the great object in view. We must learn to disentangle our consciousness from the body, to "forget it," and this cannot well be done if there is dullness, fatigue, pain or discomfort to keep our attention continually called back. If those who meditate find pain and ill-health interfering with their endeavors, it is best not to attempt too much, but to simply place oneself in the presence of God or the Master and to rest there. A bodily infirmity such as being crippled

or blind will not hinder meditation. In some cases it may even help.

The second obstacle is a mental one, an attitude of mind, and presupposes either lack of evolution, or that the inner awareness and interest have not yet been awakened.

The third is also another habit of mind. There are some natures who have so deeply ingrained the habit of seeing all sides of a question that they can never bring themselves to any decision. In the high adventure of occultism, as in the smaller quests of life, unswerving vision of a goal and a one-pointed endeavor to reach it are necessary. Sometimes the real root of indecision is a form of selfishness; the fear that we shall not make a decision which will bring the best results to ourselves. But even if the result is not the most fortunate, the attempt to decide and to see has evolved capacity and wisdom. Life is after all a continual round of choices, and only by our own choosing can we grow and evolve. "Wrong questioning" means the unduly critical frame of mind, which doubts and questions the whole time and cannot remain stable for a moment. This habit of mind is again the result of exaggerated self. It is very much in evidence in certain forms of mental instability which are always the fruit of temporarily exaggerated ego.

The fourth explains itself. If we do not really care, if we "never think," we cannot by any possible means tread the path of Yoga. Neither can we if we allow our body to develop habits of laziness and sloth. Unless a symptom of ill-health, laziness is a habit. It is well for us to keep alive all life through the faculty of effort. Dr. Besant once told us to try always to do something more, not something greatly beyond our powers, but something just ahead of them. Initiative and endurance are valuable faculties.

With regard to the sixth, the lessening pull of attraction for worldly things will turn the forces of our desire nature in another direction. As we begin to glimpse the beauties of the inner life, the outer will lose some of its attractiveness. We shall learn to "sit loose" about things, to be big and philosophic. What a fuss we sometimes make when we lose some little thing, or forego some petty advantage! Old Epictetus had a lovely way of dealing with that frame of mind. He told his people to say to themselves that they had *given it back*.

Erroneous ideas are very difficult to deal with. They cause insuperable barriers in the mental sheath. The Master K. H. says in a letter to

(Concluded on Next Page)



# Common Sense Talks

By SIDNEY A. COOK

## On The Dark Powers

On this subject I must confess that I write without direct knowledge. I cannot honestly make any claim to being sufficiently important to come under the notice of the Dark Powers, though some with whom I have disagreed may, in their opinion, have attributed my difference of view to those malignant influences which only the Brotherhood of the Shadow are supposed to wield.

From a purely common sense standpoint, the ordinary person may be sure that he is just as safe from the special consideration of the Dark Forces as he is from the special consideration of the members of the Great White Brotherhood itself. They are all too busy to bother with the little things with which we are concerned. Only as we make of ourselves fit instruments for the helping of the world, whole-heartedly, in utter abandonment to selfless service, do we come to the special attention of the Great Ones. Not until we begin to make ourselves felt as instruments of Their will are we likely to meet anyone who represents the opposing Brotherhood. The Brothers of the Shadow have no interest in petty squabbles, personal differences and minor misunderstandings. They direct their efforts to offset the progress of the Great Plan, and unless we are contributing greatly to its consummation, we may be sure they are ignoring us.

At those points where the Plan is most ably and most understandingly directed, they concentrate their powers against those who are powerful for good, and unless we are outstandingly great, we may be sure that nothing but a tremendous pride would ever make us feel that the Dark Forces are arrayed against us.

How foolish for individuals in the ordinary walks of life or the ordinary channels of theosophical service, to suppose that a brother who disagrees is actuated by powers or forces darker than those within themselves. Is it not likely to be just as true that in opposing the opinion of someone else we are the agent of the Dark Forces? Or is our opinion necessarily so superior?

Are we not compelled to the conclusion that for the ordinary person (and we are as yet all ordinary) the Black Forces do not exist? We may rest safely in the comforting thought that until we cease to see them lurking in the aura of every opponent of our own small plans and ideas, we shall never be big enough to attract their notice and may dismiss them entirely from our thoughts until we have won the favor of their attention by becoming completely brotherly, kindly and tolerant, in the innermost depths of our being, toward all of those whom we have looked upon as their agents and our inferiors.

## THE INNER LIFE

(Continued from Page 16)

Mr. Sinnett that He can take away from His pupils any undesirable magnetism which may come in the lower bodies from contact with the world fairly easily, but not the evil magnetism which occurs in the higher sheaths from erroneous ideas and conceptions. The Master M. also says with regard to a young pupil of His who had been brought up by the Jesuits, that the deformation of the boy's mind would never be got over in the present incarnation. How blessed should we then consider ourselves who have had the light of Theosophy brought to us. In the religious world of today there still remains many a hideous conception of Deity, and a consequent dwarfing and crippling of the human spirit. We might well, in some cases, paraphrase the words of Madame Roland, spoken on her way to execution, and say, "Religion, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

The last two also explain themselves. Insight and steadiness of mind are the result of patient endeavor to meditate and concentrate. No advance in Yoga is possible without them. And even

when a position of elevation and insight is reached, we allow it to escape and dissipate in the turmoil of the ordinary world. To be successful in Yoga a man must have that aim at the back of his mind all the time. All events and aims must bow to it. He must use them all in the service of his supreme quest. H. P. B. says: "The student must make all his desires lean to, and center upon, the acquirement of spiritual knowledge, so that the natural tendency of his thought may be in that direction. He must, therefore, in every moment of leisure revert to these subjects, as well as have a special time set apart for their consideration." And she also tells us that we should acquire the habit of careful and constant concentration of mind upon every duty and act in life. The occultist becomes a trained and capable actor in the common drama of life. He is never vague and inefficient. The Master calls it "a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts."

