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• UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ADYAR •



1935

Renewing a Great Concept

From Dr. Besant's First Presidential
Address

The Theosophical Society welcomes to its membership men and women of all religions, of all opinions, and, provided that they recognize the brotherhood as universal, it demands from them no belief in any fact, however sure, in any teaching, however vital. With a splendid faith in the victorious power of truth, it disregards all the barriers which superficially divide humanity — sex, race, creed, color, caste — and welcomes those as brothers who deny even the very truths on which brotherhood is based, and who reject even the revealers who make its realization possible for humanity. Its platform is as wide as thought, its all-embracing love is as the sun which gives warmth and life to all, even to those who are blind to its light.

The condition of the continuing life of the Society is its perfect toleration of all differences, of all shades of opinion. None has the right to exclude his brother for difference of thought, nor to claim for his own thought a fuller liberty of expression than he claims for that of another. Complete liberty of thought must be guarded by all of us — by me, as your President, most of all — not granted as a privilege or a concession, but recognized as the inherent right of the intellect, as its breath of life. Tolerance, even with the intolerant, must be our rule.

THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST

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The Magic of "The Secret Doctrine"

By DR. GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

Summer Proceedings 1934

Part II

(Continued from the December issue)

WHAT are the supremely arresting intimations of *The Secret Doctrine*? First, the spirit of mountains which scintillates from every page. Reading it we know we are in the midst of Himalayan splendors, and we perceive overwhelming heights and distances round about us, of structure and substance altogether incomprehensible to us, yet strangely akin. We have the sense of being infinitely small, yet the infinitely great around us is, we somehow perceive, ours, and the inevitable extension of ourselves. *The Secret Doctrine* summons us to associate this knowledge, conjured from the future by the magic of H. P. B., with our everyday lives, so as to realize that even in the humdrum world we live, in fact, amidst these Himalayan wonders, and that the splendid lies about us for our grasping.

The book takes you into those mountainous places where alone certain aspects of Yoga can be contacted, and of course we know that certain forms of Yoga depend for their fulfillment and consummation upon temporary residence on physical plane mountains. Now, while we may not

always have mountains at our disposal, we have *The Secret Doctrine*, and by its magic we can ascend into spiritual mountainous heights, and breathe an air which invigorates us to discover truth for ourselves along any line.

That is how (if I may be pardoned for a personal statement) I gradually went along the path which was most interesting to me, of the development of consciousness from the physical right on up to the Nirvanic. Anyone can do it! It does not require someone special, but it requires someone determined and eager, and not full of his own special ways of looking at things, of playing among things — someone truly free from all those restrictions and rigidities. One determines to reach those tremendous heights, and to traverse those distances! And if you will read *The Secret Doctrine* page by page, without understanding it of course, at some point or other in your reading something will click within you, and you will say: "How true that is. That is what I am after." Page after page will be turned over and nothing particular will happen. Then all of a

sudden there is a sentence, a phrase, which will arouse you and unfold to you the whole of the marvelous, splendid vista of your own individual higher Self.

That does not in the least degree mean that you have reached unfoldment, but it means that you have recognized your higher Self from within the narrow confines and vision of your lower. You say: "Yes, that is my greater reality. I will pursue it."

If I had time I could go through, let us say, the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, beyond the Stanzas of Dzyan, and I could give you sentence after sentence, each with its own temperamental appeal, and if I were to hurl forth those phrases at you, each one of you would find one with regard to which you might say: "Dear me, I never thought of that. How very extraordinary!" You would feel somehow an expansion of consciousness had taken place.

And so that spirit of great heights, of splendid distances, is one of the wonderful features of *The Secret Doctrine*. We have a sense from it of being very small, but with myriad potentialities to become infinite, to do great things, because we know that *The Secret Doctrine* is one's higher Self unfolded. It is all very, very marvelous. What book is there which enables you to read about your own future without understanding it? Of course you cannot understand it! In this present we cannot envisage the future wholly. Otherwise we would be in the future. We cannot understand, but we are intrigued to understand!

I often wonder why it is that so many people seek no other future, stick where they are, so to speak, and proceed along so slowly, when there is the magic of this volume at their disposal from which they can derive, if they will take it, so much adventure and wisdom. It has nothing to do with the lower mind. Most people, of course, have not finished playing with the toy of the lower mind. That toy was given by God to the human kingdom when people entered upon it. When you ceased to be animals and when you entered the human kingdom, God said: "Now I am going to give you a nice little toy, my dear child." And humanity has been playing with the mind ever since, and of course it will go on playing until it finds that there is something better with which to play than the mind. When it has finished playing with the mind from all its angles, then it will let that toy sink into obscurity in the subconscious. It will want another toy, the toy which is of the kingdom beyond the human, the toy which, if I may say so with all respect to the Elder Brethren, our Masters play at the present time. You understand we are always playing games wherever we are. And it happens that when you begin to come to the end of your human existence the mind, while having its due place, plays, knows that it plays and does not go beyond it.

So that this principal object of *The Secret Doctrine* is to give that sense of splendidly rarefied air. But not only does it do that, it gives a very

wonderful sense of purpose, taking us out of time and giving us part of its essential mystery, and then one begins to realize that one incarnates with purpose, and then nothing whatever can take away our abiding happiness.

I suppose that I may say (if I may intrude a personal note) that I have, as the outer world would say, suffered — well, I do not think the expression would be too strong — hell, on various occasions. There is no one to whom I would talk of the hells through which I have been, or which the outer world would think I have been. It is against the law to speak of these things. But I have never been unhappy in any hell, and there is nothing which really has been a hell to me, and if you were to say: "Oh, would you not be unhappy if such and such a thing were to happen, and such circumstances were to arise?" — perhaps those circumstances have arisen. There is no one, even those nearest and dearest to me, who knows anything fundamentally about my life. If I were to give expression to what has happened, people would say: "Well, well, you have had a hell of a time!" And I should reply: "My dear friend, these things mean nothing to me, because I am part of the unfolding of all these things to a great end, and there is nothing so far as I know which could happen which would throw me out of my happiness." You would reply: "Not even this, or that, or the other? Not even that?" No. It might cause me a momentary shock, for just a moment, you understand, for perhaps just a second, and then I should instantly recollect myself, knowing that God is working his purpose out and things are quite all right. We are part of God, and whether we fail or whether we succeed, it is quite the same. Whether we conquer or whether we are defeated; whether life is difficult or whether life is easy; whether we get what we want, or scarcely ever get what we want — it makes no difference whatever; we go on and on with things.

That spirit is conveyed in magnificent measure through *The Secret Doctrine*. If I wanted any fortification for that abiding happiness which is mine, I should only have to turn to *The Secret Doctrine*, because it does not tell what to believe, and does not say, "This is true, and that is untrue." It puts the picture of life before you in such a way that you must feel it and know it, and become part of that picture itself.

A corollary to that sense of infinite purpose which *The Secret Doctrine* discloses is the realization of the hierarchical law and order everywhere, which triumphs at length, not perhaps from your understanding, but because the law is never broken. Order never becomes chaos. The hierarchical spirit prevails throughout the world, throughout the whole of our life, and that is why an individual who understands that can never be one who favors disorder, or who has no respect for the hierarchical spirit.

You can tell at once what stage of evolution an individual has reached by finding out whether he prefers a republic or a monarchy. No real occultist

prefers a republic. He must prefer a monarchy. Even though republics may from time to time be expedient, this is true, and if you knew occultism as well as I do you would know at once how the idea of kingship gives a sense of certainty, of standing. The whole idea of kingship has not only a thrill, but has a reflection from the great King of the World that no leader of any kind can possibly mean. You are in the presence of the King when you are in the presence of a king, and you have to try to reconcile that truth with the fact that the king is very often bad. When you know the great truths of life, then even though the forms may be utterly mediocre, you do not mind that. You may have a good-for-nothing king, still kingship remains. I could not imagine myself living in London without going to Buckingham Palace and standing outside and offering my respect to the emblem of the great Inner Head of the Hierarchy, his Majesty, King George V.

In these days of comparative crudity and vulgarity, these delicacies are not present, but their reality is none the less and they become insistent as you read in *The Secret Doctrine* of the high sense of things which are so very royal. There is nothing more royal than royalty, than that which is kingly. One must accept the outer world in its crudity and its vulgarity, but I should prefer not to live in a republic. The fact remains that anyone who is contacting in any way the great Head of the Hierarchy will never forget what real government is, of which all these lower governments down here are nothing more than caricatures. They are merely ends, but very possibly we take the means as the ends, and forget the ends. You cannot and must not do that! It is impossible to do that when you study *The Secret Doctrine*. So that is another aspect of the great and immortal book, *The Secret Doctrine*, which is so very wonderful, and is so very important in these days.

Another aspect of *The Secret Doctrine* is this — there is no *consummatum est* to be spoken. There is no end. You apparently go on and on. People sometimes in their ignorance think, "How fatiguing to go on and on." But it is not fatiguing when you realize the end in the means. For every means, however, much it may be a means, is no less an end in itself. And so you live for the moment, and combine such living with living in the eternal.

Another aspect of *The Secret Doctrine*, a more subtle aspect, is the extraordinary way in which the pendulum swings on every page between the most emphatic personality and the most aloof impersonality. There is a supreme scope for the individual as a separate, unique person, as *The Secret Doctrine* discloses. But there is simultaneously with all that, at every step of the unfolding of that definite personality, an extraordinary sense of refuge in an all-powerful impersonality in which, as it were, that personality upon which you have been so rightly insisting loses itself in the immensities of the real.

And so the swing goes on between the person and that of which he forms a part, and so you

never lay too much stress upon *you*, you never become too much *yourself*, because there is always the swing of the pendulum into the vastness in which each one of us at the present moment is but a faint impression, or expression. You perceive that while the "I" is immensely mighty, the "Not-I"—the "God-I"—is mightier still! It is very, very wonderful to be able to oscillate between the intensity of the "I" and the supremacy of the "Not-I". You have that given to you on every page of *The Secret Doctrine*, the swinging of that pendulum between the lower and the higher self.

Where is the book, throughout the whole range of literature, which from the very beginning challenges, plunges into reality so swiftly, and declares feats of strength, compelling interest on every page, which somewhere beyond our smaller selves we vaguely feel to be realities, even though beyond the acceptance of our minds?

Works of science are beginning to open their last chapters at least to dreams, but it is by no means similar to the plumbings of *The Secret Doctrine* and the over-soul scintillations running like a silver thread through the book. *The Secret Doctrine* completely proclaims its ultimates, which are set forth in chapter after chapter, in volume after volume.

One must not go on indefinitely talking, although one could give a series of talks and elaborate these temperamental motifs running through *The Secret Doctrine*. But if I am talking about *The Secret Doctrine* today in the way in which I am talking about it, it is in order to point out to you the new way of our Theosophical Society in this new dispensation. Each one of us may be concerned, and largely concerned, with his own interpretations of Theosophy, but no one must dare say that this, and this alone, is Theosophy, or that this or that or the other is the real Theosophy, the new Theosophy, the only true Theosophy. It may be for us, but we must have Theosophists and members of the Theosophical Society today who can transcend their own points of view, their own certainties, their own knowledge with regard to what is real Theosophy for them, and realize that there is a greater Theosophy depicted by *The Secret Doctrine*, much greater than any individual interpretation. I am always a little nervous when an individual says: "This is the Theosophy for tomorrow, or that is the Theosophy for tomorrow. We must go forward to this, or back to that."

