

Convention Souvenir Number



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 **HARRIET T. FELIX, Editor, 4 Ritchie Place, Chicago, Ill.** Subscription price to non-members, 50 cents per annum.

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No. 1

President's Convention Address.

Brethren:

We are met together at an important epoch in the history of the T. S., at the beginning of a new cycle of its life. In 1891, H. P. B., the disciple chosen by the Brothers of the White Lodge to undertake a world-mission, to be the channel of a new spiritual impulse to the world; to found the Theosophical Society, passed away from earth. Great was the loss; but she left with us her colleague and faithful co-worker, the founder with her of the T. S., a disciple of the same Master, the man chosen by Him to be the President for life of the Society, your countryman, Henry Steele Olcott. So long as he remained on earth, he stood as the representative of

the Society's traditions; he was, in his own person, the head chosen by the Master to rule and guide the Society; he had watched over it from the beginning, had nurtured its growth, and guided the shaping of its organization. The Society had grown up around him, and he remained its center, even after his great colleague had been removed from his side.

But now he too has passed away from us; the first cycle of the Theosophical Society has closed. From 1875 to 1907, it has lived under the Presidency of one directly appointed by the Masters, who are the true Founders of the Society; during that time it has gone through many vicissitudes; many weak members fell away during the attack on H. P. B. by the Christian missionaries

of Madras through the Coulombs. Its American Section was well nigh rent away from it by the secession of Mr. W. Q. Judge, its General Secretary, with the great mass of American members; we must gratefully remember today the steadfastness of Mr. Fullerton and Mrs. Buffington Davis, who stood firm through that storm, which left only a remnant of its membership, to the American Section. In addition to these two great catastrophes, Colonel Olcott had to face many minor difficulties. His position was at one time rendered so intolerable at the Society's Headquarters, that only H. P. B.'s vigorous intervention prevented his resignation of the presidential office; he had to face so much petty opposition, so many accusations of tyranny and high-handedness were made against him, that he flung down his authority in disgust; only the dissolution of the then Board of Control made it possible for him to remain as President, and the Society, grown wise by experience, committed its destinies into his unfettered hands.

Despite all troubles, the Society continued to increase in numbers and influence, until, when the time had come for him to pass away for awhile from earth, it stood on a higher pinnacle than it had ever occupied before.

Let us pause for a moment, to consider the nature of the Theosophical Society, as we may find it outlined in our printed and other documents. Its nature, its origin, is a question suddenly brought to the front by Mr. Sinnett. Was it founded by the order of the Masters, by a woman, and a man chosen by them for the work, or is it a mere chance organization? That question must be decided by references to early documents, by the statements made by

the Masters themselves and by H. P. B.

The Society was organized in three sections: the first Section consisted of the "Elder Brothers" Themselves, the Founders, Guardians and Protectors of the Society. The second Section consisted of their disciples, including those accepted as chelas by H. P. B., and her other pupils, to whom she gave direct teaching. The third Section comprised all ordinary members of the Society, the exoteric body. An early draft of the constitution shows these three Sections, with three degrees in each Section, the conditions becoming more stringent as the members passed inward. In the rules of the T. S., as revised and passed at Bombay on February 17, 1881, it is stated, with regard to these Sections, that:—

"The administration of the two superior Sections need not be dealt with at present in a code of rules laid before the public. No responsibilities connected with these superior grades are incurred by persons who merely desire ordinary membership."

During the first seven years of the Society's life, many statements were made about the Society by its true Founders, the Masters. One of these says in writing, that before the T. S. was founded, they chose H. S. Olcott as the leader of the movement they were then projecting, and associated with him H. P. B., whom they sent to America, and brought to meet him, both being willing to accept the task. He speaks in 1882 of the Society as "Our Theosophical Ship," of himself as "having some authority in" it. He expresses a fear that they may have to withdraw from it for a time, save as regards a faithful minority—a fear that proved true—but that, later, a renewed effort to help it would be made.



MRS. ANNIE BESANT
President Theosophical Society

Supplement to Theosophic Messenger, October, 1907. See page 10.

Similarly we find the second of the teachers most concerned with the Society, taking it for granted that his views were to guide the T. S. In a letter, quoted in the *Path*, Vol. VII, p. 334, he says that: "The T. S. was chosen as the corner-stone, the foundation of the future Religion of Humanity. . . . It is we, the humble disciples of the perfect Lâmas who are expected to allow the T. S. to drop its noblest title, the Brotherhood of Humanity, to become a simple school of philosophy." "Before, I have written, that our Society is not a mere intellectual school for Occultism." He writes of H. P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott as "our present representatives." He writes: "We have weightier matters than small societies to think about; yet the T. S. must not be neglected."

This view of the Society is often directly stated, and constantly assumed, by H. P. B. Writing in the *Path*, in December, 1886, she speaks of "The Society, founded at their wish and under their orders." In the *Theosophist*, Vol. III, p. 243, she writes: "Our Society was founded at the direct suggestion of Indian and Tibetan Adepts, and in coming to this country (India), we but obeyed their wishes." She told the Countess Wachtmeister that, in 1851, her master told her that he had chosen her for the work of the Society. That was when he met her in his physical body on the border of the Serpentine, in Hyde Park, London. In March, 1873, she herself writes she was sent from Russia to Paris, and June of that same year to America; in October, 1874, she was bidden go to Chittenden and there she found the Colonel—thus she amplifies the statement written in the Master's own hand. Again, in

1886, she informs Dr. Hartmann, in writing, of the same facts. In a letter dated December 6th, 1887, she speaks of "the Society created by the Masters, *our* Mahâtmas." In this letter she also says: "Master sent me to the United States to see what could be done to stop necromancy and the unconscious black magic exercised by the Spiritualists. I was made to meet you (Olcott) and to change your ideas, which I have. The Society was formed, then gradually made to merge into and evolve hints of the teachings from the Secret Doctrine of *the oldest school of Occult Philosophy in the whole world*—a school to reform which finally, the Lord Gautama was made to appear. These teachings could not be given abruptly, They *had* to be instilled gradually." On June 27, 1887, writing from Elberfeld, she says: "As one of the Founders of our Theosophical Society, established at the orders and according to the desire of *our* Masters."

Nor does she hesitate firmly to claim her place as Their servant, and demands to be recognized in that capacity. When, after the Coulomb accusations, the leaders of the T. S. did not stand by her as fully as they should have done, she tells them of the danger they are running of the complete withdrawal of the Masters from the T. S., for "They will not countenance ingratitude." And she goes on to say that her demand for vindication is not due to "selfish or personal pride, but I was sent by Them, and, whatever my failures, I am Their agent, and in insulting me, the Society insults them." Again: "I am ready to disappear, Olcott, only remember, my poor friend, that with me will disappear the Masters." Thus she wrote to Colonel Olcott on April 11, 1885.

The Great Ones were not satisfied with the position taken toward H. P. B.; though some members remained faithful, the majority were afraid of continuing to bear the flag of Occultism openly, and in a written report of a conversation between her Master and H. P. B., He is recorded as saying: "The Society has liberated itself from our grasp and influence, and we have let it go; we make no *unwilling slaves*. It is now a soulless corpse, a machine run so far well enough, but which will fall to pieces when . . . Out of the Three Objects the Second alone is attended to; it is no longer either a Brotherhood, nor a body over the face of which broods the Spirit beyond the Great Range."

The First Section thus ceased to exist, and the Masters no longer directed the exoteric Society. The Second Section also ceased to exist, as a grade of the Society, though H. P. B. continued to teach some of its members. Towards the close of 1888, the loyalty of many to H. P. B. justified a renewed effort to send out help, and the Esoteric Section was formed by an Executive Order, dated October, 1888, though not in official connection with the Exoteric Section; Colonel Olcott stated that he issued this order in obedience to a letter he had received in mid-ocean from his Master. The order was printed in *Lucifer*, issued Oct. 15th, 1888, with the following prefix:

"Owing to the fact that a large number of Fellows of the Society have felt the necessity for the formation of a body of Esoteric students, to be organized on the *original lines* devised by the *real* Founders of the T. S., the following order has been issued by the President-Founder."

Needless to say that at that time there was no question as to who were the "real founders" of the T. S. So long as H. P. B. and Colonel lived, no one ventured to challenge the origin of the Society. This conception of the Society was summed up, in 1892, in a paper written by Mr. W. Q. Judge and myself, and then issued to the Inner Circle of the Society. The following extract gives this traditional view, now denied by some members of the T. S.

"Founded by the direction of Masters, and drawing its true life from Them, it stands, as a Society, in a position different from that of any worldly organization. As H. P. B. has said, every member of the Society is united by a delicate thread of magnetic *rapport* to Masters, and it lies with each member to draw himself nearer by that thread, or to let it hang loose and useless, to be frayed away, and ultimately broken. Any of you who have read letters sent to early members of the T. S., will see how real that link was meant to be, and how seriously membership in the T. S. was regarded. Lack of loyalty, lack of courage, lack of recognition of Masters, lack of devotion, marred the early ideal until the T. S., as a body, well-nigh wrenched itself out of the Masters' hands. H. P. B. sacrificed herself for the Society, and so saved it from complete failure, and, at last, it was decided to openly call out a body that had always existed within the T. S., that they might as an organized body, work to recall the Society 'to its original lines,' and thus redeem it."

It must be a matter of profound regret to all that Mr. Sinnett, the late Vice-President—to whom the Society owes so much for transmitting to it the

teachings received by him from the Masters, through the intermediation of H. P. B.—has thought fit, misled by evil influences, to suddenly repudiate as mythical this view of the Society, based on documentary evidence, and to seek to drag it down to the level of a casual movement, started without the authority and direction of the Masters, by H. P. B. and H. S. O. on their own initiative. But to this he has been inevitably led by his repudiation of the appearance of the two Masters, who are the true Founders of the T. S., to Their faithful servant, Colonel Olcott, on his deathbed, in pursuance of the promise made in 1882, that a renewed effort to help the Society would be made.

To all those who have studied the history of the Theosophical Society, nothing could seem to be more reasonable, more to be expected, than that at the opening of a new cycle of the Society's life the same beneficent Presences should appear, as had ushered it into existence. That They should have left Their dying servant unhelped; that They should not have aided the Society in passing from the original order to the new; that They who appointed the first President should refrain from expressing any opinion to help the Society in using its power of choice for the first time in the election of the second President; that the T. S. should have begun its second cycle without Their benediction—that, indeed, would have been irrational, incredible. It is a strange instance of the rapidity with which a living belief can depart from those who profess it, that those who had accepted the phenomena of H. P. B., and the appearances of the Masters in the earlier days—in New York, Bombay, Simla, Adyar, and elsewhere—for

the most part on Colonel Olcott's sole testimony, should reject that same testimony some years later, though supported by the evidence of three other persons. However, so it is, and the freedom of the Society protects those who do not accept any of the super-physical facts which have built it up, and which prove the existence of the laws that it constantly proclaims.

The Theosophical Society has before it a second serious question for consideration, the solution of which is rendered necessary by recent events.

