



THE THEOSOPHIC MESSENGER

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

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The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement contained herein unless officially set forth.

As readers are cordially invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions and notes upon Theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to **The National Committee, Editor, 5131 Washington Ave., Chicago, Ill.** Subscription price to non-members, 50 cents per annum.

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Edited by the National Committee.

A Happy New Year.

A Happy New Year to All! Our little world has gone around another spiral of its evolutionary path—it has made some progress in its development as a world—since the dawn of January 1st, 1905.

And we, tiny creatures, dwelling on its surface, have we made some progress in this small cycle of time? Yes, the progress of humanity is ever onward, but the paths that are trodden by human feet, when looked at close at hand and over the limited area included in a single life, are very zig-zag. Man is ever trying various ways of reaching his goal, taking paths that are devious, painful and wearisome, though they will bring him finally to the desired end—for "All Paths are Mine."

We have advanced some steps nearer to enduring peace among nations

through the agonies of a terrible war. Russia is making slow and painful progress towards better conditions, but the long account of centuries cannot be settled in a day.

In our own country we are having a "wave of reform" which, like 'house cleaning,' is very unpleasant when you are going through it, but the ultimate results are decidedly beneficial. It is appalling certainly to find that there is so much rubbish to be swept up and removed, but since it is there the sooner we get rid of it the better.

In the work of the T. S. in the world, there has been marked and definite progress. Reincarnation is becoming not only a familiar idea, but a more and more widely accepted belief; and with it come more rational and hopeful views of life. And it is the spread of the truth, not merely the increase in our membership, which marks the real success of the T. S. as a channel through which the Divine Love may work.

NATURAL SELECTION IN THE IN-ORGANIC WORLD.

To the scientist of twenty years ago the title of this article would have seemed to be a contradiction in terms; for how could there be such a thing as development where there is no life, proceeding under the same laws as operate in the evolution of the organic world! Nevertheless, such has been the nature of the discoveries in physical science within the last ten years that the operation of this great law is suggested in the development of the atom itself.

On August 15th last, Professor Geo. H. Darwin, second son of the late Charles Darwin, the author of "The Origin of Species," delivered at Cape Town, South Africa, his Presidential address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, using the above title for his subject. His theme dwelt with the problem as to how far the laws which have been observed as governing the evolution of the organic world may hold good in the inorganic; and he deems the question to be not at all fanciful, but one of great and practical importance. The theory of natural selection he acknowledges to have required modification since it was first enunciated, but he claims that "the general principle holds its place firmly as a permanent acquisition to modes of thought."

The professor's address is of interest to the Theosophical student from the manner in which he uses the law of analogy in bringing out his conceptions. Starting with the statement that "the fundamental idea in the theory of natural selection is the persistence of those types of life which are adapted to their surrounding conditions, and

the elimination by extermination of ill-adapted types; the struggle for life among forms possessing a greater or less degree of adaptation to slowly varying conditions is held to explain the gradual transmutation of species." He takes up the consideration of political institutions, the development of which he regards as involving the fundamental conception of the nature of evolution. Taking a wider view of political phenomena than is commonly done, he defines the state as "a configuration of arrangement of a community of men; or we may say that it implies a definite mode of motion of man—an organized scheme of action of man on man." A state is in politics, therefore, analogous to a species in the organic world, or to a stable configuration or mode of motion in the realm of matter; for the persistence of all of them depends upon their power of adapting themselves to their environment. Looking at the state from this point of view we see it displaying the characteristics of all organisms—inception, growth, gradual loss of acquired stability, and final disintegration. This disintegration may involve the extinction of the previous form of government, or merely a change; a revolution within the state itself, rather than its conquest and absorption by another. The consideration of the slow progress of these changes, involving two possibilities—one of utter extinction of the political "mode of motion" by conquest and absorption, and the other of slow modification by successive revolutions—leads Professor Darwin to question "whether biologists have been correct in looking for continuous transformation of species. Judging by analogy we should rather expect to find slight continuous changes occurring during a long period

of time, followed by a somewhat sudden transformation into a new species, or by rapid extinction." In the case of inorganic matter the process is essentially the same, but for the physicist there is no such record as is available for the biologist in fossil forms, or for the sociologist in history or the customs of savage tribes. On the other hand the problems of the world of life are as a rule so much more complex than those of the inorganic world that the biologist must be satisfied with general conclusions, while the physicist is not willing to accept such, but demands a more particular estimate of the causes and effects of the changes he observes.