There is no going forward or going back. There is the insistence on the eternal realities. Where do you find the impressing of these eternal realities? You find it in *The Secret Doctrine*, and so we want to have a renaissance of the study of that heart of the whole of our theosophic life. And if our brethren will have the patience and steadfastness to go on studying, all will be well. If they will go on studying what they cannot understand they will be rewarded, and richly rewarded. Most of us want to understand at every stage,

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Editorials

A League Triumph

Our editorial columns of last month referred to the steady progress of peace. Since then the League's greatest triumph has occurred. War spirit, bred in the Balkans where seeds of international strife spring to fruition overnight, suddenly became rampant and a repetition of 1914 seemed imminent, with great powers already lined up on either side. The newspaper headlines bore the certainty of war.

For two weeks or more, with armies standing to battle, great representatives of the contending nations stated their case before the League — at first in bitter words, in denouncement, demand and fighting fury. Gradually, under the influence of the League and of noble effort to avert catastrophe, council and conciliation prevailed. The League had won. War that threatened to stalk through Europe, more terrible than 1914, gave way to goodwill and peace — a triumph for the League which answers beyond further argument all questions of the die-hard obstructionists.

Many a Theosophist will be happy that his faith in efforts for good, for what is directionally sound, has been justified by so fine an accomplishment.

Science in Accord

Speaking in his presidential capacity before a gathering of 2,500 scientists of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Sir James Jeans declared that nothing was real in the new world of modern physics except what is in our consciousness and our perceptions. He expounded on the recent theory that photons do not have individual existence but are members of a single beam of light, and developed the idea that when we view ourselves in space and time we are quite obviously distinct individuals, but "when we pass beyond space and time we may, perhaps, form ingredients of a continuous stream of life."

Again science, through its most advanced minds, approaches the conception long given out theosophically that all life is one. It is through this approach and through this understanding perhaps, that science will presently conceive that brotherhood is a fact in Nature, a law of life, and from such discovery, scientifically as well as theosophically grounded, what social reforms and human happiness may not result?



The Blessing of Early Membership

Not infrequently we hear members expressing their keen regret that Theosophy did not come to them sooner, that they went through many sad experiences in earlier life without the guiding knowledge of Theosophy, and they ask why, since they are so appreciative of its value, karma should have kept them from earlier touch.

It is suggested that perhaps the answer lies in an unsympathetic attitude in some past life, in an opportunity to contact and perhaps to work for the Wisdom of the Ages, not fully utilized.

Perhaps inquirers have served us well in thus bringing to our attention that it is by making the most of the present opportunity to serve Theosophy, by a sympathetic attitude toward the Society's problems and an effort to be helpful and understanding, that we may insure close and early contact with this eternal philosophy in the future.

THE MAGIC OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

(Continued from page 3)

want to be able to pass judgment at every point and to say: "Yes, I see but I am not prepared to follow what I do not see." We want a few Theosophists in the world who are not particularly interested in following what they see, but who are eager to follow what they do not see, who are adventurous, who can voyage forth on the discovery of life, as Colonel Olcott voyaged forth, not knowing whether he would get anywhere.

You can develop that consciousness, but not without the voyaging spirit within you, because you know when you take the first great Initiation you have to enter a tunnel and dwell in darkness, where no light is to be seen at all, until you, yourself, as it were, set a light from your eternal and inextinguishable light, whereby the eternal begins to become bright, and you, yourself, go on steadily toward greater light on the other side of the eternal, of the tunnel. We must have brethren who are adventurous, not brethren who want to have truths put into their head, but want to live in the midst of obscurity, and who want to understand that which they cannot understand, which seems impossible to understand.

So far as my own particular specializing is concerned, my own consciousness, there is any amount of *The Secret Doctrine* which is truly incomprehensible to me, but there are passages which correspond to my own experience and to my own understanding, and so I say to myself: "Well, those things I do not understand at all, but this, yes, this I do, and perhaps I shall some day understand a little more, and so I am going on for that!"

I like addresses to be given, sometimes, which are rather obscure, so the audience will say: "I could not make head or tail of all that which the man was saying." Now he may be obscure because he is ignorant, or because of his wisdom. If because of his wisdom, well, then, he is a man to be listened to! We do not want to be little children, so that we must be continually fed with truth, so that we go away and say: "How comforting that lecture was, how true it was, how wonderful it was, it expressed so entirely my own thought on the matter, so entirely my own views."

It is the very worst testimony for Krishnamurti, for example, to say: "Yes, he is the new Theosophy just nicely cut and dried." Don't you see how it does not really help him when we say: "Yes, I

understand Krishnamurti and I am following him, and I agree with his presentations"? I wonder whether there are half a dozen people who profit from the obscurity which perhaps is intentional in him. He, of course, represents a certain line of force. There are innumerable other lines of force, but none of us can hope to understand any of them substantially. The best that we can do as Theosophists is to drink in all we can, and let the force do what it will with us. Don't let us label it. Let us just let it have its way. When people say, "Back to Blavatsky," or, if you like, "Forward to Krishnamurti," it is so petty! It is so narrow! It is neither "back to Blavatsky" nor "forward to Krishnamurti." No other person, be it Blavatsky or Besant or Leadbeater or Krishnamurti, can take the place of oneself and the work of the Theosophical Society.

Dr. Besant would often say to me: "George, I know you are very fond of me. You look up to me. I don't want you to follow me. You can look up to me for the time being, if you like, but what I want you to do is to be something which is different from me, radically and fundamentally."

That is the work of the Theosophical Society. We are greater than any person, greater than any movement. We represent the eternal right in the midst of the many time spirits, and we are a magnificent movement. Men may come and men may go, but Theosophy and the Theosophical Society should go on forever, if they can be all-inclusive, if there is enough life in them, if they can be supremely impersonal, and know that in everyone there is a truth as true and as beautiful as there is in everybody else. When through reading *The Secret Doctrine* you discover that you will have achieved a very great deal.

Well, friends, I must not detain you, but I want you to remember that I do not hope for a moment that because of tonight's lecture any of you will say: "Oh, yes, *The Secret Doctrine* is very interesting, I must go ahead and read it at once." What I hope is that you are in some small measure intrigued and that if you have not looked into this book you will look into it, and say: "Oh, I do not understand it at all," and then you will go on reading it until you understand something, somewhere, and then you will have taken an Initiation!



Theosophy and Beauty

By DR. H. DOUGLAS WILD

THE WINDS of life blow fresh these days, and in the hearts of Theosophists the pool of imagination is astir with new dreams. Look where we may, we see a horizon filled with the variety of the paths along which Theosophy is going into action, breathing its creative unity into the forms of our social and cultural living. In the widest, deepest sense the transforming power of Wisdom's hold on practical affairs throughout the world is being felt like a quiet but mighty urge of spring in the earth, and in profound accord with this event our Society is putting forth its boundless vitality in growths not seen before.

Of these the Greater America Plan is one. The fact is encouragingly obvious. But the indications of this awakening to active, practical power are only beginning to appear. The greater part of the germinative life is still, as always with beginnings, hidden. Its function is in no small part imaginative and poetic. I refer to that flow of communication with the Good, the Beautiful and the True, which is the secret wellspring of man's activity as creator, and therefore of the undertakings of our Society and Section.

According to A.E., the Irish poet, every leading movement of reform in the world today has had "a poet twined about its roots." So too with us as regards the essentialness of poetic nourishment. Be the result of our action what they will, it would seem to be clearly our business as Theosophists to become ever more vivid sources of outflowing harmony and to grace our action in the world with a luminous halo of delight and loveliness — the mark of Nature's order in human realization.

Most of the Greater America Plan is as yet in the root stage. But those moments are important in which we as Theosophists and Americans lovingly, vividly brood on the latent power and the eventual freedom, motion and music of this new branch of our tree. Through such brooding do we most effectually originate the design and release the forces of the America we wish to create.

A few more suggestions at this point concerning the broad affinities of poetry to our American task. Interestingly enough, it is Shelley's definition of poetry as "at once the center and circumference of knowledge," which supplies us with a most suggestive image of our cultural enterprise. The definition applies not only to the nature but to the function of poetry, giving us a sense of the part played by poetry in knitting into organic beauty and completeness the factors of experience which confront the human race — a synthesis which modern man's analytical and separative powers of mind have made imperiously necessary.

Let us conceive of our Greater America Plan as

a theosophical wheel or solar system of civic and cultural activity, each spoke a separate department, and all reaching out from Will, Wisdom and Love, the center of creative energy, to the farthest boundaries of practical affairs, thereby integrating our civilization into a more rhythmic and harmonious whole. Needless to add, in proportion to the degree of our vision and the intensity of our devotion to it, shall we transfigure the national life, causing the wheel of it to revolve with more splendid freedom and glow with nobler fire.

Let us agree that this work, if it is to be theosophically performed, must have *beyondness* conveyed into it, not merely abstractly or intellectually, but vitally, flamingly. The very doing must be permeated with Theosophy as a living force. But to make Theosophy thus living, first in ourselves and then in our work, we must reach the soul of it, the rhythmic, self-expressing life of its truth. And it is here that poetry, the most democratic of the arts, comes in as an indispensable fructifying mediator.

"Art," wrote Emerson, "is the path of the creator to his work." It is indeed a linkage and not merely a product separated from its source. It is the path of love becoming visible, the alchemy of man's creative vision, uniting the Self with the outer world through an expression of the whole consciousness in a transforming harmony of delight. The practical relation of poetry — or more exactly, of our poetical self-improvement by reading and writing — to the execution of the Greater America Plan lies in the productive quality which the union of mind and heart achieved by poetry gives to our ideas. If, as Plato put it, "the beautiful is the splendor of the true," then we do not completely possess our truth until we have imagined ourselves into its beauty and can express this splendor as the life-stuff of experience.

Great poetry is archetypal and moulds the soul of a people by giving to their thinking what it needs in atmosphere, formative force, direction and imaginative flesh and blood. As a vehicle of life's wisdom, poetry illuminates the central problems of civilization by bringing to bear on them vividly and intimately the forces which flow from nobly creative attitudes and ideas.

From these considerations it follows that a suitable provision for poetical activity within the program of our Section might be expected to play a generous part in heightening the vitality of the centers of power and reality in our midst. To the extent that our lodges should become poetical nuclei in our Sectional being, there would, conceivably, develop an increased play of inspirational

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From the National President

The Dues Proposal

The proposal to change dues from \$3.00 to \$5.00 continues to grip the interest of our members, as is evidenced by the receipt of many expressions of opinion. It is characteristic of the unapproving replies that almost without exception the answer is based upon the opinion that to increase dues will cause a loss of members from among those who could pay \$3.00 but who could not pay \$5.00. Everyone who knows the condition of distress through which a large section of the people of America have had to struggle during the past few years will be wholeheartedly appreciative of this sympathetic view, but it is right that we should ask ourselves whether such an opinion is not the product of the psychology of depression and gloom rather than of reason.

Let us take some outstanding facts and see whether the matter of money has really seriously affected the extent of our membership.

Fact No. 1. In the great years of enthusiastic prosperity, so-called, when everyone had employment and most people had more money to spend than they had ever had before — the years from June, 1927, to June, 1930 — we lost an average of 1,592 members per year who did not pay dues, a fraction over 20% of the average membership of those years. Last year, in the very depth of a severe depression, 758 members dropped out, a fraction over 16%.

Fact No. 2. Each year, before its close, every lodge secretary is invited to recommend to Headquarters the cancellation of dues for members whose interest continues but who appear to be unable to pay.

Fact No. 3. In the fall of each year the National Secretary sends a letter directly to each delinquent member offering cancellation of dues in cases of inability to pay, rather than lose the member's name from the magazine mailing list.

Fact No. 4. Each year in early spring another letter is mailed from Headquarters to every unpaid member offering cancellation of dues if necessary to retain the member on the active roll.

In view of the foregoing, is it fair for members to base their decision in the matter of dues upon the theory that Headquarters does not make provision to care for those unable to meet the dues requirement?