Before dealing with it, I must make a statement which ought not to be necessary, but which I must make because of a possible misunderstanding that may otherwise arise. In all that I am now going to say on the question of a moral, or penal code, I am dealing with ordinary offenders of the common type, and with *no one else*. I do not like to say, because it seems an insult to my brother and Fellow-Initiate, Charles Leadbeater; that no word that I am now going to say applies to him, nor can any arguments on this subject have any bearing upon him.

I am ashamed to say this, I feel that I insult him in saying it, only similar words of mine have been misconstrued before, and therefore I must guard against misunderstanding. Let me assure you in all solemnity that the Initiates who are disciples of the Masters do not press their presence upon any Theosophical Society, or any other society in the world. We stand on other ground. We offer our services. You may reject them or take them as you will, but after the experience that H. P. B. endured, that he and I have endured, let me assure you that there is no anxiety in the ranks of the Initi-

ates to come forward and offer services which you do not desire to accept. You have no necessity to pass a penal code in order to exclude from the Theosophical Society any disciple of the Masters. And having said that, in order that there may be no misunderstanding, let me go on to the general question as to what you shall do in the future with ordinary wrong-doers.

The proposition that the Society has no moral code—the statement which formed one of the charges on which Mr. Jinarajadasa was expelled—has been reasserted, first by myself, then by Mrs. Mead, then by Mr. Fullerton, and is now generally accepted as the mere statement of a fact. But the question: Ought the Society to have a moral code? presses for answer. It is not the fact that the Society on this matter is divided into two parties, one of which believes that vice retards and virtue hastens the realization of Universal Brotherhood, while the other may or may not think this truism to be true. Both agree on this; we are all at one in our eagerness to raise the moral tone of the Society, to make it an example of noble living to the world; none are indifferent to morality, nor are content with a low standard of living. We agree that morality is all important; that the life of the Society depends on its power to lift its members into nobility of conduct; that every wrong-doer in our ranks poisons the very springs of our being. Where we differ is on the question, "Shall moral ideas be enforced by penalty, or not?" It is a penal, not a moral code that some are demanding. The way of the world is to enforce morality by penalty, and, because penalties can only be enforced against the most fla-

grant breaches of the moral law, it is obliged to accept a very low standard of morality, and to leave unpenalised some of the most mischievously immoral acts. No good man is content with his morality, if it does not rise far above the penal law of the country in which he resides.

Most religions have a moral code, a set of "Commandments" of some kind, such as the Ten Commandments of Judaism, the Five Precepts of Buddhism. But none of the great religions, so far as I know, have a penal code, enforcing its commandments by exclusion from its pale. On the contrary, they regard it as a primary duty to try to improve their evil-doers, not to cast them out. Some religions outcaste or excommunicate on ceremonial grounds, but one may presume that the Theosophical Society does not wish to copy these examples. Religions leave to the civil power the punishment of offences, and strive to reform and purify rather than to expel. Shall the Theosophical Society descend below the level common to religious bodies, and proclaim itself in need of the sword of a criminal law?

As a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, we should not omit to show forth the brotherly way of dealing with the criminal; we should not expel him, crying out: "Stand aside, I am holier than thou," but should, by lofty living, pour such a stream of nobility into the Society that none bathed in it could remain base. Among brutes, a sick animal is attacked and either slain or driven away, lest he should infect the herd; among savages, the sick are cast out of the tribe, and left to die; among civilized nations they are tenderly nursed back into health. Does the

nursing back to health connote indifference to disease? Are we to treat our morally sick on the pattern of the brute and the savage, or on that of the civilized man?

A penal code among us would be the denial of Brotherhood, the affirmation of the "heresy of separateness," the separateness we are banded together to destroy. Spirituality knows no separateness; it proclaims the unity of all. Just in proportion as we are spiritual, shall we feel our unity with saint and sinner alike. We are all eager to feel our unity with the Gods, with the Christs, with the Saints, but no such lop-sided unity is possible. Only those can be one with the highest who are also one with the lowest; by the one Spirit that dwells in us all, our brother's sins are our sins, our brother's shame is our shame. Our Elder Brothers, the Masters of Compassion, stoop to us, the younger, that They may lift us up; with what eyes of patient sadness must They look on us, as we eagerly grasp at Their hands that we may rise, and trample on those who are younger than ourselves? Shall They not say to us, if we fall into the present snare: "For as much as ye have expelled the least of these, our brethren, ye have expelled us?" The spiritual man has no property in his own purity; he holds it for the purifying of all; all become purer because he is pure. For the unspiritual, personal purity becomes a separative force, and of such it is written that publicans and sinners go into the kingdom of heaven before them. The excluder, by the justice of the Great Law, becomes the excluded, until he longs for the non-separateness which he has denied.

There is a tendency in the Theosoph-

ical Society, as in the outer world, to narrow down the word "morality" until it is a label for a special kind of virtue—sexual purity. To say that a man is "immoral" has come to mean that he is loose sexually. Morality is not considered to include slander, back-biting, false-witness, imputation of evil motives, persecution; these crimes are committed light-heartedly by many who regard themselves as moral. But these are deadly sins against the law of Love, and retard the realization of Universal Brotherhood far more than the evils committed by the publicans and sinners of the times.

On these matters the judgment of Initiates has ever clashed with the judgment of the world, for they regard the sins of the mind as more deadly and more far-reaching in their consequences than the sins of the body. The moral conventions of the day are ever rigidly observed by its Pharisees and too often they deserve the scathing rebuke of the Initiate, as whited sepulchres which within are full of all uncleanness. Still it is true as in the days of the Christ, that men tithe mint, anise and cummin, and forget the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and truth.

Our President-Founder had more than once a lesson that he should not follow the standard of the world in moral judgments. He quoted to you last year at your convention the rebuke he received from a Teacher for over-looking the spiritual merits of a member, who was a drunkard—not that drunkenness was moral, but that one physical fault may be over-balanced by other non-physical merits. Still more instructive was the case of one who, moved by a pure desire to help human-

ity, made a blunder in the method of his helping, and suffered a year's imprisonment here, in the United States, under the Comstock Law. The elder among you will remember the case of Mr. D. M. Bennett. After his imprisonment, Mr. Bennett went to India, and was vigorously defended by H. P. B., much to disgust of some of the European members of the Society, and the President-Founder was rebuked for hesitating to admit him into the Society, lest the reputation of the T. S. should thereby suffer; Master M. bade the Pharisees look to the priceless pearl within the oyster, declaring that Mr. Bennett was a man of tremendous courage, and a martyr, and that the Masters were glad to have the help of such men. "Such our K. H. loves".

All who knew H. P. B. personally—those to whom she is a living person, and not merely an ideal figure after their own fancies and bearing no resemblance to the original—know how deep was her scorn for the conventionalities by which the weak guide their conduct, how broad and tolerant was her judgment of men and things, how she brushed away the cobwebs of phrases and went straight to the heart, the life-motive. She over-looked many a moral fault where she saw a heart full of desire to serve, and it is that wide and noble forbearance, the spirit of the Initiate, that I would invoke to guide our deliberations.

If we make a rule expelling from the Society our undesirables we shall sink below the level of all great religious bodies, even below the level of ordinary scientific, philosophical and literary societies, who would not condescend to tell the world that they dis-

prove of crime—that is taken for granted among all decent people—or are so weak in virtue that they think it necessary to formally expel any chance evil-doer who happens to be within their ranks, lest the world should suspect them of approving, or condoning, immorality.

Apart from these questions of principle, a practical question arises: What code is proposed, crimes against which are to be visited with expulsion? Personally, I am against a penal code on this ground as on the ground of principle. In my article, written last January, on "The Basis of the Theosophical Society"—written as soon as I knew that I was to be nominated as President, in order that the Society might vote on my election with full knowledge of my views on this disputed question—I pointed out the difficulties which surrounded the formulation of a penal code. In the many articles which have been written against mine, there is not one which faces these difficulties, and even attempts to formulate a practical code. So far the only suggestion has been to let expulsion follow on any breach of the law of the land in which the member resides. Such a system might occasionally land us in absurdities, but it would at least be simple and easy, and would have the advantage of securing to every accused member a fair trial, so that none could be expelled without a legal conviction, surrounded by all the safeguards that centuries of experience have shown to be necessary to protect an accused person against injustice due to prejudice.

But such a rule would commit us definitely to a very elementary moral

code, which would be inscribed in our Constitution as that of the Theosophical Society. There is the further difficulty that when you once formulate a code, you implicitly aver that other evils—however dangerous they may be to the life of the Society—are not sufficiently serious to be visited with expulsion. Our lofty ideals would be dragged down, and a law which embodies the low average moral opinion of the day would be put in their place. Instead of our being able to take it for granted that all evil living is injurious to Brotherhood, we may be met, when we say: "Such conduct is unworthy of the Theosophist", with the retort: "It is not forbidden in the Society". The commission of a theft by a member of the Society, at once condemned by all, would be less poisonous to our common life than the hatred, bitterness self-righteousness, which no penal code could touch, and which would spread like a deadly infection. Members committing such deadly sins against Brotherhood would remain in the Society, while the mere common criminal, whose evil cannot spread among us, would be triumphantly expelled.

In face of the manifold difficulties in formulating a penal code, it does not seem too much to ask from those who desire to introduce one, that they shall definitely state what they want, and not throw on others the burden of defining the degree of wickedness which shall justify expulsion from this nucleus of Universal Brotherhood.

Moreover, a period of great excitement is not the best for the decision of a question on which differences of opinion exist. It would in any case be wise to remit the discussion until the turmoil has died down, and differences

are less bitterly expressed. Each Branch that wishes to do so, can exclude from its membership all whom it considers undesirable, and if it finds its policy successful, may recommend it to its Section, or to the Society at large. We should then have the advantage of seeing penal codes formulated and worked by those who think them desirable.

On that matter, I am only giving you such advice as a President may fitly offer to a Section. I have no desire to dictate what you shall do as a Section. I am personally concerned in the decision of this question only when it comes up before the General Council which alone can make rules for the whole Society. But I deem it my duty to say clearly, as my position has been assailed, that I have not changed it in any way, and that I hold distinctly to the principles laid down in the original article on "The Basis of the Theosophical Society" and the later article explaining some further points in the same connection.

As President of the Theosophical Society, I re-affirm the principles I laid down before my election, and I shall steadily resist any attempt to impose a penal code on the Society; I stand for the affirmation of lofty ideals of morality and for strenuous efforts to live up to them; I appeal to the unfolding Divinity in man, and not to the beggarly elements of coercive laws; I gladly affirm my brotherhood with the lowest, as I reverently hope to be accepted as a brother by the Highest.

Before us, Brethren, open up splendid opportunities of future work. In this vast Republic you number some 80,000,000 human beings. You have

light to bring them, you have knowledge with which to feed them, you have hopes for their cheering, you have strength for their uplifting. Around you are millions who are starving for wisdom; will you refuse them bread of life, while you are quarrelling among yourselves as to whom you will accept as your fellow-members? Awake from your uneasy nightmare; open your eyes to realities, and cease to struggle with shadows. Instead of fighting each other, go out and fight ignorance with knowledge, impurity with purity, darkness with light. Rescue the miserable by showing him whence misery arises; console the bereaved, by tearing the veil which shrouds the worlds into which his beloved has passed; strengthen the weak, by making him feel the power of the Divinity within him; soothe the rebellious, by teaching him that he is the author of his sorrows.

