



# THE THEOSOPHICAL WORKER

October 1942

ADYAR

Vol. 7, No. 10

## The Festivals of Our Lady<sup>1</sup>

By The Editor

**B**RETHREN: I very much regret that we can only have a very small celebration of the Assumption of Our Lady, one of the most important Festivals, not only for the Christian Faith, but for the whole world. I am afraid that in the Protestant Faiths there is not that active reverence for Our Lady that there should be. In the Roman Catholic Church it is much more manifest. And in the Liberal Catholic Church, where we are endeavouring to contact the realities of religion, the place of Our Lady and the various associations with Her are very exalted.

Today, August 15, we celebrate the Assumption—that is to say, Her Ascen-

sion into Heaven to become Queen of the Angels; just as the Annunciation celebrates Her bringing into incarnation of the great Teacher known as Jesus, through whom we believe the Christ Himself, the World Teacher, manifested and lived a life on earth for a period of three years. It is curious that the Gospel allotted to the Assumption is the same as that allotted to the Annunciation. It is set forth in the first chapter of the Gospel according to S. Luke, beginning at the twenty-sixth verse:

“And in the sixth month the Angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a City of Galilee named Nazareth to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the

<sup>1</sup> From talks given in the Chapel at Adyar on August 15 and September 8.

Virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel came in unto her, and said : Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the Angel said unto her : Fear not, Mary ; for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said : Behold the handmaid of the LORD ; be it unto me according to thy word."

Interestingly enough, both the birth of Our Lady, celebrated on September 8, and the assumption of Her Office as World Mother, are associated with Wisdom. Very specially with regard to Her Festivals She is regarded as a great Messenger of Wisdom. Throughout Her life, Her Devotion is only comparable to Her Wisdom. In the midst of all the troubles of Her Lord from the time of His coming into incarnation, and during the whole of Her life, we must think of Her as the apotheosis of devotion and wisdom.

But we also think of Her as the great Lady of Compassion, Mother of all living creatures, whether human or sub-human. In these days where cruelty is so rife, where brotherhood is so frightfully set at naught, we must think of Her as the great Angel of Compassion, having, perhaps, a role greater than the role of any of the other Elders in this distressed world of ours.

One could only wish that throughout the world there were that recognition of Her, that adoration, that realization of Her as the great Consoler of all the afflicted. Were there that recognition, people would everywhere turn to Her and be comforted.

Though today we are looking at Her with Christian eyes and almost in Christian garb, She is a far greater Personage than could be confined within a particular faith. I think in every religion She is worshipped, honoured and recognized for what She is. On this day, while celebrating Her more Christian aspect as Mother of Jesus, we must never forget that She has a far wider sphere of service than could be confined to Christianity. She has been called the " World Mother " and that She is. Never did the world need more sorely its Mother than the world needs Her today. There might well be a great movement to cause Her to have a deeper recognition on the part of all the people. Here, of course, we celebrate Her Festival, for obvious reasons, of the Motherhood of Jesus, but also, particularly in these days, we recognize the need of the world for Her.

I only wish we could have had one of our great services in homage to Her. Unfortunately most of the church equipment is in a place of safety. As most of you who have attended our services can see, there is no Picture over the central Altar, and no Statue on the Shrine of Our Lady. We usually have a very beautiful glass statue of Her, but it is too precious to be left to the mercy of bombs. But there we have the Altar beautifully decorated with white flowers, symbol of Her purity, and here we are to give our adoration—not to ask from Her compassion, for She gives in perfect measure to every single person who needs Her comfort. We lift up our hearts to Her in deepest adoration and in thankfulness that She is among the Great Ones to be that which only a mother can be to her children.



September 8 is the Day of the Birth or Nativity of the Mother of Christ, or as we would say in our Theosophical terminology, of the Master Jesus, who Himself gave His body for the use of the Lord Christ during the three years of the Christ's Ministry on earth. We must think of Her. Whether we are Christians, or Hindus, or Parsis, or Muslims, Jains, or Jews, we must think of Her as we know Her to be—the Mother of all the world and of all the peoples in the world. At no time more than the present are Her ministrations vital to us all.

I was thinking, as I came along to attend this service, that each one of us who looks up to Her with the utmost reverence, and very especially those who are following Her on Her particular way, can contribute immensely to Her service by doing our utmost at all times to minimize and decrease hatred and contempt and the uglinesses so rife throughout the world. Among those who reverence Our Lady—and there are millions throughout the world of many Faiths who reverence Her, who look up to Her, who acknowledge Her as the World Mother—there cannot be any hatred, any

contempt. Among those who are loyal to Her there cannot be any negation of that great Brotherhood. We are sustained so marvellously by the purity of Her Motherhood.

We often hear of the hatred one nation bears to another. In India we sometimes hear of the hatred existing between the Indians and the British. Hatred and contempt, the sense of superiority, all these are abroad. But we are among the fellowship of Our Lady, no matter to what Faith we belong, we should never allow ourselves to be swept into the evil vortex of hatred, but should stand aside from it, and do our best to decrease it.

As we stand in this Chapel, hallowed by our great President, Dr. Besant, and by our beloved Bishop Leadbeater, celebrating this occasion, I think we can resolve to draw as near to Her as possible, not through prayer and personal aspiration, but through the desire to serve Her, as She can best be served, by standing against all disunities and, above all, all cruelties, and by standing for all that unites the peoples of the world in a common Brotherhood.

#### A PRAYER WRITTEN FOR 20 SEPTEMBER 1942

Today, September 20th, being the anniversary of her passing, homage and honour are being offered to Dr. Annie Besant throughout the world.

In India, her spiritual Motherland, the homage and the honour are specially intimate, for she loved and served India beyond all other lands and at last laid down her life in India's service.

Here at Adyar, her loved home, we who have been, and still are, her daughters and her sons cherish deeply her memory, and bow before her in utmost reverence and gratitude, praying that we may grow more and more worthy humbly to reflect the spirit of her life and boldly to speak her message whereby India shall renew the glory of her soul.

*Vasant Māta Ki Jai ! Vande Mātaram !*

—G. S. A.