A close analysis made by means of a special letter to each member who dropped out last year, for the purpose of discovering the cause of his loss, has brought replies showing inability to pay dues in rare instances only. In several instances the cause was incompatibility with other members in the lodge; in the majority of instances, there was ability to pay if the association with other members had

been happy and if the member's interest had continued. Definite lack of interest is frequently expressed. Presently we shall present exact statistics resulting from this analysis. They do not support the contention that these members have been lost mainly through lack of funds. We appear to lose our members for financial reasons, but actually a cessation of interest is at the back of it in most cases.

The case seems to be one of psychological depression. The Society is suffering from the same condition from which business as a whole has suffered and which business leaders are more and more recognizing. They have been afraid, their fears have kept them from enterprise and initiative. They have been standing still. They are waking up now and discovering that there was no reason why they should not have helped themselves out of the depression a long time back. They have been fearful of the happening of things that never could happen.

Let us not be fearful, when membership is wrapped round with so much assurance of protection. Let us think constructively and hopefully, still with understanding. Let us be courageous as to the facts rather than sentimental on unsupported theory. What an aliveness our work would acquire if we set aside our psychological funk and recognized our own individual responsibility each to accept just a little larger share in the cost of a great work, and to be courageously cheerful.

*Not one regret that I had done too much,
When there was much to do,
But this I know, when the long hours pass
In swift review,
I shall look back and wish that I had done
Oh, so much more,
When I turn in at evening to my door.*

— Grace Noll Crowell

Family Memberships?

Out of the discussion relative to dues has arisen the suggestion that special provision should be made for family memberships, relieving the family of some expense where husband and wife are not both employed, just as there is now relief for junior members not yet of working age. It is a suggestion of merit worth our serious consideration.

A thought has been offered as to the \$5.00 membership, proposing that if adopted it should be paid in two semi-annual installments, neither of which would be as difficult to meet as the present annual payment. Another excellent suggestion, to which Headquarters would be glad to adapt its membership records.

The Vision of a Lodge

A correspondent writes explaining how we lose members. He says: "We are not a brotherhood, we have nothing to bind us together — not even a kind word as brother or sister. We come and go and salute each other like the people on the street." What an indictment that any member should have been given cause thus to express himself.

What is the ideal of a lodge? I conceive of a lodge from which members could not be lost — a lodge, association with which would be the most valued thing in the member's life; a lodge so full of the spirit of true brotherhood and friendliness that every member would know that he was wanted for himself, because he was a brother member, not because he had money or even talent or capacity to serve; a lodge that it would take a wrench of one's heart to break loose from; a lodge that welcomed member and stranger gladly because they were members of the human kingdom, and which kept that welcome ever warm for them.

What do our lodges do to make new members

into fast and firm friends of the lodge with a tie that could never be broken on a matter of money? What do our lodges do for their sick members by way of visiting and continued friendly touch? As I said in my last report, to keep the members that we have is our first obligation — of infinite value if carried out — a never ending service that every member owes to every other. The Society's most valuable possessions are its members, for through them the work is done, and we have but one concern — the work that was given us to do.

Greetings

To all of our members far and near throughout the Section I extend New Year greetings and the wish that we shall together make the year one of great progress for the Society, and therefore of happiness to every member.

I am sure that great blessings are in store for us as we live to serve the Society and Those to Whom we owe its founding. In the spirit of goodwill and tolerance we go forward.

THEOSOPHY AND BEAUTY

(Continued from Page 6)

energies essential to the accomplishment of our Plan. And, let it be hinted, the poetic spirit would tend to safeguard the Plan from those tendencies toward uncreative mechanization which beset so many things American.

The final and concrete proposal is this. Each lodge may, by the appointment of a leader of poetical activity, institute a regular program of poetry reading for the lodge as a whole and of poetry study and writing (any free, rhythmic expression is intended here much rather than the deadly matters of technical formality) for those members who would like to improve themselves in specific ways of appreciation and expression. Teachers may be counted to develop through the understanding which the act of teaching brings. It would be very helpful if reading lists were tested out from the standpoint of temperamental and even climatic suitabilities, and then submitted for publication in a serial column in THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST. If a temporary special editor or clearing house is found desirable, the writer of this article will be glad to offer his services.

Our Section has genuine poets within its ranks, and the finest fruit will be reaped from a printing

of their poems. The example is contagious. Articles, too, pertaining to all aspects of principle and practice relating to the values of poetry would presumably be welcome.

In a later issue I propose to follow my own suggestion and submit a fairly varied and suggestive reading list. But space hardly permits of this here. In a broad way, however, I most heartily recommend a reading *ad libitum* from Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet* and from the last section of poems in Edward Carpenter's *Towards Democracy*. They are most deeply theosophical.

Let no one think that poetry is degraded by our devoting it thus deliberately to theosophical uses. Poetry is the hand-maiden of the wisdom and beauty of life, and freely bestows the service of her genius on those purposes of life which are beautiful and wise. The end is not that we should appropriate poetry to aims other than poetical, but that in enhanced measure we should be drawn to the poetic fire of our ideas, be converted into poets, theosophical "caressers of life" and of its action through us, faithfully infusing with love and joy all objects on which the sun shines, all things which the universal heart of man contains.

Beauty diversified into the arts is the true refiner and uplifter of humanity, for it is the instrument of culture, the broadener of the heart, the purifying power which burns up all prejudice, all pettiness, all coarseness.

— ANNIE BESANT

Youth's Ideals for America

By FELIX LAYTON

Chairman, Young Theosophists of America
Summer Proceedings, 1934

IT IS A privilege to be asked to speak to Theosophists and it is an especial privilege to speak to earnest students of Theosophy gathered at Olcott, where power is made available for America and where it is easier for the Masters of the Wisdom to touch our hearts and rouse us to more brotherly work in Their name. Because we know that They are watching us and are seeking to use these gatherings to give added power to Their servants, it becomes a matter of even greater importance than usual that those who speak here should say only that which is true, which is pure and which may help Their love, Their strength and Their wisdom to reach mankind.

Our ideals are the fundamental things of life on which our attitudes toward everyday life depend. Those of us who do not know our ideals as the result of inner seeking and striving through periods of storm and stress will not be the leaders of splendid actions stimulated by ideals which alter the world. Those who thus find and serve an ideal are those who are the real moulders of a nation's destiny, because their actions in any circumstances will be acts of service to those ideals, while the actions of those who have not found an ideal will be mere reflections of their environment and will be only to serve their ephemeral personal desires.

Both Alexander the Great and Napoleon illustrate the power of an ideal, but their ideals became tainted and lost in material achievements, and their empires have long ago completely disappeared. The Christ, the Lord Buddha and other great founders of the religions of the world, Who lived nobly to serve an ideal, have wide and mighty empires today and Their ideals constantly draw love from the hearts of Their followers. This love on the part of Their followers inspires actions for the uplift of the world.

The ideals which we have affect us at critical junctures in our lives and make the greatest difference to our surroundings and in our actions forever after. When a vital choice has to be made between two courses of action and we do not know which to follow, and hesitate and think and worry about it, then is when we have to invoke our ideals and let them help us. If we follow them, we follow the right path; if we disregard them, we make mistakes — often with far-reaching results. In minor events we may decide almost automatically, but in a big decision which we have to ponder, the presence or lack of ideals decides the

issue on which our whole life depends. In a nation also the presence or lack of ideals decides the nation's whole career, and determines all its acts and the condition of its people.

Nations are just as transient as a human being; they do their part and then pass on. They can do that part well or badly, however, according to whether they serve or betray their ideals during their life. Each nation must recognize that it is a unit in a larger whole, whose service alone is worth while; that it must improve itself only for the welfare of the larger self, the universal brotherhood of humanity. This does not mean that we must throw over all national responsibilities and assume international ones only. If we did that, other nations would rightly call us busy-bodies and tell us to reform our own faults before reforming the world. Neither does it mean that we must be proudly independent and have nothing to do with other nations, thinking solely of ourselves. It means, however, that America must be like a responsible individual who has the welfare of the world at heart. Such an individual must improve himself, he must fight the faults in his own makeup and do what he can to eradicate them. Second, he must fulfill his responsibilities to the group, be a friend to those around him and do his part toward maintaining justice and order in the community. He has two responsibilities — those to himself and those to his community — to be useful to the welfare of the group. So it is with America or any other nation — these two responsibilities must be accepted. First we must have an ordered, just, well controlled domestic state. Second, as a nation we must accept our responsibilities as a member of the group of nations which form the world, and maintain justice and order there.

The ideals of youth are the ideals which will come more and more to the front as time passes, and those who are now young assume more and more the responsibility for the nation's future. One of the most marked differences between the actions of the men and women of today and the acts of the great idealist is that the idealist feels a tremendous sense of his duty to the ideal he serves, while the man who is not an idealist lives for his bodies, acts to preserve himself as he is against the press of environment.

In politics, local or national, America needs men and women for whom the power of the government is a sacred trust placed in their hands by

the community. For the idealist to use this power for any selfish purpose, to allow for an instant the thought of his own welfare to influence his decisions in matters of the community's welfare, would be a betrayal of that trust, and to betray that trust would be the most ignoble thing he could do. One who had such a concept of government would work increasingly to see that he came to the right decision in matters of importance and could be trusted implicitly. Unfortunately it is not always so in this country, and we must feel ashamed on that account, but more and more people are recognizing that the men in power must be chosen because they have ideals, and for no other reason.

Because we live in a democracy it is our responsibility to see that the people who are chosen have this sense of the greatness of the responsibility they fulfill. They must be chosen for this reason for every office from President of the United States to local registrar of deeds. If the people as a whole do not choose on these grounds and if those who are idealists will have nothing to do with politics because they are dirty, then politics will remain dirty, and cities, states and country will be misgoverned. An important duty rests on the voters and members of the community to place in office the idealist who will regard that office as a sacred trust. This acceptance of the public work as a sacred trust must enter all fields of public service — education, medicine, religion, as well as government. It has not been so sadly lacking in the other fields as in government, but it can be more strongly emphasized. People in these positions — the teacher, the doctor, the priest, etc. — are all so placed that they can help others to become more useful to the world. Those in other professions may or may not be as favorably situated, but if every individual will search deeply behind the outward acts of those he meets and try to arouse whatever ideals lie there, he will be fulfilling his responsibility to the community, which should be the ideal of all.

There has been among public officials an unpleasant growth of the habit of passing the responsibility of an executive office to someone else, while keeping all the pomp, glory and privilege of that office. This has been especially true in our local government, but has also reflected itself in the actions of the United States in its relations with other countries. The nations of the world are just like a group of human beings, only all their decisions and changes in attitudes take place much more slowly.

The United States has shown a tendency to avoid responsibility in its relations with the nations of the world. Those nations who show that they wish to help maintain peace and law and order, and will cooperate with any constructive plans in that direction, and will even join in suppressing unjust aggressors by force when others' rights are violated, are the pillars of a prosperous

peace. The United States dealt a crushing blow to the assurance of peace when it refused to join the League of Nations, which was the expression of a great constructive ideal for world peace. The refusal of the Senate to allow the United States to support this movement was prompted by fear and unwillingness to accept the responsibility as a member of a group of nations. Since then the Kellogg Peace Pact and the cooperation of the United States with the League of Nations at Geneva to discuss the policy of the world nations toward Japan's invasion of China, have shown that our country has redeemed itself in some measure as a responsible member among the group of nations.

