



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.

All 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, Room 426, 26 Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.** Subscription price to non-members, 50 cents per annum.

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Edited by the National Committee.

Brotherhood.

The great catastrophe at San Francisco naturally fills our thoughts at this time and the whole American section sympathizes with the sorrows, losses and hardships of all our brothers in the City of the Golden Gate. Nothing has yet been heard from our members there, but we know that the buildings in which they had headquarters have all been destroyed and consequently the Branches have lost everything. When they are able to reassemble and take up their work again all the other Branches will be ready and eager to give them aid so far as the ability of each extends.

The Branch at Santa Rosa has suffered little, and an encouraging report

from that place will be found among the Branch reports.

As we write the whole country is throbbing with sympathy for the sufferings of the inhabitants of the stricken city, relief trains are racing across the continent, and help of every kind is being poured in with unstinted hand. The "brotherhood of humanity" has become for a time a living truth, and out of this great calamity has come an uplifting of the whole nation. Though this exaltation of feeling will be of brief duration, its effects will be lasting.

When we meet on White Lotus Day to recall how much we owe to the great soul who "brought us the light," perhaps most prominent in our minds this time will be the fact that from the teachings of Theosophy we have learned to see in these great convulsions of na-

ture—not an outburst of wrath from an angry God—not the working of blind forces, regardless of human life, but part of an ordered scheme of evolution in which every act is guided by intelligence and love, and all things do work together for good to all the children of the one Divine Father.

An Examination into the So-Called Proofs of Fraud on the Part of Madame Blavatsky.*

[*Reprinted from the March Theosophist*]

In view of the fact that from time to time we find ourselves confronted again with the statement that H. P. B. has been shown to have resorted to fraud and deception, in connection with the production of certain phenomena, in the earlier history of the Theosophical movement; and in view, also, of the further fact that many members of a later date, having little or no personal knowledge of the matter, are frequently at a loss for a suitable reply to such allegations, it would appear that a brief consideration of some of the more important of these so-called proofs of fraud may prove of service.

Personally, I may say that some fifteen years ago,—that is, long before joining the Society, I satisfied myself not only that the evidence adduced was, in many ways, of a very unsatisfactory nature, but also that it was so utterly inadequate and insufficient, as proof of fraud, that no impartial investigator could possibly arrive at a less favourable conclusion than that of “not-proven.” Whilst further knowledge, acquired during many years’ membership in the Society, together with a clearer and more definite understanding of the meaning and the

purpose of this great movement, to the welfare of which H. P. B. was so wholeheartedly and unselfishly devoted, has led to the firm and unalterable conviction that these alleged practices of trickery and deceit were utterly and completely foreign to her whole nature. For the purpose of this discussion, however, I have again gone carefully through the whole of the evidence recorded against her, as also the replies called forth from those best qualified, by personal knowledge and experience, to testify both to the sterling worth of her life and character, and to the genuineness of the phenomena in question; this further examination having served but to confirm and to add strength to my previous convictions.

Now, the charges of fraud made against H. P. B. are based mainly upon the statements of Monsieur and Madame Coulomb, supported by the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters, as they are called, and upon the report, largely founded thereon, of the Society for Psychical Research, or, to be more accurate, upon that of Mr. Hodgson, which the Society somewhat hastily, if not unwarrantably, adopted; and, to a less degree, upon the statements of Solovyoff contained in “A Modern Priestess of Isis,” a work published after the death of H. P. B., when, of course, an efficient reply was no longer possible. It is necessary, therefore, that we should consider the question of the credibility and the trustworthiness of these people, as witnesses against her, as well as that of the qualifications of Mr. Hodgson, for the thorough and impartial conduct of his investigations. Now, in regard to all these charges, there is one most important and remarkable fact which

* Being the substance of an address delivered by S. Studd to the Melbourne Branch T. S., on October 7th, 1903, in reply to a reiteration of the original charges, and printed by request. Now reprinted from Mr. Studd's pamphlet with thanks to the author.