Prof. Darwin then lays down this proposition: "Natural selection may seem, at first sight, as remote as the poles asunder from the ideas of the alchemist (that matter, having a common substratum for all the elements, could be changed from one kind to another, and thus the baser metals be transmuted into gold); yet dissociation and transmutation depend on the instability and regained stability of the atom; and the survival of the stable atom depends upon the principle of natural selection."

He then reviews the work of the last ten years in investigating the nature and constitution of the atom, which is now known to consist of a large number of component parts, instead of being, as had been hitherto supposed, a final indivisible portion of matter. The great question now relates to the mechanism by which these component parts in the atom are held together. The simplest atom—that of hydrogen—consists of about 800 minute corpuscles or electrons, revolving in regular orbits within a containing globe. Pro-

fessor Thompson has shown mathematically that if the electrons are to be persistent in their motions their orbits must be definitely arranged and the number of the electrons fixed; otherwise there can be no association into stable communities of different types. Now there are known laws of electricity in motion which indicate that an atom constituted of negatively electrical corpuscles in a sphere of a positively electrical character would be radiating energy, and therefore losing it, and would eventually develop instability and be disrupted. He is thus led "to conjecture that the several elements in chemistry represent those different kinds of communities of corpuscles which have proved by their stability to be successful in the struggle for life." It would also follow that when the time comes when even the most stable of atoms reach the point of disintegration they will necessarily transform themselves into an element which needs less energy than was required in the former state. This change might require a very long time to be affected, but it must come; and though there are as yet no symptoms of decay in the solar system, and the elements therein must have existed for millions of years, yet it is not eternal.

Whatever may be the value or otherwise of Professor Darwin's idea—which differs decidedly from that of Professor Crookes in his "Genesis of the Elements"—the interesting phase of the whole question is the radical changes that are going on in scientific circles with regard to conceptions of the nature of the inorganic world. Recent investigations in the new department of science which has been termed "plasmology" show in crystals phenomena which are absolutely analogous to

vital phenomena—so much so that photographs of certain forms produced in the changes in crystals appear to be almost exact duplicates of those of various lower forms of microbes. The question has been raised as to whether the microbe is no more alive than the crystal, or the latter equally endowed with life as is the former. A monism there seems to be; but is it a "monism of 'life everywhere,' that is, the universal action of a vital principle, or of 'life nowhere,' that is, the complete absence of any vital principle?"

Surely, and not so very slowly, Science is following the road toward an ultimate demonstration of the unity of all life, and the fact that there is no such thing as "dead" matter. The "tiny architect" at work in the crystal, the marvelous adaptability of plants to their surroundings; the "ways of the ant," which we must consider if we would be wise; the intelligence of the animal, most highly developed by his association with man—all proclaim the operation of one underlying and guiding Will. As the world of the infinitely little is more closely studied, evidence accumulates that cannot be ignored; and the unfailing accuracy of the photographic plate shows the crystal undergoing segmentation, which is a characteristic vital process—thus breaking down the barriers between living and dead matter—barriers which have so long been regarded as not to be passed.

W. G. G.

Look for no reward for goodness but goodness itself. Remember heaven and hell are utterly immoral institutions, if they are meant as reward and punishment.—*Thomas Davidson of the Adirondacks.*

Esoteric Christianity Class.

ITS OBJECTS.

First—To attain a clear conception of the Christian religion as founded by the Master Christ.

Second—To aid in every way possible the bringing into present day Christianity its original teaching.

Third—To fit ourselves to converse intelligently on the views we hold.

LESSON 5.

