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Be Gracious: But What Is Graciousness?

By the Editor

I HAVE so often to give advice to other people that I find myself in some danger of forgetting to give advice to myself. Obviously, advice should begin at home, even if it cannot end there. And it is far more important that I should begin with advice to myself. How otherwise can I hope to give effective advice to others?

There seems to me to be one very special quality which I ought to intensify in myself—and it is graciousness.

I find it lacking everywhere, in all. I would say to every one without exception: Be gracious. And I need to say it to myself most of all. Of course, one is gracious on occasion. One has flashes of graciousness; but in how many of us is graciousness constant, under all circumstances of living?

Graciousness is one of the most beautiful jewels of culture and refinement. And since this is emphatically not an age of

graciousness, all the more must some of us try to develop the quality.

What is graciousness? It is an amalgam of many virtues. I would put first among such virtues the virtue of positive *appreciativeness*. I need, I think we all need, an ever-flowing appreciativeness towards all, be they equals or so-called inferiors. We must instinctively and intuitively perceive the sparkling good in all with whom we come into contact, respecting that good feeling definitely thankful for it. Unless we are automatically appreciative, we cannot be constantly gracious.

Second, among such virtues I would put a very sincere *respect*. Respect is the child of appreciativeness, and it is garbed in the clothes of kindly and understanding words. There may be occasion for sternness, for rebuke, for strong condemnation. Even then the words may be kindly, never harsh or unduly shattering.

Third, among such virtues I would put a very real sense of *comradeship*, bereft of any sense of superiority, and still more of any sense of comparison as between one's own capacity to do something and the capacity of another.

Many people lack graciousness, because they are constantly comparing everything with themselves. They constitute themselves the centres of all circles, those of others as well as their own. They are constantly intruding their own lives into those of others, providing an unceasingly running commentary on the lives and activities of other people in relation to their own. They are ever constituting themselves standards of other peoples' conducts.

This is not graciousness. It is the antithesis of graciousness.

Instead of this, there should be a very real brotherliness, and very especially towards those who are substantially unlike ourselves. That which we have not, others may have. Each one of us lacks much. Others may have that which we lack, just as we may have that which others lack.

Graciousness, to mention a fourth virtue, is a definite *thankfulness* for others. We are thankful that others are not like us—which is quite another matter from being thankful that we are not like other people—that they have other gifts to give which we cannot give. Graciousness never implies for a moment that it is a pity others are not like ourselves. True graciousness rejoices in differences, and is bereft of all sense of superiority.

Let me not forget a virtue which in some ways, perhaps, outshines the rest—the virtue of being as gracious to an individual, to any individual, *when he is absent* as when he is present. Graciousness, if real, is a habit, not a cloak; and I should so much like every one to feel safe with me in absence as well as in presence.

Nor must graciousness disappear before the lack of it. There is so much ungraciousness abroad that the little graciousness there is must be as a rock amidst the surging waves of ungraciousness. The more ungraciousness surrounds us, the more must graciousness go forth from us. And very specially those of

us who happen to be in any authority whatever, be it but to servants, are under a particular obligation to be gracious. It is easy, as well as expedient, to be gracious to those above us. On the whole it pays to be gracious to those who are our equals. The truly gracious person is particularly gracious to those who are dependent upon him, be these children, or servants, or otherwise subordinate to him.

I think the world would change unbelievably were graciousness to become a characteristic of most of us. And as for our individual selves, how smooth-running would be our lives, how serene, how warm and happy, how treasured we should be by those around us, were we to acquire the habit of graciousness, being gracious because all living things around us are so worthy of our graciousness as we are so worthy of theirs.

How I wish I had this virtue of graciousness. It would make all the difference to my work, and to my peace and happiness. I must become gracious, even though I can never be as gracious as my President-predecessor, she who was Graciousness personified.

Finally, be gracious! Is not graciousness the very flower of Brotherhood?

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FAITHFUL SERVICE FUND

Fellowship Lodge, of Chicago, Ill., U.S.A., enclosed a contribution to the Faithful Service Fund in their message of greetings to the President. The message, signed by 31 members, was received in Christmas week. The contribution has just arrived (February 11). Both the message and the money are much appreciated at Adyar and by the President. The signatures add to the interest of the message which is as follows:

"The members of the Fellowship Branch of The Theosophical Society send greetings to Dr. and Mrs. Arundale and to the staff at Headquarters.

"They wish particularly to send warm birthday greetings to G.S.A., upon December first, and the undersigned wish to be enrolled as absentee delegates, and send herewith \$ 20.25 for the Faithful Service Fund.

A Living Poem of Patriotism

[Adyar celebrated Rukmini Devi's 39th birthday on February 19 this year.
This article by L. G. S. is reprinted from "The Modern Times" of 3 May 1941.]

"INDIA? Yes, India has everything to give to the world. Her Art, her Culture, they have a message for the world of today; a message of love and peace for a world full of chaos and conflict. It is my one desire, my one ambition, to interpret this message to the world; to express India's soul to the millions through the medium of a universal language—Art. This is the spirit behind Kalāshetra."

It was Shrimati Rukmini Devi. The din and bustle of a hum-drum City life was far, far away; a soft, silent breeze was slowly fanning through the lovely verdure around; from the walls surrounding, Prophets of ages and Muses of art and learning spread a halo of spiritual happiness about this seat of Beauty and Art. Seated in this home of Peace and Calm—the great hall of the Adyar Theosophical Society—the great lady was unfolding her heart's sublimest yearnings.