cannot fail to impress every honest inquirer, and that is, that the whole of the evidence against H. P. B. comes from foul and tainted sources, not one honest man or woman bearing witness against her. Although hundreds of phenomena were produced at various times, in various places, and in the presence of a great many different people, yet, in spite of every effort to secure adverse evidence, not a single person with clean hands could be found to testify against her. As to Solovyoff, of whom the editor of *Borderland* speaks as an "ungrateful rascal on his own showing" (vol. ii., p. 175), I might almost be content with a brief quotation from a review of his work, written by Miss Freer, better known as X., who, though admittedly greatly prejudiced against H. P. B., says (*Borderland*, vol. ii., p. 175): "Truth to tell, M. Solovyoff's testimony does not inspire the reader with entire confidence in his personality, our feeling that even H. P. B. may not be so black as he paints her, is in proportion to our perception of the extent to which, in so doing, the artist blackens himself." Again she says that he is shown to be "a false friend" . . . "a man who has not even the schoolboy's code of honour, 'tell a lie and stick to it'" . . . "a biographer so conscious of his duty, 'nought to extenuate,' that one occasionally feels, in sharing his information, like a receiver of stolen goods;" adding that "if the testimony produced against Madame Blavatsky rested solely on M. Solovyoff, one would feel inclined to say, from *internal evidence*, that the book, entertaining as it is, should never have been published." However, it is interesting to note that this same Solovyoff, who now denies

that H. P. B. was possessed of any occult power, published in the *Rebus*, a Russian scientific journal of July 1st, 1884, an account of a most remarkable instance of the manifestation of such power, as witnessed by quite a number of people, and as to which he himself testified that "the circumstances under which the phenomenon occurred, in its smallest details, carefully checked by myself, do not leave in me the smallest doubt as to its *genuineness* and reality. Deception or fraud, in this particular case, are *entirely out of the question*" (quoted in "Incidents in the life of Madame Blavatsky," p. 273). Yet, in the face of this emphatic declaration, M. Solovyoff, in "A Modern Priestess," published eight years later (pp. 42-5), endeavors to persuade us that, even at the time, he was by no means satisfied as to its genuineness, whilst elsewhere (p. 212) he says: "I believed from the first that she was tricking and deceiving." Again, he makes great capital out of an alleged confession by H. P. B., although *long afterwards*, in writing to her, he says (p. 289): "I can say positively that I convinced Richet of the reality of your personal power and of the phenomena which proceed from you;" whilst, upon the publication of the Report of the S. P. R., he openly ridicules its conclusions, writing also of the astral appearance of H. P. B., at a time when she herself was in India (p. 302). Finally, this very unreliable witness, a romancer by profession, by the way, though quoting freely from private letters, alleged to have been written by H. P. B., yet, with one or two trifling exceptions, omits to give any dates, thus making it a matter of extreme

difficulty to disprove their authenticity.

Now, before considering the Report of the S. P. R., which is usually regarded as by far the most formidable of these several indictments, it would be well, perhaps, to deal with the statements of M. and Mme. Coulomb, who supplied the material for the foundation upon which Mr. Hodgson built all his conclusions, the following details being gleaned from the *Theosophist* (vol. vi., pp. 2, 48 and 70), the "Report of an Investigation, by a Special Committee of the T. S., into the charges brought against Madame Blavatsky" (published in Madras in 1885), and a pamphlet, by Madame Coulomb, entitled "Some Account of My Association with Madame Blavatsky." From the *Theosophist* we learn that H. P. B. first met the Coulombs in Egypt, in 1872, when, by reason of a shipwreck, she was obliged to take shelter in their house, and therefore, on being appealed to some few years later in India for help and protection, she was glad to repay their former service to herself by placing them in charge of the house at Headquarters. Later on, after their notorious attack, it was alleged by the Coulombs that H. P. B. was heavily in their debt for money advanced to her in Egypt, but this is completely disproved by a letter, written by Mme. Coulomb from Ceylon, on June 10th, 1879,—that is, a few months only before their arrival in India—in which she begs H. P. B. to lend her the sum, of Rs. 200, even urging that, if need be it should be borrowed for the purpose, giving an assurance that it should be repaid in two months' time, and offering meanwhile to give a promissory note for the amount (see Report of