Pages 36 to 45, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 Name some of the teachings of the Christian Church relative to God, man and the universe which are logically unacceptable to intelligent thinking men?
- 2 (a) Give the names of some of the Christian Mystics of the first one thousand years of our Christian era?
(b) Of the last nine hundred years?—
(c) What part if any, did these men have in Esoteric Christianity?
- 3 To whom did Christ speak in parables, and why did he so?
- 4 General discussion of lesson?

LESSON 6.

Pages 46 to 55, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 What were some of the names used in the early Church referring to the Mysteries?
- 2 What is your understanding of the verse "Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it?" Mat. 7:4.
- 3 Are "riches" a bar to entrance into the "Kingdom of Heaven?"
- 4 How may we help bring back into the Christian religion its Esoteric teaching?

LESSON 7

Pages 56 to 65, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 (a) Had St. Paul a knowledge of the Mysteries?
(b) Name a few references relating thereto.
- 2 (a) Did any other apostles have knowledge of the Mysteries?
(b) Give names and references in proof thereof.
- 3 What is the Esoteric meaning of the "resurrection of the dead?"
- 4 What is the meaning of the saying of Paul, "**until Christ be formed in you?"—Gal. 4-19.

LESSON 8.

Pages 66 to 75 inclusive "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 What are Universal Truths and how may we recognize them?
- 2 (a) Name some of the early Fathers of the Church whom we know were Initiates?
(b) Tell in a few words something of Saint Clement?
- 3 (a) Should the Mysteries be restored to the Christian Religion to-day, what effect would the event have upon the Church?
(b) Are Church people ready to receive Esoteric Christianity?
- 4 Review of Selections from Saint Clement's Gnostic notes (pages 73, 74, 75 E. C.)

It is recommended that, as far as possible, branches organize Esoteric Christianity classes. Chicago Branch has quite a large class devoted to this study. Correspondence is invited with isolated members interested in the study. Letters on the subject should be addressed to the "Esoteric Christianity Class," care of the Messenger, and will be gladly answered.

Cultivate ideal friendships, and gather into an intimate circle all your acquaintances who are hungering for truth and right. Remember that heaven itself can be nothing but the intimacy of pure and noble souls.—
Thomas Davidson of the Adirondacks.

PRESS POINTS.

To the Members of the Nat. T. S. Press Com.:

Further additions to the list of chairmen of sub-sections are:

MR. F. E. MARTIN,
(Webb City *Evening Register*)
Webb City, Mo.,

has charge of Presswork in the States of Missouri, Iowa and Michigan.

MRS. MARY STEMPER,
LINDA VISTA APARTMENTS,
San Francisco, Cal.
Arizona and New Mexico.

It is impossible at present to state just when the pamphlet on *Suggestions for Presswork* can be issued. In the meantime it is hoped that the Chairmen of the Sub-sections will collect such suggestions as appear from time to time in the MESSENGER, and will utilize such as are applicable to their special territories. A *Press Fund* of about \$55.00 is in the hands of Mr. R. A. Burnett (address Chicago T. S. Headquarters) Treasurer Nat. T. S. Press Com., upon which Chairmen of Sub-sections may draw for expenses connected with stationary and postage.

From the immense number of newspaper and magazine clippings that are being sent to the Central Com., it is evident that our committees are very much alive, and that fine work is being done in putting Theosophic ideas before the general American public.

KATE C. HAVENS,

Chairman Nat. T. S. Press Com.
6115 Woodlawn Ave., Chicago.

Five lines of work are particularly commended to the attention of every local committee. Some of these have been mentioned before, but they are now all crystallized into a definite five-

fold aim for the coming year's press work.

Our general purpose is (1) to bring Theosophical news and teachings, and all pertinent matter before the American people through newspapers and other literature. (2) to enlist the writers in the Section in the service of Theosophical subject matter. (3) to draw forth the latent powers of incipient writers.

But the particular goal that is set before us for the ensuing season is comprised in the following five means: the first is reporting the Sunday night and other public lectures of the local Branches to the local papers. As a rule the reports should be prepared and sent to the papers beforehand, and consist of three hundred words or more of abstract.

The second is to present to the Branch meeting at stated intervals, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, any news or articles of Theosophical interest found in current literature, periodicals or books.