In individual relationships, in local, federal and international relationships, a respect for the sacredness of the trust placed upon us is one of the greatest ideals, but there are other things besides direct human relationships which some of us are called to serve. The artist, the writer, the musician, all work for the one ideal of the beautiful. It is the inspiration which wells up from within, urging expression in terms of the most beautiful creation possible. Because they have the ability to create beautiful things they have a tremendous responsibility toward the beautiful. They have a link with all the beautiful things of life, and it is their sacred trust to see that they do all in their power to use their channelship for the creation of beauty, and for the happiness of the devas who create the beautiful. Those of us who are not artists can seek to appreciate the beautiful wherever we are, and to work for the beautiful by making our lives natural and beautiful as far as we can. The devas are seeking to cooperate with us more and more, and it is a responsibility laid on all of us who wish to make the brotherhood of angels and of men a reality, to make our lives natural and beautiful to those around us. We should do this out of respect to our brothers of the angelic hosts.

To me a sense of responsibility is the great need of America today — a realization of the sacredness of the trust placed in us to elect the right people to govern, to take a stand fearlessly on every action on the basis of the ideal we serve, to always accept our responsibility for the government of the group we are in, so that the group may advance together securely.

Acceptance of these responsibilities in all walks of life is one of the surest ways of having the greatest of all responsibilities placed upon us — the responsibility of helping the great Plan by being a channel through which the love, wisdom and strength of the Masters may flow to the world. They never betray a trust or shirk a responsibility. As we accept our responsibilities we become more fitting channels for Them, and thus are doing the greatest service possible to ourselves, our community, our country, our world and our God.

Seeds

By MRS. BERTHA E. JAKES

THE whole effort of a plant is to produce seeds and it takes the way of a beautiful flower to do it, for desire creates form; what you want to be you may be. If one ribbon is not attractive to visitors, flowers change it for another; not in a moment, as we count time; flowers never waste themselves as we do in haste. Eternity is just a pleasant day with plenty of time to do everything.

Seeds stand for potential life. This little vital spark is not sealed in a case and left to find its own nourishment; it is always provided with food to live until it can help itself to other food found in earth, air and water. Nor does the effort to attract end with flowers; it extends to seeds which are even more extraordinarily adapted to varying conditions. The harder the fight, the more they increase their output. For instance, weeds are universally unwelcome, being the tramps of the vegetable world — and no one loves tramps. The necessity to fight for life increases vitality and hardihood, as witness the thistle family one plant of which can send out millions of seeds in a season.

Having found some of my most interesting subjects among so-called weeds and being known as the champion of the down-trodden and pulled-up race, I feel like apologizing for referring to weeds as if they were something apart from other plants. The dictionary defines them as "Any one of those herbaceous plants which are useless and without special beauty, or which are positively troublesome; the exotics of cool countries are sometimes weeds in the tropics." So Emerson gave the best definition after all when he said a weed was a plant out of place. Waste spaces, roadsides and railroad tracks are the refuge of these outcasts and some of them are beautiful.

Call not that roadside common
That wears with simple grace
Upon its dusty shoulders
White drifts of Queen Anne's lace.

The seeds that are left for man to plant form a small proportion of the whole, and constitute principally products for food. Such seeds have the fewest means of propagating themselves — a habit of Nature; the more man does for her the less she will do for herself.

Seeds enlist the help of animals, birds and waterways, but get the most help from the wind. In order to do this, they take unto themselves wings such as the maple, ash, elm, tulip trees and pine; or set the fashion in balloons and parachutes like the dandelion family; or as spores they ride on the

breezes by millions, hoping to settle on some favorable spot where they can raise a family.

A thistle by a railroad track
Seems always to stand still;
She cannot travel like the train,
but all her children will.

Beginning with the plummy willow and poplar cotton of May, each successive month sends its swarm of winged seeds upon their wanderings. Dandelions, thistles, wild lettuce, ironweed, aster, cat-tails, goldenrod down to the little groundsel shrub in September. The largest and rarest of the ballooning seeds is the oyster plant or meadow salsify.

John Burroughs in writing of the dandelion says: "After its first blooming comes its second and finer inflorescence when its stalk, dropping its more earthly and carnal flower, shoots upward and is presently crowned by a globe of the most delicate and aerial texture; it is like the poet's dream which succeeds his rank and golden youth." This globe is a fleet of hundreds of fair balloons, each one of which bears a seed destined to drop far from the parent source. Whether you agree with Mr. Burroughs or not depends upon whose lawn holds the dandelions!

Birds are great planters and to pay them for their help, seeds cover themselves with sweet tasting fleshy envelopes but are careful to be so hard inside that the birds will reject them. Thus cherries, raspberries, blackberries, elder, poke berries, mulberries, the haw family, sumac and every berry of the kind has its chance of finding a new home by means of the birds. The place upon which any or all of these things are planted may assuredly count on bird visitors and gratitude poured out in song.

The squirrels are even more faithful planters; no gardener could do it better and, as usual, food is the incentive. But instead of wrapping the seed in sweet tasting stuff, the careful pine-mother puts it in a hard little box not easily opened except by the cutting drills of the squirrels or Old Man Frost, who knows how to crack them open and let the little rootlets out. Thus the walnut, butternut, hickory nut, hazel and other seeds destined to produce trees are securely protected. The way these packages are lined is evidence of a wise Creator. The chestnut lies in a bed of satiny down, exquisite to the touch, while its outer covering is a forest of vicious needles which no creature is willing to tackle except with clubs and boot heel until the door is unlocked by the magic key of Jack Frost.

Then there is that large and unpopular family of seeds, mostly composites, whose friendliness and determination to go with any creature that comes along exhibits tactics that are admirable only for persistence. These restless vagabonds are almost without exception foreign emigrants; they have traveled from the ends of the earth and will steal rides by fair means or foul. Burs, beggarticks, pitchforks, Spanish needles, burdock, cockles, desmodium, twin seed of the goose grass and, worst of all, the quintessence of viciousness, the sand bur. The victims of these persistent hangers-on would see no beauty in them while they desperately clutch and tear at garments, but found unattached and viewed beneath a lens, these most determined of all seeds present varied and interesting exteriors. Round, oblong, angled, spurred, flat and many sided, there is hardly a geometric form that may not be found and admired.

Much to their discomfort all four-footed creatures contribute to the distribution of these seeds. Co-operation is Nature's law and nothing is too small to help. Indeed, some of the greatest help comes from the smallest creatures, such as bees. If they should perish, more than half of the flowers in the world would be exterminated.

There are seeds that birds do not eat, nor animals carry and the wind does not blow. "How," says the wych-hazel, "can I get my progeny out into the world and prevent them from falling at my feet to crowd each other to death?" It does not sound maternal, but she shoots them as far as forty feet from their loving home, trusting each child will shoot its children forty feet farther and thus people the earth. The wych-hazel does her important work in October and November. Even as late as snow-fall her branches may be ablaze with tassels of yellow petals, a glory not divided with any other flower. At the same time she bombards the surrounding country with her hard little black seeds in a two-celled, nut-like receptacle which springs open when mature, throwing the seeds with force enough to administer a stinging blow to any curious human who gets in the way.

Violets have the same trick with the seeds they wish to spring on the public, from a late flower they mature at the root just above the ground. Shy and modest are not the only attributes of the violet; it is canny, farseeing and provident. She seems to say: "My flowers are popular and I must provide against robbery." So she makes a queer little green flower that no one sees and few know, and matures a three cornered pod full of seeds. Just in time to get washed into the soil by autumn rains and all nicely covered by blankets of falling leaves, these pods open with a snap, pitching out the seeds in every direction.

Pine trees, particularly the Scotch and Austrian pines, have a dramatic and noisy way of sending out their buff-winged seeds into the world. The second autumn after flowering, the cones, with a smooth solid exterior, giving no sign of the many potential trees packed away in a spiral formation, release their treasures with a click that may be heard two hundred feet away. This spring-like

opening of the scale gives the winged seeds an impetus to flight that carries them some distance. If a man wished to get at these seeds, some of which are tasty eating, he would find it as easy as breaking into a bank, so tightly are the scales glued together; but a squirrel, with no knowledge of botany or burglary, whirls the cone around in his neat little paws, begins at the stem and nibbles the scales at the point of attachment which is thin and gives away readily to sharp teeth.

If man, birds, animals and wind refuse to help ambitious seeds, there is one plant that becomes a carpenter, makes its own brace and bit and bores its way into the ground four inches, depositing its seed where it will be reasonably sure to come up at the call of spring. This is the crane's bill, a member of the wild geranium family. The small magenta flower that one plant bears would not be noticed, but when it covers an acre of pasture it spreads out a color coverlet that makes one exclaim at its beauty—if you are not a farmer and it is not your pasture!

South Africa grows a grapple plant provided with a large number of curved hooks that attach themselves to passing animals. Deer become badly lamed by the hooks that never let go. Also there is a plant that can make a journey and return to its starting point. This is the ell grass which grows in water in depths of one to several feet. It sends its pistillate flowers on long stems up to the surface of the water. The staminate flowers grow near the ground but break loose at the proper time to seek their mates, float to the top and discharge their pollen. When the pistillate flower is visited by the drifting pollen, its stem takes the form of a spiral and is gradually withdrawn by contraction down to the depths where it discharges its seeds.

Wild rice must be planted in water and its seeds are shaped like javelins so they sink to the bottom. Cotton seeds are distributed by the wind if not picked. Tumbleweed becomes a high if not a holy roller in order to spread its seeds far from its home site. Knotweed, peas and beans are in pods that dry, twist and throw their seeds. There is a cucumber that squirts its seeds for several feet. Coconuts have an outer covering or husk impervious to water, hence they may float long distances to new land. Lotus seeds drop in water but they are not released by their pods until they are ripe. Birds eat mistletoe and wipe their bills on the bark of trees, thus planting the seeds. Bluejays plant acorns, but not intentionally; their object is entirely selfish.

The pod family, starting with the legumes, is a large one and contributes much to our food supply in peas, beans and other nutritious things. But there are pods that harbor deleterious seeds, such as the loco weed which affects the brains of animals and makes them crazy, thereby giving rise to the saying that a person may be "locoed."

While Nature's main object is utilitarian—each plant seeming to have some definite purpose and place in life in addition to its perpetuation—

(Concluded on Page 14)

The Greater America Plan

DR. PIETER K. ROEST, FIELD DIRECTOR

Visioning the Theosophical Society as a more vitally active organization, our members taking part more and more in the real work of molding a greater America to the splendid ideals of Theosophy; our work becoming more scholarly, our presentation more dignified, our halls more beautiful, enhancing the Society's prestige in our communities as our work is the better understood.

At the close of the year and with a new twelve-month before us it is but natural to pause a moment for a glance backward on what was accomplished, and forward on what remains to be done. How is the Greater America Plan working out? What has become of the original impulse with which it started so vigorously? Let us seek to answer these questions as honestly as possible. We shall take the latter question first, remembering that its answer here is only a personal opinion based on impressions received in the field.

It seems to me that the spirit of the Plan has unquestionably entered into the rank and file of our membership. While there are still lodges and individuals in our National Society who appear wholly untouched by the new outlook and its inspiring power, the majority show a definitely bright flame of earnest enthusiasm where they were apathetic or worse before; and those whose flame burned brightly at the time the Greater America Plan was inaugurated have increased its intensity and radiance ever since. I would say without hesitation that the Plan has been a co-ordinating factor of great power; that all over the country it has given our members a new stimulus and a new vision of the magnificence of our work, and of the need to set aside small differences and petty misunderstandings or purely local views in order to achieve the great things we *can* do and are expected to do *together*. Especially in connection with our public work the standards have been raised, and with them the reputation of Theosophy among the public. The continued insistence on the fact that Theosophy is not a creed and the Theosophical Society not a sect; that the former is the unfathomable Wisdom of God as reflected in the minds of the Greatest among men, and the latter a cultural organization composed of sincere Truth-seekers all over the world who study this Science of Life in a brotherly spirit and try to spread its illuminating principles — this is steadily increasing in the minds of the thoughtful the respect that every honest contact with living Theosophy commands. The real breadth of view which acknowledges the need for complete intellectual freedom, for the rightness and even the necessity to our Society of containing within its membership the widest variety of beliefs and

opinions, provided they are expressed courteously however firmly — this too is gradually becoming known and respected amongst members and non-members. And the continued insistence upon the spirit of the five basic objectives of the Greater America Plan in this magazine and by the field workers has undoubtedly found favorable response among the entire membership. We may therefore safely say that the Plan has been so far successful in imparting the splendid impulse of the 1933 Convention to the Section as a whole; although necessarily some lodges have been imbued more fully than others, and a few are still wholly untouched.