Next month we will consider the different means given by Patanjali for the removal of the obstacles.

## Section News and Notes

### *We Welcome Colonel Wylde*

Negotiations have finally been completed with our friend from New England, Lieutenant-Colonel L. F. Wylde, who will arrive in New York City from Southampton on January 4 to bring to our Section his own fine abilities as lecturer and teacher.

Colonel Wylde's experience and training as a Theosophist have been closely correlated with his many years as an officer in the Indian Army where his opportunities included not only the very practical approach of an army officer, both on the Punjab frontier and also in later years in the Military Accounts Department under the Finance Department of the government of India, but also valuable contacts with students of the finer teachings of Theosophy with whom he had personal association.

As student, but also as lecturer and teacher, Colonel Wylde took an active part, not infrequently in the office of president, in a number of lodges in India. His theosophical life has been further enriched by personal acquaintance with Dr. Besant with whom, on one occasion, he had the privilege of making a tour.

Following his retirement several years ago, Colonel Wylde has lived in England and there has made a place for himself particularly in class work, but also as public lecturer.

Colonel Wylde comes to us with the friendliest messages from abroad, and on his own part with an eager desire to be splendidly helpful to us. That he will succeed, there is no doubt and that we shall greatly enjoy him is equally certain.

### *Dr. Arundale Appointed Vice President*

Mr. A. P. Warrington, president pro tem of the Theosophical Society, has appointed Dr. George S. Arundale to the office of vice president, to serve in that capacity for the interim pending the election.

### *A Word of Appreciation*

Mr. Cook, Miss Snodgrass and the Headquarters staff gratefully acknowledge the many lovely cards of greeting received at Christmas time. The kind thoughts expressed in these messages contributed much to the happiness of the season.

### *Your Directory Blank—Please!*

Many members have yet to send us their directory blanks. Please send them at once so we may go forward with the compilation of the data for the Greater America Plan.

### *Miss Codd General Secretary in Australia*

With the beginning of 1934 a true friend of the American Section, Miss Clara Codd, is to be the General Secretary of the Australian Section. To Miss Codd we send our loving good wishes and heartiest congratulations for this greater opportunity of service, and to our friends of Australia we extend no less hearty congratulations in having the leadership of one so fine and true and wise as Miss Codd, for we know of no one who brings so deep a sense of the reality of the Masters and there is no greater gift than this to contribute to any Section.

### *A Wedding at Headquarters*

Miss Blanche Krauss and Mr. Egmont M. Reed, members of Headquarters staff, were married on Friday evening, December 22, at five o'clock. The ceremony took place in the library at Olcott, with the Rev. Albert F. Hardcastle, also a member of the staff, officiating. The wedding was most beautiful and impressive, with the library attractively arranged for the occasion, and the whole building looking its loveliest, dressed in gay Christmas decorations. The music, too, including the dignified Wedding March from "Lohengrin," contributed much to the beauty of the ceremony.

A delightful wedding supper followed. Silver bells hung over the table, which was decorated in old rose and lovely white flowers and candles, and of course there was a huge wedding cake in the center. At the conclusion of the meal it was announced that a trunk had arrived for Mr. and Mrs. Reed. A miniature trunk containing a gift for the bride and groom was then brought into the dining room and presented to them.

We wish these two splendid young people much happiness in their married life, and we are glad that they are still to be with us at Olcott.

### *Current Dues Will Reinstate*

We remind our members that our By-Laws provide that members who have been inactive may reinstate by paying dues for the current year only. This should encourage those who, having got far behind during the depression, now see the brightness of the dawn of returning prosperity, with all obligations cancelled except dues for one year.

While we hope that many will presently make up all that the Society has lost by their misfortunes, we shall welcome the payment for just one year and gladly record the reinstatement of membership.

### *Theosophical Order of Service*

The Theosophical Order of Service begins the year 1934 with a new Chief Brother. Mr. Robert Logan of Eddington, Pennsylvania, who has ably served the Order for five years in the capacity of Head Brother for Animal Welfare, will take charge of the entire program of T. O. S. work in the United States. It is expected that his very competent assistant, Miss Mabel Zimmers, will take over the Animal Welfare work, and no doubt his complete cabinet of National Heads will be announced very shortly.

Will all local head brothers and workers rally about Mr. Logan and give him loyal support? And will all those who wish to establish Service groups — healing groups, peace groups, animal welfare groups, health groups, etc. — write, wire or see Mr. Logan? There is a tradition in our T. O. S. family which runs, "When all others fail you in time of need, try Robert Logan!"