A wave of spiritual life will soon sweep over your country; everywhere, as you look around, are springing up new ideas, new hopes, new endeavors—the promise of new forms of life. On the threshold ring the footsteps of the coming civilization, the civilization that shall be built of Brotherhood as its foundation. The Theosophical Society is the herald of its coming, the bringer of the glad tidings of its approach. Oh! rise to the level of your high calling, of your splendid opportunity. Cease quarrelling as children, take up your work as men and women, the self-conscious sons and daughters of the all-ensouling Word, the glad and strenuous co-workers with the Elder Brothers of the Race.

Mrs. Besant has engagements to lecture in several European cities before her return to India for the Convention of the Indian Section T. S. in Benares in December.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

In June 1895 the late President-Founder felt himself obliged, during the difficulties caused by the secession from the T. S. of the majority of Branches in the American Section, to cancel all charters and diplomas held by those who accepted as valid the act of secession, and to subsequently refuse admission to the T. S. to all who were members of Societies that grew out of that secession. The freedom of members of the T. S. to become members of any other societies was thus for a time, restricted. The difficulties referred to have long since passed away, and members are entitled to again enjoy full liberty to join or to remain in any Associations to which they may wish to belong.

Membership in any other Association hereby ceases to be a barrier to membership in the Theosophical Society.

Annie Besant

President of the Theosophical Society.
Chicago, U. S. A. Sept. 17, 1907

Mrs. Besant (see supplement) left Chicago Sept. 19th for Boston. Her stay there was very successful. Several lectures were delivered. A reception was given in her honor by the T. S. The Metaphysical Club also held a gathering in her honor. Other lectures were given in Washington, D. C., Philadelphia and New York. (A detailed account will be given in the November MESSENGER.)

On October the first, from the Hoboken pier, Mrs. Besant and party sailed from New York on the Kaiser Wilhelm II, North German Lloyd:

“We who know the truth of life must first change the world in ourselves internally before the world can be changed in others externally. If we know the truth of life and do not live it, we are as a lighthouse set upon a hill in which the light has gone out.”

—*L. A. Mallory.*

Twenty-First Annual Convention
 OF THE
AMERICAN SECTION
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

HELD AT
 CHICAGO, ILL., SEPTEMBER 15, 1907

Report of Proceedings

Morning Session, September 15, 1907

The Twenty-First Annual Convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society was called to order Sept. 15, 1907, at 10:05 A. M., in Kimball Hall, Chicago, by the President, Mrs. Annie Besant.

Nominations for Temporary Secretary were called for and Mrs. Janet McGovern, of Los Angeles, California, was named by Miss O'Neill. There being no other nominations Mrs. McGovern was declared elected Temporary Secretary.

The first business was the appointment by the Chair as Committee on Credentials: Mr. Walter G. Greenleaf, Mr. Henry Fuller and Mrs. Mary E. W. Farley.

The President then delivered the address which appears on the first page of this issue.

At the direction of the President the Secretary of the Convention read the following telegram:

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Sept. 15.

Loving greetings to Mrs. Besant. May "Convention stand firm for right living."

Golden Gate Lodge.

No vote being possible until the report of the Committee on Credentials was passed on, and this report not being ready, the Chair appointed the following Committees:

Auditing Committee: Ransom H. Randall, Edwin B. Catlin, and Dr. B. W. Lindberg.

Committee on Nominations: Dr. George F. James, Francis E. Martin, Miss Mary O'Neill, Mrs. Emma S. Lee, Mrs. Minnie C. Holbrook.

Committee on Resolutions: Mr. A. P. Warrington, Mr. John H. Bell, Mrs. Addie M. Tuttle, Mr. William Yarco and Mr. C. O. Scudder.

The following resolutions were then presented:

The first was a proposed amendment to the Constitution and rules submitted by Mr. J. Harry Carnes.

Resolved, That the Constitution and the Rules of the American Section of the Theosophical Society be amended by adding the following section to Article I.

SECTION 16. In the interim between the regular annual meeting of the Council assembled in Convention a sufficient number of members of this section in good standing may file in the manner hereinafter provided a written petition with the General Secretary for the purpose of obtaining a referendum vote of the members of the American Section upon any question which the Council at its regular Annual Meeting is competent to decide. A majority of the valid ballots cast on any question submitted to a vote shall constitute a decision thereon, which decision shall have the same force and effect as a decision on the same question would have, if it were made by the said Council at one of its regular Annual Meetings.

The expression "sufficient number" as used in this section shall be deemed to mean 10% of the number of persons in good standing as shown in the regular annual report of the General Secretary next preceding the date of filing of the petition. The petition must be accompanied by a fee of \$50 for the purpose of defraying the expense of taking the vote, but the General Secretary may in his discretion, waive this requirement. The petition, when filed and accompanied by the fee, when the latter is not waived, shall be examined by the General Secretary for the purpose only of ascertaining if the names of a sufficient number of persons appear thereon, in which event it shall be his duty to immediately proceed to prepare the ballots for mailing to each member of the section in good standing. The ballots

shall be mailed not later than twenty days subsequent to the date of filing of the said petition. Should the petition be found by the General Secretary *not* to contain a sufficient number of members of good standing it shall be returned by the General Secretary, not later than 10 days from the date of filing of the petition, to the person whose name heads the list of signers and shall be accompanied by a specific statement clearly pointing out wherein the defect or insufficiency exists so as to enable the petition to be amended to remedy the defect. Not later than 30 days after the mailing of the ballots the General Secretary shall ascertain the result of the vote and shall cause this result to be published in the official organ of the Section as soon as possible. The individual vote of any member shall not be disclosed.

The General Secretary may use for ballots postal cards with the question or issue printed thereon. All the ballots returned to the General Secretary, and from which the result is ascertained shall be preserved until after the regular meeting of the Council following next after the taking of the referendum vote in order that a recount may then be had should the Council desire it.

The petition shall contain the question or issue to be voted upon and in the discretion of the petitioners, may embrace more than one count, should the nature of the issue render this desirable.

For convenience of the members it shall be the duty of the General Secretary to have this amendment printed in such form as will permit of its being affixed in the printed constitution and rules of the Section.

The second resolution was presented by Mr. Russell:

Resolved, That the General Secretary, in his discretion, be and he is, hereby authorized to appoint one or more Assistant Secretaries to aid him in the performance of his duties.

The third was presented by Mr. Scudder:

Resolved, That the National Committee and the American Section Press Committee be and the same are hereby dissolved.

Resolved Further, That the Executive Committee be and the same is hereby authorized and empowered to appoint any Committee or

Committees to carry on the work of the National Committee and the American Section Press Committee or to appoint any other Committee or Committees, which, in its discretion, may be deemed necessary to aid in the furtherance of the sectional activities.

Resolved Further, That all papers, lists of names or other documents pertaining to their work in the American Section now in the possession of the above Committees be turned over to the General Secretary.

The fourth was presented by Mr. Scudder:

Resolved, That the hearty thanks of the American Section are hereby tendered through their delegates here assembled, to our beloved President, Mrs. Annie Besant, for her able, progressive and inspiring address before this Convention; and further

Resolved, That its sentiments of loyalty to high ideals, its firm and positive declarations upon topics now of vital interest in our society, be commended to the serious thought and study of our entire membership.

The fifth was presented by Mrs. Wardall:

WHEREAS, The American Section T. S. covers an immense area of country, thus causing great distances between Branches; and

WHEREAS, The society is organized for the purpose of doing the most effective work in spreading the great Truths of The Wisdom Religion and their purpose is hindered thereby; therefore

Resolved, That it would conserve the interests of the Society, were the American Section divided into *three* separate sub-sections according to the natural topography of the country.

The sixth was presented by Mr. Hotchner:

Desiring to bring about a more settled condition in the American Section, a number of members have assisted in formulating the following preamble and resolution:

WHEREAS, We concur with the wish of our President that we all work in unity for our beloved Society; and

WHEREAS, The Society's mission, in her words, is "to proclaim and spread abroad The-

osophy, the Divine Wisdom" "through a well planned organization, combining complete divisional liberty with the strength insured by attachment to a single centre," this liberty naturally enabling each section to work through such channels as contribute to its success; and

WHEREAS, In determining the conditions of membership, we believe that it is not necessary to devise a fixed moral code with penalties and that, as stated in our President's recent article, "the criminal codes of all countries are taken for granted as a foundation on which to base our movement"; and

WHEREAS, In America the cause of Theosophy can be promoted only if the Society respects wholesome public opinion and encourages liberty of thought and action, and if the Section and each Branch exercise the right voiced by our President "to demand from its authorized, or generally recognized exponents conformity to a higher moral standard than the ordinary one of their time and country"; and

WHEREAS, The present condition of the Section necessitates a non-partisan and impersonal expression of our attitude on these subjects; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the American Section Theosophical Society heartily coincides with the statements of our President that "the life of the Society depends upon its morality" and that "any member who sinks below the rule of morality which surrounds him . . . should surrender his membership, that he may not, for his own private view, imperil the position of the whole movement in the eyes of those the movement is meant to help."

The Chair then called on the General Secretary for his report; this was as follows:

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

BRETHREN OF THE CONVENTION:

We open this morning the Twenty-first Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America,* or the American Section T. S., and this Report begins, as usual, with the statistics of the year from September 1st to September 1st.

Only five branches have been chartered.

*As this is a report, we are not at liberty to change the form; but we would call attention to the fact that the name given here applies to another Theosophical Society, which has no connection with ours, so we cannot agree to the term being used in any case, as it is apt to cause confusion.

THE EDITOR.

NAME.	PLACE.	DATE.
Oahu Lodge T. S.	Honolulu H. I....	Oct. 10, 1906
St. Anthony T. S.	Minneapolis, Minn	Nov. 27, 1906
Fremont T. S.	Fremont Neb.....	Jan. 9, 1907
Lotus T. S.	Kansas City Mo...	Mar. 11, 1907
Hyde Park T. S.	Chicago, Ill.....	Aug. 21, 1907

The Wilkesbarre T. S., Wilkesbarre, Pa., dissolved in January last. The charters of two Branches, the Helena T. S. and the Heliotrope Lodge, T. S., both of Helena, Montana, were cancelled by the Executive Committee. There are now seventy-four Branches in the Section.

The number of new members admitted is 328; restored, 22; resigned, 82; died, 39; dropped from the roll, 258. Of Branch members there are 2194; of members at large, 365; total, 2559. Last year there were 2607, hence a loss of 48.

The New York T. S. gave to the Olcott Endowment Fund the \$38.25 which would have been expended on floral decorations on White Lotus Day, and three individuals sent me \$17.50 for that Fund, so that \$55.75 have gone forward to India.

Our two field-workers have this year covered a notably large part of the country. Mr. Hotchner, after labor in the East and the middle West, passed months on the Pacific Coast, not finishing until early in August. Dr. Moore also did work in the East and in Western States. not recently visited by a lecturer, took in the new Branch at Fremont, and gave much attention to the South-West, also to Denver. For the Branch in Fremont we are indebted to the painstaking effort of Mrs. Robertson of Chicago Branch. Mr. Hotchner resigned his commission on September 1st, after three and one-half years of arduous work. Missionary work has

been done by Miss Jacobs and Mr. Talbot, and Mr. Lapsley has continued his services to Los Angeles and towns near by. Mr. Max Heindel has contributed to propaganda in the North-West a striking and unique method. His public lectures are free, a collection furnishing an insignificant part of the expense, and are made more attractive by music from a pianola and by a large collection of magic-lantern slides. All of the above activities have received some aid from the Propaganda Fund.