Half a decade has passed since Rukmini Devi founded this International Art Centre with a view to emphasizing the essential unity of all true Art, and working for the recognition of the Arts as vital to individual, national, religious and international growth. During this period she has done yeoman's service to the cause of Bhārata Nāṭya. If, today, Bhārata Nāṭya is recognized as one of the supreme schools of Art, if it is acclaimed as an art nearest perfection, it is due to the untiring efforts Rukmini Devi has put forth in that direction. She has, by her beautiful representation, saved this classic art from the rut into which it had fallen, revived it in all its pristine glory, and given it a new meaning and a new message.

"I do not believe in an art which has not absolute culture. It is here that I admire Bhārata Nāṭya. It is a channel for the mes-

sage of spirituality," she said. "Bhārata Nāṭya is a portrayal of the transcendental emotions of the Divine Ones. While you dance, you feel a sense of dedication to the Lord, your heart throbs with the elements of pure devotion, and in such a mood of spiritual ecstasy you express and convey this lofty message through rhythmic movements."

This accounts for the highly devotional nature of Rukmini Devi's dance performances. While you witness her movements you feel yourself inspired and lifted to a super-cosmic plane. What a happy change she has brought about in the nature of nāṭya! We slowly persuaded her into a retrospective reflection.

"Music was a passion with me in childhood days. But I had never seen a dance. The art of dance was so much abused in those days that no parents would allow their children to witness a dance performance.

"The 'dancing girls' were—perhaps justly—looked upon with contempt and with a certain amount of horror. I do not condemn those poor girls. Even today, some such 'exponents' of the Dance exist. The fault is not theirs. The public wanted them to be so, to satisfy their cravings. What an appalling taste our people possess! They would applaud even the coarsest and the crudest—at times, vulgar too—performances. How could Art progress in such circumstances?"

As she grew up, her love for Indian Culture and Art too grew up. Her one aim has always been to interpret India's soul to the world by reviving the true spirit of the age-old Indian Culture.

"In 1926 I was in Australia. There I met Mme. Pavlova, the celebrated Russian dancer. I saw her closely at work and I was impressed by her love for the Art." This, in no small

degree, enkindled the fire of Rukmini Devi's future work of the dance. It was about 1935 that she met Shri Meenakshisundaram Pillai of Pandanallur at a Bhārata Nāṭya recital in Madras.

"I decided to dedicate myself to the service of our ancient Art." It was not easy sailing. Her mother was surprised at this new undertaking but she has always been in sympathy with her daughter's life-work. She secured the goodwill and co-operation of friends and comrades, and started this Art Centre in January 1936.

KALAKSHETRA is slowly growing into a fountain-source of artistic regeneration and cultural inspiration. Eminent teachers of Sanskrit, of Music, of Dance, of Sculpture and Dramatic Art are there helping Rukmini Devi to achieve her ideals. The art of making hand-woven materials of old designs is also revived at the Centre. No wonder, many young souls are flocking to the Centre for instruction.

"I want the pupils to feel the spirit of Art and not merely master the technique. I want them to learn the meaning of the Art, I want them to be inspired by the divine source of our Art. Dance is not a mere physical exercise; it is a spiritual reaction; it is a dedication to the spirit beyond. I am inculcating this into my pupils."

Her interest is not confined to Bhārata Nāṭya only. In Kalākshetra, drama, music, kathākali, painting, sculpture and other arts are taught, while she herself has studied many forms of art, both Indian and western. So many dancers today mix many styles of dance, though they know very little of each style. There may be some good ideas in the different arts of India which might be suitable to incorporate into one dance, but she does not believe in mixing the different techniques, because, she says, "the result shows such a lack of harmony that it is unpleasant to see. Those dancers who try to incorporate a bit of every art usually know the least of every art. Wherever Kathākali and Bhārata Nāṭya have been mixed, it is quite obvious that movements are taken from an impression

rather than from deep study and understanding.

"I wish very much that the people would not encourage such things. I wish that the artists would aim at something more than mere applause. For my part, I like praise; I am encouraged by the public applause. But I do not seek it. My one aim is to raise the standard of Art. If I work, India must benefit for centuries by that effort of mine. It is to India, the India of ages, that I dedicate my work. I always remember that it is through our interpretation of her soul that India is being judged by the world."

The talk slowly turned to the realm of Films. She was deeply pained at the plight of our Film Industry. "People have to get together and work together to save it from degradation," she said. She also revealed her desire to produce a few Model Films. "I wish to start with a short film such as a 10-minute picture, and see how I succeed. I shall then proceed to a full-length film. There can be no freedom for India without the rebirth of our Art and Culture. Art can be successfully used to bring about unity between our peoples and stir patriotic consciousness in the masses. It all depends on how we use our medium. If enthusiastic and art-loving film people would extend their co-operation, I would love to produce pictures with a meaning and a message, for the film is one of the most potent instruments of educating the nation."

These were the outpourings of the yearning heart of this great artist. Her heart throbs with the love of India; her lofty soul rises above the mundane level of materialist philosophy; her visionary eyes see the dawn of the day when India's Art and Culture will secure her the much-longed-for Freedom, and when the world will look to India for inspiration and guidance. It is this living poem of patriotism and culture that is the inspiration of Kalākshetra, the presiding deity of this sacred Temple of Art at Adyar. Here she toils day and night for the release of the hidden soul of India. Let us, then, co-operate with her in her noble efforts.

Adyar News and Notes

WHAT WOULDST THOU BE ?

A blessing to each one surrounding me :
A chalice of dew to the weary heart,
A sunbeam of joy bidding sorrow depart,
To the storm-tossed vessel a beacon-light,
A nightingale song in the darkest night,
A beckoning hand to a far-off goal,
An angel of love to each friendless soul :

Such would I be,

Oh that happiness were for me !