# Besant Anniversary—October 1st

## THE CHAPLET

SOME of us floated into Theosophy on the flood-tide of her greatness: I was such an one. Being nobody in particular, yet, as many another, I have my small chaplet of jewel-memories, graded from minute to larger and diminishing again to minute.

I was young when I saw and heard Annie Besant for the first time in that most thrilling series of London lectures, *The Changing World*, with the "Deadlocks" and the momentous announcement of the last, concerning the "Coming Christ"; and, being young and as one naturally does with new things, I went with my best Sunday judgment on top. I listened with every pore of my skin, and was able afterwards to write a whole lecture out and to remember almost any phrase of it. As that beautifully modulated voice drew to the close of the first lecture, an ardent yearning arose: "I wish she would look at me!"—and her head turned and she did, such wise, clear, at once compelling and appealing grey eyes. Life has never been as it was before that evening; nor I quite the same. I joined The Society and said to my sister Clara Codd: "I am going to be a *real* Theosophist."

Before she left England, I wrote to Dr. Besant and offered to become her disciple. She wrote me: "You will have to grow much more than you have done so far before you can receive individual tuition." I decided to grow, knowing that it would mean lots of trouble. Dr. Besant always wrote the few letters I have had from her with her own hand.

One day I was elated at being asked to tea with her at Miss Bright's house in Drayton Gardens. There were some dozen of us. I was outrageously shy, being born that way, and not having had the courage to say more than "How do you do?" and "Good-bye," I came away feeling very distressed. But when I got home, I wrote a poem about Annie Besant—I think it was truly good; but afterwards I tore it up and I do not think anybody ever read it.

*The Changing World* lectures were given in the St. James' Hall, afterwards called the Philharmonic; but the following year it was not available, and I remember the consternation at the Headquarters (the flat in New Bond Street) because the only hall to be had was the Queen's Hall and everybody doubted whether she could fill it! (Mrs. Sharpe was General Secretary and Clara Librarian, I wandering in for odd jobs.) When the time came, the members collected their friends, and went into the highways and byways, doing their best to swell the audience; but the hall overflowed and many were turned away from the doors, and every year after that the Queen's Hall was regularly engaged. One of my very precious memories is of the potent stillness of that big hall as her voice rang like a deep cathedral bell into every corner of it, quoting: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Surely was the voice of the Good Shepherd Himself added to hers.

Then I went to India, and out there she was less the President and more the Mother—a very true Mother. When I arrived in Adyar, I looked round to see what I could do and thinking Mr. Crombie



looked overworked, offered to help him in the Publishing House; but he feared to adopt me on his own responsibility; so I went and helped Dr. Roche and Miss Bell in the Order of the Star work, which was then in the left octagon bungalow. Dr. Roche wanted the name of the Order painted on the lintel. I cut some stencils of the letters and daubed white paint over them after work, at sundown; but alas, on descending from the ladder, I was grieved to see white inchoate patches where the letters were meant to be. I went to bed in great anxiety, grateful that darkness descended so quickly in the East; but at sunrise I was up again and with a sharp little orange stick scraped the edges of the letters clean. I was glad to find that the dry paint came away quite easily. As I worked, the Rolls Royce went along the drive. It was Mrs. Besant going in to her "New India" office with Mr. Wadia. She asked him: "Who is that?" and then asked him where I was working. Then she said: "I thought I said Miss Codd was to work in the Publishing House." So, after all, I turned up at Mr. Crombie's elbow, in the proof-reading and sub-editing department, and I was happy at having *The Theosophist* as my special care.

When Mr. Crombie took a holiday, I had to look after *The Commonweal* and other things for him (under Mr. Wadia), and one night I went to bed very exhausted, anxiously wondering whether I would be able to get all the proofs read in time for the printers. When I arrived next morning to work, I found the dear President had herself read every one of them, mine as well as his!

Two precious beads on the string are of having shared with others in two creations of hers especially dear to her. Soon after arriving in Adyar, we—Mr. Wadia's T.P.H. group of workers—were taken in cars, with our typewriters, to the newly-taken offices of *New India*, then almost

bare of furniture, where 8,000 names and addresses of subscribers were divided up between us to be typewritten, and the uncompleted lists were brought back to Adyar to be finished. I sat all the evening typing and finished my own list and some of the others' too.

The second occasion was an afternoon when about 50 or more people were gathered in the Hall at Adyar to form the Home Rule League. The President was feverish, and had stayed at home in her room, but she came down and spoke to the meeting, and the League that was to mean and do such tremendous work was formed. We were given little silver star badges with H.R. engraved on them in red. It was afterwards changed, as you know, to the two silver letters interlaced.

I helped to form the branch of the League in Kumbakonam, being the only woman on it. It occurred to me that we could have a woman's branch. The men-folk were very superior and sceptical about it; one said: "If I ask my wife what Home Rule is, she wouldn't know what to answer." But we formed it, and the discussions were very live, and all the proper Resolutions were passed and sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State in due form.

Talking of meetings puts me in mind of one morning when she was speaking in the Hall, standing beside the statue of Mme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott. The deep cream walls formed the background; she wore a white-and-gold sari; in her hand was a small writing-block with a yellow and brown back to it; beside her the brass-legged table with a vase of yellow flowers upon it. I grew absorbed in my picture, painting it in rapidly, and got as far as presenting it to The Society, and its being hung in the Adyar Hall, when her grave grey eyes rested fixedly on me and I came back to earth with a bump, having lost what she was saying.



Before leaving England, I had been through an intense emotional crisis, and partly resulting from that and partly from a low vitality, I used at times to want to die. Well, at the end of a year's work in Adyar, I went to see the President to ask what I should do. She was very busy, as always, sitting on her "chowki" Indian-wise, writing letters. She beckoned me to sit on the "chowki" beside her; so I sat there and waited in silence while she went on writing. After a time, she looked round and said: "Leave it to me." Afterwards I went to teach in a school in Kumbakonam, but from the day that I went to see her, I never more felt the longing to die.