MAX WARDALL

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

### *Mr. Wood's Candidacy*

Members have commented on the fact that our previous issue, carrying the notice of Mr. Wood's presidential candidacy, did not give more space to publicity on his behalf. The answer is a very simple one. Mr. Wood sent a brief notice of his nomination and stated that he was sending a manifesto. No copy reached us, however, but we have obtained one by wiring to a friend, and are therefore enabled to include it in this issue.

### *Auditor Wanted*

Is there in the Society, in or near Chicago, a member who is a public accountant and who would care to give his services for the purpose of auditing the Society accounts? Someone near Chicago could give week-ends and evenings. If anyone out of Chicago has the time to spare, we would gladly give him residence at Olcott during the period of the audit. Write Headquarters.

### *Bulletin of Lodge Activities*

The Bulletin of Lodge Activities is intended to serve as a medium of exchange for practical ideas and live methods which have been tried by our lodges and found to bring good results. The first issue of this bulletin carried the announcement that it could continue only as long as new ideas and developments were sent in to Headquarters for distribution. If you wish to keep this service alive and useful you must see that the necessary material is supplied, by reporting to us the various plans and methods that have contributed to the success of your lodge work.

### *The Christmas Fund*

The suggestion that every member should contribute one dollar as a Christmas gift to Olcott has brought us evidence that very many members read our magazine quite thoroughly. Even January will not be too late for a Christmas gift to Olcott, so please send in your dollar bills. They will be just as useful in 1934. We like to know that our magazine is read.

### *New Reading Course*

Opportunity for registration in the new reading course in *Theosophy and Art* will be held open until January 15. Send your dollar registration fee and your name and address at once to Headquarters at Wheaton for enrollment in this unusually interesting course.

### *A Staff Change*

On December 16 Headquarters bid farewell to two members of its official family, Mr. Theo. Illmann and his wife, Mrs. Vera Illmann, who have been with us since last April and who now find it necessary to return to their home in Germany. A lovely dinner party was given for them by the staff on December 15.

We are sorry to lose Mr. and Mrs. Illmann. Our good wishes go with them.

### *Michigan Federation*

On Sunday, December 3, Lansing Lodge acted as host to the Michigan Federation when it held its thirty-third quarterly meeting. Inclement weather kept away many who otherwise would have been there, but a most delightful and inspiring time was had by those able to attend.

The occasion was one of great rejoicing for the Lansing Lodge, a happiness shared by every member present, for it marked the opening of their newly enlarged headquarters, a fine suite of rooms, centrally situated (almost in the shadow of the Michigan capitol building), well arranged, artistically decorated and beautifully furnished. Lansing now has a headquarters and a membership which admirably reflect the spirit of the Greater America Plan.

In the morning, forum and business meetings were held, and immediately following, the new hall was dedicated at a ceremony performed by the president of the Federation, Mr. E. Norman Pearson. In the afternoon Prof. Charles W. Chapman gave a lecture on "Vibrations." The lecture was accompanied by stereopticon illustrations and experiments. In the evening Mr. Pearson lectured on "The Modern Renaissance of Christianity."

### New England Federation

An enthusiastic gathering of thirty members, representing Annie Besant Lodge — Boston, Hartford, Springfield and Holyoke lodges, gathered together on December 17 at the Victoria Hotel in Boston for their second Federation meeting. Following the vegetarian luncheon the meeting was called to order by the president, Mr. Lindsay E. Haines; and Miss Emma Mills, president of the lodge in Boston, then extended a cordial welcome to the Federation delegates. Reports were given by each lodge, indicating the encouragement resulting from the Federation organization and particularly welcoming Miss Anita Henkel among the members.

The members were keenly appreciative of the gift of Miss Mills, the phonograph records of addresses by Bishop Leadbeater and Dr. and Mrs. Arundale, which were played and much enjoyed.

Miss Anita Henkel was the guest of the day and in addition to presenting the Greater America Plan to the members, she gave a talk on "Theosophy — A Way of Life" and in the evening a lecture, "Our Dynamic Powers," which was greatly enjoyed.

The evening concluded with a social hour and the singing of Christmas carols.

The occasion was splendidly helpful and will be felt in the New England lodges in their greatly increased power to accomplish.

### My Job at Headquarters

I have been at Headquarters about a year and a half. But should I leave tomorrow, I know that I should carry with me the knowledge that this relatively small section of my life has been a most enlightening, stirring and inspiring period. One doesn't live here at Olcott without such an experience. It is happiness indeed to be here and see the Great Plan at work even unto oneself.

Upon my arrival, I was put to work as janitor in the place of Mr. Snell, who was temporarily dismissed from work because of illness. Since his return, my duties have been many and widely varied in nature. Among other things, I am in charge of the mimeograph work and the mailing list for our magazine, *THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST*. Work on the mailing list is done in the Record Office, where I also correct addresses on the members' record cards and do some of the filing and mailing. Mr. Bolton and I divide the chauffeur service. Occasional repairing of the car and truck has become my duty, enabling me to put into practice my knowledge of mechanics. I also hold myself in readiness to undertake other tasks which I am from time to time called upon to do.