You will hear from the Press Committee the remarkable enlargement of its work, and the fact that this work is restricted only by its means. So exceedingly far-reaching and useful is it that I felt justified in appropriating thereto \$200.00 from the Propaganda Fund, and was happily able to add \$150.00 from what is left of the Discretionary Fund. It hardly seems that this important department is sufficiently made known to our members, and certainly the resources of the Press Committee in no wise approach its needs. On September 14th, Mrs. Emma S. Brougham resigned her position as editor of MESSENGER, whereto she had been appointed by the Executive Committee soon after last Convention.

Gifts to the Propaganda Fund were greatly stimulated this year by sending to each member-at-large with his dues-card a brief appeal that he give something additional to the Fund, the bare dues of \$1.00 a year being so little in support of Theosophy. Many responded, some generously. On the other hand, defaultings from the pledges made at Convention were never so large. There was a surplus from last

year of \$1,113.95. We have received from donations \$569.11, from Convention pledges \$497.00, from collections by the National Committee \$119.75, and from a legacy by Miss Sara L. Bradley \$475.00, a total of \$2,774.81. The expenses of our regular field-workers and other occasional helpers were \$2,051.55, gift to Press Committee \$200.00, gift to Pacific Coast Committee \$75.00, printing and furnishing documents for distribution \$18.83, other expenses 40 cents. The present surplus is \$429.03.

The most momentous event of the year was, of course, the passing away of the President-Founder. In an intensely secular age it is a notable event when a man in the prime of life, full of experience and powers and resources, discards all facilities for wealth and honors and dedicates his life to a spiritual philosophy discerned to be for the regenerating of humanity. This Colonel Olcott did, and for thirty-one years, with an energy that never slackened, a persistency which never flagged, a faith which never cooled, he pushed forward the Cause of Theosophy till its notes sounded in all lands and its Society stretched from pole to pole. Undaunted by poverty or apparent checks or the collapse of trusted co-workers, his self-sacrifice and heroic labors ended only when accident and disease made further effort impossible. To the thousands who revered his service and loved his personality it is a grief that his last months of life were of physical pain and suffering and distressing weakness. It would have seemed so fitting that the pathway to rest should have been painless and peaceful. It was not so to be, and relief was felt when the eager wish for

freedom was granted and the tired soul went on to join the great Colleague with whom he had worked so long and who was standing ready to welcome his coming. It may be that some who are here today will witness their appearance in their next incarnation, when again hand in hand they shall once more head the army of Theosophists, not then a band but a mighty host.

Our Indian brethren rightly saw that a memorial to Colonel Olcott was most seemly, and, no less rightly, that its most fitting form would be a Permanent Endowment for the Pariah Schools which he was the first to found and upon which he spent so much of his endeavor. It indeed would keep his memory green and ensure for all time the continuance of one of the most fruitful charities ever planned. I understand that the requisite endowment is about \$60,000.00, and it may be that this Convention will take some steps to secure pledges from members and to arrange that every American Theosophist shall have opportunity to take grateful part.

The figures in the vote of the Section upon the confirmation of the new President were given in MESSENGER for July, but it is proper that they be repeated here, *Convention proceedings* being the continuous and official record of Sectional affairs. For the confirmation of Mrs. Besant were cast 1319 votes, against it 679, and 10 ballots were invalid, invalid because the signers did not indicate how they wished to vote. Somewhat over 500 members, about one-fifth of the Section roll, did not vote at all. I have never received from the acting President any Proclamation of the election of the new President,

and therefore have been unable to furnish such to MESSENGER. Official notice appeared in *Vahan* for August, but that did not arrive here until August 12th.

In the spring of the year it became necessary for the General Secretary to put check to an attempted aggression on the rights of the American Section. A little group of members of the General Council, 5 out of 22, in session at Adyar, passed a Resolution that the Executive Committee had no power to cancel a Branch charter, but could only recommend cancellation to the President. In my seven years of service under Mr. Judge, and in my twelve years as General Secretary, this power had never been questioned by the President-Founder, or by any one else prior to the above incident, and had repeatedly been exercised during these nineteen years. Moreover when Colonel Olcott was directly asked a year ago as to the control of charters by the Executive Committee, he replied that the Committee during the interval between Conventions had precisely the same control as had Convention during its session. Without any suggestion from me, the other members of the Executive Committee united in a statement that Colonel Olcott's language was as I have given it. I thereupon informed the little group at Adyar of the above facts, and notified it that its proceedings were disallowed and that the Executive Committee of the American Section would continue, as heretofore, to put an end to Branch charters where necessity required.

Two cases very shortly arose. One was the Helena T. S., Helena, Montana. The Branch had sunk to five members, and I had long been convinced that it

had no other than a paper existence and should not be upon our roll. When, therefore, I learned from the Secretary that there had been no meeting for several years and that he did not know when another would be held, I invited the Executive Committee to cancel the charter and to transfer the five remaining members to membership at large, which the Committee unanimously did. The other case was the Heliotrope Lodge, also of Helena. From thirty-one members it had sunk to seven, and only two of these paid dues for 1907, the others being dropped from the roll. It would be absurd for two members to hold a charter, and the Executive Committee unanimously agreed with me that the charter should be cancelled. In each case the Recording Secretary at the Adyar Headquarters was at once informed of the suppression of the Branch by the Committee. In August I received from the new President an official communication stating that all cancellation of charters for other cause than a declension of Branch membership below seven must be referred to the President. But this is clearly within the Presidential rights, and will be the guide to my successor.

Our lessened additions to membership and the increased number of resignations show the effect of that discord of opinion and antagonism of feeling which all of us have so sadly to lament as prevalent in the Section for the last fifteen months. Almost more than any other organization does the Theosophical Society depend for its success upon harmony of sentiment and unity of effort. Confronted with a partial paralysis, our instant question is as to the treatment which shall remove the disease and restore the vigor. Can one

be wrong in surmising that a reversal of the causes producing the disease is the only way to effect a cure? It will not come if no distinction is admitted between right and wrong, if moral principles are supposed not binding upon Theosophists, or if the individual conscience is not conceded its right to rule; much less can it come while any one supposes himself infallible, inerrant, free from mistake in word and act. But it may come if each F. T. S. vigorously suppresses conceit, dogmatism, proscription, the denial of liberty to every other, asserting and manifesting the spirit of large freedom, tolerance, conciliation, good will. And come it will if the fine, broad sentiments so constantly voiced by the late President-Founder are echoed by every member of the Society. Then indeed will revive the Theosophic purpose and the Theosophic work, and once more will a cemented body press forward its mission with enthusiasm and with success.

I take it that every genuine Theosophist must see in the late President-Founder an exemplar of what genuine Theosophy is and effects. His personal conditions made possible that unreserved dedication of entire time and work which to members with family and business obligations, as are most of us, cannot be given. But there were two respects in which he is a practicable model for every member of the Society. One was the conviction, permeating every department of his being and transparent to the merest acquaintance, that Theosophy is a real thing, not an ingenious speculation, not an abstract intellectual philosophy, not a tentative guide in problems of the soul, but a correct depiction of human affairs, human evolution, the true com-

pass for actual guidance in life. To him it meant an ever-present law, an ever-present Duty, an ever-present Help, all of them encompassing the entire field of existence in each of the three zones which all men successively tread. The second was the conviction that the Theosophical Society was the selected instrument by the Masters through which was to be spread throughout the world that exposition of realities, called Theosophy, whereby only can human ill be cured and human progress to the Divine be made. Now it is entirely possible that every Theosophist in whom these two convictions inhere may exemplify them. He can sedulously fulfill under Theosophic light each of his many obligations, personal, commercial, social; and he can sustain the mission of the Theosophical Society with all the zeal, effort, time, and money which can be spared therefor. Moreover, there is another contribution. The genius of the Society is in its catholic spirit, its insistence on individual liberty, its repudiation of all creeds and doctrines and personal devotions as tests of membership, its inflexible maintenance of Constitutional provisions as the safeguard of its life. In individual and official defense of all these Colonel Olcott stood as a moveless rock. And here again, most especially in eras of turmoil and fever, that sturdy figure stands and will ever stand as a model for each individual member of the Society he founded and so loved.

We can see now, after the historic record of so many years, the sagacity which caused his selection by those who planned the work that the Society was to do. We shall show our own sagacity if we carefully maintain the

same characteristics as changeless principles in the still more varied work which must be ours as time goes on and the advancing intelligence of the age calls for larger activities and more copious methods. The year 1907 has carried away the familiar form upon which we have relied so long, but it has not carried away the knowledge of what he did or the memory of what he was. And I believe that during whatever time the Theosophical Society is to endure, it will ever find its exemplar and its stimulous in its first President, Henry Steele Olcott.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
General Secretary.

The General Secretary also presented the Treasurer's report, which was as follows:

THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

From Sept. 1st, 1906, to Sept. 1st, 1907.

RECEIPTS.

Surplus from last year.....	\$1053.24	
Received from Branch fees and dues.....	2342.50	
Received from fees and dues at large.....	414.50	
Donations.....	5.50	
Donation to Adyar.....	10.00	
Interest on Bank Deposit.....	42.59	
		\$3868.33

DISBURSEMENTS.

Remitted to Adyar ¼ fees and dues.....	\$689.00	
Remitted to Adyar donation.....	10.00	
Appropriation to MESSENGER.....	739.70	
Appropriation to THEOSOPHIST.....	82.00	
Appropriation to REVIEW.....	78.75	
Stenography and typewriting.....	827.31	
Stamps.....	188.60	
Printing Convention Proceedings.....	180.00	
Gen. Sec'y's R. R. expenses to Chicago...	71.00	
Expenses of Counting Committee.....	68.80	
Telegrams.....	50.86	
Printing.....	49.25	
Rent of Convention Hall.....	35.00	
Stationery.....	24.04	
Expenses Committee on Transportation.....	8.30	
Incidentals.....	17.41	
		\$3120.02
Surplus on hand.....		\$ 748.31

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
Treasurer.

On motion of Miss Mary O'Neill, duly seconded, the reports of the General Secretary and Treasurer were accepted.

The report on Credentials was then read.

On motion of Mr. Russell, duly seconded, the report of the Committee on Credentials was accepted, the settlement of three cases under discussion—those of Holyoke, Rochester and Webb City—being deferred until recess.

On motion of Mr. Warrington, duly seconded, Mrs. Janet B. McGovern was elected Permanent Secretary of the Convention.

The report of the National Committee, as given by Mrs. Emma S. Brougham, was as follows:

This year on account of the condition of the Secretary the National Committee has not done any work which it is ready to report, and at its last meeting held yesterday afternoon, which was quite a full meeting, it was moved and seconded that the Committee dissolve itself as far as it was able to do so, and the former Secretary be asked (or ask the Committee complete for dismissal,) as the committee was created by the Convention in 1899. This action was taken by the Committee without the knowledge of the resolution to be offered, and that resolution has been referred to the Committee, and it will be most cordially voted for by all the members.