—F. R. HAVERGAL

ADYAR DAY—THE TWENTY-SECOND

Early morning hours mark the opening of these celebrations at Adyar—and, so pleasantly cool for February, as well with the advantage of the advanced time. The meeting at Headquarters began at 8.5 a.m. (by the clock), twelve minutes before the passing-hour of Colonel Olcott. The inspiring prayers of all the religions, a few words of explanation, and then came a period of silent stillness, when all stood in memory of the President-Founder, thinking too of C. W. Leadbeater whose birthday this was.

The Hall was well filled, for Adyar Day makes a special appeal; representatives of the many Departments, and of the clerical Staff, the Young Theosophists, and the stirring group of scholars from Kalā-kshetra and the Besant Theosophical School, with the teachers, and among them all, the beloved figure of "the oldest resident," Mr. Subbiah Chetty, gathered in a warm friendly group to attend the President, Shrimati Rukmini Devi and the Vice-President in their homage on this great day. Shrimati Rukmini Devi spoke first on C. W. Leadbeater giving from her living picture the impression of a great Soul, with a rather conventional youth and early manhood, who threw aside conventions when needed for occult living, in his devotion, wide and deep, to

the Masters. His training of others was in friendly informal fashion, but his discipline for character was strict. The outstanding note left upon the mind was that of a happy spirit, thinking depression a disease. The President spoke on the tone Colonel Olcott also gave to his work, and charged us impressively to realize how little persons as such mattered—yes, even the individuals at Adyar, dedicated to the constant building of the ideal Adyar. The important matter was for all to give their work, thought and emotional impetus to Theosophy and The Theosophical Society.

Meanwhile the 600 children from the Olcott Harijan School marched in a way imposing and picturesque, singing, with banners and pictures garlanded, to do reverence to their Founder where his bust marks the place of his cremation. On their return to school, Shrimati Rukmini Devi presided over their meeting, where two of the teachers spoke—in Tamil of course—to the children about their Founder, and his junior co-worker. Then trophies were presented to Bulbuls, Girl Guides, Cubs and Scouts, and many useful and attractive prizes were given for sports events. The lighting ceremony and the unfurling of the flag that preceded the speeches and prize-giving were dignified, and the concluding words of Rukmini Devi, encouraging the children to work in the light of the inspiration of the Founder, lifted up the same tone.

At S. Michael's Church, in the morning, the Rev. R. Balfour Clarke, who was one near and dear to C. W. Leadbeater, celebrated the Holy Eucharist, and there was a fine note of dedication and blessing added to the day. A very good photograph of Bishop Leadbeater was in the Church, and seemed to add the happy radiance of his own personality.

The children of the Besant School found a fitting close to the whole happy day in that

which may well be called a chat, so direct and simple in touch was it, by Shrimati Rukmini under a banyan tree in Damodar Gardens, when she told them intimate details of the lives of the two great leaders, making them very real, and at the same time a fine urge towards noble character-making.

—E. MARION LAVENDER

OLCOTT SCHOOL REPORT

"Resisting fate, put forth manliness with strength of soul." The Olcott Harijan Free Schools present their compliments and request your generous support to the Olcott Memorial School, Adyar, the School for the poor"—so runs a neatly printed slip, enclosed in the year's report (1942). It is a fine record of work done in three Schools, and is issued in booklet form, with a Foreword from Dr. Arundale as follows:

"I am publishing this little booklet containing the Annual Report for 1942 by the Correspondent of the Olcott Memorial School, because I regard it as signal testimony to the great worth of the work for so many years done in the School by Mr. M. Krishnan and his colleagues.

"The School has received innumerable appreciations both from members of the general public and from educational authorities who are concerned with the inspection and administration of the institution. The little booklet is, therefore, a tribute which I most happily offer to Mr. Krishnan and his colleagues, and I hope it will be the means of causing further interest to be taken in this great memorial to Colonel Olcott's affectionate interest in those who in his time were much more downtrodden than they are today.

"I should like to draw very special attention to the beautiful words of Dr. Maria Montessori on page 13."

"MAZDAZNAN"

This is a little journal published monthly by Mazdaznan, Kashmir, for Mazdaznan, India. The Editress is Mrs. Clarence Gasque, a very good friend of Adyar institutions, specially of Olcott School.

The December issue of *Mazdaznan* carries a portrait of the late Dr. O. L. Ha'nish and articles and notes from his writings. All these are of special interest to his admirers and followers but there are also items of general interest and helpfulness.

A NIGHT SCHOOL

Night Schools are a good part of welfare work in the villages around Adyar.

Mrs. Chase was invited to open a new Night School in a village inhabited by "fishermen of the Coromandel Coast." It was an impressive function. A welcome address to Mr. and Mrs. Chase set forth the story of the 100,000 fishing population on the coast from Vizagapatam to Negapatam. Their past is interesting history, and their present a poverty-stricken existence. A village welfare group, begun in 1940, Bharathvar Sangam, has undertaken to help them along "Education, Health, Temperance, and the improvement of their fishing methods and their social life." The Night School was opened and Mrs. Chase said she blest it with all her heart. "They deserve all the help and goodwill we can give them—both the villagers and their helpers."

100 SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Joint Editor of *The Young Citizen* writes in the February issue:

"We are happy to inform our readers that there was a welcome response at this Convention to the Editor's appeal for more supporters of our Journal. Already we have enrolled nearly 100 new subscribers and there are promises for 20 to 25 subscriptions from each of the following Theosophical Federations in India: Bihar, United Provinces, Central India and Rajputana. We do hope that other Federations will come forward and take up an equal number."