Every Theosophist knows that he has a service to render as a part of the Masters' work, but here at Headquarters, one seems more directly in touch with it; and I sincerely hope that the work that I am doing is of real value to Them.

E. M. REED.

### Itineraries

#### LECTURERS

##### *Bishop Charles Hampton*

January 3, Chicago, Ill.  
January 4-6, Detroit, Mich.  
January 7-10, Cleveland, Ohio.  
January 11, 12, Buffalo, N. Y.  
January 14-21, New York, N. Y.  
January 22, Syracuse, N. Y.  
January 24-26, Omaha, Neb.

##### *Mr. L. W. Rogers*

January 2-11, Miami, Fla.  
January 14-27, St. Petersburg, Fla.  
January 28-February 9, Jacksonville, Fla.

##### *Colonel L. F. Wylde*

January 6-20, Baltimore, Md.  
January 21-26, Philadelphia, Pa.  
February 2-4, Cleveland, Ohio.

#### FIELD WORKERS

##### *Miss Anita Henkel*

January 5-7, Paterson, N. J.  
January 8-10, Montclair, N. J.  
January 11-13, Newark, N. J.  
January 14-18, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
January 22-25, Richmond, Va.  
January 26-31, Norfolk, Va.

##### *Dr. Nina E. Pickett*

January 1-13, St. Petersburg, Fla.  
January 14-28, Miami, Fla.

#### FIELD DIRECTOR

##### *Dr. Pieter K. Roest*

January 4-6, Baltimore, Md.  
January 7-12, Washington, D. C.  
January 13-15, Philadelphia, Pa.  
January 16-18, New York, N. Y.  
January 22-February 9, New England Federation.

### A Radio Talk

Our members will be interested to know that Mr. Warren Watters gave a fifteen-minute radio talk in Omaha recently on *The First American Without a Church*, in which the fascinating and beautiful story was told of how the Great Spirit gave their religion to the Chippewa Indians. It reveals to the Theosophist the coming of another messenger of the Great White Lodge.

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### Christmas Dollars

We sincerely appreciate the Christmas dollars that have been sent in as gifts to Headquarters, and we extend our cordial thanks to the members who have thus contributed to the success of our work.

### Do You Read The American Theosophist?

We are soon going to give our members a special opportunity of telling us what they think of this magazine, whether they read it thoroughly, what attracts them most, what they disregard, what additions they would like, what exclusions, what changes in format, type and contents. Please, therefore, remember as you read, that you may have something to tell us when the opportunity is given.

### Warning

A number of our members are being approached by a young man writing from the Pacific Coast seeking to borrow money and giving the names of other members as references, among them some resident at Headquarters. No such request should be acceded to on the strength of any such reference until that reference has been checked, nor on the strength of any claim to membership in the Society.

It would be helpful if all such requests were referred to Headquarters so that the extent of the campaigns that some of these people conduct might be known.

There is an individual traveling among our lodges and writing to our members claiming to be a released prisoner who contacted Theosophy in prison. He has even been to Headquarters, but was unable to present any credentials or verify any of his statements and he quickly left when met with an insistent demand for verification of his claims.

Generosity does not consist in permitting oneself to be victimized by the unscrupulous.

### Founders Day Fund

Total.....\$134.80

### Helping Hand Fund

Total.....\$25.00

### Christmas Fund

Total.....\$17.00

### Prison Literature Fund

Total.....\$2.00

### A. M. O. R. C.

There was recently issued on behalf of this organization what purported to be a summary of the proceedings in a California court in which the organization was granted a judgment of \$1.00 against certain non-resident publishers. We understand that an answer to this is to be issued by one or more of those against whom the judgment was obtained and that more of the story will then be told.

Apropos of this, we have understood that the true and original Rosicrucian Order is confined to a very small group of very high initiate occultists, some of whom are not resident on the physical plane. We are quite sure that the initiations of this true and original order do not involve a coin of the realm exchange.

### New Members from November 21 to December 20

Applications for membership during the above period were received from the following cities: Oakland, Calif.; Des Moines, Iowa; San Antonio, Texas; Glendale, Calif.; Boston, Mass.; Washington, D. C.; Hartford, Conn.; Houston, Texas; Chicago, Ill.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Santa Monica, Calif.; Ft. Madison, Iowa; Oklahoma City, Okla.; Aberdeen, So. Dakota; Portland, Ore.; Toledo, Ohio; Birmingham, Ala.; Casper, Wyo.; Hollywood, Calif.; New Orleans, La.; Paducah, Ky.; Denver, Colo.; New York City, N. Y.; Baltimore, Md.; Rochester, N. Y.

### Deaths

Mrs. Eliza F. Yarco, Besant-Hollywood Lodge, member since 1898, Oct. 27, 1933.

Mr. Horatio A. Warren, Chicago Lodge, November 1933.

### Birth

To Lieut. and Mrs. M. H. Burckes, Maryland Lodge, a son, Melvin Stearns, April 27, 1932.

### Marriage

Miss Blanche Krauss and Mr. Egmont M. Reed, both members of Olcott Lodge, Wheaton, and Headquarters Staff, December 22, 1933.