Investigation, p. 132). In February, 1884, when the Coulombs had been established at Headquarters for a few years, H. P. B. left Adyar for Europe, and immediately after her departure, Mme. Coulomb began to circulate vague charges of fraud against her, but upon this becoming known to the members of the "Board of Control," a Committee of Inquiry was at once appointed. Finally, after a most exhaustive investigation, during which it was conclusively shown that Madame Coulomb had long been endeavoring to extort money from various members; that, on H. P. B.'s departure for Europe, she had openly sworn to be revenged upon that lady for having, as was alleged, prevented one Harisinghi from giving her Rs. 2,000; and that, on many occasions, she had declared the T. S. to be designed to overthrow British Rule in India and the Christian Religion, etc., etc., and after the failure of every effort to induce Mme. Coulomb to produce evidence in support of her charges, she and her husband were formally expelled from Headquarters and from the Society, no mention whatever being then made of the letters, which were afterwards declared to have been in her possession all the time. Meantime, shortly before their expulsion, and when H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott had been informed by letter of the many complaints that were being made in regard to their conduct, Mme. Coulomb, in reply to a letter of remonstrance from H. P. B., wrote: "I may have said something in my rage, but I swear by all that is sacred *for me* that I never said *fraud*, secret passages, traps, nor that my husband had helped you in any way. If my mouth has uttered

these words, I pray to the Almighty to shower on my head the worst maledictions in nature." (Report, p. 131).

However, after trying in vain to persuade H. P. B. to intervene on their behalf, they appear to have determined upon a method of revenge, and so, some two months after their expulsion, there appeared in the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, of September and October, 1884, a series of private letters purporting to have been written by H. P. B., for the most part, to Mme. Coulomb, by whom they had been sold to the missionary proprietors of the magazine. According to these letters, some of which, if genuine, could only have been obtained by theft, H. P. B., with the connivance and the assistance of M. and Mme. Coulomb, had been for years engaged in the fraudulent production of phenomena of various kinds, by means of sliding panels, trap doors and puppets of bladders and muslin; and so a great outcry arose in the press, it being freely reported by some of the newspapers that H. P. B. had been shown up as an unprincipled fraud. As one of the honourable exceptions, however, the *Madras Mail* of September 14, 1884, made some exceptionally severe comments on the conduct of the missionaries, in publishing the private correspondence, even if authentic, of a lady in her absence, without her permission, and at the instigation of an avowed enemy; adding that "even if genuine" the publication of these letters "involves an inexcusable breach of confidence," and asking what if after all they prove to be spurious? Whilst the *Indian Mirror* of September 20, 1884, in the course of a lengthy article, remarks that "the let-

ters published were so transparent that we wonder that any man of common sense could not see through their more than questionable genuineness," and further refers to them as "a correspondence more than suspected to be spurious."

On reading these letters, one is at once struck by the very vulgar style in which most of them are written, this being in marked contrast with that of H. P. B.; then, as with those of Solovyoff, with one or two unimportant exceptions, they are neither dated nor addressed, and thus give no clue as to when or where they may have been written. This fact alone tending, as it undoubtedly does, to make it exceedingly difficult to disprove any statement contained in such letters is of great significance, and of itself sufficient to cast grave doubt upon their genuineness. Apparently the correspondence consists of a few genuine letters of no significance, together with a number of forgeries, in which, here and there, genuine phrases are thrown in to give verisimilitude to the whole, which would thus appear to be, as H. P. B. declared, "in large part fabrications" ("Incidents," p. 312).

Upon investigation it was found that Monsieur Coulomb's ordinary handwriting was very similar to that of H. P. B., thus indicating the probability of his having been the actual writer of the letters, and so giving point to Madame Coulomb's most emphatic denial that *she* had ever "forged H. P. B.'s name," or "traced genuie letters and so made interpolations" (see preface to her pamphlet), for which we have no similar denial on behalf of her husband.

As to the contents of the letters, in

which French and English words and phrases are intermingled in a most absurd and meaningless manner, many statements therein have been shown to be distinctly contrary to the facts, as testified to by quite a number of witnesses; one letter being definitely pronounced a forgery by Major-General Morgan and three other people, who had formerly perused the original. Then H. B. P. is made to refer to an Indian potentate, who had no existence; to make mistakes with the names and initials of intimate friends; to boast of having dined with the Governor when, as a matter of fact, she had declined an invitation received; and, when writing of a close friend, well known to Madame Coulomb and seen by her almost every day, to describe him in detail, giving his full title and office, just as though she were referring to an utter stranger.

[*To be continued.*]

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 17.

Pages 155 to 162, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 From whence comes the story of Christ as being born of a virgin?

- 2 our Christmas day celebrated as the birthday of any Divine Being other than the Christ?

- 3 Was the 25th of December always celebrated as the birthday of Christ within the Church?

- 4 From what source comes the story of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection?

- 5 What is meant by the "Savior of the World"?