When next I found myself working in Adyar, I helped Dr. Arundale and Miss Burdett in the office overlooking the river. It was very precious to me that sometimes he let me do little notes for the Chief on my own, or typewrite copies of private letters written in her own hand. I went from there to Benares, where I did not do too well. When she came there, we were walking through the grounds, a party of us, and she put an arm round my shoulders and said: "How are you getting on, my dear? Not too bad, is it?" What a deal of sympathetic understanding in those words, that made them as pleasant as praise. She told the boys a story of a cricket match between a boys' school and a team of policemen. The match was won by the policemen; but she said that from the higher standpoint the boys had really won, because the police were much bigger men and it was an easy victory for them, whereas the boys played up to the last minute as though they were winning the game. The story was a comfort to me at that time.

One day she came out of Shanti Kunja with a large pair of scissors and asked me to cut away the sleeves of the woollen jacket she was wearing, as it was too hot. I cut one away very carefully, making a neat circle round her arm and she exclaimed admiringly. That made me self-conscious, so the other sleeve came away very crooked and wobbly.

My last contact with her was dimmed because I put myself in a shadow where her radiance was intercepted. . .

I had a feeling that though I was small and she infinitely great, we understood each other; that was her wonderful gift. Since she went, I have sometimes seemed to see those grave deep eyes looking at me. I know that I shall meet her again and again.

—DOLLY CODD

## WARRIOR FOR GOD

She passes on! The Warrior Soul,  
Whose every blow did strike men free;  
Whose every breath for Him was breathed,  
Whose Heart is all humanity.

Shall we, her children, stay our hand  
To mourn our Leader's absence sore,  
When every nation, every land,  
Needs all the more the love she bore,  
Needs all the more the strength she gave,  
The light she shed, mankind to save?

Nay! Let us shed with greater will,  
This love, this strength, this light abroad,  
That *she* would have us carry still—  
This wondrous Warrior for God.

H. E. TYRWHITT

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There is no failure for those who march beneath the Shining of  
the Star.

—A. B.



# The Workers of the Future

BY S. E. PALMER

THERE is a story of an old Roman philosopher who stood watching a triumphal procession at Rome. He was looking beyond this magnificent display, and with patriotic zeal was eagerly watching for signs of Rome's future prosperity, the causes which would in working out still further extend the power and glory of his native state.

He looked at the carts heaped high with the spoils of the conquered. He saw hordes of captives preceded by their chiefs in golden chains. The old philosopher was heard to say: "Alas for Rome if this is all!"

He saw the victorious general in his gilded chariot, followed by his battle-scarred veterans who had carried the Roman eagles triumphantly over bloody fields; but again he was heard to sigh: "Alas for Rome if this is all!"

Now the youth of Rome marched along; those who were eager to enter the army, eager to give their young lives, if need be, in upholding the honour and dignity of Rome, and in extending her power. Then the old man smiled and exclaimed: "Thank the Gods, Rome is safe!"

The Theosophical army has its generals. We honour them. It has its veterans; those who have given and are still giving money, time, talent, life itself to this movement. But like the old philosopher we may say: "Alas for The Theosophical Society if this is all!" Even the magnificent Theosophic literature, the world's recogni-

tion of Theosophy as a system worthy of study, the defeat of conspiracy, and the wreck of traitorous camps; all these are not enough if Theosophy is to realize its possibilities. The young must be trained to take the place of the veterans. The new recruits, whether old or young, must become ready to enter the ranks of the active workers. They must be taught and be encouraged to take part in discussions. Those who are liable to be called upon for an opinion will acquire the habit of listening attentively. It is a great thing to have a leader who can teach classes, lecture, and direct the affairs of a Branch. It is a still greater thing to have a leader who can train new members so that all alike will feel the responsibility and be ready and willing to act.

Recollection of such a teacher suggested this article. Every one who was associated with her shared the responsibility of branch work. She encouraged timid members to express an opinion, to read a short extract or serve on a committee. Not the least valuable part of her various Theosophic activities was this discipline of the raw recruits. They proved the value of their training in keeping up classes and meetings when no recognized leader was available. In the course of time these workers will become the leaders in other Branches, spreading enthusiasm and love of active Theosophic work. In this way the raw recruits of the present may become the veterans of the future Theosophic army.

# Homage to Our Vice-President

[Report of the Meeting Commemorating the Passing of Mr. Hirendra Nath Datta, Vice-President of The Theosophical Society, held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, 17 September 1942.]

## THE PRESIDENT

WE are meeting here today in consequence of a message we have received from the Associated Press to the effect that our beloved and revered Vice-President passed away in Calcutta (last evening). I will ask our Senior Member of The Society in Adyar to speak to us first.

### RAO SAHEB SUBBIAH CHETTY

Our late Vice-President was a good lawyer, a man of culture and sound common sense, and a good Theosophist. . . His words were full and satisfying. His passing away is a great loss to The Theosophical Society.

### DR. SRINIVASA MURTI

Friends : On the passing of an aged person, a young philosopher is stated to have said that youth is a dream ; middle age, a delusion ; and old age, a mistake. In the case of a good many of us, such a statement may be right as a rule. . . But the life of Hirendra Nath Datta is here to prove the exception. In youth he had dreams enough, but the period was far more one of self-preparation. Middle age was not a period of delusion but of achievement. And Old Age was not a mistake but a blessing to humanity, and a period of attainment, so far as he was concerned. Such was the person whose memory we commemorate. He was a person who lived not according to the dictum of the young philosopher referred to above but rather according to the description of the poet Kalidāsa in *Raghu-*

*vamsa* where he has referred to the way in which the *Raghus* lived their lives in their four *Ashramas* (or periods of life) of the ancient *Varnashrama Dharma* scheme.

The first period of life was that devoted to study and self-preparation. During that period there has been no one more pre-eminent than our late Vice-President. The letters "P. R. S." which he was privileged to put after his name stood for the highest distinction in the Calcutta University—the Premchand Roy Scholar.

He thus prepared himself for the second period, that period in which a person is the householder, leads the domestic life. His duty is to earn, to bring up a family, to help to keep the other three Ashramas (or Orders) going. As a solicitor he earned well and spent money generously. He has been a pillar of strength to The Theosophical Movement. His distinguished legal practice at the High Court extended to over thirty years ; when the prospect of a law-suit against him and others was mentioned to him at some time recently, he referred to his long practice by remarking with his dry humour that, having walked the floors of the law courts for over thirty years, such a prospect did not unnerve him.

