



THE THEOSOPHIC MESSENGER

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

Issued by direction and under the authority of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, in convention assembled, for free distribution to all members.

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 Editor, 4940 Washington Ave., Chicago, Ill.** Subscription price to non-members, 50 cents per annum.

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No. 1

Emma S. Brougham, Editor.

The Twentieth Convention.

The Twentieth Annual Convention of the American Section of the T. S. opened under most auspicious conditions. The President-Founder was in the chair, the number of delegates uncommonly large, the weather ideal.

After the preliminary formalities were gone through, the President-Founder gave an address to the Convention which is printed in full in the Convention Report and which we trust will be read by every member in the Section. It contains wise counsels which are needed by every one of us.

The business of the Convention went forward easily and smoothly in the able hands of the chairman and the afternoon session closed at four o'clock.

Kimball Hall was crowded to its full capacity for the evening address and an over-flow meeting was held at the

headquarters of the Chicago Branch at which Mr. Henry Hotchner gave a talk, his subject being the same as Col. Olcott's.

On Monday morning Mr. Fullerton was re-elected General Secretary and Treasurer by acclamation. The Executive Committee were all re-elected with the exception of Mr. Horwood, who withdrew his name with a suggestion to the nominating committee that Mr. Chidester be nominated in his place, which was done. Mr. Chidester is well known throughout the Section and everywhere commands the respect and confidence of the members and his nearness to New York renders him especially valuable in case of any sudden need of immediate action by the Executive Committee.

The reception held Saturday evening at the Stratford Hotel proved most enjoyable and did not break up until a late hour.

Post Convention Meetings.

The meeting at Kimball Hall Monday evening did not attract many outsiders—people really do not care just now to learn anything about asceticism—but it gave an opportunity for a more familiar talk from the President-Founder to the members, and was thoroughly enjoyed by those who were present. As Mr. Burnett was unavoidably absent, his description of the Paris Congress was postponed.

The meeting Tuesday morning was carried on with the usual animation which characterizes such discussions.

In response to the request of the National Committee for short papers seven had been sent in and of these five were read.

The first paper read was on training classes and other classes.

The writer starts out with the declaration that the first thing to be done after starting a Branch is to have an H. P. B. Training Class.

This sentiment was cordially endorsed by the members present. It was agreed that so long as the three main objects of a training class—teaching members to speak on their feet, giving drill in parliamentary rules and affording each member an opportunity to preside—were carried out, minor rules should be varied to suit conditions.

The writer also gave some excellent suggestions on Lotus Circle work which called out much discussion, the result of which will be given later in a paper on the subject.

A paper was then read from the president of the San Francisco Lodge on the methods and work accomplished there. Among the points

dwelt upon are the following:

The Helper's Blank by means of which the president is enabled to acquaint himself with the intellectual tastes of the members and to guide individuals through a course of study comparable with much of what they would do at a University; it is also useful in attaching to the lodge students at a distance; by its use also members are assigned subjects for the papers to be read at lodge meetings, at which a twenty-minute paper is read on some theosophical subject and another of the same length on another subject, followed by discussion. All business is, as far as possible, attended to at Board meetings and thus more time can be given to the study.

The aspirational side is not neglected for music is used to open the meetings followed by two minutes of united thought on some spiritual subject and the meetings are closed with some words of lofty import. Each week the subjects for the following week are written upon the blackboard with references to points to be studied and the books recommended for research. Reference is made to "Bulletin No. 1," copies of which will undoubtedly be furnished to other branches upon application to the secretary of the San Francisco Lodge.

In another paper on "Branch Meetings" the study of some book with questions and references is advocated, with frequent changes of leadership. This called out much interesting discussion in which the advantages of this method were illustrated. It was agreed that this latter method seems to be better adapted to a small branch.

Another paper which was read described feelingly the difficulties in the

way of making branch meetings acceptable to all members—the old and the new alike—but did not offer any solution of the problem. It would appear that no satisfactory solution has yet been found.