- 6 Is the world the worse or the better for the story of Christ as the Church teaches it?

- 7 What should be the attitude of Theosophists toward Christians who believe in the literal reading of the Bible?

LESSON 18.

Pages 163 to 168, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS.

- 1 (a) Why is Christ sometimes referred to as the "Lamb of God"?

- (b) When was the lamb used as a symbol of the Christ and in what manner?

- 2 What do we know of the origin of the crucifix?

- 3 (a) What is the origin of Easter?

- (b) Why is it a movable feast?

- 4 Why do we sometimes call Christ the "Son of Man"?

- 5 What brought about the confusion of the stories of the Sun-god and the Christ?

- 6 What do we know of the Office of the Christ?

LESSON 19.

Pages 169 to 177, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS

- 1 For what reason is Christ referred to as the Second Person of the Trinity?

- 2 What aspect of the Divine Spirit does Christ represent in man?

- 3 What constitutes the preparation for Initiation?

- 4 (a) Name some of the attributes the Probationer must attain ere Initiation.
- (b) Define Discrimination.
- 5 Is Control of thoughts a real necessity to the Probationer?
- 6 What makes Endurance a quality to be desired?
- 7 Name the three aspects of Divine Life contained within the Spirit.

LESSON 20.

Pages 178 to 183, inclusive, "Esoteric Christianity."

QUESTIONS

- 1 What part did the Kosmic Christ have in the creation of the system to which we belong?
- 2 What other name may we ascribe to the Kosmic Christ?
- 3 Does the Christian bible give any information coinciding with our Theosophical views in regard to the Creation?
- 4 From what great Truth was the story taken of Christ being born of a Virgin?
- 5 In what manner does the Kosmic Christ benefit Humanity?
- 6 How came we to have the present Gospel stories of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus?

We call attention to the change in the office of THE MESSENGER.

PRESS POINTS.

It has been intimated that specific directions for preparing material for the papers would be useful. Some suggestions appeared in the Press Points for December, 1905. Additional ideas are offered herewith:

The first few introductory paragraphs are most important for the regulation newspaper style. Look at the columns of any large metropolitan daily and note how the entire story is crystallized into the first few sentences or paragraphs, and that the remainder of the article is merely an elaboration of these

into fuller detail. From fifteen hundred to two thousand words is a good length for an ordinary article.

In reporting a lecture one of the most convenient ways is to request the speaker to give you an abstract of the lecture beforehand. Copies of this can then be made and dispatched to the local papers the day previous to the delivery, together with the date, hour, place and occasion of the lecture and the name of the speaker. Or, you can report from the lecture as it is given, taking notes of the most important points and afterward filling in the detail as you recollect, having it reach the newspapers the same day.

The generous space accorded the addresses given by the field workers as shown by the clippings they send shows that space can be had in the press for our speakers, although, perhaps, not everywhere with equal ease. Some committees report their lectures customarily and have good success. Others, who for one reason or another, have perhaps faint-heartedly felt that the plan was not worth while trying, it is hoped will emulate them, and at least make a hearty effort. From three hundred to a thousand words is suggested for the length of these reports.

The prison work is another feature of our work that may be especially noted. The jailers may be interviewed and presented with some Theosophical literature to look over and be given some of our reasons for regarding it as particularly pertinent to the needs of men under the ban of the law. This has been done in Chicago, and the wedge that has already been made it is thought may prove an opening to larger opportunity.

If any committees or individuals wish copies of articles for publication will they communicate their wants? Some articles are in preparation and some are ready. And if there is a special demand for a certain variety of article, arrangements might be made to supply it.

Welcome to the several new helpers that have reported their interest personally or through field workers. Mr. Rogers has sent us a number of good names. It is hoped that any and all who feel similarly inclined to co-operate will make themselves known. The desire is the index of the ability and the opportunity to do something of one sort or another. And a little correspondence and exchange of suggestion may clear the decks for action.

ADA MAY KRECKER, Sec.

Report of the Second Annual Convention Northern District Pacific Coast Federation.

The N. D. of P. C. F. includes the following Branches: Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, Victoria, Portland. The convention met March 25th, 1906, at Theosophical Hall, 1420 2nd Avenue, Seattle.