### American Theosophical Fund

Previous receipts.....	\$316.25
To December 15.....	38.05
	<hr/> 349.30

### Building Fund

Miss Helen Macgregor, Mrs. Kathleen Martin, Miss Jessie C. Burgess, Mrs. Donna Sherry, Mr. Ismael S. Zapata, Miss Mary Casey, Dr. Henry A. Smith, Miss Ila Fain, Miss Anna E. Kerr—Total \$41.25.

### Greater America Plan

Previous receipts.....	\$1507.65
To December 15.....	120.38
	<hr/> 1628.03

### Higher Memberships

Previous receipts.....	\$1604.45
To December 15.....	41.55
	<hr/> 1646.00

## What Lodges Are Doing

**Aurora Lodge** (Illinois) had as guest speaker on Monday, November 27, Dr. Pieter K. Roest, who spoke to members and their friends on "The Challenge of the New Era." After the talk, tea was served. On Monday, December 11, Dr. Roest gave a public lecture at the public library, which drew a large and interested crowd. His topic was "Why Are We on Earth?"

**Besant Lodge** (Cleveland) recently enjoyed a lecture by Dr. Alvin B. Kuhn on "Platonic Theosophy in the Bible." On December 6 the lodge gave its fourth annual Christmas welfare party, a special affair in which were combined a joyous reunion of friends and an ingathering of clothing, food and money for their less fortunate brothers. The auditorium and the lodge rooms were gay with Christmas decorations and glittering trees. The old familiar carols were sung and an amusing guessing game was played. The outstanding event of the evening was the skit given during the past Summer School at Olcott. Afterwards coffee, Christmas cookies and popcorn balls were served, and there was a prettily decorated table for the children, with special refreshments and toys for them. The party was voted the best of the many social gatherings of Cleveland Theosophists.

**Besant Lodge** (Tulsa) held a meeting on November 16 presided over by Mrs. James Lyon Gartner, who gave a most interesting and informative talk on the Roerich Peace Pact and Banner. Mrs. Gartner, an active worker along all artistic lines and a great admirer of the art and philosophy of Nicholas Roerich, was peculiarly able to interpret his ideals. Much interest was evinced by all who heard her and considerable discussion followed. Founders Day was celebrated at a regular members' meeting by devoting part of the time to a review of the founding of the Society and to short talks about the founders. On December 1 an astrology class was organized, under the direction of Mrs. Arthur S. Kerr, with eleven members present at the first meeting. The lodge home took on a very festive appearance on Sunday afternoon, December 3, when a Christmas tea was held. Many beautiful red candles cast a soft glow over the bright red berries and the sprigs of pine, making a lovely setting for the musical program. After tea was served, the guests lingered about the fireside to enjoy further the happy atmosphere and the first manifestation of the Christmas season. The program committee arranged for the lodge home to be open on Christmas morning and a meditation service was held hourly from 9 to 12 for those who wished to commemorate the Christmas festival in that way.

**Birmingham Lodge** celebrated Founders Day with a program dedicated to Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky and the courageous work which they did in a world very different from the world

of today. A lecture entitled "Civilization that India Needs," delivered by Colonel Olcott in 1881, was read by Mr. George H. Gell, vice president of the lodge. Following the lecture, the members discussed the problems of the early days and how the work of the Society has always been adapted to the needs of the world at any given time. It is with great regret that the lodge loses its vice president, Mr. Gell, who, with his family, sailed on November 30 to reside in England. A farewell tea in his honor was given on November 24 after a lecture by Mr. Richmond P. Wetmore, president of the lodge, on "The Universe We Live In." The new lodge quarters, undertaken through the inspiration of the Greater America Plan, have proved most satisfactory in every way. One of the most interesting uses to which they are put is their use as a meeting place for members and friends, for reading, discussion or afternoon tea. This feature lends a friendly atmosphere to the lodge and brings people into informal touch with the library. Mr. and Mrs. George Bridges have consolidated their private occult library with that of the lodge, thus doubling the number of books available to the public.

**Chicago Lodge** reports two interesting additions to its scheduled December program: A lecture by Dr. Pieter K. Roest, to which all lodges of Chicago were invited; and a two-day bazaar, with moving pictures each evening. The January program is to be a continuation of the truly educational program which the lodge has enjoyed for the past two years.

**Detroit Lodge** commemorated the founding of the Society with a very inspiring program on November 21. The meeting was opened with three lovely piano selections by Mrs. Adeline Lennon. Mr. John McDougall gave a short paper on the founding of the Society and Miss Lola Fauser told of some interesting incidents in the life of H. P. B. Mrs. Gail Wylie spoke about the life of Colonel Olcott, and Mrs. Golda Stretch narrated some of the highlights in the life of Dr. Besant. Mrs. Donna Sherry presided. The audience was inspired by listening to the phonograph records made by Dr. and Mrs. Arundale. Mr. Pearson showed moving pictures of Headquarters at Wheaton and at Adyar and also pictures of the Founders and of Dr. and Mrs. Arundale. The meeting was closed with community singing. In addition to the Wednesday and Friday evening public study classes, Mrs. Pearson conducts a Study Club on Friday afternoons for those who are unable to attend the evening classes.