When we consider next the work that has been done and the work that remains to be done, the picture is less satisfying. One is always inclined to overestimate, in anticipation, concrete results of cooperative enterprise. It is hard to remember that so vast a program as ours will require many years for its realization, and that activity planned is never the same as activity performed. For our own part as promoters of the Plan, Miss Henkel and I are glad of the response to our field work, and of the favorable reception accorded to our Lodge Handbook and of the willingness of at least one quarter of our members to cooperate with the compilation of our Membership Directory. But the Handbook is still far from complete, and our field work has so effectively consumed our energies that an important part of our work has remained unattended. From the Advisory Groups which were started after considerable effort had gone into their preparation we have so far received only one encouraging report; and for my own planned group on "Social Order" my incessant traveling and lecturing have not even left me the time to make a start. In this work one becomes painfully conscious of one's limitations. There is always so much more to do than one finds oneself capable of doing! The birth of new or the revival of old lodges and federations cannot wholly offset occasional relapses; the enthusiastic comments on the Handbook from some cannot quite obliterate the sad fact that its sound suggestions seem to remain wholly unheeded by others, etc.

To complete the picture, therefore, we must look forward! We have made a good start — not quite as good as we had hoped to make, but

sufficiently good to provide a most encouraging outlook. But the greater part of the work is still ahead, and it will require an even fuller cooperation of the lodges and members with their Headquarters than has already been given. *Creative activity at "Olcott" for the benefit of the whole Section must become constant instead of merely summer work.* Only when a constant stream of inspiration and information flows to Headquarters and is from there re-distributed throughout the nation, will its true importance be felt. Only when every inquirer and every new member can be guided to the study that will suit his particular interest and background; when every more advanced member is training to pass on what he has understood and learned to live, and is studying industriously to reach more and deeper understanding with inspiring aid from his lodge and Headquarters, only then will our Greater America Plan begin to exert its full beneficent influence. For that a great deal of intensive intellectual work is needed, both at Headquarters and in the lodges. "Olcott" must become our cultural and educational center as well as our administrative center; if we work steadily towards that end the possibilities for our usefulness to America will be unlimited.

For in a national Society thus integrated and vigorously functioning, our Elder Brethren would find an instrument marvelously adapted to Their great purposes. Through its Center, dedicated to Their use, They could send—as They do now, but far more profitably—the spiritualizing energies that this great country needs, assured that through its many thousands of active and intelligent members these energies would find their way into all strata of the population and all walks of life.

Towards that end our efforts will be steadily bent when our return from field work will enable us to stay at "Olcott" for some time. While in the field for several months yet, we hope to get suggestions and ideas from many sides with which to amplify and to correct our own still plastic plans. But we are sure that we are going in the right direction, toward a greater American T.S., and thereby toward a greater America! So let the New Year be still better than the last; let us forget whatever marred the past and every day of 1935 let us renew our dedication to Truth and Brotherhood, starting anew each day the service of the highest ideals we have learned to see. Where there's a will, there is a way. Let us determinedly cooperate with Life, and Life's resistless power will be with us.

SEEDS

(Continued from page 12)

she is not indifferent to beauty, and if human beings are alive to this fact the decorative quality of seeds will be recognized as well as flowers. The Jerusalem cherry would not be noticed for its small flowers, but when brilliant with its orange and scarlet seed balls, it ranks high as a decoration especially at Christmas time. The same is true of winterberries or black alder. Bittersweet finds its way into many winter bouquets, as do pepper berries, Chinese lantern, holly, mistletoe and many others. Not only in bouquets have seeds a decorative value, but as necklaces they are quite equal to beads and the work of a jeweler. Also seeds are valuable in the study of design, either singly or in groups.

It is my proof of the beauty in common things that surrounds us, which we are apt to take for granted and not keep our lamp of appreciation steadily glowing for the multiple beauties of Nature.

Spring has its promises, but autumn has its fulfillments and scatters showers of seeds of all kinds with every breeze; but "the meadows are full of knowing weeds which refuse to give up their grist. Though a few grains are wrenched from them, they still hold a generous share for the white days when hungry winter birds will need them."

Plucky little weeds
With their pockets full of seeds,
Standing up against the driving
Winter's storm;
Waiting for the Spring
When their treasures they can fling
On the breast of Mother Earth to
Keep them warm.

But there are other plans, it seems,
Upon the dockets;
Along come hungry winter birds and
Pick their pockets.

It may not be so, but it seems to me the following is more or less true:

Leaves come down in showers;
Petals fall from flowers;
Nuts drop down in companies;
Fruits let go their hold on trees;
Grass lies down and goes to sleep;
Downcast skies begin to weep.
Mercury slides towards the ball:
That's why we call it Fall.

Editor's Note: The poems in this article are from Mrs. Jaques' book, "Whims."

Adyar News

The President and Mrs. Arundale arrived at Adyar on November 6, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Hotchener and Captain and Mrs. Sellon. They were very warmly welcomed at the station in Madras. A banner of greeting was stretched across the road at the entrance to the Adyar estate, many people along the road waved their welcome, and a large gathering awaited them at the Headquarters Hall to exchange warm greetings.

Dr. Arundale reported a satisfactory tour, in which he had met the General Secretaries of most of the European Sections, had attended a number of conventions, and sensed an increased vitality and interest everywhere, confirming reports that he had received. Adyar hopes that he will now be able to stay awhile at Headquarters.

In the interest of economy, *The Theosophist* is no longer sent free to the chief executive of each of the Sections as has been done for many years past. A small pamphlet, "The Adyar News," will henceforth carry official and executive notices to General Secretaries.

Adyar was recently honored in the opportunity and pleasure of entertaining Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. Dr. Tagore was in Madras at the invitation of its citizens and was accompanied by a party of thirty of the members of his Visva-Bharati, a registered public association open to all, irrespective of sex, nationality, race, caste or class, and consisting of the following departments: (1) School; (2) College; (3) Research Institute; (4) School of Arts and Crafts; (5) School of Music and Dance; (6) Institute of Rural Reconstruction.

On his arrival at Adyar on a Sunday morning, Dr. Tagore was duly welcomed and garlanded, after which he addressed a meeting, expressing appreciation of Adyar and paying gracious homage to Dr. Besant. Speaking of the honors paid to himself he said, "Give honor to the dead and love to the living." He made a brief speech at the Besant Memorial School, in the course of which he said, "I am old now and can do little in a practical way, but in spirit I am with you in this great work." It is interesting to note that this great poet of international fame gave an interview to our two Young Theosophists recently arrived at Adyar, Miss Dorothy McBrayer and Mr. Felix Layton.

Adyar Day February 17

By THOMAS W. POND

Chairman, U. S. Adyar Committee

IN ACCEPTING the appointment as chairman of this committee, the unceasing activities of which, under the direction of the last chairman, the late Captain Max Wardall, have been a source of inspiration to the American Section, I feel how trustingly we must depend upon the membership to enthusiastically continue this important work.

It is only when the hands are empty, we are told, that they can be filled by the Master. The very joy of giving brings down upon the entire world the spiritual light emanating from the Society's great Headquarters in India, and it is our destiny to make that light shine the more brightly in order that Adyar may become a flaming Center and an ever increasing fount of blessing and happiness to the world.

I am fully convinced that no other group of people have as many opportunities to serve mankind as have Theosophists. Therefore,

let every lodge president be a local chairman,
let every lodge member make a contribution.

Some will not be able to give as much as others, but that is not important. The important thing is the spirit of true sacrifice and the pure joy of giving which should accompany each contribution. Lodges

may send their donation collectively, or members may make their individual offerings. However, let no member fail to hear this appeal. Those whom we serve know well our circumstances and ask but one thing — the will of the heart. Many times members will shyly refrain from giving because their contribution may seem so small. Do those members stop to consider that the combined gifts of a thousand such people would make a considerable sum? Furthermore, the sacrificial spirit of one thousand hearts would place a tremendous spiritual power in the hands of our courageous International President.

Greater things are to be the lot of all humanity and during the transition stages through which all things must pass let every Theosophist stand firm, working steadfastly for Adyar with eyes fixed upon the great ideal and not allowing himself to become disturbed by the shifting scenes which must precede the advent of the Age of the Beautiful. Thus may we all become potent factors in making the administration of Dr. George S. Arundale a dynamic force in the spiritual evolution of the world.

All contributions should be sent to Dr. Ernest Stone, Treasurer, U. S. Adyar Committee, Ventura, California, P. O. Box 91.

The Inner Life

By CLARA M. CODD

Theme for the month:
Idealism.

Thought for the month:
"Create for yourself a great ideal, the ideal of that which you want to be. Dream of it, think of it, try to live it. One day, with joy, you will find yourself becoming that fair thing which your thought threw on the clouds of the future."
Annie Besant.



Clara M. Codd

The English statesman, Lord Rosebery, once said that what the world needed beyond everything else was "practical mystics," idealists who are capable of clearly formulating high and noble aims, and who at the same time possess the practical power and patience to try and realize them down here. To be capable of high and sustained idealism is the mark of a soul old in the scheme of things. The younger brother cannot define a very big ideal. It will be on more petty and personal lines. Neither can he orientate his life and energies for long in their direction. The really great man is great because he can do that. It is the fruit of many efforts, and maybe many sorrowful disappointments in past lives. Now he has the strength and clarity of vision, and sufficient disentanglement from personal reactions to keep all forces pointed in the required direction. Sometimes we see that acting in the case of a national hero or statesman—such a man, for example, as Abraham Lincoln, who could see a great vision of his country's future and keep the helm pointed there, no matter how many storms created by lesser men obscured the passage. Yes, idealists are the salt of the earth, the highest class in the school of life, from whose ranks step forth the pupils of our Masters, those who are capable of attempting the perilous ascent to Adeptship.

What is an ideal? Dr. Besant has described it as a congeries of permanent thought-forms built into an ideal form. And its constant influence over the life and character is immense. It provides a natural standard to which we may always refer in moments of doubt and indecision. Only let us always remember that true ideals are germane to their creator alone, and have not the same compelling power for another. They provide *our* standard, not universal ones for others. And they are so satisfactory to ourselves because they are

really the result of a kind of clairvoyant faculty, the ability to foresee along the pathway of our soul's own dharma that which we have the innate power to become. Like the acorn which can only become an oak tree, we can each of us only become "that which we are," and that hidden potency desiring to unfold and manifest brings about the formation of what we call ideals. So each man's ideal will be different and serve *him* best of all creation.

Many things help us to formulate that ideal—the books we read, the people we meet. And the more clearly it is formulated, the greater power we have to meet successfully the misadventures of life. Let us take the pains to do this, for clear ideals meditated and dwelt upon will recur at moments of crisis and give us at once the right motive and line of action. "Lives of great men all remind us, we may make our lives sublime." What boy or girl has not adopted a hero who became for them an inspiration and standard of living?