THE PRESIDENT: Report of the American Section Press Committee:

Miss Ada May Kreckler then presented the following report of the Press Committee:

Expansion marks the pathway of the past year's press work—expansion, be it said, due much to your own good gifts rendered us with sympathetic bounty by the General Secretary, Mr. Fullerton.

Our aim, as hitherto, has been threefold; (1) to put Theosophy into the American press (2) to educe the talents of the writers of the Section in favor of Theosophical purposes; (3) to enlist the sympathy and support of the Section in general. While we cannot deny that

there have been heavy handicaps the last twelvemonth, it is equally undeniable that our aims, the first in particular, are having ever fuller realization.

Our year opened with a re-arrangement of our machinery. The sub-chairmen and the division of the Section into geographical fields for their respective charges were eliminated; and the old standing local committees and other helpers anywhere thenceforward formed auxiliaries to the committee proper consisting of seven Chicago residents: Mrs. Havens, chairman during the first half of the year; Dr. Burnett, chairman during the second half of the year, Miss Shanks, Mr. Burnett, Mr. Post, Mr. Unger and the secretary. We have been a happy, harmonious group; when midsummer suspended meetings we hied us to the greenwood in the park for friendly fellowship and planning.

Through the columns of THE THEOSOPHIC MESSENGER, which were generously opened to us as hitherto, helpers were elicited and correspondence invited. It was thus that through Mr. John MacMillan we secured in the largest Sunday paper of Pittsburg a series of five articles on the History of the Theosophical Society, Thought-forms, Thought-Culture, Re-incarnation and Karma. It was thus, through Miss Ethel Ingalls, that we secured a real friend in the leading English paper of Mexico City which has published a number of Theosophical articles and also editorials; and it was thus that we have found other similar openings elsewhere.

In the MESSENGER suggestions for work appeared from time to time and the local committees were urged to have their Branch lectures reported in their local papers, to keep scrap-books of Theosophical clippings, to find local markets for Theosophical writings and to place Theosophical books in their local town libraries and Theosophical magazines on the public reading tables.

The committee proper in Chicago, meantime, directed its work into two main channels, the rural papers and the metropolitan papers. For the country papers we provided five articles, each about 2,000 words long. One was a condensation of Mr. Fullerton's letters on Theosophy, one on Science, investigating the existence of a soul; one on Music forms, one on Thought forms, one, Immortality and Re-incarnation. These were syndicated, one a month,

to from three to five hundred rural papers each.

For twelve city papers were prepared treatises on such themes as the Reality of Fairies and Angels, Man's Many Bodies, There is No Death, Purgatory, Have we lived before? Where is Heaven? Cause and Effect in Human Careers, Destiny of the Human Race, The Meaning of Be Ye Perfect, The Similarity of all Religions, Thoughts and Things and How. In addition to these one of the largest Sunday papers of the United States, with a circulation of over 250,000, has published throughout the year about 15 articles running from 1800 to 3,000 words in length. From this paper these have been syndicated each to about six other leading papers, making a total circulation of many hundreds of thousands. The subjects included Science Reviving Alchemy, the Dematerialization of Matter, Occult Teachings of the Secret Doctrine verified by Science, Re-incarnation championed by Prof. McTaggart of Cambridge; the Current Wave of Occult Thought and Theosophy as its largest expression. In this same newspaper has also appeared a weekly column presenting Theosophical ideals of ethics, and from the syndicate department of this paper have been issued for ten months of the year a daily paragraph inculcating Theosophical ethics.

Although newspapers have offered the largest and readiest channel for us, yet we look also to the magazines, popular, scientific, religious. Some months ago a well-known periodical published an article on the occult and invisible world written by a trained pen but evidently with slight knowledge on the topic. Another prominent periodical recently handled Reincarnation in much the same manner. That Theosophical themes are not out of demand is evidenced by the mere publication of these sketches. But how different the effect had they been treated by some one equipped with the Theosophical teachings. More especially however do we covet place in the more serious reviews whose readers are the fountains whence flow the streams of the best American thought. To that end four essays have been outlined and are under way. There are also in incipient writings for the children, stories for children and ideas for supplanting our present Sunday comics with more refined and helpful amusement, with the doings of the thought fairies and like fancies.

Many plans have lain dormant for want of means to make them physical realities. Money has been our one most pressing need. We cannot go further than our purse strings can carry us.

Besides money we need workers, chiefly, writers; secondly, such sympathizers as can aid in placing our writings in the Press; and lastly, research workers who can supply us with data on such themes as scientific proofs and parallels of Theosophy, or Theosophical clippings from current literature, or their findings on Reincarnation and Karma or other study topics. Miss Harriet P. Hurlburt has furnished us a list of about two hundred books and periodicals of 1906 containing matter of Theosophical interest.

The field is verily limitless, circumscribed only by our capacities. Not an event or a discovery, not a faith or a fact, but invites Theosophical interpretation. We Theosophists can give this and through the Press we gain our largest hearing. The revered President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, sent as his message to the press committee parliament last year: "Tell them that one good journalist is worth a hundred platform speakers."

Grateful indeed we are to you all for past generousities, good-will, interest, your any help, and right heartily we hope for yet larger support in the coming year. We are grateful indeed to you all, and in particular to the editor of THE THEOSOPHIC MESSENGER, Mrs. Emma S. Brougham, for the ample space in her columns; to the American Section General Secretary, Mr. Alexander Fullerton, for his sympathy, liberality, appreciation; to the renowned President of our Society, Mrs. Annie Besant, whose books have been the direct basis for many of our writings, and, beyond and above all others, to those High Helpers of Humanity in whose lowliest service we would fain ply our energies.

ADA MAY KRECKER,
Secretary A. S. P. Committee.

On motion, duly seconded, the report of the Press Committee was adopted.

MR. RANSOM H. RANDALL: The Auditing Committee reported that they had found the accounts of the Treasurer correct, signed by Ransom H. Randall and Edwin B. Catlin. The other member of the Committee did not make his appearance.

On motion, duly seconded, the report of the Auditing Committee was adopted.

Secretary McGovern then read the following telegram:

Greetings to the President and the Convention. We deeply regret that sickness prevents our being with you. May Wisdom guide and may peace and harmony attend your deliberations. May every member hold the good of Theosophy and of the Theosophical movement above everything save right and conscience.

ELIZABETH M. CHIDESTER,
ARTHUR M. CHIDESTER,
DAVITT D. CHIDESTER,
Philadelphia.

Also a cablegram from Mr. Fricke of the Dutch Section:

"Dutch Section sends greetings."

An earnest plea was made by the General Secretary for financial contributions in behalf of a Theosophical family in destitute circumstances.

Adjournment for luncheon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

After Mr. Greenleaf, the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, had presented the decision of his Committee on the three cases hereinbefore referred to, Mr. Warrington presented the report of the Committee on Resolutions, as follows:

The Committee on Resolutions presented a unanimously favorable report on the adoption of all the Resolutions except those presented by Mr. Hotchner and Mrs. Wardall. Mrs. Wardall made some remarks explaining her Resolution and then withdrew it. Mr. Hotchner suggested that the opinion of the Convention be obtained as to whether the Resolutions should be taken up *seriatim* or *en bloc*.

Miss O'Neill then moved that the report of the Committee on Resolutions be accepted as offered. Motion sec-

onded. Mr. Knothe dissented from this, on the ground that the Resolutions contained diversified matter.

Mr. Fuller moved as an amendment to Miss O'Neill's motion that the report of the Committee approving certain Resolutions be adopted *en bloc*, leaving the sole remaining resolution offered by Mr. Hotchner open for discussion. Motion seconded.

Judge James moved, as a substitute, that the Resolutions favorably reported on by the Committee be discussed *seriatim*. Motion seconded. Miss O'Neill moved to table the substitute.

The Chair called attention to the fact that several motions had been presented and that they must be considered one at a time in their proper order.

Mr. Fuller's amendment was then considered. Raising of hands apparently showed that the amendment was carried by a large majority.

Dr. E. M. H. Moore then called for a poll which the Chair stated could not be given unless there was a fairly even vote, for the reason that its grant would seriously delay the transaction of business of the Convention.

Eleven delegates were counted in favor of a poll and these delegates were found to represent thirty-five votes. A large majority was found to be against taking the poll, and the decision of the Chair was made accordingly.

The adoption of the amendment of Mr. Fuller rendered unnecessary the consideration of the motion by Judge James.

Miss O'Neill then moved that the adverse report of the Committee on Mr. Hotchner's Resolution be adopted. Motion seconded.

This report was as follows:

While in itself it seems unobjectionable it

tends to raise the same issues which have caused recent dissensions in the Society.

The Chair then directed that Mr. Hotchner's resolution be re-read.

The Chair called attention to the latter part of the Resolution in which she was quoted in part, and then read in full the passage which was omitted.

The vote was then taken on Miss O'Neill's motion that the adverse report of the Committee on Mr. Hotchner's Resolution be adopted. Motion was carried by a large majority.

Under the head of unfinished business Mr. Warrington explained that the Convention of 1906 had appointed Judge James, Mr. Knothe and himself as a Committee to look into the question of Incorporation of the American Section. The Committee submitted an adverse report, which, on motion of Mr. Scudder, was accepted. The Committee was discharged.

The Chair then called for the report of the Committee on Nominations. Dr. George F. James submitted the following recommendations which, he stated, had been adopted unanimously by the Committee. They were as follows:

General Secretary—Dr. Weller Van Hook.

Members of the Executive Committee—F. J. King, Illinois; A. P. Warrington, Virginia; J. H. Carnes, District of Columbia; Mrs. Mary Stempel, California.

Remarks by Mr. Knothe nominating another ticket.

Mr. Warrington and Miss O'Neill each made some remarks in support of the candidacy of Dr. Van Hook. Mr. W. F. E. Gurley spoke against the candidacy of Dr. Van Hook.

Mr. Scudder asked if Mr. Fullerton accepted the nomination.

The Chair replied: "Yes, I asked him."

Mr. Scudder then moved the previous question, the motion was seconded and upon a vote being taken was carried.

Miss O'Neill asked for a roll-call, and the Chair requested that Messrs. Warrington and Hotchner serve as tellers. This request was complied with by them.

Prior to the calling of the roll, Mr. Hotchner asked the following question of Mr. Fullerton: "I should like to ask Mr. Fullerton if he is in harmony with Mrs. Besant's policy, as so far outlined."

Mr. Fullerton replied: "Not at all. I am with Mrs. Besant most heartily in one thing, that there never shall be a moral code imposed on the Theosophical Society, but otherwise I do not recall any points in common."

The roll was then called and the Chair announced the following result:

Dr. Weller Van Hook 198 votes.

Alexander Fullerton 69 votes.

Dr. Van Hook was declared elected by the Chair as the General Secretary of the American Section.

The Chair then asked permission to read a resolution which had been handed in by Mr. Warrington. This was as follows:

Resolved, "That this Section remembering Mr. Fullerton's long services to the movement in America, especially during the session which almost destroyed it, begs him to accept, on his ceasing to be General Secretary, the assurance of their affection, apart from all questions which have of late divided them.