A paper was read from Mr. Van der Linden, of Santa Rosa Branch, on "The Three Aspects of the Work of Every Theosophist." Mr. Van der Linden is one of the oldest members in the American Section, having been a contemporary and friend of H. P. B., and he is described by those who know him as a man of saintly character—a noble example to all of us.

He speaks first of our duty in and for the world, urging upon each to do his part, whether it be large or small—if we cannot write or lecture, we may "point out the way, however dimly," by our lives and by our words, as opportunity offers.

The second aspect of our work is that within the T. S., and on this he offers some very pertinent suggestions. First, that we should contribute freely, ungrudgingly and according to the length of our purses for its support—not because it depends on money for its Life, but it requires it for the sustenance of its form, without which the Life cannot manifest itself.

Further he admonishes us to attend all meetings that we may give and receive strength, to subscribe for as many of our periodicals as possible, not to be too critical of the errors and mistakes of others, but to try to think of the good they do; yet never condone flagrant departures from the high standards of our principles, that would be a betrayal of our trust; and lastly, to give all the time we have to spare to the study of our glorious philosophy. The

third aspect of our work is self discipline, self development, and in this our efforts should be continuous and unwearyed, but not for our own progress or advancement, but that we may be better fitted for service for the helping of humanity.

Mr. Unger, of Chicago Branch, gave an outline of his work in the Esoteric Christianity Class and made an effective plea for more definite and persistent work along Christian lines, which met with a very cordial response.

At the afternoon session reports of branches were heard, from which the following interesting points are gleaned:

In New Orleans the Inquirers' Class is doing most successful work; meetings of the Branch are announced in the papers and Theosophical books in the public library are extensively read. This is certainly most encouraging from the conservative South.

The Minneapolis Branch has a large library which is extensively used, and the two Branches find the introduction of a good deal of the social element helpful in their work.

The St. Paul Branch seeks to give variety by introducing questions compiled from various books. Its meetings are opened with brief devotional exercises and closed with a short ethical reading.

The Seattle Branch has evolved, out of a membership of 65, ten public speakers. It supplies many books to the public library and is doing successful Lotus work. It has a social meeting every month.

Toronto Branch is also experimenting more with the social aspect, having afternoon tea in connection with an Inquirers' Class in the suburbs.

Los Angeles devotes its branch

meetings especially to devotional and ethical studies. (This may possibly be an answer to the question, What shall we do at our branch meetings?) They are doing a successful Lotus work and the Lotus Group decorates the rooms whenever this is necessary.

The meeting adjourned at 4 o'clock and a social hour followed at which light refreshments were served.

Tuesday evening, the members present were gladdened by the appearance of the President-Founder who introduced the speaker for the evening, Mrs. Steinem, of Toledo, whose guest he had recently been and of whose character and abilities he spoke in high terms. He lingered to say a few words of farewell, but was unable to stay for the lecture on account of the pressure of business.

Mrs. Steinem, who is a member of the Board of Education of the city of Toledo, gave an interesting talk on "Theosophy and Public Life" especially in connection with educational matters.

PRESS COMMITTEE PARLIAMENT.

This meeting was held Wednesday morning and was opened by Miss Krecker, secretary of the Am. Sec. Press Committee. After a brief review of the work of the past year, a full account of which will be found on another page, she said that in an interview with Col. Olcot, he had said that he and Mme. Blavatsky were the first press committee and that H. P. B. was always ready with "copy." He also said that in his opinion a good journalist was worth a hundred speakers, being able to reach so vast an audience.

The speaker stated that the key-note of press work for the coming year

would be "Ethics." She then asked Dr. Burnett to take the floor.

Dr. Burnett called attention to the fact that outside of the Universities the subject of Ethics receives no definite attention and that the time seems ripe for concerted action along these lines, aiming to introduce the subject into public and other schools.

She brought to the attention of those present the prize offered 20 years ago for the best Ethical essay to be used in educational ways, and the excellent material called forth by that appeal, two essays being published in one volume and widely circulated.