The third is to try to place in your local papers any article sent from headquarters. If it cannot be placed locally it may be sent to some other paper with which the Committee is familiar.

The fourth is to endeavor to place Theosophical reading matter in prisons and hospitals. Reading is always in demand at those places, and affords a good opportunity to put old Theosophical books, periodicals or pamphlets where they may prove of inestimable value in moulding lives.

The fifth is to keep a scrap-book of clippings of Theosophical matter.

One of the easiest and best ways of getting this work attended to is to give

each line into the charge of some one particular person who is held responsible therefor. Each committee is urged to keep a record of their work along these five lines so that detailed reports may be rendered at the end of the year.

Report blanks are being issued by Mr. Ungér covering these five heads, which will be sent to the local committees for full accounts of their endeavors, so that some estimate may be had of just how far we have compassed our ends.

All the field-workers were elected to honorary membership in the American Section Committee, the election being coupled with an invitation to co-operate with the committee's workings, as their travels from Branch to Branch afford opportunity.

Some most welcome letters have been received. Mrs. McGovern, President of the San Diego Branch sends an extensive report she had published in a local paper of a Sunday night lecture she delivered on "Esoteric Christianity."

Others have sent for material to publish in their papers, and have offered to help. These bright beginnings are surely but an earnest of what will certainly follow as the inevitable and grateful result of hearty, devoted effort.

ADA MAY KRECKER,

Secretary.

Examine yourself every night, and see whether you have progressed in knowledge, sympathy and helpfulness during the day. Count every day a loss in which no progress has been made.—*Thomas Davidson of the Adirondacks.*

The Spread of Theosophical Literature.

As one indication of the interest taken in Theosophical literature, it is thought it might be interesting and helpful to give a list of the books by well-known Theosophical writers now in the public library of Chicago. It will be observed that Mrs. Besant's books are particularly well represented. It is found that her books are purchased very soon after they appear. These books are not presented to the library, they are bought, unquestionably because there is found to be a demand for them. It is hoped that this list may be found useful in stimulating the purchase of these books by other libraries. The numbers by which they may be found in the Chicago Public Library are added for the benefit of the Chicago members and also that the list may be used in propaganda work in Chicago.

ANDERSEN, JEROME A.

Septenary Man..... L 5505

BESANT, ANNIE.

Ancient Wisdom..... L 5509
 Birth and Evolution of the Soul, L 5561
 Building of the Cosmos..... L 5562
 Death and After..... L 5520,3
 Dharma..... L 5563
 Esoteric Christianity..... L 5510
 Four Great Religions..... L 5564
 In the Outer Court..... L 5565
 Karma..... L 5520,4
 Man and His Bodies..... L 5520,7
 Path of Discipleship..... L 5566
 Re-incarnation..... L 5520,2
 Self and Its Sheaths..... L 5567
 Seven Principles of Man..... L 5520,1
 Some Problems of Life..... L 5568
 Three Paths..... L 5569
 Pedigree of Man..... L 5571
 Study in Consciousness..... L 5971
 Theosophy and New Psychology L 5570

BLVATSKY, H. P.

Caves and Jungles of Hindustan, L 8272
 Isis Unveiled, 2 volumes..... L 2387
 Key to Theosophy..... L 2345
 Secret Doctrine, 3 volumes..... L 2541

COLLINS, MABEL.

Idyl of the White Lotus..... F 3108
 Light on the Path..... L 2484
 Five Years of Theosophy..... L 2497

JOHNSTON, CHARLES.

Memory of Past Births..... L 5105

JUDGE, W. Q.

Ocean of Theosophy..... L 5507

LEADBEATER, C. W.

Astral Plane..... L 5520,5
 Christian Creed..... L 5517
 Devachanic Plane..... L 5520,6
 Clairvoyance..... L 5518
 Dreams..... L 5519
 Invisible Helpers..... L 5515
 Other Side of Death..... L 5541
 Outline of Theosophy..... L 5512
 Glimpses of Occultism..... L 5542

BOHEME, JACOB...... L 5500

MEAD, G. R. S.