Mr. T. A. Barnes, president Seattle Lodge, gave the address of welcome, strongly endorsing the work of the Federation and recommending an effort towards keeping a lecturer constantly in the field on this coast, also suggesting that where several members of the T. S. had formed a study class, such a nucleus, lacking a sufficient number to secure a charter, should receive official recognition at Headquarters; such recognition would, he thought, stimulate and encourage to further effort.

Mrs. Wardall followed with a comprehensive resumé of the year's work in the Northern District, calling attention to the organization of the Willamette Branch of Portland, Ore.; to the system arranged of registering addresses, by means of which a correspondence may be carried on, and literature mailed to addresses throughout a wide extent of territory. The fruit of this first year's work could hardly be estimated, but so far as known, was most gratifying. Many valuable recommendations for future plans of work were embodied in this address.

Mrs. Kyle of Tacoma, and Mrs. Carl J. Smith of Seattle, followed with papers on "Propaganda" and "Lotus Work." These papers were received with much attention and enthusiasm.

Mr. Yarco of Vancouver, spoke on the work in British Columbia. Mr. Yarco's special line is correspondence, averaging two letters daily, some from strangers, who, having heard something of Theosophy, desire further information.

Vancouver is a strong center, and the Sunday evening lectures well attended. The branch is especially strong in Lotus work. Mr. Yarco brought out forcibly the point that to do the most effective work a speaker should avoid talking over the heads of his audience. "We must," said he, "study our people, otherwise we fail in our work."

Dr. Scott of Tacoma, reported that the propaganda there was almost entirely carried on by individual effort.

A letter of greeting to the convention from Mr. Willis, president of the San Francisco Branch, was read by the sec-

retary; also one from Miss Lizzie Sanders of Spokane Branch, which was distinctly hopeful and encouraging in its tone.

A letter from Miss Isabella Jefferson, of Oakland, Cal., was read, giving an outline of the methods and something of the result of her work among the city jails and prisons and at the military prison on Alcatraz Island.

The report of the treasurer showed a fair balance in the treasury.

It was decided that some action be taken at once toward securing Mr. Rogers and Mr. Talbot for an extended visit to the Northern District.

The September semi-annual convention of the Northern District will be held in Victoria.

Mrs. Wardall, Mrs. Patterson and Mr. Wald were re-elected to their respective offices, for the year ending March 25, 1907.

While but three of the Branches composing the Federation were represented by delegates, the beautiful new hall of Seattle Branch was filled with an interested audience, and the enthusiasm in the work of the convention might well have warranted an extra session, the general sentiment being that the Federation had come to stay, having proven its worth and utility, and that it "has a wider and larger part to play; it brings together, co-ordinates, harmonizes and expands the scattered units which compose it, at the same time that it contributes a fresh and effective element to the education of each by all."

The convention concluded with a public lecture at 8:00 p. m. by Dr. Knapp of Vancouver, who guided a large and appreciative audience on "A Ramble Through Woods Theosophical."

MARY B. PATTERSON,
Sec'y Federation.

A WARNING.

I am informed that a Mr. Alfred J. Weiss, or E. J. Weiss, claiming to be a Russian Jew, member of the Vancouver Lodge, and alienated from his family because of his Theosophy, but who is not a member of the Society, has obtained money under various false pretenses from F. T. S. in Montreal, Buffalo and New Orleans—in New Orleans claiming membership in the Montreal Branch. He was there exposed when betting in a billiard saloon, was arrested on complaint of the President of the Branch, whom he had victimized, denied on his way to the lock up that he was a member of the T. S., and is now awaiting trial. I am asked to warn the Branches against him in case he unhappily recovers his freedom.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
General Secretary.

To The Theosophic Messenger:

The Rev. Martin K. Schermerhorn of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., who has been a Unitarian minister over twenty-five years, a life member of its association, and pastor emeritus of the charming Memorial Church of Newport, R. I., has lately joined the Huntington Lodge T. S., and has been lecturing on the main teachings of Theosophy among the church people and to the Metaphysical people of Hartford and Boston—in both of which cities he has been the pastor over large churches. He has been a close student of Theosophy and the religions of the world for many years, and is the author of various books on Universal Religion, Worship and Brotherhood; and is admirably fitted to carry the light of Theosophy to the people in the churches who are reaching out for the truth. We have too few such workers at present.

BRANCH REPORTS.

Santa Rosa, T. S.