He intoned Sanskrit verses delightfully, and even his ordinary speech was in slow, measured and rhythmic accents. No more will we hear those wise words and musical intonations that held us spell-bound when he spoke at our Conventions and other gatherings.

In the third stage he lived a Karma-Yogin's life of great wisdom and strength.





MR. HIRENDRA NATH DATTA  
Vice-President, The Theosophical Society, 1934—1942

The business of one in the third stage is to help everybody by his wisdom, to retire for contemplation and meditation. That he did. Even to the last day of his life, he devoted some hours to the study of Theosophy and the latest literature by the greatest thinkers. He would not sleep before he performed this Rishi Yajna or sacrifice to the Rishis. He did that as long as I knew him and presumably up to the day of his passing.

He was over the verge of the fourth stage. If he had lived longer he would have been an ascetic, but he passed over before he could fully enter the stage.

He was not a mere solicitor. He contacted life at very many points. There has hardly been a cultural or humanitarian movement in Bengal with which our late Vice-President has not been associated, and usually in the capacity of Vice-President. In Shantiniketan he was much beloved. I have heard that in the early days the Poet liked him to be chairman at his meetings rather than anyone else, for he knew Hirendra Nath Datta would give the sum and substance of what the Poet had spoken in poetry, in his beautifully cultured prose.

At all our Conventions we went to him for help and guidance in all our difficulties. Nowhere else will he be missed more than at Benares, Headquarters of the Indian Section of The Theosophical Society, where he was our friend, philosopher and guide for many years. We cannot sufficiently honour his memory.

### THE RECORDING SECRETARY

It is very, very difficult to speak about our beloved Vice-President, and particularly for me, because I had not the privilege of coming into close contact with him, as had Dr. Srinivasa Murti. But from the little I have known of him, I can give a beautiful Sanskrit definition of greatness that applies to him :

"Harder than a thunderbolt, but more tender than a flower."

Our Vice-President was strong in matters of principle. Those of us who have seen him in the Indian Section Council know that he was very strong and that he took up a more strong attitude than any other member on a question of principle. But, so far as his relation with others was concerned, he was humble, gentle, and tender as a flower. It is hard to meet in ordinary life such a combination.

We know he was a learned person. We have known the great heights of his intellect through his speeches, but many of us do not realize that behind this intellect was the great heart of the devotee. . .

If The Theosophical Society has suffered by his passing, the Indian Section has suffered the greatest blow. In the Indian Section the older members are fast disappearing. He had the closest link with the past and was the embodiment of the spirit of India in learning, in gentleness, in the living of the ascetic life. As a philosopher I am reminded of an incident. After the last Convention there was a theft in the house where he was staying and all his possessions were taken away. I went to his house and found him reading a newspaper, entirely unconcerned. When later I told him that the things had been found, he was equally unconcerned. It did not matter to him whether these things came back or not.

He combined with his philosophy a great amount of practical tact. In all his decisions, in his advice, in his judgments, one could see a practical mind.

One can go on speaking about a life so rich, so beautiful, and so fragrant. . .

With the passing of the Vice-President the Indian Section has lost one of its towers of strength. It will be hard to replace that loss. Today let us who are young make a resolution that we will rededicate ourselves



to Theosophy and will give our utmost of sacrifice, learning and loyalty, so that the cause so dear to our Vice-President may go on, and may we attempt to work in the spirit in which he worked.

### RUKMINI DEVI

One can forever go on praising the late Vice-President, because he was really a very unusually beautiful person. I felt he was beautiful in so many ways—beautiful to look at, and there was beauty in his voice for speaking. Even when he spoke in prose his voice sounded like music, and when he quoted Sanskrit, one did not mind whether one understood or not, it was so beautiful just to listen to his voice.

It is very rare for a solicitor to be a learned man as well as a poet. Though, so far as I know, he never wrote poetry, he was essentially a poet, because his speeches were the speeches of a poet—very imaginative, beautiful, and expressive in language. He was a master of the English language, and certainly of Sanskrit, and I am told his Bengali was very beautiful.

I do not know how many people really knew him. He led a very quiet, apparently aloof life; at home anyone could do and say anything in his presence, but though he seemed far away, nothing escaped him, he observed everything. When he came to a dinner-party he was usually extremely silent, only occasionally saying a few words full of wisdom and beauty.

When Dr. Srinivasa Murti said that he was Vice-President of so many cultural institutions, I wanted to add that it was not only true in Bengal but also in South India, for he was Vice-President of Kalā-kshetra. I thought I had a very special Vice-President, because he embodied the spirit of Indian culture. More than most human beings he understood art and culture; read his book on Art, *The Kamala*

*Lectures*, and you will know what an extraordinary understanding he had of Indian culture.

His learning was not merely shown in quoting from books, but because he was essentially a Theosophist and still more an occultist, he gave to his quotations his deep experience, and when he quoted you saw an inner meaning. To him Theosophy was not merely membership in The Theosophical Society, but a living fire in daily life. Therefore, his learning, his Vice-Presidentships, and even his work as a solicitor, everything was an expression of Theosophy.

I have often wished that I could consult him on a matter of law, so that I could hear him speak solicitor's poetry, because he could not help but be poetic at all times. There is no doubt in the minds of every one of us that we shall miss him immensely. It is very sad in India that that type of person is gradually disappearing. In The Theosophical Society we have had many very great persons. One of these was our late Vice-President. I hope they will come again in The Society, that the great ones of old will be replaced by younger members who will feel their spirit and bring back the magnificent culture of which so many in olden days were examples. I have a weakness for old people, and a special weakness for our Vice-President.

I am absolutely sure that he is happy. The first thing he would do, on being free, would be to go to Dr. Besant, his Guru. Let us be happy in that knowledge, though on the physical plane we shall all miss him very much indeed.

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The President then read his tribute which is embodied in a Supplement to the October *Theosophist*.

In conclusion the President said that the gathering might spend a few minutes in thinking especially of Mrs. Hirendra Nath Datta, so gallant a partner of his life.