But we should also remember that our standard, being for ourselves alone, grows with our growth, and sometimes expands rapidly. Its roots lie in that Inner Christ Who being lifted up in our consciousness draws us ever onward. An ideal must never make us proud or hard or thankful that we are "not as other men are." And always, perforce, true idealists are ahead of the race. The standard of "public opinion" is too low for them. Many a good man and true has failed of that which he might have achieved for men, because through sloth or faint-heartedness he lowered his standards to that of the vast majority. "Faithful unto death" is the inborn nature of the idealist; to be false or to betray the vision within him is to turn away from himself. For an ideal is the first glimpse of the Master, of God, the tiny window through which heaven's light first shines.

Among the many ways which *Light on the Path* describes as being necessary for the finding of the Way, one is to "seek it by making the profound obeisance of the soul to the dim star that burns within. Steadily, as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you may know you have found the beginning of the way. And, when you have found the end, its light will suddenly become the infinite light."

The hearts of men are their books, events are their tutors, great actions are their eloquence.—*Macaulay.*

Personal Opinions

By L. W. ROGERS

Pacific Coast Lagging

Some economist should tell us why it is that "hard times" always strike the eastern states first and cling to the Pacific states in a long lingering, if not loving farewell! A certain degree of industrial reawakening is clearly observable in the East, but on the Pacific Coast the shadow of the depression seems as deep as it has been at any time. In the mountain states conditions appear to be almost normal, due of course to the silver legislation that has enormously energized mining industry. But westward from there the traveler enters the region of financial gloom. The Northwest is largely dependent on the lumber business and that has been in the dumps for several years. One reason, of course, is because building operations have been almost completely suspended and another is the growing competition of other construction materials.

If, as some believe, a wave of prosperity is rising it can safely be said that it has not even wet the toes of Tacoma and Seattle. In the latter city one hears of families that stay all day in bed because they have no fuel; of other cities with houses in the dark because the electric current is promptly turned off if the monthly bill is not paid; of families on relief with a total income of twelve dollars a month; of single men worse off than any others because without either work or relief assistance. In San Francisco the number of newly-poor beggars is almost alarming. It costs more to walk to a restaurant a few blocks away than to pay for a meal after arriving. One learns presently to put small coins in a certain pocket, for if more is given to one there will soon be nothing for others. There are undoubtedly some habitual "bums" living contentedly on such street gifts but the large majority are obviously previously well-to-do people reduced to poverty. They walk the streets daily asking for nickels and dimes, and eat when they have collected enough for a little food.

Naturally enough the economic situation here has seriously affected our lodges. To begin with there seems to be no affinity between riches and the higher life. It is chiefly the people to whom material wealth has become unimportant that are attracted to theosophy. There is little doubt that if the sum total of the possessions of the members of the Theosophical Society was divided by the number of members the average wealth would be found to be very low. In the membership will be found a considerable number of elderly people with an income just about sufficient to exist upon in normal times. There is a larger per-

centage in middle life with growing families and a modest income from some small business or from a professional position. There are a good many teachers of one sort or another, some with positions in established schools and others teaching independently some art or language. A small percentage are quite young and either are still in the family home with no income at all or are just starting in self-support in a very small and uncertain way. Finally there are the very few who are financially independent either because they have private fortunes or hold some position with a large salary. All this means that even in the most prosperous parts of the nation in most prosperous times we can expect considerable difficulty in financing propaganda work; and that when economic depression reigns the problem becomes a really difficult one. In the Northwest our lodges have adopted the plan of shifting the lodge meeting from midweek to Sunday so that a member can attend both lodge session and public lecture by paying only one car fare. Otherwise many members could go only to one meeting.

Under such circumstances giving public lectures becomes doubly difficult. When the lodges have halls they are usually so small that the members, and that eternal fringe of hangers-on who go to everything but never join anything, fill about half the seats; the other half of the audience is all the lecturer has from which to draw new material for strengthening the membership, and so he is somewhat like a machine that is forced to work at quarter capacity. It seems such a pity for a propaganda lecturer to use all his time and energy talking to a very small audience from which he cannot possibly get more than a dozen newly interested people, when with the same time and energy he could as well bring in four times as many. But that means rent for a larger hall and adequate advertising to let the public know about it, and most of the lodges frankly say that such things are beyond reach. The only alternative is for the lecturer to personally assume the financial risk and he takes his financial life in his hands when he does it.

Many of our lodges, particularly on the Pacific Coast, are carrying on under circumstances that call for real courage. Even with reduced rents they are hard pressed to get in the cash to meet the monthly bill and take care of incidental expenses. But nearly all of them are having at least two activities—the lodge meeting and a public lecture weekly. "How long will the depression last?" is the question asked almost everywhere. On this page next month something will be said about that.

What Lodges Are Doing

Augusta Lodge: Bishop Hampton was with the lodge on November 23. At an afternoon meeting he spoke on "The Occult Side of Healing," and in the evening gave a public lecture on "The Brotherhood of Religions." Augusta Lodge has been fortunate in obtaining splendid publicity in the local newspapers, and the text of Bishop Hampton's public lecture appeared in one of the newspapers the following day.

Besant Lodge (Tulsa) reports that its first Christmas bazaar, given December 7 and 8, was very successful. The bazaar was held in order to raise funds for the visits of Dr. Roest and Bishop Hampton in the spring. The sale of antiques donated by Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Zollinger contributed in a large measure to the success of the bazaar and aroused much interest among the buyers. The lodge is even now planning another such occasion for next year.

Birmingham Lodge: On November 11 the Atlanta and Birmingham Lodges held a joint session when Atlanta members drove over to Birmingham to spend the day. A vegetarian luncheon was served, after which an informal discussion of work revealed much of value to both lodges. The guests attended the Inquirers' Class in Theosophy, conducted by Mr. Richmond P. Wetmore, who delivered an excellent address. In the early evening a buffet supper was served at the studio home of Mr. and Mrs. Georges Bridges, where the Atlanta Lodge was enabled to study the work of the Arts and Crafts Department of the T.O.S. in the experiments being carried on by Birmingham Lodge along cultural lines. The guests left for home about six thirty, after a very delightful day.

Blavatsky Lodge (Hollywood): An unusual and interesting program of public lectures has been prepared by Blavatsky Lodge. The November and December lectures included "The Emperor Julian's Effort to Theosophize the Roman Empire," "Mani, Crucified Saviour of the Third Century," "The Mysterious Cagliostro," and "Theosophy, the Most Serious Movement of the Age." A Christmas program and social took the place of a public lecture on December 26.

Brahmavidya Lodge (Tampa) writes that it has been continuing the program work established in the fall, with classes in Scientific Astrology, *The Secret Doctrine*, and Elements of Theosophy, as well as a question and answer class. Several people from Lakeland, Florida, have been attending the classes and have requested one of the Brahmavidya members to start a class in Lakeland. The Mystic Book Shop, operated in connection with the lodge, continues to play its part in spreading Theosophy in Tampa. It is open

every week-day from nine to nine, and a member of the Society is available at all times to explain theosophical teachings to inquirers. Tea is served every afternoon from four to five, and a ten-minute talk is given by a guest speaker on "Mysticism and Modern Thought." These afternoon occasions are very informal and are open to the public.

Chicago Lodge celebrated Founders' Day with a lovely program. Miss Elizabeth E. Hancock's talk was exceedingly interesting and the music was splendid. Mr. E. Charles Best played one of his own compositions, and there were two beautiful violin and piano numbers by Mr. and Mrs. David Holquin. Mr. Holquin is now with the National Broadcasting Company and was formerly a member of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. A generous collection for Headquarters was received.

Detroit Lodge: Mr. Fred Werth, Headquarters field worker, recently completed a very successful visit to Detroit. His lectures were well attended and the audience appeared to be gaining much of value from his message. The lodge has just started a series of Musical Appreciation Hours, which, judging from the first one, are going to be very popular. Mrs. Elizabeth Rohns Davis, prominent pianist and teacher, is conducting these hours, using as a basis for her talks Cyril Scott's *The Influence of Music on History and Morals*. Tea is served following the talks and those present are invited to stay for the public lecture later in the evening.

Houston Lodge has been making splendid progress with L. W. Rogers' *Elementary Theosophy*. Members take turns in presenting a chapter, summarizing it in a paper or talk. The meetings have been interesting and the attendance good. A party and bridal shower was given on November 15 in honor of the lodge's faithful and well beloved secretary, Miss Lena Hall, whose marriage to Mr. Marion Lee, of Wilson Dam, Alabama, had been announced.

Indianapolis Lodge: Members and friends of the lodge enjoyed a tea and Christmas party on Sunday, December 30, followed by moving pictures of Palestine and a lecture by Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Kirkpatrick, who personally visited Palestine and took the pictures.

Los Angeles Lodge held a splendid Founders' Day meeting, celebrating that occasion and the fortieth anniversary of lodge activity unbroken and harmonious.

Milwaukee Lodge has been dividing its Sunday public work between lectures by prominent outside speakers and a series of more informal discussions under local guidance. Speakers presented

thus far have been Miss Sommer, Mr. Kunz, Miss Henkel, Dr. Kuhn, Miss Marie Mequillet and Dr. Henry Smith. It was an especially fortunate sequence of events to have had Miss Henkel with the lodge immediately after Mr. Kunz. Miss Henkel's practical suggestions for the emotional health of the lodge are a good complement to the keen intellectual stimulus received from Mr. Kunz. The discussions so far have dealt with Theosophy in Art, Hinduism, Buddhism, Egypt and Greece, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity. Founders' Day was celebrated with an appropriate program. A highlight in the social program was a waffle luncheon, also a feature of Founders' Day. Other social events have included a number of Sunday afternoon teas, served between lectures, a Children's Evening and a New Year's Eve party. Wednesday members' meetings have been devoted to the study of Powell's *The Casual Body*. The Thursday class is doing its usual fine work in combining, in an informal way, theosophical study with sociability. The lodge has experienced a substantial increase in active members, and a plan has been evolved whereby the lodge takes care of unpaid Headquarters dues.

Oakland Lodge held its annual bazaar on November 17, realizing a substantial sum needed for replacement of worn library books as well as new publications. The attendance was excellent and all present enjoyed the afternoon and evening. On November 25 the Federation of Lodges of Northern California met with the Oakland Lodge to enjoy a talk by Mr. Rogers on the closing years of the lives of Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater. Mr. Rogers' series of lectures given in the Bay Cities drew good crowds and were much appreciated.

Oklahoma City Lodge: A dinner was given recently in honor of Miss Henkel. Oklahoma City is her home lodge, and the members were very happy to welcome her on this occasion. Bishop Hampton conducted a members' meeting on December 19, and is to return in January for a week of public lectures. A special Christmas program was arranged for December 26.

Port Huron Lodge attended the Michigan Federation meeting on December 2 seventy-five per cent strong. Mr. Fred Werth was with the lodge on December 3 and 4 and his visit proved instructive and helpful to the members. *The Theosophist* has been placed in the Port Huron public library, with a notice in the front of each issue of the magazine giving information concerning the local lodge. It has been decided to have a social gathering each month in addition to the regular meeting. The secretary reports that the year's work is going along splendidly, with the utmost harmony among the members.

St. Louis Lodge: A delightful Christmas party, planned by the young people of the lodge, was given on December 15. There were special entertainment features, and gifts for everyone on the Christmas tree. An excellent orchestra furnished music for dancing. The Theo-Arts Club sponsored an interesting Christmas program on December 13. Mr. Clay Ballew, Director of the Washington University Glee Club, was the soloist, and there were readings and songs by Miss Ethel Leaver and Miss Genevieve Lilie of the Morse School.

Washington Lodge: The quarterly program of the lodge prepared in October carries many interesting announcements, among them some attractive public lecture titles, a Christian Mystic Bible Class, a Blavatsky Class and a New Age Group.