Orpheus..... L 5559
 Plotinus..... L 5558
 Simon Magus..... L 5506

OLCOTT, H. S.

Old Diary Leaves..... L 5511
 Theosophy, Religion, Occult
 Science..... L 2507

RAMA PRASAD.

Science of Breath..... L 2546

SINNETT, A. P.

Esoteric Buddhism..... M 2068
 Growth of the Soul..... L 5514
 Occult World..... L 2386

SINNETT, MRS. A. P.

Purpose of Theosophy..... L 2544

WILSON, H.

Introduction to Theosophy..... L 5516

WRIGHT, CLAUDE F.

Modern Theosophy..... L 5508

DENTON, WM. AND MRS.

Soul of Things..... L 5337

Branch Reports.

Santa Rosa, T. S. Continues with unremitted pace, and although the effects of the work are not apparent in the rapid increase of membership, those who watch can see its influence extending. Although soliciting no membership we keep a welcome open door for all who become aware of the inefficiency to promote peace of the crumbling faiths around us, eager to show to all the restful haven of the "Ancient Wisdom." And although at times we may deplore that as yet so comparatively few take advantage of the opportunity offered we know that there are more lives coming, and that the "Ancient Wisdom" is sure to prevail, if only *we* do not relinquish our efforts.

One of our study classes finished "Man and his Bodies," and is now at work on "Ancient Wisdom." The other still continues "The Astral Plane." Santa Rosa T. S. sends its Christmas greetings to all sister Branches.

P. VAN DER LINDEN, Sec'y.

Lima T. S. The Lima Branch entertained Mr. C. Jinarâja 'âsa from Nov. 13th to Nov. 24th. During that time he delivered several lectures and held three afternoon meetings. On Sunday evening, Nov. 19th he delivered a lecture in the Opera House on the subject, "The Science and Religion of the Future." It was attended by a large and interested audience—in fact the largest audience ever attending a Theosophic lecture in Lima.

Mr. Jinarâjadâsa's visit has awakened general interest and removed some misconceptions in the public mind in

regard to the teaching of Theosophy. By his work and pleasing personality he has succeeded not only in interesting a great many outsiders, but he has awakened new life in the Branch members. We hold a meeting on Thursday evening of each week, also a study class for beginners on Saturday afternoon.

MRS. FRANK VAN HORN, Sec'y.

Toledo T. S. In October the Toledo Branch was highly favored by a two weeks' visit from Mr. C. Jinarâjadâsa.

Both public and branch meetings were very well attended, much enthusiasm was manifested and much valuable instruction imparted in a charming way.

These meetings were of inestimable value to the Branch and were thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated, and memory often recalls the delightful occasion.

The Branch now has three study classes in addition to the Thursday evening meeting.

A business meeting and social are held once a month.

There is a social gathering Saturday afternoons, when questions are asked and light refreshments are served.

The children have formed themselves into a circle which is officered and managed by themselves, and once a month there is a social gathering for the young people.

SARAH J. TRUAX, Sec'y.

St. Paul T. S. On Sunday, Nov. 12, Mr. Henry Hotchner came to spend a week with us, following his visit in Minneapolis, during which time members of St. Paul T. S. had been privi-

leged to attend his lectures there.

Mr. Hotchner gave three public lectures here, the subjects of which were related serially, and it was hoped that by them some erroneous ideas might be removed from the minds of St. Paul people in regard to Theosophy and its followers. At those lectures there was an increasingly large and interested audience, on the last evening taxing the capacity of the hall to its limit, even to standing room; men and women standing more than an hour and a half and showing no sign of impatience or weariness, tempting Mr. Hotchner to talk fifteen or twenty minutes after he had finished his lecture. The remaining four lectures to members only were highly appreciated, not only by our own Branch but by many members from both branches in Minneapolis. Mr. Hotchner is particularly ready and satisfactory in answering questions asked by non-Theosophists, always having some information to impart, and tempting the enquirer to further investigation. We were very much impressed and pleased by the strong emphasis which he placed upon the observance of a high moral standard for every day living and thinking. We believe that too much can hardly be said upon that subject by Theosophists in general, but such exhortation from Mr. Hotchner seems to come with especial force and fitness, as his life bears evidence of consistency with his teaching. One member has been added to the Branch as a direct result of the public lectures, and we expect more. We hope to have Mr. Hotchner with us again in the near future and for a longer period than was this first enjoyable occasion.