# The Vice-President's Passing

NOT only The Theosophical Society, but the Indian world of culture too, suffers a great loss by the passing of Mr. Hirendra Nath Datta, our honoured and venerable Vice-President, which occurred at his home in Calcutta on the 16th of September. He was in his 77th year, having been born on 17th January 1866 at Calcutta, where he spent the whole of his life, rising to eminence as the senior member of the Calcutta bar, the protagonist of Theosophy through many years of vicissitude, and after Rabindranath Tagore himself the central figure of the cultural movement of the Bengal Art Schools. He was an impressive figure in any company, innately dignified, deeply learned, and giving the appearance of living on the heights, though immediately gracious and attentive when engaged in conversation.

It is impossible to say that his service to The Theosophical Society was greater in one direction than in another, though his immense legal knowledge has been an incalculable gift during the Presidential tenures of both Dr. Besant and Dr. Arundale over a period of many years, both to The Society and to the Indian Section.

The Vice-President joined The Society on the 14th January 1894, and was thus a member of not quite fifty years' standing. Since 1909 he was a member of the General Council. In 1934 Dr. Arundale on his election as President nominated Mr. Hirendra Nath Datta as Vice-President, and the General Council on December 25 approved the nomination. On 6 June 1941 he was renominated as Vice-President and the nomination was confirmed by the General Council in December of that year.

Mr. Datta invariably attended with Mrs. Datta the Annual Conventions in India.

He was present at the first Convention of the Indian Section in 1896, and practically every Section Convention since, as well as every International Convention held at Adyar or Benares; he visited Adyar for the first time in 1903; in 1930 he delivered an important discourse on "The Future of The Theosophical Society," and since 1933 he addressed Convention year after year, his lectures being among the most memorable of the Convention series.

Mr. Datta was one of Dr. Besant's intimate friends and counsellors. She often stayed in his house in Calcutta, and she always associated him with her Theosophical activities. He was, for example, one of the foundation members of the Central Hindu College, Benares, and was on its Board of Trustees. As a founding member of the National Council of Education, Bengal, he held for many years the office of Secretary, and was later one of its Vice-Presidents.

There was hardly a cultural movement in Bengal in which he was not deeply interested. As a lifelong friend of Rabindranath Tagore he was influential in the counsels of Vishvabharati at Shantiniketan, being Vice-President and trustee, and he was associated with one of the most important technical colleges in Bengal with 650 students. Furthermore, he was for some years President of the Bengal Academy of Literature, the premier literary society in Bengal.

The summation of this cultural phase of his activity was the *Kamala Lectures* which he delivered before the Calcutta University in 1940, and which the University published under the title of *Indian Culture*. The book shows not only great erudition and beauty of form, but a



profound knowledge of world movements in their deeper spiritual aspects and inter-relationships. The Vice-President foresees that Indian culture will transform the coming civilization. It is, moreover, a source of never-ending pleasure to find in all his writings, and in his speeches no less, a thorough mastery of English as well as Indian texts.

Among his publications are also "The Philosophy of the Gods" (*Deva Tattva*) and other works on Vedanta and Vaishnavism in Bengali. His Everestian view of the esoteric philosophies is clearly manifest in *Theosophical Gleanings*, published at Adyar in 1938.

The Vice-President's literary work and "very eminent services to Theosophy and The Theosophical Society" won him the Subba Rao Medal, which Dr. Arundale presented to him in a most felicitous speech at the 1941 Convention.

In the same year Mr. Datta accepted the invitation of the President of Kalākshetra to be a Vice-President, as embodying the eternal culture of India and as a link between North and South. All our Theosophical and educational institutions he helped with open-handed generosity.

In politics the Vice-President was an ardent Nationalist and never lacked courage to show his colours. In the Bengal Partition days from 1905 he was regarded as an extremist, his delicately balanced judgment notwithstanding. His intense love for his Motherland brought him into the Indian National Congress and to the aid of Dr. Besant's Home Rule movement, and his name was amongst the signatories to her Commonwealth of India Bill.

Professionally this many-sided and richly-endowed son of India was the senior partner of Messrs. H. N. Datta and Co., solicitors of Calcutta, and here it was that his rare legal acumen was placed at the disposal of the Theosophical leaders. The happy settlement of the long-standing

Rishi Valley Trust dispute was based on his advice. Only a few days before he passed over a letter reached Adyar settling a point in law, so that he must have been in full use of his faculties right to the end.

Mrs. Indumati Datta has been a member of The Theosophical Society since 1910. To her and to the members of her family we send through this channel the sympathy of many thousands of Theosophists and reverence for his devoted loyalty, his profound wisdom and his saintly life.

—J. L. DAVIDGE

## MESSAGES RECEIVED

Dear President: Today's paper tells of the translation of our dear Hiren Babu, one of the most reverable spirits I have known in this life of fortunate friendships. I liked Gandhiji's instruction to Mahadev Desai's relatives—"No mourning allowed." Can we mourn when one of such spiritual accomplishment as our brother Hirendra Nath Datta moves from our world into Theirs? For his family we lament a deep vacancy—out of which comes a noble memory. To you, on behalf of The Society, goes our congratulation in having had so eminent and worthy a Vice-President, and the hope that an equal successor may be found among the Indian members.

With sympathy and fraternal greetings,  
yours cordially,

JAMES H. COUSINS

MARGARET E. COUSINS

\* \* \*

Telegraphic messages of sympathy have been received from:

Bhavnagar Lodge;  
Bombay: Blavatsky Lodge;  
Bombay Theosophical Federation;  
Bombay: Youth Lodge;  
Coimbatore Lodge;  
Bangalore City Lodge (Resolution).

# The Office of Vice-President

[*The President's Letter to the Members of the General Council*]

**M**Y dear Colleague : With very deep regret I have to announce to you the passing of our beloved and revered Vice-President, Mr. Hirendranath Datta, whom I had the pleasure of nominating to that office both on my election to the Presidency in 1934 and on my re-election in 1941—the nomination being unanimously endorsed on each occasion by the General Council.

It is by no means too much to say that his loss is irreparable, for not only was he a great Theosophist in character, in deep learning, in oratory and in exquisite writing, he was also a great lawyer, to the immense advantage of The Society in many a very delicate legal matter. The Indian Section of our Society will particularly feel his loss, for he was its guide, philosopher and friend for very many years.