BROTHER RAJA IN ENGLAND

News and Notes for Nov.-Dec. just received here says: "Stop Press!!! Mr. C. Jinārājādāsa has arrived in England, and has agreed to take part in the proceedings both

on Foundation Day and at the Support Convention."

Mr. Jinarājadāsa's address to the American Convention, *The Theosophist as the Ideal Citizen in War and in Peace*, is being sold for the Red Cross.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED from overseas

The American Theosophist, Oct. and Nov.

Espiritualidad Oct.-Nov.-Dec.

Evolucion, October.

The Liberal Catholic, October.

Pretoria Lodge Newsletter, December.

Theosophical News and Notes, Nov.-Dec.

Theosophy in Action, December.

Theosophy in Australia, Dec.-Jan.

The Torch, Sept.-October.

Transvaal Fed. Newsletter, December.

The Middle East Forces

Theosophy amongst the Arabs

THE Centre in Cairo has become in a fashion a permanent nucleus for members in the army in the Middle East. Mr. Tom Naylor, whose work has been mentioned here before, sends reports from time to time of work done and thoughts centred. "The Newsletter" that was, and, it is hoped, is, circulating from Cairo Centre among these scattered and migratory members, has had a definite tone directed towards reconstruction, and to the much-needed foundation-of-Theosophy applied, to be given to it. Discussions and study to that end, when at Cairo, have led to articles being sent to the Press. In one case *The Eastern Times*, printing both article and a leader on it, offered to the American University space in its columns for articles, so widening the scope of its policy of aiding hygiene and reconstruction processes among rural Arabs. Mr. Naylor is having articles translated for Arab readers, urging the need that the Arabs should have the influence of two movements, the one for the elementary education of the people, and the other for the religious-educational-university. These were the outcome of the "individual uniqueness" he sees grounded of necessity in Theosophic teachings, when applied in that environment to prevailing conditions.

There is a wider vision also, that has two aspects. First the ideal of Cairo becoming more than what it is already, a centre to which both Iraq and Syria look for some

leadership towards united activity in the Middle East, which is described as "a newly developed area for tomorrow." This area requires the radiation of Theosophical teachings applied to the immediate problems that arise in constructing a base for Muslim unity, and for a Mid-East-Federation, that might become one of the nuclei in the active wholeness of the cell-life of a World Federation.

The second aspect is the very essential thorough consideration of the bearing of Theosophic principles upon the general position of construction. This earnest group of practical students sees the need for a study course in social organization, dealing with today's problems and new and vital efforts towards their solving, with day-to-day reference to events in the Press. To them the fulfilment of life needs technique and organization, and, "the Theosophical basis of unity and co-ordination." It is such work as this that specialized groups are doing in certain directions in the Theosophical World University Centre. Enquiries can be made at the Section Headquarters in England and in the United States. Attention must also be drawn to the two Study Courses based on the Laws of Manu, available both from London and from Wheaton, U.S.A., the second founded on the former. Here is a good beginning for those who wish for direct study towards the practical effect of the principles in re-building the social polity.

—E. M. LAVENDER

The President's Correspondence

35th CONVENTION IN S. AFRICA

DEAR DR. ARUNDALE: Your splendid message to our recent Convention was received with great acclaim and enthusiasm. Under the Presidentship of your special Agent, Mr. Jan Kruisheer, we had a most wonderful and inspiring Convention recently at Cape Town. I was directed by Convention to send you by post a special Reply to your Message as it was drafted out by a little band of the members and warmly and unanimously endorsed by all. The following is the text of this Reply:

"The Convention of the South African Section, which met in Cape Town on January 1st, 1943, received with the deepest gratitude and appreciation the Message from you which was read by Mr. Jan Kruisheer when the Convention opened.

"We have, as you so justly observe, many deep-seated problems, racial, economic and others, though to compare these with those which exist in India would be invidious.

"We feel encouraged by your welcome message to face these problems of ours with a deeper understanding and a more sympathetic insight.

"We shall keep in mind your injunction to regard our country as one of the creative workshops, and mean to make our Section worthy of its part as an instrument of the Great Plan."

I am now deep in the business of getting all Convention reports off to the printers for the next *Link*, where you will see a very full report. It certainly was one of the happiest and most fruitful Conventions ever held here, and Mr. Kruisheer, as usual, endeared himself to all. An exceptional number of delegates attended. Considering war restrictions and the difficulty of travelling this showed their

enthusiasm. One even came all the way from Rhodesia.

—CLARA M. CODD,
General Secretary

Dr. Arundale's Reply

Dear Colleague: I am very much obliged to the Convention of The Theosophical Society in South Africa for their appreciation of the message I sent them some time ago.

South Africa is, of course, a melting pot, and while for the moment the fires of tribulation may be rendering the work difficult, in due course pure gold will be the result, and it will be of its own kind and beauty. If South Africa is the home for wonderful diamonds and other precious stones, it must also be the home for wonderful gems of instruction in every department of human life.

13 February 1943

CONVENTION IN IRELAND

Irish Theosophists assembled Annual Convention send loyal sincere good wishes for health happiness and to Sri Rukmini Devi.

—KENNEDY

Dr. Arundale's Reply

Dear Colleague: Many thanks for the gracious cable from Theosophists in Ireland. They are very good to remember us, and I can assure you that we so often think of your beautiful land with all its great opportunities in the future.

13 February 1943

ADYAR DAY: NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand Section sends loving gratitude Adyar Headquarters seventeenth February.

—HUNT

[Received in time to be read at the morning meeting on the 17th at Adyar.]

The Order of the Round Table

BY ELISE STAGGS

Acting International Secretary-Treasurer of the Order

CONVENTION, U. S. A.