To a Violet

(Blooming in Late November)

Courageous little flower,
On chill November days
When from the noonday sun
Come forth such tepid rays
As scarcely chase the frost,
To shed your beauty on a thankless world,
Your fragrance too! —

Tell me the secret of yourself,
For if I knew
How to express
Such simple loveliness
As you,
And ask no warming sun
Or balmy days,
But only knew to give
And sweetly live,
To ask no recompense
Nor praise —
I should cease striving to become
For I should BE.

— Albert Frear Hardcastle.

Theosophical News and Notes

In the Field

It is amazing how great the accomplishment of a cheerful attitude and a courageous state of mind, and so it is not surprising that from numerous sources we receive enthusiastic accounts of achievement among the lodges. Whatever the problems, gloom and a woeful reiteration of troubles never banished them. That Theosophists know this truism not merely as a theory but as a fact is evidenced by their energetic activity.

Miss Henkel has continued in the middle West during November and December and the lodges in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Milwaukee and the Chicago area are particularly appreciative of her genius in helping lodges to help themselves. The field worker who merely discovers perplexities in lodge life is bound to fail, but whoever is able first to reveal the sources of strength and power unique to each lodge can then aid with loving kindness and practical understanding. Miss Henkel is now in Oklahoma and from there will go west to the Pacific Coast for the coming month.

Mr. Rogers traveled west in November where he was warmly welcomed by many friends in Tacoma and Seattle, and that in spite of the general conditions, which he finds a handicap. Portland was next on his itinerary and December brought him to the San Francisco area. No doubt worthwhile work was accomplished in the Northwest and is now in progress in the Bay District, but reports are yet to be received.

Dr. Pieter K. Roest spent a strenuous six weeks on a circuit of lodges including Baltimore, New York, Newark, Philadelphia, Richmond, Norfolk, Montclair, and Washington, which was completed early in December. It was a period of splendid accomplishment in those cities from which we have heard. Philadelphia members were especially gratified in attracting the largest audiences in their experience for a long time past, and are grateful for a National Lecturer who adds to his genuine and universal friendliness the abilities adequate to challenge the respect and to command the interest of people of intelligence. In Newark Dr. Roest followed Mr. Rogers and developed the inquirers' class, stabilized the interest, and aided greatly in getting this lodge re-established and happy in being again a living and dependable center. Dr. Roest was warmly welcomed in New York, where their plea is for a longer engagement. Richmond responded splendidly and Norfolk proved its mettle by extending its program beyond the original plan in order better to take advantage of Dr. Roest's presence.

From the East Coast Dr. Roest made his way southward to Augusta, Georgia, where his accomplishment was not only with the two lodges, but

in addition, in a noteworthy engagement to address 1200 high school and junior college students, where his address on "The Challenge of the New Era" was enthusiastically received. Augusta was also able to achieve a column and a half newspaper report of one of Dr. Roest's public addresses.

Dr. Pickett has been active in Oklahoma, and December was spent in San Antonio, Texas, where a staunch group of members are doing excellent work.

Our new field worker, Mr. Fred H. Werth, began his activities in November and spent a month under the direction of the Michigan Federation. The members and lodges are most appreciative of Mr. Werth's warm friendliness and smiling ways, and the reports commend his capacity in the field most enthusiastically.

Dues and Greater America Plan Pledges

This is the season when our funds begin to run low, and therefore the time when we have to take steps to collect the money that has been pledged or that is otherwise due and which we have counted on in arranging the program of the year.

Will lodge officers and all members please concentrate as much as possible upon the collection and payment of dues, and will those members who have unpaid pledges to the Greater America Plan and to other funds please endeavor to make their payments as soon as possible? There is \$2,400 still to be paid on pledges to the Greater America Plan, part of which was pledged for last year.

Theosophy in Action

The Nation of November 28 carries an important article by Mr. Milo Perkins, a member of Besant Lodge, Houston, Texas. As a business man Mr. Perkins writes under the general caption "What Business Men Think," and the specific title "Grab the Torch, Men of Means."

In the article Mr. Perkins urges that business recognize the changes that are coming and again assume leadership under a plan of adjustment whereby labor and capital could progress under improved social and industrial conditions.

We commend the article to our readers.

Thank You

Mr. Cook, Miss Snodgrass and the Staff are deeply appreciative of the many loving greetings which have been received by card and letter at Headquarters during the holiday season.

1935 Convention

The Board of Directors have approved Sunday, August 18, as the date of the opening of the 1935 Convention. There will as usual be a reception on the evening of the previous day, and Convention will be preceded by Olcott Institute and Summer School. The National President will be glad to receive suggestions regarding program features.

We note that the English Section hopes to have its Annie Besant Memorial Hall available for its convention next year, having already collected over \$5,000 toward its construction. This Section will not achieve its desires in the matter of a Besant Memorial Hall quite so promptly, but arrangements are being made to provide a larger tent than we have hitherto used, as we anticipate a still larger Convention.

An Offering to the Blind

There are 100,000 blind people in the United States. At least 98% of them know nothing at all of the doctrine of reincarnation and the laws of karma. They cannot understand why they are living a life of gloom and darkness. But there are many who are eager to understand something of Theosophy and depend upon our free theosophical Braille books and magazines. Our books are circulated among the blind readers throughout the United States and Canada, and a free monthly magazine goes out to the blind in many countries. But all this costs money and I wonder if you, dear reader, would not like to make a little offering to this work by sending a silver coin together with your name and address to The Theosophical Book Association for the Blind, 184 So. Oxford Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

We commend this activity to our members.

— Editor.

(Reprinted from the December, 1933, number.)

Lodge Reports

Our lodge officers are again reminded that Headquarters will presently be calling for lodge reports relating the activities of the year, statistically and from the standpoint of accomplishment and progress, and as to future plans.

Dr. Tagore Visits Besant Memorial School

On the morning of October 23 Dr. Rabindranath Tagore paid a visit to the Besant Memorial School at Adyar, of which he is one of the distinguished patrons.

Long before his arrival the children, teachers and visitors assembled under the shade of the two mango trees in the Besant Gardens, where final preparations were made to receive the great man. The place was beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands hung from the trees, while the fragrance of incense sweetened the air. The children were seated on the ground before the chowki, which was decorated and prepared for Dr. Tagore under one of the mango trees, while a garlanded life-size portrait of the great woman who inspired the school faced the poet's chowki over the heads of the children.

Among the teachers and visitors seated near the children were Mr. Shankara Menon, the headmaster; Mr. and Mrs. Shri Ram; Miss Watkins from the Vasanta School at Auckland, New Zealand; and other distinguished visitors from England, America and Australia. Dr. Tagore, who was the guest of the Theosophical Society for a week, was escorted to the joyous and distinguished gathering by Dr. Srinivasa Murti, the deputy for the President, who was in Europe.

As soon as the poet had seated himself, and the children and guests had resumed their seats, a garland was put around his shoulders by a little boy and a bouquet presented by a girl. The poet then gave a short address in his delightful, sincere way. He told the children that he was sorry he could not address them in their native Tamil, but he hoped they would be able to understand his English. In a friendly way he told them that he would not inflict upon them a long speech by an old man, for he would rather see them playing happily among themselves in the lovely grounds of the school. He regretted that he could not play and dance with them and tell vivid stories of the heroes of Ancient India as he used to do when he was younger. He told the children that they were very lucky to attend a school in such beautiful surroundings, with such splendid teachers, and that they were fortunate indeed to be in a school which was connected with the name of Dr. Besant, whose greatness must live for ages. He closed by saying that he was happy to be a patron of such a progressive and idealistic school, and that he would be glad to have his name and fame used in any way to further its work.

After Dr. Tagore's speech, Mr. Sivan, composer and teacher in the school, chanted a sanskrit couplet which he had composed in the poet's honor, and then the teachers were presented to the great man one by one. The program closed with a short musical selection by the school children, after which the school resumed its normal activities, proud to have received a visit from its distinguished patron.

FELIX LAYTON

Michigan Federation

A unique public symposium, contributed to by a Christian, a Jew, a Hindu and a Theosophist, was a feature of the winter gathering of the Michigan Federation at Ann Arbor, Sunday, December 2.

In the beautiful "Grand Rapids" room of the Michigan League Building an audience of approximately 150 listened with wrapt attention to the speakers, each of whom told what his particular belief had to offer to meet the needs of today. Rabbi Bernard Heller, Ph. D., Principal of the Hiller Foundation, spoke for Judaism. The case for Christianity was given by the Rev. Edward Blakeman, D. D., Religious Advisor to the Student Body of the University of Michigan. Hinduism's contribution was outlined by Mr. Tarini P. Sinha, M. A., of the University of Michigan; and Mr. E. Norman Pearson, president of the Michigan Federation, spoke of the contribution made by Theosophy to the needs of our day.

At an earlier meeting, Mr. Fred Werth, field worker from National Headquarters, addressed the members. His talk, which was instructive and inspiring, carried an appeal which brought a response from every one of his listeners. Mr. Werth's presence at the Federation gathering came in the midst of a tour of the lodges in the Michigan Federation, and the members expressed their deep appreciation of his work among them.

A lunch, at which approximately seventy delegates were seated, followed the morning sessions, and after the public symposium a talking picture entitled "The Next War," carrying a very powerful appeal for world peace, was exhibited by Dr. Frances S. Onderdonk of Ann Arbor. This brought to a close one of Michigan's most successful gatherings. Mr. Werth undoubtedly did much, by his presence and his message, to encourage all who were present to greater endeavor. And it would scarcely seem possible that anyone present could fail to be convinced by Mr. Pearson's dynamic presentation that Theosophy holds the key to the solution of the needs of today.

Children's Convention Camp

At the Convention of 1934 the National President was requested by resolution to look into the possibilities of providing a camp in or near Wheaton for the entertainment of the children of Convention and Summer School guests.

A camp for both girls and boys of all ages does not seem to be possible at the present time, but a member has made the following constructive suggestion in connection with which we invite further comment and recommendation:

1. Parents bringing children to Olcott are to let Headquarters know a month in advance.

2. Families having children will take rooms in Wheaton village, preferably where they may be looked after in the evening.

3. Parents will contribute as much per day as is necessary to pay someone to direct play activities for (a) the younger children, six to ten years; (b) the older group, ten to fourteen years — division to depend entirely on the number and age of children.

4. The scene of play activities might be the garden of some Wheaton member of the Society or the garden of the play director.

5. A teacher or whoever is chosen to direct such play activities would plan a definite program for the time, including handwork, hobbies, plays and games, athletic sports (for the older group).

6. Two meals, morning and evening, could be taken with the parents at Headquarters; the noon meal could be a simple one (sandwiches, fruit and milk) prepared by someone in the village or by Headquarters and eaten with the play director in charge, in informal manner.

7. Each child would be expected to bring with him some play equipment, constructive in character, to be used by himself and the group, Headquarters perhaps investing in permanent play equipment as time went on, if the children's camp were to be a yearly affair.

Itineraries

MISS ANITA HENKEL, *Field Worker*

January 15-February 28, Southern California Federation.

THE RT. REV. CHARLES HAMPTON, *Lecturer*

January 6-12, Tulsa, Okla.

January 13-19, Oklahoma City, Okla.

January 20, Tulsa, Okla.

January 23-25, Wichita, Kans.

January 26-February 2, Omaha, Nebr.

DR. NINA E. PICKETT, *Field Worker*

January 1-15, Houston, Texas.

DR. PIETER K. ROEST, *National Lecturer and Field Director*

January 5-8, Miami, Fla.

January 9-11, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

January 13-16, Tampa, Fla.

January 17-19, St. Petersburg, Fla.

January 20, Sarasota, Fla.

January 22-23, Orlando, Fla.

January 27-31, Atlanta, Ga.

February 2-8, Birmingham, Ala.

MR. L. W. ROGERS, *National Lecturer*

January 1-28, San Francisco District.

January 29-31, Fresno, Calif.

MR. FRED WERTH, *Field Worker*

January 5-February 15, Ohio Federation.

I am a part of all that I have met. — TENNYSON

We Are Regretful Too

Miss Snodgrass and Mr. Cook express their deep appreciation of the many regrets so kindly expressed by friends all over the Section who have learned of their inability, through other pressing work, to join the party with whom they intended to sail for Adyar.

"Brother Francis"

A young man of nineteen, announced as "Brother Francis," is visiting some of our lodges and claiming acceptance by reason of authorization to give Mr. Krishnamurti's blessing, as also that of one of the Masters Who he says is a young man now living in western America. As we understand that the Master referred to is not young and is living elsewhere, there appears to be reason to doubt the validity of these claims.

If we know anything of Krishnamurti's teaching, it seems most unlikely that he would authorize anyone to represent him even to the extent of passing on a blessing from him. "Brother Francis" claims acceptance by Theosophists as the "Krishnamurti of the West," preparing for the coming of Christ in 1975. Other pronouncements include as usual a request for funds, in which the appearance of the young man in a white suit and cape and wearing a very large cross adds to the appeal to the unintelligently impressed.

A new touch, sufficiently overdone, we believe, to make discriminating people wary.

Statistics

Deaths

Mrs. Helen Fisher, Chicago Lodge, December 1, 1934.
Miss Elizabeth S. McLeish, Columbus Lodge, November 14, 1934.
Mrs. Eugenia E. Travis, charter member Montclair Lodge, November 26, 1934.

Marriages

Miss Patricia Huntington, Santa Barbara Lodge, and Mr. Maurice Skates, October 26, 1934.
Miss Esther Bagnall and Mr. Thomas Greville, Lightbringer Lodge, Washington, September, 1934.
Miss Lena Hall, Houston Lodge, and Mr. Marion Lee, November 25, 1934.

New Lodge Officers

Sampo Lodge, Detroit — Pres., Mr. Frank Williams; Vice-Pres., Mr. Fred Fernelius; Sec'y, Miss Aino Kaksonen; Treas., Mrs. Irene Williams; Librarian, Mr. Otto Kalapudas.
Newark Lodge — Pres., Mr. Edwin B. Litzkuhn; Vice-Pres., Mrs. F. E. McElroy; Sec'y, Miss Marjorie E. Dippel; Treas., Mr. Rexford Sharp; Publicity Chairman, Mrs. Florence Litzkuhn.

Decatur Lodge — Pres., Corres. Sec'y, Librarian and Pur. Agt., Mr. Louis B. Cassell; Vice-Pres. and Publicity Agt., Mrs. Pearl Grant; Rec. Sec'y, Miss Alta Turner; Treas., Miss Rosa Voelcker.

Leadbeater Lodge, Jacksonville — Pres., Mr. Roy K. Downing; Vice-Pres., Miss Lenore Graham; Sec'y and Treas., Mr. Rawdon Sharpe.

New Members From November 1 to November 30, 1934

Applications for membership during the above period were received from the following lodges: Terre Haute, Tacoma, Birmingham, Maryland (Baltimore), Duluth, St. Louis, Dayton, New York, Pythagoras (Cincinnati), Detroit, Syracuse, Sirius (Chicago), Lansing, Seattle, Oak Park, Richmond, Casper, Colorado Springs, Hermes (Philadelphia), Besant (Cleveland), Hartford-Capitol, Panama, Newark.

American Theosophical Fund

Previous receipts.....	\$70.10
To December 15.....	8.00
	<hr/> 78.10

Building Fund

Mr. E. F. Dann, Mrs. Anna E. Lancaster, Mrs. W. F. Underwood, Mrs. Gertrude L. Blanchet, Mr. John R. Fincher, Mr. Horace Britton, Mrs. Martha F. Priest, Mr. Milton B. Holmes, Dr. and Mrs. V. G. Rocine, Mr. Otis S. Vaniman — \$104.50.

Greater America Plan

Previous receipts.....	\$1,145.50
To December 15.....	211.50
	<hr/> \$1,357.00

Christmas Contributions

Total.....	\$13.00
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Founder's Day Contributions

Total.....	\$161.60
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Helping Hand Fund

Total.....	\$20.00
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Form of Bequest

I give, devise, and bequeath to The Theosophical Society in America, a corporation, with its principal place of business in the City of Wheaton, State of Illinois, the sum of.....dollars (\$)
(or the following described property):.....

Cash contributions made within the taxable year to The Theosophical Society in America not exceeding 15 per cent of the taxpayers' net income are allowable as deductions in computing net income under Article 251 of Regulation 69 relating to the income tax under the Revenue Act of 1926.

Endowments may be made to the Society with the provision that an annuity be paid to the patron for life.

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American Round Table

RAY W. HARDEN, Chief Knight



A League of Young People Banded Together for Service.
Motto: "Live pure; speak true; right wrong; follow the King."

Pages: 7 to 11 years.
Companions: 12 to 17 years.

Squires: 18 to 20 years.
Knights: Over 21 years.

Official Organ: "Modern Knighthood," a newspaper by young citizens of America. Subscription price \$1.00 per year. Round Table Headquarters address: P. O. Box 690, San Jose, California.

In line with continued expansion and progress of Round Table work in the United States, a new "Certificate of Membership" has been issued by Round Table Headquarters. It is handsomely engraved and produced in art colors on a background of gold, using heavy board, suitable for framing or hanging as it is.

The illustration shows a knight in armor, mounted upon a beautiful horse, both figures equipped with all the insignia and appointments of knighthood. These express the ideals and objects of our modernized Order in various symbolic significance, as do the towers and turrets of the castles which also appear in the picture.

Upon the engraved scroll beneath is the new wording of our Round Table pledge, as slightly changed in Dr. Arundale's new outline, which reads: "Live Pure; Speak True; Right Wrong; Follow the Light." Also there are spaces for filling in the name and title of the new member, with date of his initiation and signature of the Chief Knight of the American Section.

Formerly we have depended upon ordering certificates imported from England, these being sometimes greatly delayed or even lost in transit. Now, with our own distinctive official certificate as well as new membership cards for the new year, the American Section is ready for fresh growth, greater interest and effective service.

It is recommended that every Leading Knight keep one of the new American Round Table certificates on display at Table meetings, and available to show to prospective new members. For this purpose, a sample certificate will be mailed to all active Table leaders, as soon as their annual report is sent in to Round Table Headquarters.

Blank forms for such reports have been mailed to all, as these are to be made as soon after January 1 as possible.

Leading Knights are again reminded that no boy or girl is to be allowed to lapse in membership for non-payment of dues. Several Tables maintain a local fund for paying dues for members in these circumstances, and through the kind contributions of friends of the Order, there is a headquarters fund for the purpose of paying the dues of any member who wishes to continue in active Round Table service, but finds difficulty in paying the dues. All that is necessary is a statement to this effect by the Leading Knight, and the young Page or Companion is duly recorded as a member in good standing. They will receive their cards and other communications of the Order.

Through the good agency of Mrs. Flavia B. MacKenzie of the T.O.S., the Round Table Order has made valuable contact with The World Peace Federation, Inc. The Secretary has requested copies of Modern Knighthood, and written several very helpful letters. We quote a paragraph from one of these, which might well become a national slogan: "World Peace is *necessary* and it is *possible*!"

The firm of Lenox, Inc., Trenton, N. J., has presented to the Round Table Museum a handsome piece of chinaware in the design of a large seashell, decorated in gold.

We have a most earnest letter from a member in India who wishes to correspond with boys and girls in America. The address is: "Mahmud Ahmad, Mohalla Jolahka, Jammu, Kashmir State, India.

Snow is to one a weary waste
 And bleeding feet,
 A horror and a peril to be faced,
 A foe to meet.

And yet another in it sees
 A glory as of God,

Beneath bowed heads of reverent trees
 A sheltered sod.

For one the path of victory won
 By struggle to the goal;
 The other, deeds of action done,
 Drinks beauty with his soul.

— FANNIE M. PENDLETON.

THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST



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

The Living Universe, by Sir Francis Young-husband. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York. Price, cloth \$3.00.

It is a striking instance of the change in the trend of western thought during the current century, as compared with that of mid-Victorian days, that our author should have felt obliged to apologize to another writer who had used practically the same title for a work on the same subject, neither being aware of the other's effort. In his chapter on "The Inhabited Universe" Sir Francis draws a parallel between the activities of an aspiring man and those of the Power controlling the Universe, a kind of "as above, so below" conception; and he surmises that Man, the human race, has been brought up, as it were, under the influence of surrounding intelligent beings, and he speaks of Cosmic Genius, under whose dominant control the living beings on one planet might stimulate the beings on another planet. The author's intuition speaks when he asserts that "the Universe is a Living Universe animated by Mind, inspired by Creative Love, and dominated by the power of a Holy Spirit."

The work is an interesting combination of mystical perception of cosmic facts, real truths, and phases of a type of scientific thought as to the descent of Man which are rapidly becoming outmoded in the light of new knowledge broadcast through the world in the last fifty years. But the author's views will give many readers opportunity for earnest thought, and it will well repay any student to read the book with thoughtful care.

— W. G. GREENLEAF.

An Introduction to the Mantra Sastra, by S. E. Gopalacharlu (Adyar Pamphlet No. 188-89). The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. Paper, 40 cents.

Mantra Sastra is a department of occult science which has for its objects the acquirement of powers for securing the objects aimed at by means of invoking the gods presiding over them, by repeating such Mantras as are intended for the purpose with the necessary ceremonies attending thereto, the first condition attending success being purity of body, speech and mind.

The Song Celestial, by Sir Edwin Arnold, illustrated by Willy Pogany.

A new edition published by David McKay Company, Philadelphia. 7¾ x 10 inches in size, 135 pages, attractive cloth cover of black and silver, boxed, price \$3.50.

The Bhamati of Vacaspati on Sankara's Brahmasutrabhasya (Catussutri), by S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri and C. Kunhan Raja; Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. Price, cloth \$6.00.

The authors and the publishers are to be congratulated upon this first English edition of Vacaspati's Bhamati, and English readers will not question the close association of the Sanskrit source when they see single words rendered into fifteen of their own. They will enjoy, also, the numerous metaphors: weaver, plantain, cows, the Ganges, fire, the blind, leanness, narrow-necked pots, rice, banyan trees, goat's milk, ghee, lotus, oxen, lyre, mustard oil, rope and snake, bowls, red crystals (rubies), rotten gourds. Indian all, and the reference to mustard oil has even been used to place Vacaspati in one of two Indian provinces, much as the use of bluebonnets might indicate that an author was both American and Texan. The words of a man who is dated by a single reference to a questionable king, and by the fact that he must have preceded his commentators, as living within the ninth century A.D., here certainly live again.

— L.D.B.

Our Elder Brethren, edited by Dr. Besant. The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. Price, cloth \$1.50.

The series of articles embodied in this book first appeared in *The Young Citizen*, a magazine of world brotherhood, edited by Dr. Besant, and in collective form constitute "an attempt to convey a faint reflection of the beauty and the splendor of the Great Servants of the World." It is a very interesting discussion of the great teachers, saints and spiritual leaders of the world, their work, and their relationship in time; and it presents in clear and helpful manner a subject that is especially appealing to members of the Society. This book will repay reading and re-reading. — F.M.P.

Life the Great Adventure, by Nina Elizabeth Pickett. Published by the author. Price, paper, \$0.50.

This little book contains some of the inspiring teachings which Dr. Pickett has been presenting to her lecture audiences during the past ten years. To earnest souls who are beginning to work consciously with the Divine Plan toward the perfecting of their lives this book should be a wonderful inspiration and help. It pictures the various stages in the climb of the human soul from its birth to its perfection and liberation.

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