MARIE ELEANORE REMICK,
Cor. Sec'y.

Superior T. S. — Preparations were made for Mr. Henry Hotchner's visit by holding a public meeting, giving a splendid programme, consisting of a paper, "An Outline of Theosophy," by Mrs. Conklin, recitations and music from the great composers. Then light refreshments were served to invited guests, in order to give them an opportunity to visit freely with T. S. members, and so interest them in the course of lectures to be given later.

The Superior and Duluth newspapers gave a report of the above as being a preparation for the expected visit of Mr. Hotchner, giving abstracts of some of the lectures which he had just given before the Minneapolis people.

Mr. Hotchner gave six public lectures in a hall which was rented for the occasion. The audience numbering from 100 to 150 included many of the leading citizens of Superior. An abstract of each of the six lectures was published in two daily papers, the *Superior Evening Telegram*, and the *Duluth News Tribune*. These lectures reached thousands of homes. One lecture, "The Future of Humanity," was given before the members of the W. C. T. U. This was also published. Mr. Hotchner gave seven lectures to the members of the Branch.

In response to invitations from the superintendents of schools, Mr. Hotchner gave four lectures, as follows: One lecture to the 800 students of the Duluth high school; one lecture to the 300 students of the Superior State Normal school; one lecture to the 325 students of the Superior high school; one lecture to the 115 students of the Nelson Dewey high school. The subject of the lectures were Public Speaking, Physical Culture, emphasizing vegetarian diet, kindness to animals,

cleanliness of the body, neatness of dress and many other splendid suggestions, besides many good stories which pleased every one.

Mr. Hotchner was cordially received. The outbursts of applause which those boys and girls gave showed their delight and appreciation of what was said, the way it was said and the uplifting influence which went with it. They realized it was a message of truth and of love for them, for all humanity, and it was a plea for kindness to our dumb brothers of the animal kingdom. Our whole city has had an uplift. Every T. S. member felt proud of our lecturer and of the Theosophical society to which he and we belong.

We hope Mr. Hotchner may come back again and continue this work which he has begun.

UNA M. SHIELDS.

Kansas City T. S. After a brief rest during the hot season Branch activities were resumed immediately after the close of the Chicago Convention.

The activities are along the same general lines that were followed last year and comprise four evenings of each week, viz:

Sunday Evenings: Public meetings, at which some member of the Branch delivers a lecture on a Theosophical subject previously announced and advertised, at the close of which the audience is given the privilege of asking any question relating to any phase of the subject treated, the only requirement being that all questions be reduced to writing.

Programs for public meetings are made to cover periods of two months and are printed in advance and circulated at public meetings. Under this

plan ample time is given to those who are to take part in which to prepare. In addition to this method of advertising public meetings, notices are published in the Sunday issues of two of the daily papers under "Church Announcements," giving place and time of meeting and subject. Public meetings are well attended. It is gratifying to note the growth of our Branch in the development of available material for public work. We now have ample material for two months' program without any one appearing more than once. This result has been achieved by hard study during the past year.

Wednesday evening is the regular Branch meeting, at which some book is studied.

"Thought Power, its Culture and Control," is the book now being studied.

Friday evenings of each week a public study class is conducted at the Branch rooms by Jas. T. Manning, and on Tuesday evenings a public study class in Swedish language is conducted by Dr. B. W. Lindberg.

We regard our public study classes as our most important activities.

We seek to develop an interest in Theosophy at our public meetings and we invite those who seem interested to attend our study classes, when by careful study of the Outline and Manuals they may acquire a better knowledge than can be given from a public platform. All who become members of these classes are given to understand that they are under no obligations to become members of the T. S. The result is that those who are ready, become active members in due time, and those who have only a passing interest drop out of the classes and the Branch is not burdened with a lot

of indifferent and inactive members.