THE annual Convention of the Order of the Round Table in the U. S. A. was quite "International" this year. We had several beautifully illustrated magazines from Australia and New Zealand, the small magazines *Torch* and *Onward* published by the New Zealand Round Tables; some little, carved, wooden shoes from Holland; two wooden animals finely carved and polished from Poland; the exhibit made by the scouts and cubs of the Olcott Panchama School, Adyar; and a scrap-book. This scrap-book has been made by Mrs. Ben-Allen Samuel who has the longest consecutive record of Round Table work in the U. S. A. For years she handled the International work, Friendship Letters, Panchama School gifts, 400 boxes packed by the Round Table children, exhibits of dolls from the U. S. A. to an International Convention, exchange of small exhibits such as the shoes, animals, etc., and many post cards and pictures. The old letters, pictures, postcard exhibits, R. T. magazines, etc., not only make one of the most fascinating scrap-books I ever saw but are also valuable for the archives.

AUSTRALIA

Encouraging work has been done in Australia. While Knight of Honour, Rāja, was in that country, last May, he wrote me as follows: "I have to inform you that the Senior Knight of the Order, Knight Rukmini, has, by a cable dated 25 April 1942, appointed Mr. Morris D. Briggs (Knight Servitor) of Brisbane, Chief Knight of the Order in Australia. Mr. Briggs was a stretcher-bearer in the last war, and was decorated with the military medal "For Valour." His address is Box 389 E., G.P.O., Brisbane.

Knight Servitor wrote me immediately, and before leaving for Olcott I was able to send him all the help possible. With a real hero at the helm Australia will surely go forward into the bright future with the old banner of chivalry going before.

CANADA

A little more work has been done and we are that much nearer finding Leaders and a Chief Knight for Canada. Odd but the two best and most recent prospects are a Mrs. Dorothy Anderson of Calgary and a Mrs. Amy Anderson of Walkerville.

COLUMBIANA

Another number of *Revista Teosofica Colombiana* was sent to me but no letter. They at least remember me, and now that they have their own Chief Knight to help them in Spanish the work may progress more rapidly.

COSTA RICA

Mrs. Carmen de Madrigal, P.O. Box 1911, San José, has been delayed from starting the work last spring. Mrs. Esther de Megerville wrote me that now she had returned from a voyage Mrs. de Madrigal would soon undertake the work. This letter came while I was at Olcott, and Mr. José B. Acuna, of Costa Rica, translated it for me. Mr. Acuna was giving us a splendid series of lectures at our Summer School.

CUBA

Miss Maria Duany writes that they are closing their weekly meetings about the middle of June until September, and will have only a monthly meeting during the vacation. She goes on to say:

"Yes, German Valdetarro wrote me. He is an enthusiastic young Theosophist whom I have known through correspondence for sometime, and I do think the idea of naming him Chief Knight for South America is a good one. Since you have already appointed me pending ratification—[now given]—Chief Knight for Cuba and Central America, his appointment to South America would cover all territory in Latin-America and make work between these countries easier. I certainly agree to the appointment.

"We have a copy of *Mary Jane's Party*, thank you. It is lovely. I hope to translate it so we can use it here sometime. Our children love dramatics and this little play is most interesting.

"The other day we asked the children to write down a few suggestions as to activities they would like when we open again after September, and I am copying a few of them in case they can be of use, or if you like to know what some of these youngsters of ours think and like :

"To continue studying foreign countries ; To correspond with other Round Tables ; To commemorate the foundation of the first Round Table group (I am sorry but I do not know the date—does anyone ?) ; To study interesting things, industries, plant and animal life, etc. ; To make a plant museum ; To have periodic picnics ; To make a small garden ; To make sweets and candy occasionally ; To have a party or an entertainment once in a while ; To visit interesting places in the community ; To make drawings and pictures ; To increase our library."

It would seem children are the same the world over, because that is about what our children in the United States want, and many of these things we are doing in one or another of the Tables.

INDIA

From *The Bombay Theosophical Bulletin* of January 1942, we gain a very fine picture of the work of the Round Table in India. There are 16 Tables in India with a total membership of 275. "The different Tables have been conducting ceremonial and non-ceremonial meetings, and the members have interested themselves in social and cultural work. Miss Tehmina Wadia, Chief Knight for India, has been doing her work by sending monthly letters to all the Tables and by visiting various towns where she either revived dormant Tables or founded new ones. We wish Miss Wadia all success in her strenuous work for the Round Table, and we trust that during the coming year she will be able to carry the message of the Order of the Round Table with its splendid motto, 'Live Pure, Speak True, Right Wrong, Follow the King' to a larger and ever-increasing circle of the youth of this country. Miss Wadia's address is : The Theosophical Colony, Juhu, Bombay."

OUR LEADERS

Knight Rāja was gracious enough to give some of our active members about an hour of his time. Several troublesome points were straightened out and we all received much help. Probably we have been progressing along lines they would approve, and if we keep our Great Leaders close to our hearts we shall not go far wrong. After the war we will be ready together to work for the New Age and for the Youth who will inspire and lead it.

Perhaps you feel, as I do, that through this small organization we are weaving strong bonds of Brotherhood. A little leaven is a mighty thing when They are using it.

Arnold Bennett, author of *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day*, refers to Dr. Besant's *Thought Power* in his book, and praises it very highly : Another example of how the concepts of Theosophy are becoming more and more popular as the world begins to understand.

—The American Theosophist

Count de S. Germain—Some Notes

“THE Count of S. Germain was a great personage who appeared in the last century, and early in the present one in France, England and elsewhere.”