**Herakles Lodge** (Chicago) presented an interesting and well attended lecture on Sunday afternoon, December 3, by Mr. Carle A. Christensen, whose subject was "The New Music." Mr. Christensen referred to the evolution being observed in



jazz music, and spoke about the modern music of the classical school. His presentation of the subject included considerable original material, and it was a worth while contribution to a subject of growing interest. Tea was served following the lecture, and a pleasant visit, interspersed with music, was enjoyed by the appreciative audience.

**Hermes Lodge** (Philadelphia) reports renewed interest on the part of both the members and the general public. Attendance at the meetings is definitely increasing. The supper and celebration on Founders Day was a distinct success and a substantial check was sent to Headquarters. The lodge has been fortunate in securing Mr. Rex Barnett for a series of lectures on Sunday evenings.

**Houston Lodge** writes that Mr. Rogers' series of lectures in Houston was a great success. The attendance was excellent, increasing from 225 to 300, many new students were added to the two study classes and a number of new members were admitted to the lodge. All of the members worked to prepare for the lectures. They held an "addressing bee" in the lodge rooms, sending out announcements and literature, and a "phoning squad" brought very good results.

**Indianapolis Lodge** had a birthday party for its president and a Thanksgiving celebration on Sunday, November 26, at the home of Mrs. Leo Fesler. Fifteen members attended, and in keeping with the spirit of Thanksgiving, each expressed his idea of one thing for which to be thankful in connection with the Indianapolis Lodge.

**Los Angeles Lodge** is very busy with the winter's work. It is the desire of the members to follow the Greater America Plan as closely as possible. They have formed an H. P. B. Training Class, which activity they have carried on for several years, and three study classes are conducted in addition to the Sunday evening musical and talk. These are all open to the public and include an afternoon "Inquirer's Class" under the guidance of Mrs. Virginia Baverstock; a Tuesday evening study class conducted by Mrs. Harriett Tuttle Bartlett; and a Friday evening class in the fundamentals of Theosophy, also under the guidance of Mrs. Baverstock. At the regular lodge meetings on Wednesday evenings, the president, Mr. Theron Winston, leads in the study of *The Secret Doctrine*. The Sunday evening "cultural" programs are in charge of the vice president, Mrs. Henrietta Kapp. The January program includes four interesting talks by members, to be preceded by a half hour of music by Mr. Howard Coombs. On November 29 the lodge had a combined celebration for Founders Day and Thanksgiving. There were beautiful autumn decorations, and fifty-eight individual birthday cakes, each carrying a lighted candle, commemorated the fifty-eighth birthday of the Society. Following the dinner, Mr. Winston read

excerpts from *The Golden Book*, after which the evening was given over to Mr. Coombs' delightful music. In addition to these activities, the lodge plans to publish a little paper each month.

**Maryland Lodge** (Baltimore) raised a portion of the amount pledged for the support of the Greater America Plan by sponsoring a card party on November 17, and the members hope to have a similar activity every month.

**Pasadena Lodge**, whose regular activities have for some time been dormant except for its circulating library, has again started activities, working along lines laid down in the Greater America Plan. The work is progressing favorably in the matter of beautifying the lodge rooms, and regular lectures are given each Wednesday evening, which have met with an encouraging response from the public. A class in elementary Theosophy is projected for the immediate future, with more advanced classes at an early date. Some interesting plans for the attraction of young people are in the process of being formed, from which good results are confidently expected.

**St. Louis Lodge** announces that a new class in Bible interpretation was started on November 20, with an enrollment of sixty-four. The lessons are designed to cover the three principal phases of theosophical interpretations of the Old and New Testaments — the occult, astrological and spiritual. Each lesson is largely complete and is furnished also in pamphlet form for home study. A new record of ninety-nine members attending a regular weekly meeting was reached in November. A delightful Christmas party was sponsored by the young people of the lodge on December 16.

**St. Paul Lodge** collected fifteen dollars in pennies at a "Penny Party" recently. During the month of November the members saved pennies and brought them to the party, and the amount collected was applied to the Greater America Plan pledge. About 150 people attended a dinner and program given by the lodge on Founders Day. Bishop Hampton has just completed a most successful lecture series in St. Paul.

**San Antonio Lodge** had a special meeting on November 29 for the initiation of four new members coming in at the close of Dr. Pickett's month of lecturing and class work in San Antonio. Dr. Pickett conducted the initiation and gave a members' talk, which was followed by refreshments and a social hour. The lodge is happy over the result of Dr. Pickett's work. The attendance at the two public lectures and at the two classes kept steady all during the month, with an average of one hundred at the evening meetings and sixty at afternoon classes.

Mail copy for the above columns not later than the 15th of the month.





# The Round Table

**RAY W. HARDEN**  
EDITOR

Chief Knight for America  
Order of the Round Table

Address: P. O. Box 690    San Jose, California

A League of Young People  
Banded Together for Service

Motto: "Live pure; speaks true; right wrong;  
follow the King."

Protector.....**DR. ANNIE BESANT**

Pages: 7 to 11 years                Squires: 18 to 20

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Official organ: **MODERN KNIGHTHOOD.**

A Newspaper by Young Citizens of America

Subscription Price.....\$1.00 per year

It is said that if a new publication can pull through its first year, it is established and has good chances for permanent success. The Round Table paper, MODERN KNIGHTHOOD, is now six months old, and faces a serious crisis. Friends who come to its aid at this time will be promoting one of the most valuable agencies for advancement of our humanity through theosophical education of young Americans.