The Resolution was unanimously adopted by a rising vote.

Mr. H. H. Fuller moved the adoption of the report of the Committee on Nominations relative to the Executive Committee. Motion was seconded.

Mr. Knothe suggested that the same

vote be counted for Executive Committee as given the General Secretary. Upon a vote being taken the Executive Committee as nominated was declared by the Chair elected.

The Chair called for reports of Federation and Field Workers. Dr. E. M. H. Moore responded and later submitted the following report:

REPORT OF DR. ELEANOR M. HIESTAND-MOORE UPON FIELD WORK, 1906-7.

Madame President and Members of the Executive Committee:

Concerning the work done by me in the field of the American Section T. S., I desire to report as follows:

During my appointment at Chicago, between September 20 and December 3, 1906, I delivered twelve public lectures in the Headquarters of the Chicago T. S., conducted twelve public question meetings, twelve class meetings for beginners, and presented a course of eight lectures on physiology and psychology.

During the months of December, 1906, and January, 1907, I was stationed in New York. The work as arranged included only two public lectures, but I conducted weekly five meetings for study and discussion, including a public question meeting, a class in physiology and a class in the critical study of the manual "Karma."

During February and March, 1907, in Philadelphia, I gave nine public lectures, and nine lectures to members only, conducted nine question meetings and nine weekly class meetings, respectively, of a beginners' class, a new members class and a class for advanced students.

During April, 1907, I visited Lincoln, Neb., and remained there one week, giving one public lecture and holding three parlor meetings open to the public, two meetings for inquirers and two class meetings for members.

During the month between April 15 and May 15, 1907, I visited the Denver T. S., and gave each week three public lectures. I conducted in Denver, also, a weekly question meeting, a class for beginners and a members' study class.

At the close of my Denver appointment I visited St. Joseph, Mo., and conducted three parlor lectures weekly and two classes weekly (May 16 to June 3).

During the week of June 3 to June 11 I vis-

ited the Lotus T. S., of Kansas City, Mo., and gave five informal talks to members and friends.

My next appointment was with the Webb City (Mo.) T. S. During ten days' visit (June 11 to June 21) I gave four public parlor meetings in Webb City, two public lectures in Joplin and held three public question meetings in Joplin.

Returning to the north again, I visited Fremont, Neb., and, during a ten days' sojourn (June 21 to July 1), I held twenty meetings for members and friends. No public lectures were given in Fremont.

From Fremont I proceeded again to Lincoln and gave two parlor lectures and held a public question meeting. On July 10 I proceeded to Denver, where a month's vacation was allowed me, according to the usual custom.

On August 11, I resumed my work again with the Denver T. S. The program arranged for the month, dating from August 11 to September 9, included five public lectures, five question meetings, five class meetings, five lectures to beginners and four sessions of a class for the study of *The Bhagavad Gita*. On September 9, I closed my work in Denver and proceeded to Chicago.

My work in the field has been especially directed to the organization of classes for the study of Theosophy and to the training of those classes in such methods of research as I have found especially helpful. The outcome of this work has already been reported by the Branch secretaries.

As my contract with the Executive Committee expired by limitation at this convention of the American Section, according to previous notice given to the retiring General Secretary of the American Section, I beg leave to tender my resignation from the Field in the United States.

Respectfully submitted,
ELEANOR M. HIESTAND-MOORE.

Miss O'Neill then moved that, "This Convention heartily endorses the reinstatement of Mr. Jinarajadasa to membership in the Theosophical Society." Motion seconded.

Mr. Hotchner moved that Miss O'Neill's motion be laid on the table. Mr. Hotchner's motion was seconded,

but being put by the Chair was declared lost.

Miss O'Neill's motion was then put and declared carried by the Chair.

Under the head of new business Mr. A. G. Horwood suggested that the Executive Committee be directed to take up and consider the question of formulating rules for the purpose of making more definite and certain in the future, matters involved in the appointment of delegates and proxies.

The Chair asked if there was any objection, and there being none, stated that it would be considered a direction.

THE PRESIDENT:—We have now reached the end of this Convention. You may permit me, perhaps, as presiding over it, to congratulate you that, in the midst of warm feeling and a strong clinging on each side to the principles of the two parties into which the Section has been largely divided, the meeting has on the whole gone so peaceably, so smoothly, as really to be a credit to the American Section in the fashion in which the parties have discussed the matters that have divided them. Now that the matter is settled for another year, may I, as President of this Society, beg that you will strive to co-operate, so far as your principles and consciences permit, the one with the other; and that where you cannot agree, there you will take the wise course of each going his own way according to his conscience and his sense of right; that you will realize that within the limits of this Society; there is place for every view, place for every opinion, and that all, men and women, have an equal right to speak for that which they believe to be best, to protest against that which they believe to be mischievous. It is not by holding principles loosely that our Society will make progress in the future; but by holding principles firmly, by expressing them openly, but without hatred, antagonism or evil speaking, each striving to serve the Masters in his own way, and giving his brother credit for equal sincerity of motive, equal desire to serve. If we were only a society of a moment, then it would matter less that there should be no differences of opinion among us. Some of you may think those differences are evil. Will you allow me to say

that I think they are very good? If any one view were held by the whole Society and enforced by it, it is quite possible that in future ages, when knowledge is wider, when information is more complete, that it would be found the Society had lost because it had not expressed also another view of truth. There is great significance in the old fable of the two men who saw a shield, one side of which was silver and the other gold. One man declared the shield was silver; the other swore it was golden; and they fell almost to blows about the question, until a passer-by explained that on one side it was gold and on the other silver. And truth is many-faced, though one in essence. No one of us is great enough to see every side of truth. No one of us is strong enough to hold the whole of truth within his feeble hands. Your brother may see a truth which you do not see, which is really complementary to your own. The free expression of it enriches you. It ought not to offend you. And the most opposed truths on this planet will often find their blending, their reconciliation, on the higher plane where spirit beyond the intelligence and the reason, can see all which the intellect can only express in paradox and by opposition. On one point I almost all agree, I will not say all, for there are members of this Society with full right of membership, who may not even believe in the existence of those whom many of us regard as objects of the highest reverence,—the Masters of the Great White Lodge. They have their right of membership as much as any others,—their full right of expression as much as those who assert it. The great majority of you, however, probably believe in their existence. To those I say: If you strive to serve them honestly, sincerely, with your best reason, your best conscience, then, though you may be in error as to a fact, your heart is right, and is on the pathway of truth, and inevitably you shall find it, even though it be by mistakes, which you afterwards may recognize. They have need of every service that each one can render. They are not so petty that they cannot reach out hands to those that oppose each other down here, and find some service which each is able to render to the other. One of the virtues of the disciple is tolerance,—being able to see the point of view of another, being able to recognize how the world looks through another man's eyes, and always remembering that the man who is honest is a servant of truth, no

matter how much he may be confused in the way his tongue may happen to express his ideas. Let us then join in the service of the Masters without laying down the line which that service must take. Realize that in many ways Their work may be done, and that it is not for you nor for me to dictate along what path a man shall walk as he seeks the eternal truth. Tolerance, willingness to listen, willingness to re-study a complicated question, this is the wisdom of every member of the Theosophical Society. And in the year that lies before you, if you cannot agree, say, in a branch, on any point that has divided our minds here, far better to separate into two branches and let each branch work along its own line, than to paralyze the whole of your work by continued questions of difficulty and dispute. There is room for all, room for each, and my last word in this Convention is a pleading that you should try to remember that the truth you serve is greater than your conception of it; that the Masters we strive to follow are mightier than any thought of ours that tries to picture Them. It does not grieve Them that we disagree; it does not grieve them that we think differently. The only thing that grieves Them is when the word of love is forgotten, and when hate throws into bitter antagonism those whom unity of purpose, at least, should make charitable to each other. Judge your own lives, live Theosophy, and if you will judge yourselves and live Theosophy you will have no time to judge your neighbor, nor to say that his Theosophy is not yours. That is the way in which They may be served. And there is one great word I would leave with you, taken from an ancient Egyptian scripture, which says that the Self finds his own way according to the Word; and what is the Word? Each one of you has his own Word, syllabled out by his own development and his own character, and the Self in you chooses and makes his own path, according to the Word through which his lower vehicles he is trying to syllable out in his world of manifestation. Seek, then, your own Word. You have the right and the duty. And if you cannot understand another's Word, then let him speak it none the less; and in days to come, that which has seemed a discord will turn out to be a richer harmony, just as some of the most magnificent chords of the musician are made not of accords only but also of dissonances, that in the resolution of the chord make richer harmony and fuller tones. (Applause.)

I declare the Convention adjourned.

PUBLIC ACTIVITIES.

Preceding the Convention and immediately following it, the public of Chicago, as well as the members of the Theosophical Society, had the opportunity of hearing several lectures by Mrs. Besant. Of these, three were delivered in Orchestra Hall and one in Kimball Hall.

On the evenings of September 13th, 14th, and 15th the lectures were given in Orchestra Hall, the first lecture being on "Psychism and Spirituality" the second on "The Place of Masters in Religions" and the third on "The Value of Theosophy in the World of Thought." All of these lectures were well attended, and evidently appreciated by the public as well as by the members of the Society who were present. The third lecture however that in regard to the value of Theosophy in the world of thought, was apparently most popular with the public. The large audience which listened to it frequently interrupted the speaker with enthusiastic applause when she pointed out the benefit of the practical application of Theosophy to the problems of the day—problems, religious, scientific, educational and civic with which every thinking man and woman is grappling. Never has what may be called the "practical" side of Theosophy been more ably or more forcefully presented.

The practicality of Theosophy of the application of its ideals to mundane problems—was also well illustrated in the lecture which Mrs. Besant delivered in Kimball Hall, on September 17th. This most interesting lecture was on "Theosophical work in India" showing how Theosophy had been ap-

plied to the knotty problem of education in India and Ceylon, and the success with which the effort had been attended. The lecture was illustrated by stereopticon views, showing different buildings of the Central Hindu College and other educational institutions in India, which owe their inception to the efforts of the Theosophical workers. Mrs. Besant paid a touching tribute to Colonel Olcott's work in connection with the Buddhist schools in Ceylon and the Pariah schools in India.

This lecture, the proceeds of which are to go to the educational fund in India was most popular with the large audience which heard it—Kimball hall being filled to the doors.

On the whole, the newspapers have given favorable reports of Mrs. Besant's lectures, and the public has been appreciative of the fact that common-sense and a sense of humor are factors which have a prominent place in the mental constitution of the President of the Theosophical Society.

Two Post-Convention Question meetings were held by Mrs. Besant. One on Tuesday afternoon for members only, and one on Wednesday afternoon for both members and non-members.

At both meetings, which were well attended many interesting questions were asked and answered.

"Look not mournfully into the past
It comes not back again. Wisely
Improve the present, It is thine.
Go forth to meet the shadowy future
Without fear and with a manly heart."

—*From over a Church door in the Tyrolese Mountains.*

Notes from the General Secretary

The *Theosophist*, improved by Col. Olcott a short time before his death, is now edited by Mrs. Besant, who has still further plans for its development.