In the literature of the time he is referred to as an enigmatical personage. Frederick II, King of Prussia, used to say of him that he was a man whom no one had ever been able to make out. Many are his “biographies,” and each is wilder than the other. By some he was regarded as an incarnate God, by others as a clever Alsatian Jew. One thing is certain, Count de S. Germain—whatever his real patronymic may have been—had right to his name and title, for he had bought a property called San Germano, in the Italian Tyrol, and paid the Pope for the title. He was uncommonly handsome, and his enormous erudition and linguistic capacities are undeniable, for he spoke English, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Russian, Swedish, Danish, and many Slavonian and Oriental languages, with equal facility with a native. He was extremely wealthy, never received a *sou* from anyone—in fact never accepted a glass of water or broke bread with anyone—but made most extravagant presents of superb jewellery to all his friends, even to the royal families of Europe. His proficiency in music was marvellous; he played on every instrument, the violin being his favourite. “S. Germain rivalled Paganini himself,” was said of him by an octogenarian Belgian in 1835, after hearing the “Genoese *mæstro*.” “It is S. Germain resurrected who plays the violin in the body of an Italian skeleton,” exclaimed a Lithuanian baron who had heard both.

He never laid claim to spiritual powers, but proved to have a right to such claim. He used to pass into a dead trance from thirty-seven to forty-nine hours without awakening, and then knew all he had to know, and demonstrated the fact by prophesying futurity and

never making a mistake. It is he who prophesied before the Kings Louis XV and XVI, and the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. Many were the still living witnesses in the first quarter of 18th century who testified to his marvellous memory; he could read a paper in the morning and, though hardly glancing at it, could repeat its contents without missing one word days afterwards; he could write with two hands at once, the right hand writing a piece of poetry, the left a diplomatic paper of the greatest importance. He read sealed letters without touching them, while still in the hand of those who brought them to him. He was the greatest adept in transmuting metals, making gold and the most marvellous diamonds, an art, he said, he had learned from certain Brahmins in India, who taught him the artificial crystallization (“quickenings”) of pure carbon. As our Brother Kenneth Mackenzie has it: “In 1780, when on a visit to the French Ambassador to The Hague, he broke to pieces with a hammer a superb diamond of his own manufacture, the counterpart of which, also manufactured by himself, he had just before sold to a jeweller for 5500 louis d’or.”

He was the friend and confidant of Count Orloff in 1772 at Vienna, whom he had helped and saved in S. Petersburg in 1762, when concerned in the famous political conspiracies of that time; he also became intimate with Frederick the Great of Prussia. As a matter of course, he had numerous enemies, and therefore it is not to be wondered at if all the gossip invented about him is now attributed to his own confessions. . . .

“However that may be, Count S. Germain was certainly the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries. Europe knew him not. Perchance some may recognize him at the next *Terreur*, which will affect all Europe when it comes, and not one country alone.”—Compiled by A. P.

Among the National Societies, 1941-42

[Condensed from the General Secretaries' annual reports received at Adyar. It is heartening to note that despite the ravages of war there are Sections of The Theosophical Society active in the five Continents—Asia, Europe, America, Australasia, Africa.]

ASIA

1. *India*: A very satisfactory increase in membership is recorded and a good deal of work has been accomplished. Early in the year the General Secretary of the European Federation, Mr. J.E. van Dissel, who had come from England to attend the Adyar Convention in 1941, but who, with Mr. J. Kruisheer, arrived a little late after it was over, visited many Lodges in India and greatly helped to rouse interest in Theosophy. Mr. G. N. Gokhale himself also visited many places in March, April, July and August, giving a total of 82 talks in 24 places.

Although war itself has touched India but lightly, it saw something of its distress with the thousands of refugees who streamed into the country with the occupation of Burma, while political unrest also accounted for disturbed conditions which prevented the General Secretary from travelling as much as he would have liked to for the visiting of the many Lodges.

The Headquarters in Benares has seen the completion of the Bhārata Samāja Temple which was dedicated by Shrimati Rukmini Devi with a Veda-pathana on 23 December 1942, just before the opening of the International Theosophical Convention at Benares.

The Headquarters Hall has been renovated and is now adorned and blessed with a beautiful bust of Dr. Besant.

The Besant School is continuing under the enthusiastic guidance of Bro. Kanitkar, and is helping "in maintaining a standard in a standardless world."

In conclusion Mr. Gokhale assures us "that The Theosophical Society is again coming into its own . . . but we cannot remain un-

mindful of the great deal that remains to be done. . . . Living as we are in the most critical period of the world's history, let it be said that we quit ourselves like men."

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2. *Burma*: Until the occupation of the country by Japan The Society continued to do very useful work. Although The Society as such has now ceased to function in Burma, as in other occupied countries, many members in Burma are believed to be still carrying on the work to the best of their ability. Over half the members have now returned to India as evacuees, and, scattered throughout the various provinces there, are making use of this opportunity to aid the Indian Lodges where they now reside.

At the 30th Annual Convention, held at Rangoon on 16-17 November 1941, a vigorous programme for the year was drawn up. One of the Resolutions was to start a Theosophical College in Rangoon, and a Theosophical University Association was immediately formed to carry out this object and to collect funds, so that it might be started in June 1942. Owing to the war this plan is now in suspension.

The B.E.T. Schools recorded more admissions during the year, but these had to be closed owing to the war.

The Young Theosophists "carried on their work excellently well and much work was done by them for the Burma Humanitarian League."

The General Secretary concludes: "We hope that ere long we shall be able to go back to Burma to renew our work for the cause of Theosophy and spread the great Message with greater vigour for the helping of the people so that brotherhood and happiness may reign throughout the world."