MODERN KNIGHTHOOD, as a youth newspaper, has made a favorable impression upon the public and is rendering service to the Theosophical Society as well as to the Round Table Order on behalf of young people in America and other nations. Its simplified lessons in Theosophy have attracted widespread attention and unusual interest, as have its other excellent features and illustrations. Its youthful publishers will show their appreciation of all support given, by still further increase in the usefulness of the paper.

Beginning with the year 1934, we hope to have all Tables accurately recorded at Round Table headquarters. Several groups have been meeting and carrying out various knightly activities, but are not connected with the Order. This is harmful to the progress of the movement because it deprives the Order of good effects always obtained by high national standing.

Often the efficiency and power of the Order depend upon a strong membership showing. In prison relief work, juvenile court and other activities, we have repeatedly been able to enforce justice, obtain mercy and fair consideration for oppressed and persecuted people (older ones as well as children) because we are a "national organization."

The larger our registered membership, the more of such work we can do — and the more effectively we can do it. Therefore every group that can be regarded as a Table, adds to its own service by sending in the list of members with name and address of its leader; also time and place of meeting.

Please do not hesitate because the members, or some of them, are not able to pay the small annual fee of 50 cents (adults \$1.00). The matter of funds is very helpful, of course, but the point of real importance is *more strength of numbers* in the ranks of American Knighthood.

To report a group costs nothing. We supply the Table Report blanks free. Application blanks for each member are free. Folders and full information for conducting meetings and activities are all free, and contain most helpful suggestions. Those able to pay the small yearly membership may do so. However, we make no difference in privileges for children who are unable to pay — in fact we are often able to benefit them in various ways.

No one except the Leading Knight of the Table need ever know who pays and who does not pay. This is strictly confidential. Those not paying receive certificates and cards and everything that is sent out to our knightly members.

Anyone conducting a class or group of young people is privileged to affiliate with the American Round Table Order. Their activities and studies may be continued as they are, or as they may wish to make them. There are no "hard and fast" rules. The Round Table encourages originality and freedom.

The only difference will be an added inspiration and interest which the cooperating group receives through this act of brotherhood — plus the encouragement and strength which they themselves will be giving to the Round Table Order as a national unit.

In the same way, persons who are not conveniently located to join a group, may add their strength and power to the efforts of American Knighthood by sending in their enrollments as "Supporting Knights," the dues for this class being the same, \$1.00 per year. For this they receive special papers and lessons and other interesting features direct from headquarters, including knightly certificates. No formal application is required — just a letter or note, enclosing dues with name and address. Send to ORDER OF THE ROUND TABLE, BOX 690, San Jose, Calif.

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## THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST

# BOOK REVIEWS



To have JUST THE BOOK ONE WANTS when one wants it, is and must remain the supreme luxury of the cultivated life.

*India in Transition*, by D. Graham Pole. Hogarth Press, London, England. Price, cloth \$3.50.

So many books have been written on India in recent years, both Englishmen and Indians giving prejudiced and extreme views according to their individual consideration of the subject, it is refreshing to read this impartial account of events as they have happened in India since the World War. The author is fair to both sides, and with his long experience in Indian affairs sees clearly the mistakes that have been made as well as the actions where good judgement has prevailed. He is in favor of self-government for India and writes strongly upon the necessity for it; for instance, "Great Britain is pledged up to the hilt by her Sovereign and her various governments to prepare India for self-government and to hand over the government to her own nationals at the earliest possible moment." At the same time he sees difficulties in connection with handing over to Indians the administration of government in their own country, for India presents a whole series of problems. This book should be well studied in order to understand what these difficulties are, for the author conveys to the reader an emphatic impression of accuracy, impartiality and a balanced criticism of the whole problematical situation.—MAUDE LAMBART-TAYLOR.

*The Problem of Lemuria—The Sunken Continent of the Pacific*, by Lewis Spence. David McKay Company, Philadelphia, Pa. Price, cloth \$3.50.

In his preface the author speaks of the "myth" of Lemuria, but the term is evidently a concession to an uninstructed public opinion, for he proceeds in a very efficient and interesting manner to prove that he regards the question as anything but a "myth," by bringing forward a mass of evidence as to the actual existence of the sunken continent, the character of the peoples who occupied its vast extent and the astonishing level of civilization attained by them as shown by the remnants of the marvelous engineering feats accomplished by them. There is a chapter on that fascinating, mysterious island known as "Easter Island," with its huge statues in all stages of completion from the first hewing out of the living rock—a tremendously hard porphyritic granite—to the finished work lying ready on the shore for transportation—whither and how? What manner of catastrophe interrupted their

labors suddenly — those long-forgotten workers who were overwhelmed "with the meat between their teeth," as one vivid journalist put it when writing up the island?

Mr. Spence's work is scholarly and convincing, and is well worth careful perusal, both for its matter and its manner.—W. G. GREENLEAF.

*Practical Astrology*, by Alan Leo. David McKay Co., Philadelphia, Pa. Price, cloth \$1.00.