On the 18th of April, at 12 minutes after 5 A. M. (my clock stopped at that time), the gnomes proceeded to shake Santa Rosa to its foundations. In 18 seconds—according to Mr. Luther Burbanks' observation—all brick buildings were converted into a shapeless mass of ruins, while many frame dwellings collapsed. Fire finished the greatest part of the ruins. Many were caught under falling walls and some roasted alive. Thus far the death rate foots up 73, but not all are yet reported. With remarkable alertness all kinds of committees took the matter in hand. The town was put under military rule. At this writing provisions are ample, the clearing of debris goes on apace, and courage to rebuild is expressed on every side. Santa Rosa Branch, T. S. escaped with but little damage.

P. VAN DER LINDEN, Sec'y.

Lincoln T. S.—Mr. Henry Hotcher arrived in Lincoln March 23rd, coming directly from Denver. He left for Topeka, Kansas, April 7th. Mr. Hotchner delivered four public lectures while here. All these lectures were well attended and much interest shown. Twenty-one copies of the "Outline of Theosophy" were sold at these meetings. The Branch has gained three new members, with prospects of more joining. Mr. Hotchner spoke at the High School Assembly on "Physical Culture." About 950 pupils listened to this very interesting lecture. Mr. Hotchner also spoke at the convocation exercises at the Nebraska State

University before a large body of students and professors on "Tales from a Traveler's Note-Book." The rest of of the lectures were for members only. On April 4th Mr. Hotchner delivered a public lecture at Fremont, Neb., on "Some Misconceptions of Theosophy." The daily papers printed all notices of meetings free of charge, and published extracts of Mr. Hotchner's public lectures. We were all delighted with Mr. Hotchner, our only regret being that we did not engage him for a longer time.

MRS. M. HERMAN, Sec.

Superior T. S.—A wave of enthusiasm resulting in activity is following in the wake of Mr. Hotchner's stay in our city some time ago. Last week a Lotus Circle was organized with eleven members. The class plan on studying "First Steps in Theosophy," by Ethel Mallet, and "The Lotus Journal." Music and outside articles will be given by the various members from time to time.

A Tuesday afternoon study class of ten members has also just been started, many outsiders being attracted thither by the weekly newspaper notices. This class will take up "The Outline of Theosophy" for the present.

Membership practically the same.

We are now looking forward with much pleasure to Mr. Hotchner's return in September, if only for a short time.

MRS. C. E. BOOTH, Sec.

Los Angeles Branch T. S.—We have only our Wednesday Night Lodge Meeting and Friday Night Public Study Class going during the present vacation. At the former we have been

having a series of discussions on the Third Object of the Society, and on Psychic Development generally, its meaning and its advisability. Much obscure ground has been cleared, and some misunderstandings regarding the subject removed. Two other interesting topics on the programme for this month are "The Attitude of the Theosophist to the Social Problem" and "The Attitude of the Theosophist to the Moral Problem." The Branch seems desirous of getting definite and incisive views upon matters touching so closely on our National, Communitistic and Family Life and Conduct.

The Friday Classes continue to have a large public attendance.

ALICE ROSE EYTON, Cor. Sec.

Topeka T. S.—We have had the great pleasure of a visit from Mr. Hotchner, and it has been very beneficial to the Branch.

The two public meetings were well attended, and every one seemed pleased. The ideas on "Death and the Hereafter" and "Reincarnation and the Law of Justice" were presented in such a clear, practical manner that every one could understand and take home the truths given. The encouragement and advice the members received was worth more than words can tell.

That he may be long in the lecture field and that we may welcome him again in our Branch is our sincere desire.

EMMA GREENE, Sec.

Denver Branch T. S.—After a month of unusual activity, Denver Branch is just settling down to its ordinary amount of work, which consists of a public evening meeting, an afternoon public study class and the regular Branch meeting. The last is a business meeting, followed by a reading from and discussion of a portion of "A Study in Consciousness." We find it rather too deep, but as perseverance is a

virtue to be cultivated we shall try to finish the book with the year.

Mr. Hotchner's visit showed us that we need more careful attention to foundation work, as upon that depends the ability to give to others the knowledge that each requires. It is, therefore, the intention to turn all the working force upon ourselves another year, in order to develop more ability to express that which we have learned. During his stay Mr. Hotchner gave twelve public lectures, and twelve to the Branch only—the latter being on the practical side of Theosophy; Theosophy applied to life from the physical to the spiritual standpoints. The lecture on "The Reasons for Vegetarianism" was especially strong, Mr. H. having the power of vivid word-painting; and in that on "Meditation" he seemed to surpass himself, and raised us to the mountain-top of aspiration. These two stand out in memory, although there were others that were strong and convincing. Would that we had more such field-workers! Or should we become too dependent? At any rate, those that have the opportunity to have Mr. H. with them will surely be left with an ambition to work.