Immediately following the close of the Chicago Convention, Mr. C. Jinarâjadâsa visited us for one week, during which time he delivered five public lectures and one each day to members only. His lectures were well attended, and his scholarly and dignified presentation of his subjects did much to strengthen the already growing interest in Theosophy in this city. During the latter part of November we had Dr. Elizabeth M. Chidester of Philadelphia with us for a few days, and her quiet work among members was helpful and harmonizing.

A plan for a federation of the branches of the States of Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska is now being formulated and it is expected that such federation will be formed in February next, under the same plan and for the same purposes as the Pacific Coast Federation.

DOROTHY MANNING, Sec'y.

LOTUS WORK.

The editors of the *Lotus Journal* wish to announce that they have made arrangements for a monthly supply of their magazine to the Theosophical Book Concern, Chicago. Single copies may, therefore, be readily obtained in future at the price of ten cents each. The steadily increasing interest in Theosophical work for children has led to the demand for literature, and it is hoped that these additional facilities for obtaining the *Lotus Journal*, which seeks to improve such juvenile literature, may be found useful. The editors will be glad to co-operate in any way they can with those who are engaged in or who contemplate undertaking Lotus work in the United States

and would be glad to hear from any with whom they are not already in touch. Address either Herbert Whyte or Miss Ethel M. Mallet, 8 Inverness Place, Queen's Road, London, W.

The December number of the *Bulletin Theosophique*, the official organ of the French Section, announces, that the next Congress of the Federation of the European Sections will be held in Paris at Pentecost, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, the 3rd, 4th and 5th of June, 1906. All communications in regard to the specific work of the congress should be sent to Mlle. Weyer, Secretary of the Committee of Organization of the Congress, 59 Avenue de la Bourdonnais, (VIIth),

American Question Department.

Readers are cordially invited to send in Questions and Answers to Questions for this department. All manuscripts should be in the hands of the editor by the fifteenth of the month.

1. What is the purpose of the dot now so much used under certain letters in Mrs. Besant's later books, as Rishis, with dots under the r and first s, and Puranas, with dot under the n. Why is the word we have always spelled Sanskrit now written Samskrit, with a dot under the m? E. C. B.

ANSWER.

Sanskrit has some 47 sounds, but the English alphabet has only 26 letters, hence the need of special characters with strokes above and dots above and under as equivalent for the Sanskrit letters. There are many schemes of transliteration, of writing Sanskrit in English letters. There is, however, one scheme in use by the scholars in Europe and America, that adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain.

A student of Sanskrit writing Sanskrit in English letters must use different characters for the different sounds. Not to do so would be bad spelling; but it requires many months' study before he can transliterate accurately. It is, however, otherwise for Theosophical students who are not bound by the rules of Oriental scholarship. To attempt to transliterate without a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit rules would be to produce something that would be an eye-sore both for the scholar and the "man in the street"—something that was neither Sanskrit nor English.

We have many Sanskrit words in our books and the best we can do is to learn to pronounce them correctly (till we can find substitutes in English) and to spell them as we see them written in the books by our more careful writers, but leaving out the dots and dashes, for we are not Sanskrit scholars. Indeed the transliteration of words, with their dots and dashes, to be found in many a Theosophical book, would often make a scholar smile. If we have no time to learn Sanskrit, and yet must use words in it, let us boldly anglicise them, at least as regards their spelling. Better that than a hotch-potch of dots and dashes in the wrong places.

The word Sanskrit is now anglicised as the name of a language and will be found in any English dictionary. To write it in any other way would be pedantic except for the scholar, and even then in the very rare case of its use as an adjective with a noun. But transliterating strictly the nasal sound in the word Sanskrit should be substituted by m with a dot over or under it, the r should have a dot under, and the vowel a should follow the t.

But for practical purposes, Sanskrit is best known and written as—Sanskrit!

C. J.

LECTURE BUREAU.

Lectures from the accompanying list will be loaned for the period of one month—no longer—on receipt of 10 cents in stamps.

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