The October number, which begins the new volume, is to have 96 pages. It will contain:

From the Editor; Presidential Address to the American Convention; The Wisdom Religion in Ireland, by J. H. COUSINS; The Gnosis of the Super-physical Worlds, by Dr. RUDOLF STEINER; Nature Spirits, by C. W. LEADBEATER; Echoes from the Past, etc., etc.

Articles in November: From the Editor; The Value of Happiness, by ANNIE BESANT; The Disciple, a Story of a White Magician, by MABEL COLLINS; Theosophy and Art, by CLIFFORD BAX; Metaphysical Questions, by P. SRINAVASA IYENGAR; Continuation of the articles by Dr. RUDOLF STEINER and C. W. LEADBEATER; etc., etc.

In January and the succeeding months will appear: Some Researches in Occult Chemistry, by ANNIE BESANT.

As the *Theosophist* is the official publication of the President and will contain matter of the greatest importance to all members of the Society throughout the whole world, it is earnestly hoped that members will subscribe for the magazine and keep it on file.

The subscription price is \$3.00, which may be sent to the *Theosophist* office, Madras, S. India, or to Mrs. Minnie C. Holbrook, 1054 Walnut St., Newton Highlands, Mass.

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Mrs. Besant permits us to announce that, if present plans are carried out, she will arrive in California about August 10th, 1908, and lecture in America until about November first.

A lecture tour of Australian cities will precede her visit to America next year.

The need of funds for propaganda is

pressing. The sum at our disposal is low and all members are urged to make as generous contributions as their means permit.

Mrs. Laura A. Randall, 1150 Central Avenue, Willmette, Ill., has charge of the Propaganda Fund.

Members are requested to notify the General Secretary of changes of address. Please write very plainly.

Mrs. Besant's Convention lectures: "Psychism and Spirituality," "The Place of Masters in Religions," "The Value of Theosophy in the World of Thought," "Theosophical Work in India," as well as "Questions and Answers," were taken in short-hand and corrected by the author. The copy has been put in the hands of linotype operators, and the entire galley proof was submitted for correction in four days. The press-work and binding are being done with corresponding promptitude by a large establishment, and will, it is believed, be so far advanced that publication in book form can take place about Nov. 1. The work will be of about the same appearance as "Theosophy and the New Psychology." The price of the book will be one dollar, which covers postage in America. Subscriptions should be sent at once to the General Secretary, together with the subscription price. The volume will be mailed at the earliest possible moment in the order in which subscriptions are received.

Small souvenirs of a double picture of Mrs. Besant can be obtained of Mrs. Dora Rosner, 1001 Oak street, San Francisco.

The artistic reproduction of Mrs. Besant's picture, which goes out with this number of THE MESSENGER, is from a negative by Cox, who, by many, is considered Chicago's foremost photographic artist. Our reproduction well merits permanent framing.

The large original prints may be had by application to the Theosophical Book Concern.

WELLER VANHOOK, Gen. Sec'y.,
103 State St., Chicago, Ill.

PRESIDENT'S TRAVELING FUND

To the Editor of the Theosophic Messenger.

When our late President was on his death-bed, he spoke to me about the trouble he had found in traveling, while performing his presidential duties, and the difficulty of asking each country to meet his traveling expenses. He begged me to form a President's Traveling Fund, to which might be sent contributions from Sections, as Sectional gifts, or from individuals, who desired independently to help the work in this way.

I therefore establish such a fund at the Society's Headquarters, Adyar, Madras, India, all contributions to be remitted to the Treasurer of the T. S. at that address. The account will be annually audited, with those of the T. S. generally, and the balance of one year carried over to the next.

ANNIE BESANT, P. T. S.

Don't waste time in talking. Manifest your Thought in Action, rather than in words. Then you'll prove that they were really *Thoughts*, and not merely *Thinks*.—W. W. ATKINSON.

A letter from Mr. Knothe

To The Editor:

While fully appreciating the importance and right of each individual to decide his own affairs for himself, one may nevertheless, with perfect regard for the proprieties, offer suggestions when a line of conduct or a course of action applies equally to a number of people. It is in this spirit that the following suggestions are offered.

There are many F. T. S. in the American Section at present who not being in close touch with affairs, may be somewhat puzzled because of the outcome of the recent Convention and who therefore will not resent having placed before them the course that will be followed by certain types of members in this section.

First, there are those members who have very clearly defined ideas as to the issues that are pending, and who are not wavering for a moment in their allegiance to principle as they conceive it, who accept the change of the Sectional officials with equanimity and are very disposed to co-operate with these officials in all that tends to uphold the broad principles of Theosophy. Where such members are connected with harmonious Branches they purpose continuing their membership and using their best efforts for the Cause as they have heretofore done. Where they are not in harmony with their Branches and feel that they cannot work profitably or congenially in them that they will withdraw from such a Branch, and if they can associate themselves with six or more other members will form a new Branch, or if a sufficient member is not avail-

able to form such a new Branch, then to hold together as a center for a time, or they will join such branches as the New York; Philadelphia; Lima, Ohio; Hyde Park, (Chicago, Illinois;) Lotus, (Kansas City, Missouri;) Webb City, Missouri; or Golden Gate (San Francisco, California;) even though the Branches chosen for affiliation be very remote from their own homes, it being unquestionably more important that members have harmonious Branch relations than that they live isolated in their local Branches, and perhaps become embittered and then drop out of the T. S. entirely.

Second, there are *members at large* who wish to identify themselves more closely with those members of the Section who stand for essentially the same things as themselves, who will seek transference to some one of the Branches mentioned above, so that they will thus feel less isolation and at the same time unite themselves with those with whom they are in accord. Again remoteness from a given Branch will not count as against congeniality of interests.

Third, there are those who feel so bruised and sore that no arguments will prevail with them and they will leave the Society entirely. It is hoped that this number will be very small, and that the decision so to act will only be made after very calm and mature deliberation. Decision in a serious matter is never wise under stress of excitement.

If, however, there are those who feel that they cannot consistently remain in the Society, and if they continue to feel strong opposition to the prevailing officials, it were better for their own

well-being, as also for the Section, that such members withdraw from the Society, for a time, at least.

These suggestions as to the probable course of action of some members of the American Section are given, so that changes that members may make will not be misconstrued, the various plans of action having for their aim a constructive and not a destructive effect. The purpose in mind is to emphasize the common ground of Theosophy, which is unchanging and on which all may stand together, and to make little of the personal equation which is an ever changing quantity.

I am confident that some of the present officials of this Section are aware of my good faith in submitting the above, and that they feel satisfied that I make no idle utterance when I offer to them whatever small aid I can give in bringing about a more stable and harmonious condition of this Section. I assure them that I will heartily cooperate in all commendable plans and works, while on the other hand I shall not impetuously assail them for errors of omission, appreciating the many difficulties confronting them.

I am very willing to devote leisure time formerly given to official duties in the T. S. to such members as would wish to correspond with me on any matters which they may think mutually profitable or of value to the cause of Theosophy.

Fraternally,
FRANK F. KNOTHE,
Ridgewood, N. J.

"The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

Abstract of Reports From Branches.

SYRACUSE T. S. has little to report. Two members have dropped out during the year and one was added, the membership now being seven. An open meeting is held weekly, and *Esoteric Christianity* is studied.

COLORADO T. S. has passed its first year in quiet study, gaining two members, losing two others, and having seven as at first. No public work has been undertaken, but the Class has had several visitors and its meetings have been much enjoyed.

MONTREAL T. S. has gained one member, and now has twelve. Early in the year the Branch met for study in the private house of a member, with average attendance of five, but in April took a hall and holds two public meetings a week with address and questions. The result is very encouraging; considerable interest has been aroused, and the average attendance is thirty.

LIMA T. S. has studied *The Ancient Wisdom* at its weekly meetings for the last year. Mr. Hotchner's visit of two weeks, which included four public lectures and five to members only, was greatly valued. The Branch work through the year has been faithful and quiet and harmonious.

PHILADELPHIA T. S. has had a good year in all of its departments. It has gained sixteen members and lost six, the membership now being one hundred and twelve. The Library has been increased by the new Theosophical publications, and the circulation has been satisfactorily active, non-members enjoying its privileges. The Thursday evening Branch meeting was well attended by those studying *A Study in Consciousness*; there have been held an H. P. B. Training Class and two Beginners Classes, one of them studying *The Ancient Wisdom*. Well-attended public meetings were held on Sunday evenings, with papers or lectures. During February and March Dr. Eleanor M. H. Moore lectured, giving two courses, one on Sunday afternoons for members only, one on Sunday evenings for the public. The Branch records both growth and increased interest, also a continuation of its previous unity.

ALPHA T. S. has held regular meetings on Sunday afternoon, with good attendance of members and visitors. An H. P. B. Training Class is held on Thursday evenings, proving interesting and helpful. Dr. Schermerhorn's lectures in May were most inspiring. The year's work has been encouraging, and plans for larger activities are being formed for next year.

BOSTON T. S. has a membership of one hundred. The usual activities have been carried on. Thirty-three public Sunday evening meetings have been held, the first Sunday of each month being devoted to a General Question meeting, whereto the public is invited to contribute written questions. On the third Sunday a brief outline of a given subject has been presented, followed by a general discussion. Thirty-five Wednesday evening meetings have been held for members. During the first half of the year different subjects were presented and a general discussion followed; during the latter half of the year members' meetings were devoted to the study of *Hints in the Study of the Bhagavad Gita*. The public Study Class meets on Friday evening, and there have been studied *The Key to Theosophy* and *Questions from Vahan*. Mr. Hotchner's visit in March included three lectures to the public and four to members, all of great interest and value.

VICTORIA T. S. has had a very quiet year. No public meetings were held, but the Study Class was maintained and the members held together harmoniously. The subject for study was *Thought Power, Its Control and Culture*. Membership remains the same.

ENGLEWOOD WHITE LODGE has completed a most successful year, the membership increasing from thirty-five to fifty-one, three being lost by transfer. The Lodge has had with it almost constantly since last Convention Mr. S. G. Pandit of Bombay, who gave on Sunday afternoon during October and November a public lecture, and on Thursday evening a course of lectures on *The Planetary Chain*. Later he conducted Classes in *The Secret Doctrine*, gave lectures in Yoga, and a course in *Esoteric Christianity*. The Lodge has not been closed during summer, there being a Beginners' Class on Wednesday morning, regular Branch meeting on Thursday evening, and a *Secret Doctrine* Class on Sunday afternoon.

BROOKLYN T. S. has a membership of thirteen. From October to June a meeting was held every Sunday evening, and the subject of study through the year was *The General Theory of Evolution from Both Scientific and Theosophic Standpoints*. Branch members presented short papers on topics assigned them, being followed by discussions in which non-members could take part. Every four weeks there was a longer paper summarizing recent work, and once a month a public lecture. Among the lecturers were Mr. A. R. Webb, Mr. George L. Coffin, Dr. Moore, Mr. Hotchner and others.

HOLYOKE T. S. has suspended three and admitted nine; present membership forty-one. Activities have been study in *The Path of Discipleship* and *The Astral Plane* each Sunday at Headquarters. The call for T. S. literature has been greater than in any previous year, and bids fair for greater work in the year to come. Groups of individuals in adjoining towns have been quietly reading and studying, and we hope they will develop into regular study centers and eventually into chartered Branches.