EUROPE

3. *European Federation*: The work on the Continent has more or less come to a complete standstill, only Sweden, Portugal and Switzerland being able to continue their activities. The work in the four sections of the British Isles is being carried on splendidly.

The General Secretary, Mr. J. E. van Dissel, made an extensive tour of the Lodges in Ireland, and also visited Scotland and various parts of England. A stay of five months in India and Adyar gave opportunity for full discussion of future work with the President and the making of many valuable contacts.

Remaining in contact with workers everywhere as far as present circumstances allow, Mr. van Dissel writes that special mention must be made of the fine spirit and devotion of all members of The Society in the occupied countries where such difficult times are being experienced.

4. *England*: Period, April 1941 to March 1942. The General Secretary, Mr. J. Coats, stresses the continuance of all activities through a most difficult war period. Greater interest in Theosophy is shown by an increase in inquiries, more subscribers to the Library at Headquarters, and larger numbers attending public lectures. The Information Department carries on regular correspondence with inquirers whose letters come to Headquarters.

As it was impossible to arrange study week-ends and summer schools on a national scale the Federations held many gatherings in their own areas, for the most part well attended. The General Secretary and Headquarters' touring lecturers gave much time to visiting the Federations and meeting many members personally.

Several new pamphlets have been published, but it is being questioned whether "haphazard distribution of this kind is at all worth while," though individual approach obtains satisfactory results.

The Peace and Reconstruction Committee published a statement of its findings which

was sent to Adyar in time for its consideration at the International Convention, 1941.

Realizing the "great responsibilities laid upon us in helping to usher in a new world in which a true understanding of brotherhood shall be an indispensable foundation-stone," the General Secretary concludes his report with the cheering assertion that "it can be said that in all its parts The Society is well able to compete with the very difficult times in which we live," though "there is room for much improvement, new ideas, new means and other methods of presentation in a world which is changing so rapidly."

5. *Scotland*: All the Lodges continued their work, their study groups and public lectures.

Work parties for war activities are doing well everywhere. Five members of the Arundale Youth Lodge are on active service, one already having made the great sacrifice. The 32nd Annual Convention, held in spite of many travel difficulties in 1942, with Mr. John Coats presiding, was a great success. Publicity work has been kept up mainly by the distribution of literature and pamphlets, and by individual contacts.

6. *Ireland*: The work of the Lodges has been carried on steadily, and membership numbers have slightly improved in spite of practical isolation from Britain where representatives generally attend Conventions and other activities. Travel restrictions have made this impossible during the current year. In spite of the neutrality of Eire, war conditions press more and more heavily on the whole of Ireland, making the continuance of Theosophical activities more difficult also.

The Ritual of the Mystic Star, regularly performed in Dublin, is attracting an increasing number of the general public. *Theosophy in Ireland* comes out regularly; the Theosophical Order of Service does much work in both Dublin and Belfast among the poor and the troops.

Although there is an increasing tendency towards disharmony and friction in the

country generally, the General Secretary, Mr. T. Kennedy, asserts the faith of the Section "in the ultimate triumph of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, in spite of the darkness of the immediate outlook."

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7. *Wales*: War conditions and rigid economy have severely curtailed all normal activities, both at Headquarters and in the Lodges. The National Library service was therefore more important than ever and more use than usual has been made of it in consequence.

During the time under consideration the Twentieth Anniversary of the founding of The Theosophical Society in Wales took place on June 28, and 44 of the original Fellows are still giving their loyal service now. Having acted as General Secretary for the whole of the 20 years, Mr. Peter Freeman intimated to the Council his intention not to stand again, but no other nomination being forthcoming, he consented to his name being put forward again.

An unusually successful Twentieth Annual Convention was held at Cardiff on October 25-26, 1941, and though small in size, "it performed a useful purpose in these times of stress."

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8. *Portugal*: The Section has carried on. The membership is 153; there are 7 Lodges. The Section's Bulletin appeared regularly and published the translation of Miss Clara Codd's little book, *The Technic of Spiritual Life*. Theosophical anniversaries were celebrated, Convention was held, a public lecture given every month. The T.O.S. helped the war-stricken. The General Secretary, Mme. J. S. Lefèvre, sends the Section's greetings to Adyar and hopes that "our Headquarters will be protected from any harm"; also that "Peace will come soon and then we shall be able to work better next year."

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9. *Finland*: The work of the Lodges went on without interruption. The Easter Convention of 1942 was a happy gathering of

127 members from all parts of the country, and besides the usual activities the Youth Lodge performed the Ritual of the Mystic Star in Finnish. The magazine *Teosofi* continues to appear regularly. A new flat has been bought for the Section Headquarters, and the General Secretary notes with satisfaction that "the Section is alive."

* * *

10. *Russia outside Russia*: As most of the countries in which there are Russian Lodges have been overrun by the Axis Powers, the Geneva Headquarters of the Section has had little or no news from them. Lodge Svetlana, Boston, has continued to meet and study and pay all dues regularly. Private letters from Paris, London, Brussels, Berlin, Belgrade, Marseilles, Hamburg, Warsaw and Shanghai tell that all members remain faithful to their ideals in spite of very trying conditions.

Since Conventions could not be held these last two years, the Geneva group held a friendly and successful "Russian Day" instead.

As the Swiss Section needs lecturers, the General Secretary of the Russian Section has helped and her courses of lectures have been well attended.

The Russian workers in Geneva have also strongly supported the Order of Service in Switzerland and has collaborated with the Red Cross in work for refugees, prisoners in internment and concentration camps, as well as with correspondence.