Mr. Pandit, representative from the Indian Section, was asked to speak on Ethics and Morality from the Indian view point. He emphasized two things as the essentials of all ethical evolution, self-control and the idea of unity or the positive and negative work. The negative work might be summed up in self-control, which, at certain stages, appears to be more important than the positive work and should precede the positive in order not to endanger the aspirant. Powers then may be safely developed without losing the moral balance, being side-tracked or going insane. The idea of unity, of seeing God everywhere and in everything to be constantly in mind, learning to pierce through the form to the divine element everywhere inherent.

Mr. Warrington, of Norfolk, Va., prefaced his remarks by saying that he was not so much interested in the body (T. S.) as in the life that works through it. He suggested that in trying to reach the public we keep Theosophy, as a separate system, more in the background, and work out the ideas in the phraseology in which the people are

accustomed to think. Our methods should be suggestive rather than otherwise. Karma and Re-incarnation can be used without introducing the word Theosophy. Another element to introduce would be the possibilities of soul evolution, character building, etc. We can take up the ideas of Spencer and the evolutionists and carry them on. The first thing, however, in all the work, is to find a point of contact, through personal touch and interest, and then there are greater possibilities for making the work vital, normal, practical and effective.

Mrs. McGovern, of the Pacific coast, spoke of the need for the eradication of dogmatism and sectarianism from all our work. The life of helpfulness and brotherliness should come first as affecting the lives of those we try to help.

Dr. Chidester expressed her hearty endorsement of the work along the lines laid out for the coming year.

Several others spoke on the various points raised and it was found that there was not time to hear the paper prepared by Miss Kreckler for the occasion and she was requested to give it the following afternoon.

Upon urgent request from many who were obliged to leave Wednesday evening, the question meeting was given up and Mrs. Richardson gave her paper on "Some Aspects of Evolution," which was listened to with deep interest and aroused much enthusiasm. It is hoped that we may have a copy for the Lecture Bureau, and there is a probability that it will be brought out in pamphlet form by the London T. P. S.

Members were invited to remain after the formal closing of the meeting

for social intercourse and the refreshment of a glass of sherbet.

Notwithstanding a heavy rain, the rooms were well filled in the evening to listen to Mr. Hotchner's lecture on "Fallacies and Verities."

Thursday afternoon Miss Kreckler read her paper on "Press Work," which will be found reported in full in another part of this number and Mr. Burnett gave an interesting account of the Paris Congress. He spoke first of the beautiful hall in which the meetings were held. It was in circular form with a gallery, decorated in white and gold and adorned with many large mirrors. It would seat about four hundred and fifty people. There were very many nations and tongues represented, yet one could feel the strong current of sympathy uniting them into one body. The program was varied with a good deal of music. There was a fine chorus of fifty voices almost all members. Mr. Burnett did not hear very many of the papers as he was obliged to be absent a good deal, but he was impressed with the earnestness of this cosmopolitan gathering; they seemed to be all persons who were trying to learn how to live.

Thursday evening the post-convention meeting closed with an able and instructive address from Dr. Moore on the "Conquest of Illusion."

Report of the American Section Press Committee.

(Read at Convention.)

Success with increasing opportunities for a larger success crystallizes the report of the American Section Press Committee for this the second year of its existence. Our first year was devoted largely to organization and sur

vey of the field. In beginning the second year we declared a three-fold object, (1) To bring Theosophical news and teachings before the American people through the press. (2) To enlist the writers of the Section in the service of Theosophical subject matter. (3) To draw forth the latent powers of Theosophical writers.

Under the first object the first work done was the preparation of a series of seven syndicate articles on the spirit and ideals of the Orient dealing with Karma, Re-incarnation, Yoga and kindred topics. These were syndicated and published simultaneously in six papers appearing during seven successive weeks and were subsequently furnished to all the sub-chairman for distribution to their local committees and publications as they saw fit, and were again published in a number of papers of the North, South, East and West.

Throughout the year from time to time about twenty-five other articles on Theosophical topics such as Thought-Forms, Music-Forms, Atlantis, Lemuria, original and compiled, appeared in one of the largest American newspapers with over 200,000 circulation and from this paper were syndicated to four and six other metropolitan papers. Copies of these articles were also sometimes furnished the local committees or others for further publication.