Students of astrology will be interested in knowing that a revision is now available of the familiar title *Practical Astrology* by Alan Leo. The book contains substantially the same material already known to students but has been improved in many details and particularly noteworthy is the presentation of the tabular matter in concise and convenient form.

*Self-Realization of Noble Wisdom*, by Dwight Goddard. Published by the author, Thertford, Vermont. Price, cloth \$1.00.

This work is one of a series of Buddhist books edited, interpreted and published by Mr. Goddard, and is based upon a translation of a famous Buddhist Scripture, known as the Lankavatara Sutra, made by Prof. Suzuki, of Otani University.

A Sutra is one of the divisions of the sacred writings and addressed to the Buddhist laity. Of this Sutra nothing is known as to its author, the time of its composition, or as to its original form. It was originally a collection of verses numbering many thousands and covered all the main teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, a mystical system founded by Nagarjuna, who was regarded as the greatest of Buddhist philosophers. He was born 223 B. C. and was mainly instrumental in spreading Buddhism in China.

This Sutra is not written as a philosophical treatise is written — to establish a certain system of thought; but its main thesis is to urge upon all men the wisdom of making a determined effort to attain the highest experience that comes to the human spirit. The first of the chapters deals with Discrimination, others respectively with Transcendental Intelligence, The Attainment of Self-Realization and other lofty subjects, the last, the thirteenth, discussing the problems of Nirvana. —

W. G. GREENLEAF.

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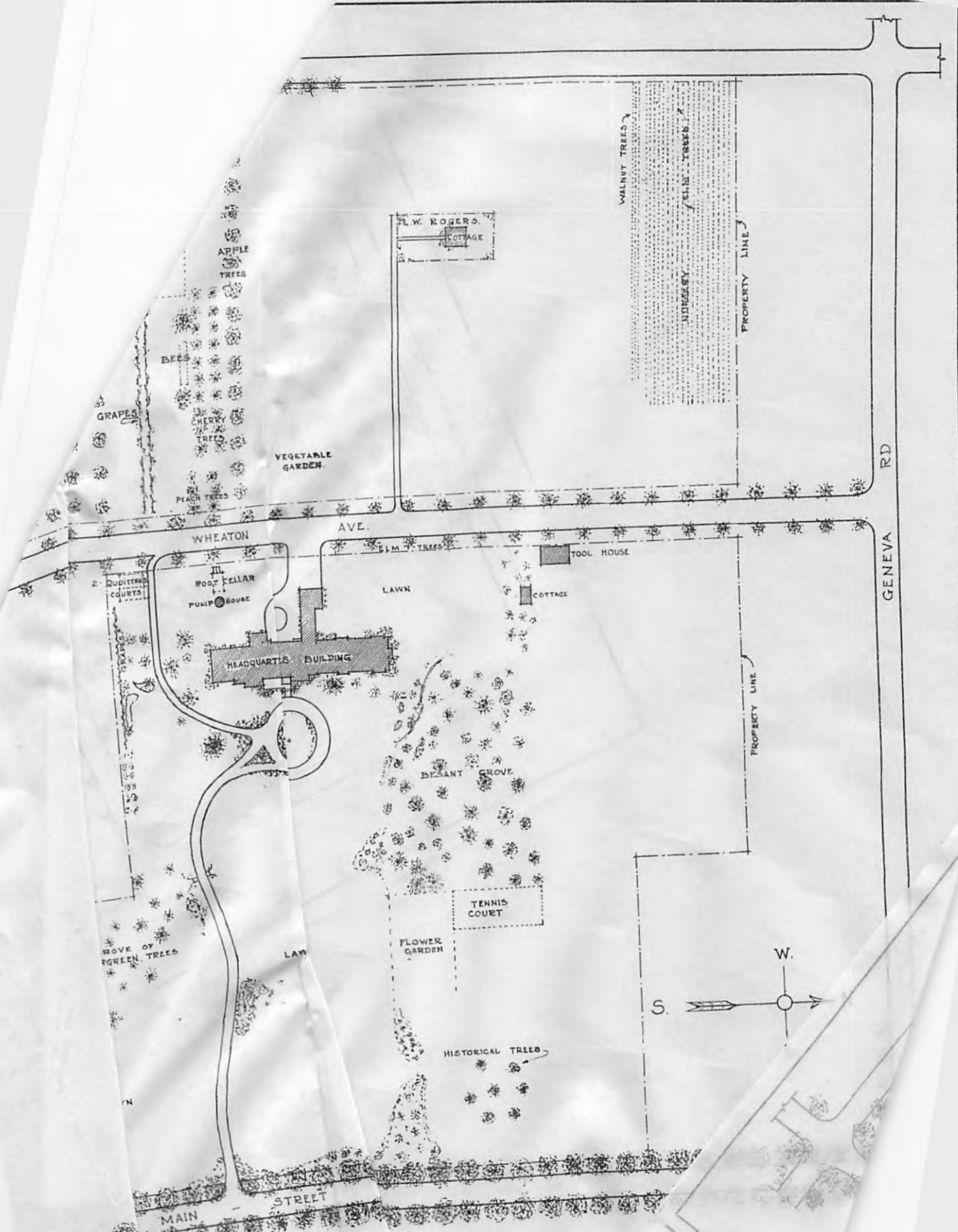
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