The press was not overly kind, but an average of two hundred in attendance was maintained throughout the course of the public lectures, showing something of an interest that it is our business to cultivate.

Mr. Frederick Spenceley, 26 Music Hall Building, Boston, has forwarded to the National Committee two very beautiful photographs. He has copyrighted H. Schmiechen's Ideal Head, under the title of "The Master Jesus," reproducing it by a sepia print, size 8x10 inches, costing 75 cents; and the latest photograph of Mrs. Besant is obtainable in two sizes, cabinet, 50 cents, and 5½x7, 75 cents. Both of these are platinum prints.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE INFLUENCE OF THEOSOPHY ON THE LIFE OF MODERN INDIA. *By Gyananda Nath Chakravarti.*

This is a pamphlet, the second in the Adyar Pamphlet Series, which it would be well if every member of the Theosophical Society could read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. Written by a highly-cultivated Indian gentleman in beautiful English, it contains much that is of the deepest interest as relating to the results of the spread of Theosophical ideas among the educated classes in India, not only in matters of religion, but in the field of politics, with which latter it is really one of the principles of the Theosophical Society, as such, not to become entangled. But, as the author truly says, because politics forms one of the manifold ways in which the inner life and thought of a nation find outer expression, it can only be a fact that a body of teaching which provides a common interest, will draw together the two great nations of India—the ruler and the ruled—and remove what is a standing menace to the stability of the English government in that wonderful empire within an empire—namely, “the complete isolation of the English people in India, who live in a world of their own creation, to which an Indian seldom or never finds admittance.” Friendship of a deep and lasting kind becomes possible when an English Theosophist goes into the home of Hindus who are lineal descendants of the Great Sages whose “wisdom has brightened his life and whose teachings are his dearest possession;” and our author regards the fact of the springing up of such relations between English and Hindu men and women, which have already resulted from the work of the T. S., as one of its most valuable triumphs.

But, for the Western Theosophist, the more vital thought of this wise writer is his earnest warning against “psychic experiences” and phenomenalism in general. He warns his countrymen against feeling called upon “to deal with vague details as to superphysical worlds, incapable of verification and useless—even positively harmful—as factors toward the development of that side of human nature which alone makes these worlds a reality.”

And he goes on to say that “whatever be the value in the West of these sterile statements as to ‘psychic experiences’—and some of the most earnest European workers in the Theosophical field are gravely apprehensive of their consequences even there—it is hardly open to question that they go against the whole trend of truly spiritual thought in India, where no method of knowing facts of the transcendental world that does not bring about personal experience as a result of inner growth is recognized as valid; and where even teachings about spirit cent point are considered superfluities tending to confusion and not to illumination, which can only be reached by leading the higher life.” True Theosophy has no more to do with the growth of “psychism” than with the revival of superstition. And this warning comes from one well fitted to send it forth for the healing of all the world is in imminent danger from an interest that is partly pure curiosity, partly morbid, and only in a measure scientific: it must therefore be most carefully watched and wisely directed, because the building of character must be far advanced before “psychic experiences” can be either safe or reliable.

THE RELATION OF MAN TO GOD—NOTES ON THE PEDIGREE OF MAN. *By A. Schwarz.*

Students of Theosophical literature are indebted to Mr. Schwarz for these two valuable little works, in which he has gathered into condensed and very accessible form a mass of information scattered through many of the books, including some of late date. To one not possessing a library of Theosophy, the pamphlets will be of the greatest assistance in the study of the scientific teachings which have from time to time been put forth. This is specially true of “The Relation of Man to God,” which covers a wide range of the literature, while the “Notes on the Pedigree of Man” is rather what the author terms it—an “aide memoire” on Mrs. Besant’s lectures at the Adyar Convention of 1903. In both of these little works will be found carefully considered and well-planned diagrams and tables, which go far toward smoothing away the many difficulties of the intricate subjects with which they deal.

Mrs. Stemple requests all her correspondents to send her mail to Nordhoff, Cal. She is in San Francisco giving what aid she can to the sufferers there; mail will be forwarded to her.

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