Two series of short sketches on Theosophy were compiled to be supplied to local committees and also five articles on the great philosophers, while another series on occultism is in course of preparation.

To the local committees who in some cases were distributors rather than producers of press material, were commended the following five methods of

work: (1) Reporting the Sunday night and other public lectures of the local branch to the local papers. (2) Presenting to the Branch meeting at stated intervals news and items of Theosophical interest found in current periodicals and literature. (3) Trying to place in the local papers or elsewhere any article sent from headquarters. (4) Placing Theosophical reading matter in prisons, hospitals and libraries. (5) Keeping a scrap-book of Theosophical matter. Detailed report blanks covering these points were issued to all sub-chairman for distribution to their local committees.

In addition to the regular constituency of the press committee with its chairmen, sub-chairman and local committees a number of members-at-large were elected; several students who were in a position to help us, such as Mr. Warrington, of Virginia, who supplied half a dozen papers with material sent him, and the field-workers who ex-officio bid fair to offer possibilities as press auxiliaries, especially, in promoting our second and third objects, those concerning the securing and educating of press workers. Each was dispatched a letter giving in some detail our aims and plans for the year so that they would be thoroughly informed and therefore all the better equipped. They furnished us with the names of some valuable helpers, organized at least one local committee and did some writing for the papers represented on their itineraries. It was also partly due to their efforts that interest in library work was aroused. Printed lists of T. S. books in the Chicago public library with their reference numbers were sent the chairmen of the sub-sections with the request that they

be sent to public libraries in order to interest them in adding some of them to their shelves. Through the generosity of one member the committee sent to the Chicago University library five Theosophical books which were acknowledged with thanks. Fifty books on Theosophy were reported found in the Chicago public library.

Another means adopted for arousing interest within the section and assisting our workers was the Press Points which appeared every month in the Theosophic Messenger by courtesy of the editor. Our report to you has been greatly shortened by our opportunity to present from time to time the workings of the press committee through the Messenger. Inquiries stimulated by the Press Points came from Canada, Mexico, East, West, North, South. Miss Ingalls, of Mexico, wrote that she sent a number of compilations to a Mexico City paper which were acknowledged with the words that Theosophical matter seemed to be in demand.

Such is briefly the plan of work as outlined and gradually unfolded. The specific reports from the heads of the sub-sections will be presented in detail at the press committee parliament Wednesday morning. At that time also there may be opportunity to describe our prison work in San Francisco and Chicago, and to tell of the openings with a magazine and newspaper syndicate which at the time could not be wholly embraced for lack of writers.

More and more is the committee convinced that as we fit ourselves for doing the work we have set out to do the opportunities for doing it will enlarge.

Having reviewed the past year, by way of an outlook over the vistas of the coming year, let us note that we plan to concentrate attention on the diffusion of non-sectarian ethical culture in home and school and to shoulder upon ourselves at least a part of America's vast responsibility for the moral development of those coming here from every quarter of the globe by the millions, whose standards of morality are below the par of the civilized world. It is our purpose to prepare suitable material for ethical school text-books as well as newspaper and magazine articles. Mrs. Besant has shown that none of the three great ethical systems, the utilitarian, the intuitionist or the authoritative are perfect without the doctrines of Re-incarnation and Karma. With these and other Theosophical basic teachings, then, as their peculiar contribution, our Theosophical writers can supplement and enrich the Western ethical codes of the day.

On the threshold of the third year of its existence the American Section Press committee feels that guerdons of success and opportunity for enlarged service are already here and that the magnitude and splendor of the enterprise wherewith we have the honor to be associated are such as to evoke our finest enthusiasm, our every power of intellect and our loving devotion to those through whose great help success is assured.

ADA MAY KRECKER,

Secretary.

As a true man is helped by foes not less than by friends, so is every right cause.—*Bishop Spaulding.*

Theosophy in the Newspapers.

What to write about, how to write it and where to send it are topics of perennial interest to us as press-workers. Theosophy is like a gold mine, the public need the gold, the press-workers must dig the gold and prepare it for use. The general public may not be interested in the mine but it is glad for the mined gold.