SAN FRANCISCO LODGE granted six demits, elected six new members, admitted four on demit, dropped twenty-two, and now has fifty-three. On August 7th it took possession of its new Headquarters, 1001 Oak street, having been burned out during the great fire of April 18th and losing everything it owned. Its Library of 1,000 books was then destroyed, but has been re-established, and now contains 107, some bought, some given. It is being constantly added to and is a most valuable adjunct. Most of the activities brought to a summary end by the catastrophe have been resumed with growing success. Study of Karma is now in progress. The Lending Library is open daily for two and one-half hours, and the Book Concern is prosperous. Mr. Prime lectured during August, September, and part of October, and is expected again in August for a short time. Mr. Hotchner was here for nearly two months, giving Lodge talks and public lectures to both members and the public. The Lodge holds public meetings jointly with Golden Gate Lodge, one member from either Lodge lecturing on alternate Sunday nights. Headquarters are occupied in common, and harmony reigns supreme in every particular.

TOLEDO T. S. lost eleven members, and now has fifty-four. These eleven all joined prematurely and had no real interest in the T. S., showing afresh that no one should ever be urged to join the T. S. until showing interest in study which promises to be steady and enduring. Meetings were held regularly and programme carried out as planned.

GOLDEN GATE LODGE T. S. can report a steady growth in development. Its regular meetings have been of great benefit in the way of mental training and power of expression. The membership is now forty-two. Public meetings are held in conjunction with San Francisco T. S., and this co-operation has proven very successful. Mr. Hotchner's visit gave a new impulse to good steady work, and there is every prospect that the coming year will see the Branch gaining not only members, but extending vital influence in the community.

TOPEKA T. S. has held meetings regularly. Attendance has been small, but there has been gain in some respects. One member has with drawn, and there are now thirteen.

NEW YORK T. S. met every week from October to June, the first Tuesday in each month being for a public lecture, and others being devoted to studying *The Ancient Wisdom*. Eight members resigned, five were transferred, ten were dropped, three were gained by admission and three by demit, and the present membership is seventy-eight. Dr. E. M. H. Moore gave great assistance in a work of two months in this Branch. There are 563 books in the Library, and the circulation during the year was 750. Discussion Classes and Classes for Beginners have been held every week.

TACOMA T. S. has been depleted by removal of members and all public work is suspended, but the Study Class continues uninterruptedly. Three members have been dropped and two new ones added, a loss of one in total membership. The removal of Mrs. Kyle to Seattle has interrupted a Beginners' Class she conducted for the last year, but it is expected that this work will be resumed in the autumn.

VIVELIUS LODGE lost one member and gained one, having now fourteen. Meetings were held uninterruptedly from October 1st until near the end of June. The first part of the season was given to a study of *Esoteric*

Christianity with a fifteen minutes' paper from a member. Early in the spring Miss Edger's *Elements of Theosophy* was the book studied and completed. Mr. Hotchner gave four days to the Lodge in January, this including one public lecture, one parlor talk, and two evenings spent with members. In the Public Library there are 100 Theosophical books, an increase of 20 during the year, and the general indications are that Theosophic interest in Detroit is steadily increasing.

SAN DIEGO T. S. has gained two members and lost five because of removal. There are now twenty. Sixteen public meetings were held from December to May, with average attendance of fourteen. From May to August an informal conversation meeting has taken its place. A regular Class has been held every week with average attendance of five, and on Thursday afternoon an informal Question Meeting is kept up besides a regular weekly Branch meeting on Wednesday. Mr. Hotchner spent a week here in May and contributed some very successful work including three public lectures and several meetings for members. Four new books have been added to the library in the year.

ST. PAUL T. S. lost three members by demit and two by resignation; six were gained, and the present number is fifty-nine. Open meetings have been held regularly each Wednesday, interesting papers by different Theosophical writers being read, and a general discussion following. Meetings were discontinued during the hot weather.

SANTA ROSA T. S. completed its seventh year on June 7th, 1907. Two members resigned, one was demitted, four were admitted, and the number is now sixteen. A "propaganda box" kept on the table for voluntary contributions at all meetings supplies the means for presenting Theosophical books to public libraries here and in the neighborhood. Another box labeled "Hindu Girls' School Fund," also kept in view, furnishes occasional additions to that useful institution. Meetings are kept up unremittingly. This year they were interrupted twice with a picnic, to which many non-members were invited. The study meetings also continue with little or no pause.

PASADENA BRANCH admitted one, demitted three, and now has twelve members. For the

greater part of the year three meetings a week were held. The Monday evening meeting was not well attended, and for the present has been suspended. The Branch meeting is a devotional meeting, and *The Ancient Wisdom* is studied. Several public lectures have been given by Mr. James H. M. Lapsley, and one by Mr. Henry Hotchner.

SUPERIOR T. S. lost five members during the year, two by resignation, one by demit, two to become members at large, and now has twenty-one. With the exception of a few weeks in summer, regular Branch meetings have been held throughout the year.

ST. LOUIS LODGE T. S. lost one member by demit, one by death, gained two, and now has twenty-one. Three weekly meetings have been held; a Beginners' Class on Saturday afternoon, with small attendance but very regular, the book used being *The Ancient Wisdom*. From this class came the two new members; the Sunday morning Class led by the President, Mrs. Richardson, at her home, and open to the public. Attendance was fairly good and the books used were *A Study in Consciousness* and *Evolution of Life and Form*; the regular Lodge meeting on Wednesday evening, with more varied study. Meetings were suspended in the summer months. New books have been added to the Library, and there are now 74. The Lodge invited Miss Jacobs to visit it in June, and was greatly profited and uplifted by her stay.

MELROSE HIGHLANDS T. S. has held regular meetings throughout the year. Two members have been lost because of ill health and one by death. Membership now numbering six. No new books have been added to the Library. The study of *The Ancient Wisdom* has been continued but not completed. In March a visit was had from Mr. Hotchner, he giving three public lectures, all well attended and awakening public interest in Theosophy. The Lotus Circle continues its meetings with a membership of three.

SEATTLE LODGE T. S., in addition to the Sunday night lectures, has had Classes on Wednesday afternoon, Wednesday night, Thursday afternoon, and on Friday night a Members' Class. Interest in each is well sustained. The books studied are *Death and After*, *The Ancient Wisdom*, *The Secret Doc-*

trine. The present membership is seventy, a gain of seven. The social side of Branch work has been given recognition as an essential aid in furthering and sustaining the other kinds of Lodge work. Financial condition is good.

LINCOLN (NEB.) T. S. lost one member by demit and six by dropping, now having twenty-one. Except during July and August there is one meeting each week. We have no Branch Library. Miss Jacobs gave a four days' course of lectures in February, and Dr. Moore came to us in April and again in July. The Branch is harmonious and progressive, even if not growing.

HONOLULU T. S. lost two members by demit and one by dropping, now having twelve. Studies have been followed in *The Planetary Chain*, *Man and His Bodies*, *The Evolution of Consciousness*, and *The Pedigree of Man*.

FREMONT T. S. received its charter January 9th, 1907, with eight charter members, and has added one member since. Scarcely a meeting has been held without the presence of visitors, who are quite regular in their attendance. *The Ancient Wisdom* is our special study, and the interest has been good throughout. Dr. Moore visited us for ten days, with great benefit to the Branch, which hopes to have her again soon. Although only parlor lectures were given, general interest was aroused.

ST. ANTHONY LODGE T. S. was chartered November 17th, 1906, with eight charter members, now increased to fifteen. *Theosophy and the New Psychology* formed the basis for discussion. In the spring Mr. S. G. Pandit stayed some weeks and lectured on Hindu Philosophy and Psychology to large audiences. The Lodge has the use of a Library with about 200 books, besides files of various magazines.

WASHINGTON T. S. lost one member by death, one by resignation, one by demit, two by dropping, and now has forty-six. Except on the last Sunday of the month, a meeting was held each Sunday for the study of *Theosophy and the New Psychology*, *Reincarnation*, and *Karma*, free to visitors. On the last Sunday a public meeting was held at which a lecture was read by a member, and three original lectures by members were given. On Wednesday a Class in *The Pedigree of Man*, illustrated by diagrams on blackboard, was conducted. On

Friday a Class on *Science of the Emotions* was most interesting. Two sociables were given during the winter. During July and August no regular work is done, but on Wednesday evenings members meet for talk on Theosophic topics. This is the nucleus for a Class on *A Study in Consciousness*, to be regularly taken up in September. Pamphlets and leaflets were distributed at public meetings, and some valuable books have been added to the Library. The Reading Room and Library are open daily from 5 to 8 p. m., an attendant in charge.

PEABODY T. S. has gained seven members during the year, and now has twenty-one. The year has been active and prosperous. Branch meetings are held weekly with appropriate course of study and discussion, and public meetings are held semi-monthly. A public meeting is held every two weeks in Danvers, Mass., also a Men's Study Class, Young People's Class, and *Elements of Theosophy* Class, all at the home of the President, Mrs. Jacobs. A Friday evening Class for all is held each week in Peabody at the home of Mrs. Hicks. The Branch has a steadily increasing Library, and books are lent to all who ask.

DENVER T. S. has lost four members, one by demit, one by dropping, and two by resignation, but has gained ten by application, two by reinstatement and one by demit, an addition of thirteen. The present membership is thirty-seven. Dr. Moore was here for a month in the spring, during which several public meetings were held each week and one for members only. Dr. Moore's visit was of great value to the Branch and we covet the constant presence of such a worker. Dr. Moore has given a second visit of a month, beginning with a public address in the Divine Science Church, this to be followed by another each Sunday. Study Classes have been arranged, and a great impetus to the next year's work has been imparted.

MUSKEGON T. S. has little of encouragement to report, and takes a somewhat pessimistic view of the T. S. future.

Esoteric Christianity was the subject of a parlor talk given by Mr. Lapsley at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Baverstock of Los Angeles.

HARRIET A. STEVENSON SEC.

Duluth T. S. For the past month our Society has been greatly favored by a visit from Mr. M. Heindel who has met us once a week in our Branch Rooms and given us much of an incentive for more earnest work.

He has also had eight free lectures for the public, which have been attended by large audiences and a great interest manifested in the Theosophic thought.

Our local newspapers have published about fifteen columns of Theosophical matter and many books have been sold.

ALICE A. TAYLOR SEC.

Pasadena T. S. During the month of August seven (7) meetings were held under the auspices of the Southern California Federation of Theosophical Branches. Two were held in Long Beach, one at Willows and four in Los Angeles. The Spiritualists of Long Beach have extended an invitation to Mr. Lapsley to speak from their platform which he has gladly accepted.

Owing to the unusual amount of matter pertaining to the convention, the directory and other matter and correspondence have been crowded out. All this matter will appear in the next issue, which will follow this, early in November.

We should be glad if all members would be interested in our Question and Answer Department. The Questions will be printed in one issue and the best answers from members in the following.

All communications in regard to the MESSENGER should be addressed to the Editor: Harriet T. Felix, 4 Ritchie Place, Chicago, Ill.

All communications to the Gen. Sec. should be addressed as follows.

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