He passed away in his Calcutta home on 16 September 1942, and I am sure you will wish to extend to his family and to his gracious wife to whom he had been married for about fifty years, your hearty sympathy in their great bereavement.

To the vacant office of Vice-President I have now the pleasure to nominate for your endorsement my colleague for many years, and the colleague for many years before of Dr. Annie Besant, Mr. N. Sri Ram, our present Treasurer and former Recording Secretary.

He has been a member of our Society since the year 1909, and has been most active in all that concerns our Movement from the beginning of his membership. He is revered and loved wherever he is known and is my right hand in all my own work as President.

I submit his name for acceptance for the period of the duration of hostilities, or for

such further period as may be necessary, for it is essential in these days that the Vice-President as well as the President should be living in India, since in the event of the President being no longer able to function the Vice-President must immediately enter upon his duties as provided by The Society's Rules for such an eventuality. This would certainly be difficult if not impossible for a Vice-President living outside India, so I have felt that my nomination must be limited while the war lasts to a member resident in India, and under such limitation the choice was obvious.

I have asked Mr. Sri Ram to enter upon his duties at once and not to wait, under existing circumstances, the receipt of the votes of the available members of the General Council, though of course he cannot formally be Vice-President until such endorsement comes as may be possible considering the fact that so many members of the Council are inaccessible.

May I therefore request you to be good enough to reply to this letter either by Air Mail or if possible by cable or telegram, so that the Council's decision may reach me with the least possible delay? . . .

When the War is over so that the Sections of The Society, or as many of them as possible, are once more functioning normally, Mr. Sri Ram wishes to place his resignation at my disposal so that we may consider the desirability of looking further afield for his successor. In the meantime, however, I am sure The Society will be well advised to avail itself of his services as Vice-President, and I submit his name with the utmost confidence.

—GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

*President, The Theosophical Society*  
21 September 1942



# The President's Correspondence

## MR. COOK RE-ELECTED

[Mr. Cook as National President, U.S.A., received 1,156 votes out of total votes cast 1,242; Mr. Perkins, as Vice-President 1,096 out of 1,197. The election took place in May.]

Dear Colleague: Hearty greetings to you and to Mr. Perkins on your respective re-elections to the offices of National President and National Vice-President. Personally I feel very glad the work of both of you has been so emphatically endorsed. It certainly ought to be, considering the splendid service you give to Theosophy and to The Theosophical Society throughout the United States. I am very glad that, despite the preoccupations of war, there have been more votes than usual. Certainly The Theosophical Society in America is a generous and a valiant body of men and women and Young Theosophists. I have said before and I say again that The Theosophical Society in America is the good Karma of all Theosophists throughout the world.

## "CAPT. COOK AND LIEUT. PERKINS"

Dear Miss Owen: I shall be very much obliged if you will transmit to the new Board of Directors my hearty congratulations on their election to the most important body of officers in The Theosophical Society in America, and my best wishes for their helping to steer our Theosophical ship in America safely through the present troubled waters. I am very certain under the wise and inspiring direction of Captain Cook and Lieutenant Perkins, all will be well in the future as in the past.

Here in Adyar we are feeling more and more the pinch of war and it has been

necessary for us to give some of our buildings close to the sea to the military. We cannot and do not complain, for we are thankful for their defence of us. But with anti-aircraft guns and Bren carriers and other machinery about the place, Adyar is not the same as it used to be.

27 August 1942

## THE ONLY SOLUTION

The Western New York Federation of The Theosophical Society in America in annual executive meeting at Rochester, N.Y., on 24 May 1942, unanimously voted:

"That greetings and cordial good wishes be sent to the International President of The Theosophical Society, Dr. George S. Arundale."

This Federation is now composed of the Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse Lodges, with delegates present from each.

We receive much inspiration and strength through our federated activities. T.O.S. has now become a definite part of our programme with one session of the Federation Meeting devoted entirely to reports of its activities followed by discussions.

—GERTRUDE K. FINCH

*Corres. Sec.*

## *Dr. Arundale's Reply*

Dear Mrs. Finch: I am very grateful to the Western New York Federation for their very generous Resolution. I can assure them that such kindly greetings help me in my work.

I send my very best wishes to all the members and hope that in the midst of the excursions and alarms of war, they are

able to sound forth the only solution of war—THEOSOPHY.

### THE VALUE OF CONVENTIONS

Dear Mr. van Ginkel: I have been reading with very great interest your Newsletter dated July the 27th. You certainly know how to write most attractively, and if I at this distance find the letter of great interest, much more surely will those who, are nearer to the events it describes.

I am very much interested to hear that you are producing "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." I saw this when Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson took the principal part, and it was really marvellous. You could not produce anything more beautiful than this.

I entirely agree with you that somehow or other there ought to be a Convention. Even if there are only half a dozen people to attend, still it will be a Convention—"Where two or three are gathered to-

gether . . ." Perhaps this has been forgotten. Even if only Cape Town members attended the Convention without transacting any business, still the blessing of the Elders would be upon them, and not only for them but for the whole of the Section. I certainly very much wished that the Australian Section had had a Convention, but it would not be right for me even to seem to express my opinion on a matter with regard to which the Section is obviously autonomous.

But in these days a Convention is almost a necessity for the carrying on of the work, and while we are in the greatest difficulties in India, both internally and externally, *we shall have our International Convention at Benares at whatever cost.* I entirely agree with you that any kind of Convention is better than no Convention.

As I am very busy I am sure you will excuse a short letter, but I wanted just to congratulate you on a very live letter.

2 Sept. 1942

## Echoes from a Spanish Refugee Camp

BY APOLLONIUS D'HISPANIE

[Translated by H. van de Poll, from *Ex Oriente Lux*, June 1942]

THREE years of cruel war, fratricide, weeks and weeks of endless marching along the Catalanian and French roads, thousands torn away from their homes, terrorized by bombs and by men . . . and then, at last, the day arrives that they are welcomed by hospitable France, the comparative restfulness of barracks, facing the sea, that limpid Mediterranean which once was a centre of human culture, a culture that now is escaping from it . . . only now are they able to become conscious of their situation and they think. . .