And of this gold, of our raw material there is an abundance. Not a question, not a current event, not a theory, not a discovery, not a business, science, religion or art but may be seen in a larger light when surveyed through the Theosophical spectacles. A well known Theosophist observed that it sometimes seemed to him that God was the only true Theosophist, for He alone touched the universe at all points. And he thought the Theosophist should be known for the big way in which he sees every matter. This universality of our philosophy is one the most helpful and stimulating of facts for us press-workers to grasp. Just as we all have appreciated that Theosophy is something not only for the study hour but for the daily round of affairs, so we are comprehending that our writings are something to jostle cheek by jowl with the every-day world, with current events, politics, science, art, literature, invention. They admit of universal application. We can get an illustration from the application of science to industry. Science at one time was a matter for schoolmen alone in their sequestered college laboratories. Nowadays the laboratories are attached to the industrial plants and the professors are engaged in applying their researches to trade

and the practical arts. When we have learned how to apply our Theosophical teachings to the world of today, the world of the West, the world of the mart and the drawing-room, the church, university and state, one of our chief problems as propagandists will be solved.

One of the first essentials is to study our field. If we are writing for a technical press, so to speak, for those who are familiar with our foundation ideas, for the schoolmen and bookish public we know that we can employ an entirely different style from that needed for the typical popular American magazine or newspaper. And even among the popular periodicals we know there is room for the widest differences. As a rule, to which of course there are many exceptions, the press of the South and East is conservative whereas the West, particularly the far West and Northwest is liberal. In the Northwest there is said to be positive public interest and demand for at least certain phases of Theosophical literature, such as thought-power, culture and phenomena. Again, the press of the rural districts is usually more conservative and sedate than the metropolitan journals. In the larger towns the sensational and the more moderate types are commonly both represented. We can then make our choice.

Even in pure news we must all have noted that there is great difference in its treatment in different periodicals and in its acceptability. What one paper treats at large, with a full page and pictures, another paper will pack into half a column. And outside of news matter the differences at once increase. So that we may well undertake the study that is made by every news.

paper writer of the papers for which he writes to see what they print and how they print it. At first the peculiarities may seem intangible but by practice they grow clearer and at last we can distinguish the distinct styles of the daily papers and can write in accordance therewith.

In studying standard metropolitan papers we become aware of a typical newspaper style which passes anywhere, despite local or individual preferences. In the typical city paper we find many profound topics ventilated from time to time, but not in a profound manner. It is probably easy for every one in writing of weighty things to use weighty, slumberous, long words which lullaby the ordinary newspaper reader to sleep, or an encyclopedic professional manner which dulls the edge of his interest. A scholar is interested in the facts and takes them no matter how they are presented, but the man of the street regards serious reading as somewhat medicinal and wants it sugar coated. It is the short words, terse sentences and a vernacular way of putting things that lay hold of his attention and fit the erudite themes into his grooves of thought. He wants an opening that seizes his eye and a light touch throughout. A peep into a well-written Sunday paper science article will show us to what pains the writer puts himself in order to expound their profundities in simple language without technicalities. Do we not all remember the English-French of our schooldays? All the words were there in our exercise, there was no grammatical error, no error of any sort in fact which we could lay our finger on, yet it was not French; it was English in French words. So all our facts may be

correct, our conclusions may be fair, but we may not have written a newspaper "story" about them.

The dramatic critics say much about human interest. We shall also notice this human interest in our newspaper studies, a news interest, a personal interest, a public interest. An example of a news interest successfully used by one of our Missouri press workers was the item which appeared during the late war in a Kansas City paper giving Mrs. Besant's interpretation of Russia's difficulties. The Russo-Japanese war was here utilized as news interest. An ethical article could be based on the recent appearance in the International Journal of Ethics of an article entitled "Patriotism a Primitive Ideal." Here we have a recognition of the passing of a popular ideal to give place to a higher ideal, an excellent opportunity for infusing the ideas of Dharma and Karma, the sliding scale standard for right and wrong, good and evil. A somewhat similar article could be founded on Sir Oliver Lodge's recent comparison of evil and good with cold and heat. The temperature rising with the "living heat" for the ascending order of beings offers fine analogy.