AMERICA

11. *United States of America* (July 1941—1942): During this period the United States of America abandoned neutrality and came in on the side of the United Nations, taking its own place on the fighting fronts. Besides this stirring event of immense importance, general elections were held for General Secretary of the Section, or National President as he is called in the United States. Mr. Sidney A. Cook was re-elected for a further term by a larger number of votes cast by a greater

proportion of the membership than ever before. He intends to emphasize three basic elements :

1. Study Theosophy and promote friendship ; 2. Encourage members to put Theosophy into practice ; 3. Draw the young near to Theosophy.

There was a gain in membership and the numbers of those who resigned or became inactive were the lowest for the last thirty and twenty-eight years respectively.

The financial account was not yet available, but promised to be encouraging, the Section having operated well within its cash income.

All departments of work were pushed to the extent that availability of personnel and strength permitted, and practically all the Lodges were covered by the tours of several well-known lecturers.

An experimental radio series over two Detroit stations was instructive, but did not produce results considered to be commensurate with the cost and effort and was discontinued. Recordings in the programme of "Dear Mr. Cheer" has a very gratifying acceptance with radio stations, the demand being beyond the Section's capacity to supply, and further sets of sample recordings are under consideration.

Publicity work has gone ahead to the limit of resources available ; the sales of the Theosophical Press have increased considerably.

A survey among members for the improvement of *The American Theosophist* is under study and will be acted upon so far as is possible.

A new but extremely important activity has been inaugurated in the Successful Service Bureau, which is collecting and correlating the experiences and ideas of members for the purpose of improving the methods and technique of work in all departments.

Summing up, the Report appeals for "greater knowledge and for greater brotherhood, and of the two, brotherhood is infinitely the more important." It also sounds the reassuring note that "The Society in its physical

welfare and in its spirit was never sounder than today."

* * *

12. *Canada* : The General Secretary, Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, reports a growing interest in Theosophy and a coming-in of many new members. "Our work and our leisure are alike dominated by the call to arms and the noise of battle. Canada for her size has out-rivalled all other nations in her service of production, in contributing food, munitions and combatants."

The Canadian Theosophist plays an important part in the life of the Section.

The Fraternalization Convention was a great success in spite of travel limitations, and five young men gave especially inspiring addresses.

The Section mourns the loss of many staunch old friends—who had known H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott and Dr. Besant personally.

Mr. Smythe himself has reached the ripe age of 81 and looks "forward to further co-operation with them in due season."

* * *

13. *Canadian Federation* : The Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. J. T. S. Morris, reports regular work from all the Lodges, many including public lectures and study classes for inquirers in their programmes. In support of the President's campaign, most Lodges devoted special meetings to the study of Post-War Reconstruction problems. Towards the end of 1941 Mr. Morris visited all the Lodges and Groups, doing much public speaking as well as holding members' meetings and succeeded in welding "the Federation into a more unified whole." He is also paving the way for a reunion of all Theosophical activities in Canada and was hoping to further this end with visits to Section Lodges as well as Federation Lodges in the autumn of 1942.

AUSTRALASIA

14. *Australia* : Owing to war conditions no Convention was held, but wherever possible Lodges in the Capital Cities held meetings in the nature of Support Conventions.

The highlight of the year was the visit of Mr. C. Jinarājadāsa, who, arriving in Sydney on 5 February 1942, remained until after Easter. A "Win the War" Congress, held by Blavatsky Lodge in lieu of Convention, had the privilege of having Mr. Jinarājadāsa in the chair. "Prior to leaving for his home in London via the United States of America, Mr. Jinarājadāsa was enabled to include Brisbane in his itinerary, much to the delight of the Queensland brethren."

A new Lodge, chartered in December 1941, shows promise of doing excellent work in the important city of Newcastle.

Six issues of *Theosophy in Australia* were published and sent gratis to all members, while Broadcasting for three sessions each week has been an important branch of The Society's work in Australia.

"The whole Australian nation," reports Mr. Litchfield, "is solidly behind the tremendous war effort now being made, and many members are actively engaged in war work," while two members have made the supreme sacrifice—"killed in action."

15. *New Zealand*: Good progress has been made. "We are fortunate in being able to keep Mr. Geoffrey Hodson here and Theosophical thought is spreading in consequence."

"Most of our young men and many of the older ones are away on active service, they are missed in our Lodges but our Society is strengthened and honoured by their service."

The General Secretary, Miss Hunt, visited all the Lodges. All the subsidiary Theosoph-

ical activities are well supported. There has been a steady increase in membership.

The Vasanta Garden School is gaining steadily increasing prestige in the country.

In addition to the Annual Convention, a special Easter Festival was arranged in the South by Christchurch Lodge when all kindered movements combined in a spirit of consecration.

Owing to import restrictions the Theosophical Book Depot has found it difficult to meet all the demands of increased sales.

AFRICA

16. *South Africa*: In spite of the war or because of the war, "quite a number of new members" have been enrolled. Because of travelling restrictions and blackouts there has been less propaganda than usual, but all Lodges have kept up their meetings, and some, like Johannesburg Lodge, have initiated a new approach to the public through dramatic art, which has been very successful. The war has increased the great value of Cape Town as an international seaport, and the Lodge there has met the new conditions with lectures which have proved most successful.

War service of one kind or another is going on in all Lodges. In Rhodesia interest in Theosophy is steadily growing. Young Theosophists are everywhere doing enthusiastic work and propaganda.

Mr. J. Kruisheer, General Secretary of Holland, who went to South Africa as Presidential Agent in July 1942, has started work which is much welcomed.

THE THEOSOPHICAL WORKER

Editor: GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

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