They have lost everything, their country,

their home, their beloved ones, their dearest possessions, their ordinary activities, their mode of living; some of them also have lost their wits.

But all these losses really mean nothing! They have lost the trust they had in the men who had been their guides up to now and who accompanied them in their exile.

They discover the errors and deficiencies in those ideas which for years formed their spiritual nourishment and into which now doubt and often repulsion enters.

They now try to find the reason of all this suffering, of all this topsy-turvy-ness, and



they are unable to see it. They feel that they have been overcome, more morally than physically. They need light, for the torches which once illumined their way now seem to be extinguished for evermore, in the mud. . .

Is it then surprising that some of them, hearing again or hearing for the first time about those Theosophical conceptions of Evolution, Karma, Reincarnation, read in these fundamental laws the explanation, the interpretation of their present condition?

We often saw them approaching us, first timidly, then with a little more confidence, and finally with their hearts open and their minds awakened and as the words came from my lips, simple words of instructive information, I felt how their hearts became filled with new hope and how the New Teaching acted as a balm, healing their wounds.

Through it I was able to enter more deeply into their being. It was as if a freshening wind had suddenly swept through their minds, purifying it and chasing away all the shadows of the night . . . and in their soul the light began to shine again.

It was thus that our task in the refugee camp started, in the beginning just a little group amongst whom there were a few who had already attended my talks in Madrid. They suggested that I should give public talks. We started them in the same barracks where also we slept, but after a few weeks already, we felt the need to move to the school barracks. Nevertheless, we never had more than an audience of 30 to 40 people, whereas there were 50,000 refugees in the camp.

Still, this small nucleus of hearers discussed the teaching received with their friends in their own barracks, and their desire for knowledge grew daily. Thus it was possible to start popular conferences after a few months, and the barracks was so

crowded that the men had to remain standing during the lecture so that all might enter—about 360 refugees.

And after they left, whilst the moon was shining over the sea, each hearer had soon converted another seeker, who himself then desired to have further information about the teaching received. Or he wanted to have an explanation of a phenomenon through which he had lived; yet another had his doubts about a certain theory; many also opened their hearts to speak about their moral and physical suffering.

In the small court between our school barracks and our dormitory, a distance of at the most 50 yards, we used to walk about, softly, for hours at a time, together with men who had lost their faith and who were anxious—not to have a substitute belief—but to find enlightenment and a reason for their existence.

You will have no difficulty, my brothers, to guess the general theme of these talks to make such a revolution possible in the consciousness of men hardened by battle and blinded by passion . . . Childmen who were in need of the affectionate hand of a father who ruffles the hair of his beloved child—whilst in the moonlight a voice arose, louder even sometimes than the waves running up on the beach, conscious of the task given to him, the task to bring to their minds new conceptions of Justice, Love and Understanding. . .

A hard test for my brothers, and for me also. But may the words inspired by That which is highest in us be fruitful for them also—this is my ardent wish.

May you also, who are reading these lines today, be fortified by these same words in your convictions in the depth of your feeling, and may they inspire you in your daily activities and brotherly relationships to prepare you for this Magnificent Task which you have been called to fulfil—to realize in the near future, PEACE.

# From Whitsun Convention, England

["THE NEW WORLD AND THE SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY OF  
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY"]

## YOUTH SPEAKS TO THE SECTION

BY I. H. HOSKINS

**A**MONG the many privileges and opportunities offered by The Society to its younger members, there are three that stand out as of prime importance: the inspiration of leadership, the opportunity for service, and comradeship.

Youth being by nature idealistic and enthusiastic, is ready to offer itself to the service of any cause or leader that inspires it. If its energies are to be wisely utilized, to the greatest advantage both of itself and of the community, it needs leaders who will capture the imagination and direct the enthusiasm. But while hero-worship plays a necessary part in the training of the emotions, the ideal itself must be capable of growth if it is to remain a worthy object of a more mature devotion. Here the Young Theosophist enjoys a peculiar advantage, for while our leaders are our heroes, they are not ends in themselves, but servants of a cause which is infinitely greater than they. Beyond the leaders there stretches a hierarchy of loyalties, The Society and the Masters who gave it, which will continue to claim the devotion evoked and cultivated by hero-worship. But Youth is anxious to translate its idealism and enthusiasm into action here and now, and if a community fails to utilize these energies, it is losing an opportunity for itself and failing in its duty towards its young people. Membership of a Lodge provides an admirable training in service, for it not only offers the visible forms of

regular activity which incorporate the young member into its outward life, but also points to the constant service of study and right thinking which belong to its inner life. This training enables the young member to create for himself independent opportunities for service and his own discipline of action.

Lastly, youth needs comradeship, and this too is offered to the young member by participation in Lodge life. It often happens that family and friends show little sympathy for the ideals and interests of the Theosophist, and he looks to the Lodge as a spiritual oasis in a somewhat arid world. Working, studying, conversing, with people who share his aspirations, he learns through comradeship to sense the spiritual reality of Brotherhood which is the *raison d'être* of The Society.

Each of these three privileges—leadership, service and comradeship—carries with it a responsibility; this heritage of Youth, earned for us yesterday, must be handed on by us tomorrow not merely intact, but augmented by our gratitude.

The inspiration we have enjoyed through our leaders demands that we shall keep alive their memory by our continued devotion and loyalty to the cause they served. The training in service that we have received demands that we shall not stand in the way of the young people coming after us, but allow them similar opportunities to serve The Society, thus giving practical expression to our belief that the younger in body may be older in soul. The comradeship extended to us demands that we shall keep open the door of comradeship



to all comers, not by a superficial affability but by that true sociability which meets each on his own path and welcomes him in his own right. We have received so freely, and freely we are bound to give.

## THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD

BY PETER FREEMAN

The World War in which Humanity is now engaged has brought this question into the forefront of practical politics, said Mr. Peter Freeman in his lecture on this subject.

Either the world has to adopt and enforce a Constitution for a universal World Authority or it will sink into chaos after the war. The continued existence of individual Sovereign Nations will prove unworkable.