Personal interest as an aid in engaging attention was noted by one of the field workers who found that her writings could find way into the press of a given town because she was speaking in the town and had been mentioned in the papers. In a less immediate way than this we can arouse personal interest by stating what we have to say as something believed by, or discovered by some certain prominent person, the more prominent the better, giving any reason to which he or she may lay claim for winning public attention.

There is also a certain public interest that can be appealed to for a hearing. The article by a sub-chairman on Re-incarnation which utilized the popular interest in Mark Twain's book on Joan of Arc and offered Re-incarnation as a solution for the Joan of Arc mystery is a case in point. An ethical article could be built up on the Theosophical interpretation of the wonderful words, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." This great saying is known throughout Christendom, by some believed, by others held as an impossible ideal. Theosophy explains it. "Be good and you will be happy," is an every day proverb that gets a scientific basis when Theosophically interpreted. The ideal of universal brotherhood is another theme of public knowledge and interest that finds rational foundation when the spiritual plane like the physical is shown to be a true universe, when human solidarity is shown to be literal. Karma and Re-incarnation aspected as the expansion of natural law in the spiritual world again brings the subject within the environment of the popular reader. Indeed the many applications of natural law in the spiritual world should prove a luxuriantly fruitful theme for Theosophical writers and would have the advantageous prestige of a famous book on the same subject.

In a suitable field such perhaps as a woman's magazine a series on character building with child-training in view might be acceptable. Theosophical teachings and literature are replete with suggestion for the culture of thought, the education of the emotional nature, the rational rearing of a symmetrical character. And when we learn to write for the children's papers

there will be much that we can tell them direct from Theosophy. Were we to find an opening in a child's or mother's magazine for some of our ethical treatises, they might be re-published later in the text-books we are planning. The magazine field is as yet practically untouched by us. It awaits its laborers to reap its golden harvests. For a religious periodical *Lost Secrets of the Early Church* or a similar theme might offer an idea for a paper or a series of papers. For some weekly Sunday magazine, such as are issued with the Sunday issue of the daily newspapers perhaps some of us can secure a column to be filled weekly with Theosophical matter of one sort or another. A leading object for each writer among us to have in view is to find his or her field, wherever that may be, and supply it as best he is able. Our local papers and magazines, with which we are best acquainted, is perhaps the best place to begin. Having begun, we are certain in time to find the paths widening. A. M. K.

Rev. Martin K. Schermerhorn, pastor emeritus of Channing Church, Newport, has been lecturing at Green Acre. Mr. Schermerhorn is above all a Theosophist, but he makes his Theosophy more generally acceptable by the use of New Thought and a generally broad view of religion. He conducted the *Devotional Exercises* a number of times in Green Acre, gave a series of lectures on "The Karma of Thoughts," and showed the support given to Re-incarnation by Emerson and like thinkers. He has written a book called "Universal Worship," composed of hymns and prayers which any one may use, no matter to what religion he may belong.

Executive Notice.

Theosophical Society, President's Office:

New York City N. Y., Sept. 25, '06.

The undersigned gives notice that for sufficient cause he exercises the authority conferred upon him in Article 4, of the "Memorandum of Association," in which the Society was incorporated April 3rd, 1905, and Rule 35 of the "Rules and Regulations," and orders the cancellation of the diploma of Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, a member of the British Section T. S., and the removal of his name from the register of membership.

The Secretaries of the British and American Sections are instructed to make known this decision in such ways as they may deem best.

(Signed) H. S. Olcott.

A Second Warning.

I have been asked to repeat the caution given in May "Messenger" against the impostures of a Mr. A. J. Weiss in addition to the Branches victimized in that notice. He has now been operating in Webb City, Mo., claiming to be a San Francisco member and a sufferer from the earthquake. It would be well if any F. T. S. upon whom he attempts his frauds would promptly prosecute him, as was done in New Orleans.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
Gen. Sec'y.

A Word to Members.

We beg leave to call attention to another change in the office address of the Messenger which is now 4940 Washington Ave. It goes without say-

ing that it is our earnest desire to reach every member with the Messenger and we beg every member who does not receive it regularly to send us a postal card giving his address and stating his case. We hear indirectly of many members who do not get their paper regularly but who have not notified us of the fact—at least so far as we know. Some mail may have been lost in the last four months owing to changes of residence of editor, and some may have been mislaid in the editorial office—such things have been known to happen—and we are very far from claiming to be exempt from these accidents. But we are starting out on the new year with a new abode, a new desk and a fine new set of resolutions, and we hope the members will all join us in a valiant endeavor to keep the mailing list straight.

BRANCH REPORT.

San Diego Branch T. S. During the past year the activities of the San Diego Branch have been encouraging, a number of new members having joined and much interest being shown in all the study classes as well as in the Sunday afternoon public lectures. Up to the time of the suspension of activities for the summer vacation—in July—there were three classes for adults, two for members, one of which was studying the "Secret Doctrine," the other "Esoteric Christianity" along the lines outlined in the "Messenger," and a class for non-members in which the manuals were used, supplemented by personal talks after which those present were encouraged to ask questions; also a Lotus Circle, in which the results obtained with the little people were most gratifying.

The visit in June of Mr. Rogers, the field-worker, and Pres. of the Pacific Coast Federation, was a great pleasure to the members and eminently satisfactory as regards the effect produced by his lectures upon the public.

The press of San Diego—especially the morning paper, which is the one most widely read, has been most kind in regard to the amount of space which has been allowed us, without charge, for reports of lectures and other Theosophical news items. In Monday morning's paper, each week has appeared an account, exactly as written, varying from two-thirds of a column to a full column in length of the public lecture given on Sunday afternoon. These newspaper accounts of Sunday lectures frequently brought to succeeding lectures people who, in all probability, would never otherwise have come.

During the past year seven new books have been added to the Branch library, and three new magazines subscribed to, the latter being, "The Theosophist," "The Theosophic Gleaner" and "Broad Views." Subscription to the "Theosophical Review" has also been renewed.

It may not be out of place here to mention the fact that the San Diego Branch is peculiarly situated and has to struggle against bitter opposition, of a nature to which none of the other Branches are subjected.

JANET B. MCGOVERN.

Questions and Answers from the Vahan.

QUESTION 307.

M. A. S.—In sending a thought message, is there any means of telling, in the absence of ordinary methods of communication, whether it has been received or not? Would a sense of satisfaction in response to the desire to know of its reception indicate anything? Does it take a longer concentration to transmit to a greater distance? If the exact position of the recipient were not known, how could the thought form reach him? Would not the idea that it would do so be crediting it with an independent power apart from one's own consciousness?

A. B. C.—The reception of a thought message could not well be indicated by other than "ordinary methods" to a

sender who had only "ordinary" powers of perception. Personally I should be very sorry to place any reliance on a "sense of satisfaction"—such a sense is far too easily induced, in some cases, to be regarded as evidence. The statement has been made, I think by Mr. Leadbeater, that a more concentrated force is required for transmission of a thought-form to a greater distance. With regard to the last two questions, M. A. S. appears to have not very carefully thought over the whole subject. The answer may best be indicated by asking another question: How does the Marconi wave find the receiver? Surely M. A. S. does not credit it with an independent consciousness?

E. A. B.—I do not think that there would, as a rule, be any means but those of ordinary communication, of knowing that a thought message had been received, though this might not be so in a case of special sensitiveness on *both* sides. A sense of satisfaction alone would not be reliable evidence, as this might obviously arise from various causes. But mere distance would make no difference, nor would it be necessary to know the exact position of the recipient. If the thought were strong enough to reach him at all, it would reach him wherever he was. The thought-form, once started on its journey, would be so far an "independent power" that when once sent out it could not be recalled or diverted from its object—any more than a shot from a bow could be recalled by a wish or its direction be changed when on its way. The thought is the impelling force of the form, vitalising it for the time it lasts, and the length of time depends on the strength of the thought.

LECTURE BUREAU.

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