While Government is the most difficult of all the Arts, it is the newest of all the Sciences, but without Government no progress is possible, and the development and culture of civilization depend upon its efficient administration.

As Pythagoras stated 2,500 years ago, "Government exists for the good of the governed," and the new World Order must safeguard the rights and privileges of all Countries and all Peoples by adopting a Charter of Human Rights which will be made the basis of all its activities. It will also have to insist on the performance of duties by each citizen according to his ability and opportunity.

A new World Consciousness is already being developed, and one sees in our Theosophical principles how profound is the idea of Universal Brotherhood as the basis of the post-war world.

As Government has extended from the simple control in the home to local administration of the village, town and country, thence widening to Sovereign National Government as it now exists, the

time has now come for a further extension of human consciousness to include the government of the whole world.

For this purpose the League of Nations was formed, but it lacked the power of government. This must now be placed in its hands and loyal support given to such a central World Authority, which would hold reactionary nations in check, as the nation in its turn has to restrict the activities of the highwayman and the robber.

Under the ægis of the new World Government will emerge a new World Religion of practical Service, a new Education of Understanding, and a new Economy of Co-operation. The Theosophical Society has a great part to play in helping to usher in this new phase of human progress.

## THE VISION OF MAN'S EQUALITY

BY L. HADEN-GUEST

A World State within which every nation will have the freedom to live its life, and in which all men are equal. This was the vision of the future outlined by Dr. Haden-Guest.

The war has shown that men have a passionate belief in what they call Freedom, and on the basis of that belief we could build something better. We proclaim democracy, but do we know the meaning of democracy? Sometimes British people talk about democracy when they really mean British institutions, and the application of English methods of local and parliamentary government to other people. We have to interpret democracy as giving people their own way of development. War has allied us and our Dominions and Colonies, with the Soviet Union, China, the U.S.A., the United Nations of oppressed Europe and Abyssinia. The U.S.A. is nearest to us in political structure; in Canada there is a large French

community; Australia is moulding the British type to a new sub-tropical type. None of these nations can be left out when we are planning for peace, but democracy is not a complete answer. We have to find some other form of organization more comprehensive than democracy. The answer we have got to give to political problems is not democracy; every nation must be given freedom to live its life in its own way.

We could learn much from the Soviet Union. One of the most revolutionary things the Soviet ever did was not in economic but political organization. There are two councils, the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities which is elected on national lines. These two bodies sat side by side and no law could be passed without the concurrence of both. Every national group has equal economic and political rights, all are treated in exactly the same way. People of outlying districts, who have been kept in order by troops in the days of the Tsar are now advocates of the Soviet system and have taken part in the recent Russian operations. After the war, we might consider doing something on the lines of a Council of Nationalities in order that the special difficulties of other nations should be considered. Unless we seized our opportunities after the war to make civilization permanent, war would come again.

We should get all the nations together round a Council Table, who will set up a World State supreme in the control of armed force, an international police force. We cannot prevent the danger of future dictators unless we have armed force in the hands of a World State. We must also do away with the shocking differences in status between white and coloured peoples. There should be one standard of world citizenship, political, economic and racial, in which all men are equal. The French Revolutionary slogan, "Liberty,

Equality, Fraternity," has never been fully realized; there has been liberty only for the few, equality has never fully existed in any country, and fraternity, which is one of the fundamental precepts of the true Christian, as of other great religions, is still the dream of the idealist.

We could establish a permanent civilization after the war if we brought to the task courage, love and a belief in brotherhood. What is needed is a world equalitarian civilization as the foundation of a new age for mankind.

## BOOKS AND LODGE LIBRARIES

BY I. HAWLICZEK

In the May number of *News and Notes* it is suggested that the number of public lectures be decreased. This does not mean that the number of contacts with the public should be diminished but the character changed to suit modern conditions. One of the most important avenues we have of making Theosophical teachings more known to the public is by libraries. It is interesting to note that although people are fully occupied these days the circulation in our Headquarters Library is steadily going up.

Points with regard to Lodge Libraries:

(1) The books should be as clean as possible, and in good condition. They should be placed in a convenient position to be seen (not too low).

(2) Libraries should be kept up to date with our Theosophical books. There are difficulties with regard to this, the greatest of which is financial. This can be obviated by sending more books from Headquarters to the Lodge Libraries. Can we not have a more elastic attitude about getting new books into the libraries (say "I will try and get it"; rather than "No, we have't got it"). There is a scheme whereby Lodges can borrow books from



Headquarters—about 7 at a time—for a certain period of time, and these can be continually exchanged so that the Lodge Library may be kept up to date.

There are some serious crimes in connection with books :

(1) That the Lodge should regard the Library as a source of additional income to its own funds. (The Library is part of the publicity effort of the Lodge. There is a fund given by Headquarters to the Federations which is used to help the Lodges.)

(2) To let books go out for no charge at all. (The public prefers to pay a small sum for the books borrowed.)

(3) To have books on the shelves standing on their heads. This means that one is regarding books as things and not as people. Books have a quality and life characteristic of themselves, and of the authors who write them. They are individuals, not things. It is not only a matter of knowing the list of books available but of knowing their quality. The librarian might be considered as a match-maker,

bringing the borrower and the book together.

We have recently produced a list of books which is being sent to each Lodge Secretary, and this should be handed to the Librarian :

*Important Books (Theosophical)*

The Lotus Fire by G. S. Arundale.  
Revised edition of the Autobiography of Annie Besant.

K. H. Letters to C. W. Leadbeater.  
Commentary by C. Jinarājadāsa.  
Adventures in Theosophy by G. S. Arundale.

The Night Bell " "  
From Visible to Invisible " "  
Helping " "  
Real Education " "  
Rukmini Devi Souvenir (with illustrations).

*Non-Theosophical*

Grey Eminence by Aldous Huxley.  
The Diagnosis of Man by Kenneth Walker.

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## THE THEOSOPHICAL WORKER

*Editor:* GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

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Subscription : India Rs. 3 ; Overseas 6s. or \$1.50.

All remittances and correspondence should be addressed to The Manager, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India.

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Printed and Published by C. Subbarayudu, at the Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras.