

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE

In the September issue of *The Canadian Theosophist* there was an article by Mr. Ernest Wood which has given occasion to much comment. Mr. Wood's article appeared elsewhere, and has had a general circulation. When it was received it was too late to reach Mr. Wood in England before the date at which it was desired to publish it, in order to anticipate his lecture tour in Canada, and it did not seem courteous to change or cut it in any way. Mr. Wood has subsequently said that the Editor should have blue-pencilled any statements he considered incorrect. But other editors have not done so, and few contributors are willing to submit to such treatment without at least previous consultation. On his arrival in Toronto certain documents were submitted to Mr. Wood which indicated the erroneous character of the statements made, and correspondence in the magazine since then has called attention to some of these. There should be nothing in all this for warmth of feeling, but there are some readers who feel as though the foundations of the earth were being moved because some writers are allowed to make statements that do not in every particular accord with fact. There is a great deal to be gained from the knowledge that none of our writers is infallible, and that this being so we must learn to rely on our own judgment. Even if we regard some one else as infallible, as some undoubtedly do, the infallibility rests on the private judgment of those who ac-

cept the infallibility and select the infallible authorities. In other words, those who profess to believe in infallibility thereby themselves profess infallibility. If, for example, I declare my belief in the infallibility of Madam Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, W. Q. Judge or Annie Besant, I am thereby proclaiming my own infallibility, for in no other way can I assert theirs. Most of us are too stupid to see this, but it does not affect the fact. And it is this impugning of their own infallibility that is the real cause of the resentment of those who assert the infallibility of others. Judgment and condemnation of others must obviously rest on a similar claim to infallibility. How do you know? Are you incapable of error? Are you infallible? We must then be humble if we would attain to wisdom, and humbler still when wisdom we have mastered.

We can only rely on the mature judgment of the wisest students, and when we find any teachings varying from standards that are generally accepted it should not be made an occasion for clamour but of quiet investigation. Obvious contradictions and incompatibilities will soon be discredited if mere authority is not relied upon; with open minds and eager intellects the views of the majority are likely to preserve the truth intact. We need never despair of truth. It has its own recuperative energies, and a self-preserved quality which renders it indestructible. It conforms to universal experience. Science is its offspring and

mathematics its handmaid. We can depend upon the multiplication table, but not on all who use it. Similarly with The Secret Doctrine.

It was pointed out to Mr. Wood in connection with his article that much of the new teaching in the last thirty years (since 1893) was contradictory of the Secret Doctrine, and that the body of teaching known by that name was the result of disclosures made on the strength of investigations carried on "for thousands of years by generations of adepts." They do not claim infallibility, but accuracy of observation and unlimited corroboration. When, then, we find divergences, contradictions, incompatibilities, and are told that these uncorroborated statements, unfounded except from observations by one or two through a very brief period, are to set aside the well-grounded and harmonious system, the result of the labours of thousands of years, we must at least leave room for investigation and comparison, for toleration and the impartiality of science. No one claims infallibility for the Secret Doctrine. Surely no claim for infallibility should be made for those who tinker with it and alter its principles.

Such reflections are all the more natural since the new conceptions are admittedly the result of investigations carried on upon the astral plane by the development of psychic faculties. The gravest warnings have always been given regarding all such investigations, as the astral plane is admittedly the home of error and delusion. Everyone finds there exactly what he seeks, as it reflects what is in the mind of the seeker and contains a picture of every mad dream that ever tempted the world. The number of systems, cosmogonies, new religions, cults of all kinds that have been dug out of the astral light in the last fifty or sixty years is not easily reckoned, but their literature would fill a library of Alexandria and the world would not suffer if it met a similar fate. It is all for the education of the ignorant, however, and the cultivation of the intuition. It is easy to know the marks of the astral source of such revelations. Sex,

sacerdotalism, sectionalism, sectarianism, selfishness in all its forms, and self-aggrandisement are the tokens and witnesses of all psychic revelations. Does it draw people together by its study and discipline? We may credit it to the Ancient Wisdom. Does it separate them and set them at enmity? We may be sure it belongs to the psychic realm.

Students of the Secret Doctrine have found in it a wonderfully unitive influence. Students of the various new revelations have unfortunately been found to divide themselves into separate groups and to exhibit violent antagonism towards all who do not agree with them. On examination, the writings on which they rely are found to be largely in contradiction of teachings that are fundamental in the Secret Doctrine. So much the worse for the Secret Doctrine, many will say. To this there is no objection at all, provided always that it is made quite clear that such divergence or contradiction does exist and is recognized. There is a reason for this, inasmuch as The Theosophical Society owed its existence to the writer of The Secret Doctrine, and it is only fair to new students to let them know what the origin and inspiration of the Movement originally was. Then they have an opportunity to compare for themselves the earlier and the later writings and to make their choice. The fact that there are differences and radical divergences in the two teachings has been suppressed, and slurred over. There should be no dogmatism even of this veiled description, but all should have the opportunity to know what all the early students knew. Then they can start on equal terms, and if they desire to adopt one line of research rather than another it will be on their own responsibility.

The desirability of having these contradictions pointed out was suggested to Mr. Ernest Wood, and he agreed that a statement of the divergences between teachings given in The Secret Doctrine and those given in later writings would be valuable to students. It would necessarily have to be prepared by those who could assume a neutral attitude towards

the subject. This in itself is a most valuable training for any student, and must be undergone some time. Mr. Wood expresses a view which is not too general in the ranks of the Society, but which must prevail eventually if its original aims are to be achieved. "However much I for one," he wrote, "may reverence and admire H. P. B., and I will admit no inferiority to others in this respect, I will not surrender to her my judgment, conscience and duty, or accept any work of hers or anyone else's as the whole gospel of Theosophy. That Gospel is the world itself; human books can only teach us to read that. Yet none can too strongly say, 'Let us study H. P. B.; let us read to understand even the obscure and difficult sentences with confidence that they contain a marvellously clear vision of the truth.'"

This is an attitude which must commend itself to all who have breadth of mind and desire to unite on brotherly lines with any who wish to promote Theosophical principles. Those who do accept Madam Blavatsky as the duly accredited Messenger to the West for the cycle in which she appeared, will do honour to their principles and to her by recognizing the good faith and sincerity of such an attitude. It is quite impossible for any man of honour and truth to say that he accepts what he does not accept, but he should be given credit for his brotherhood and his toleration. When the kamic or passionate nature is aroused by the differences in opinion and thought of others, one may know that one is not under the best influences, and one must be prepared to judge oneself in such circumstances. Those who rely on Karma do not allow themselves to be perturbed by differences of opinion in others. The important and necessary thing is to be convinced in one's own mind.

New revelations from the astral light flood the world constantly, and it is due to students to tell them that such books are to be taken as one takes other dreams and visions. As a rule it would be more profitable to read some of the old scriptures, or even the classics of literature.

These require thought, while the "revelations" only require acceptance, like the Arabian Nights and other romances. Swedenborg had visions which still appeal after a century to many people on account of the truths that were embodied in them. But their presentation in this garb only serves to conceal the wider sweep of the Secret Doctrine. A century hence the same verdict will have to be given of many of the revelations which are now in circulation and displacing the teachings given out in The Secret Doctrine as the message to the world of this cycle from the Masters of Wisdom. The impartial student will examine everything, and he will not ignore that message but will carefully compare it with the revelations which would supplant it, and choose according to his reason and conscience, but without bitterness or intolerance. Nor will he forget the radical difference between it and those revelations which come by vision and trance and clairvoyance, while The Secret Doctrine came by ordinary human means and is open to the verification of ordinary human research. The Masters of Wisdom of The Secret Doctrine are living men and not astral beings only to be met on the astral plane.

There are three distinct groups to be considered in this respect. First are the writers who either do not know anything of the Secret Doctrine at all or else entirely repudiate it. Secondly there are those who have gained all their early knowledge of occultism from it, and then have undertaken to enlarge and improve upon it. And thirdly, there are those who abide by the teachings of the Secret Doctrine, striving by study and meditation, by doing service, by strong search, by questions and by humility, to know the truth, to preserve it, and to carry it forward to future time until a fuller statement can be made, and to distribute it intact to those who know still less than themselves.

Students of the Wisdom are to refrain from condemning others, but every man in his own mind should be convinced of his own position, and it must necessarily

be one of these three. That is his business, and he shall know whether he is right by the fruits of his labours. They should make for unity with all, and not for separation, which is the danger that the world stands in—the heresy of separateness.

A. E. S. S.

THE MYSTIC CITY

By MRS. WALTER TIBBITTS

Author of "The Voice of the Orient;" "Cities Seen;" "Pages from the Life of a Pagan: A Romance."

(Continued from page 144.)

Bhakti is surrendering all actions to God and feeling the greatest misery in forgetting God.

Ramanuja was a mighty sage who trod and wrote only of the path of bhakti. He expressly states that mere knowledge alone cannot obtain the results accomplished by devotion. So he recommends a practical form of this bhakti, the cleaning of temples and images, the providing of flowers and perfumes, the giving of gifts, the using of mantras, the constant seeking by these means of Union with God, God always meaning to the aspirant the highest that he knows. That, Ramanuja says, will lead under the direction of the guru to all other qualifications, those essential virtues laid down by Sankara as necessary for the path of discipleship. Ramanuja says all these will follow of their own accord in one who is pursuing ardently the Path of Bhakti. As a Master of our own time put it, "the faults come away," until, Ramanuja continues, by His grace the "aspirant forgets everything in devotion to Him. "In time you will forget all else but the mantra and the person it is said to, and then you will see," said the guru to a pupil. The sin of sins in a chela, the sin against the Holy Ghost, the "sin of the Sack of Chittore," that which kills his spiritual life for the time it prevails; is that sin which caused the fall of the Asuras, called in Sanskrit ahankara, the sin of the first person singular. A king of old days retired to the forest to seek Yoga. Contrary to the

usual regime, his Queen Churulai was more advanced in knowledge than he, and she came to teach him, having taken the form of a brahman. He told the supposed brahman, "I have given up my kingdom, my palace, my wealth, and even my dear wife, I am ready to throw my body down a precipice." But she told him that all these renunciations were of no avail, so long as the ahankara, the sense of I, remained.

Even the deadly sin of a woman in having a second spiritual director may be forgiven, if the woman recognizes her error and pays the inexorable penalty required for such. But there is no hope for the aspirant, man or woman, of whatever renown in the world of men, who cannot abase his ego before the glory of the Great Gurus. Such a one will never be allowed to frequent those Temples where they serve Mahadev day and night.

As was the case with the shepherdess of Vraja.

This refers to the episode of Shri Krishna and the Gopis, as described in the Vishnu Purana and elsewhere. "One gopi as she sallied forth beheld some of the seniors (of the family) and dared not venture, contenting herself with meditating on Krishna with closed eyes and entire devotion, by which immediately—all acts of merit were effaced by rapture, and all sin was expiated by regret at not beholding Him; and others again, reflecting upon the cause of the world in the form of the Supreme Brahma, obtained by their sighing final emancipation." And Christian missionaries have dared to revile the Avatar of Krishna as teaching immorality! As a matter of fact, the greatest of all Avatars came expressly to teach this Highest Path of Bhakti.

It may be difficult for westerners to realize how Hindus can believe in one God and still worship the gods under different forms, according to our evolution. Two worshippers were in a Temple one day worshipping Shiv and Shri Krishna respectively, and each hated the other for not worshipping his divinity. And, as they looked, the image before which each was bowed changed, and behold half was Shiv and half was Krishna, and a voice

echoed through the Temple, "I am One!" So Narada ends his treatise on the bhakti of Krishna by saying:

He who believes and reveres this declared by Narada by the command of Shiv he becomes possessed of love. He gains that dearest.

Hindu worship is based upon the power of sound and the power of thought. Modern science teaches the power of external sound, ancient science goes further and teaches the power of sound in the invisible world. All the Hindu worship begins and ends with the repetition of mantras, sentences in the sacred language, Sanskrit, which react on the hosts of the spiritual world. The mantra in occultism is not said out loud, it is thought at the Person, the God or Guru whose attention the devotee wishes to attract.

This is the mode of the Shiv Puja. It is as old as Manu, the law-giver of the Aryan Race Himself, nay older. Its origin is lost in the mists of antiquity, for Shri Krishna says He taught it to Manu's father, Vivasu. Again He taught it as Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya philosophy which analyzes the universe into twenty-five tattvas and establishes the sequence of their manifestation.

Of the perfected I am the thinker Kapila.

Patanjali is the father of the Yoga philosophy which analyzes the human mind and its development. The two together form the Sankhya Yoga philosophy on which the entire Hindu system rests.

Patanjali analyzes the process of worship by thought power into three stages:

1. Dharana. The fixing of the mind upon an object.

2. Dhyana. Contemplation, or keeping the object in mind.

3. Samadhi. Full attainment of knowledge of the object.

It becomes part of the mind. The separate existence of the knower, the known, and the act of knowledge disappears.

The law-giver of the Aryan Race, Manu, gives explicit instructions as to the *modus operandi* of this practice. He says it is to be done twice a day, in the morning

before the sun is up, in the evening after he has set. He sets such stupendous importance by it that he says the brahman who does not carry it out is no longer a brahman. Its virtue is such that all sins of thought and deed of the previous night may be purified thereby, all contamination of the powers of darkness purged away.

Five thousand years ago the same instructions were given by the Great Avatar, who Himself engaged in this practice.

Shri Krishna says:

Let the yogi constantly engage himself in yoga remaining in a secret place by himself, with thoughts and self subdued, free from hope and greed.

In a pure place, established in a fixed seat of his own, neither very much raised nor very low, made of a cloth, a black antelope skin and kusha grass, one over the other.

There, having made the mind one-pointed, with thoughts and the functions of the senses subdued, steady on his seat, he should practise yoga for the purification of the self.

Having bathed completely, including the head, the aspirant proceeds to the puja room. In that of the Lingam before referred to, no clothes are permitted which have touched outside objects. Special dress has therefore to be worn and kept apart. Women are required to wear a sari and an ornament round the neck.

The disciple seats himself upon the floor facing the picture of Mahadev and also that of the Guru, the priest of Shiv, whose chela he is or wishes to be. The seat should be an antelope skin, and he is provided with a mala or rosary. It has 108 beads for the 108 names of Mahadev, and the beads are different from those in the Vishnaivite malas.

The Shivite devotee makes a contemplation of his Lord's picture. The Great Ascetic is usually depicted as Himself in contemplation. In my own picture he sits beside His sacred Lake, Manasarowa, at the foot of Mt. Kailash. His seat is an antelope skin and his body is covered with soft white ash. Malas are round His neck, arms, and wrists. His hands and feet are

reddened with the sandal-paste used in worship. His hair hangs down in two matted locks and three cobras of wisdom twine about His head, which is framed with the sun. The oblique eyes are fixed in contemplation, but above them in the centre of the forehead shines the Third Eye. The bel tree with its trifoliate leaves shadows this Mightiest of the Trinity.

Having contemplated the Lord in His pictured or imaged presentment, the yogi shuts his eyes and constructs a mental image of his own thought, beginning from the feet upwards. Then, taking his mala in both hands, he thinks at this mental image a mantra, given to him by his guru on the physical plane, one for every bead till the rosary is completed. Then he repeats the process at the mental image of his Guru.

When his thought is concentrated and his life is pure, the attention of the Guru in His far-off ashram in Himavat is attracted by the current of thought power of the aspirant and He sends a return current of magnetism which produces electric vibrations in the yogi's head and sometimes through his entire person. And the Guru comes in the astral body and, Himself unseen, stands beside His devotee.

As by the sudden switching of an electric light, the devotee perceives a soft effulgence gleaming on his closed eyelids. Its radiance bathes his body. He is at once aware of the Presence of his Master in the room. Hard thoughts vanish in that sweet atmosphere. Harsh lines melt from the face. At a later stage the chela gains the power of seeing the Guru face to face beside him, or the Guru may take him from the body to His ashram in the snowy range.

This thought process has been practised in the East for millions of years. It is also known to western occultists, white and black. The hierophant of perversity wrote of it as well as the Catholic Cardinal. The man who has mastered its science may appear obscure, yet wield a greater power than kings. He is blind, he sees all things in heaven and earth. He is deaf, he hears the music of many spheres. He seems lonely, he communes

with divine Men and Gods. He is bedridden, and has power to visit the stars.

There is no limit to what may be accomplished by the power of thought. Even the beginner in Yoga finds that the age of miracles is not past. The advanced occultist keeps all the hosts of hell in check. He stands between them and mankind. His is the perpetual atonement. He is the saviour of the world.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE PYRAMIDS

First Genoa, then The Hague! Result—an accentuation, in the minds of men, of national and individual differences of opinion, the clash of conflicting interests. And what does this portend? Many will remember that some years ago a series of articles from a far-seeing mind warned us that one nation, in its struggle for material survival, meant war. We did not believe it. But the devastating world war duly burst upon us. A seer of a previous generation asked humanity: "Hast never come to thee an hour, a sudden gleam divine, precipitating, bursting all these bubbles—fashions, wealth, eager business aims, books, positions, arts, amours—to utter nothingness?" To civilization as it presents itself to-day the answer appears to be in the negative. Precisely this bursting of the bubble has already come to Russia—a soul in agony—yet we pursue our complacent way, brushing aside the lessons of history, interpreting a disintegrated Russia, for example, as an accident, or a retribution in some wise, not as a lesson for our learning. And are there no prophets in our own days? Only lately the Prime Minister of England warned us that at this critical moment of our history everything depends on the spirit of mind in which we face our problems, that a wrong spirit means the destruction of European civilization. How many have heeded this warning? No, the bubbles of fashion, wealth, eager business aims, arts and amours suffice—we believe them impregnable; so did we ages and ages ago, when our souls were working out their evolution in Atlantean bodies. The records and legends of well-nigh every nation and tribe on the globe speak of the

Flood that overwhelmed a civilization that had come to value material welfare above spiritual progress. Why do we think this cannot happen again? Of course, in the Councils of the High and Mighty Ones who direct evolution upon this globe, the mere destruction of forms, of bodies that contain Life awhile, is of absolutely no account whatsoever—even we human beings push a dead body out of sight beneath the ground, having no illusions as to its further usefulness. It is the Soul of Humanity that has to learn the hard lessons of experience.—Papyrus, Egypt, for September.

CONSCIENCE

Mrs. Besant spoke some wise words at Benares, and the New Zealand Sectional organ quotes the following with approval: "On the whole, I think the Society is in a very healthy state. There is a good deal of difference of opinion, in matters of doctrine, and I think it is a very healthy sign. Unless we have difference of opinion on matters of doctrine, we shall inevitably become a church or a sect. It is not our business to become either, for we are a society of students, and if all students agree there will be a very poor advance. We test all new thought, and follow or reject it, as it affects our own intelligence. We want individual thinking; we want that every member, as far as possible, should study the great truths of all religions, should use his own intelligence to judge of their value, to follow them or not to follow them. We must remember that conscience is the inheritance of the past. . . . People think conscience is the voice of God. It is nothing of the kind. You may remember the story of an English Archbishop. A Puritan, brought before him for punishment for difference of opinion on religion, said he was following his conscience. 'Yes,' said the Archbishop, 'that is quite right; but take care that your conscience is not the conscience of a fool!' That was a little rough, but there is a good deal of sense in it. Conscience is the voice of past experience, and if we have not been through past experience of it, a thing does not touch our conscience at all."

AVATAR

O gentle One! O Thou compassionate,
And strong as Thou art tender, and as
wise!
How shall we think of Thee, who must
transcend
Our loftiest visions and our furthest
thought.

Art Thou as some great swimmer in the
night,
Who, having breasted all the tearing
waves,
And dragged himself athwart the reeling
undertow,
Yet will not rest upon the steadfast land;
But, turning, stands waist deep amidst
the wrack,
With outstretched hands, and pealing
guiding voice,
"O children! Little children, in the
night!
Come home! Come home!"

Or shall we think Thee some stern travel-
ler,
Who, having plodded through the desert
sands,
And groped amidst the whirling Afrits,
finds,
At length, a well-house; yet he will not
drink:
But, turning, holds the door ajar, and
calls,
Calls clear to us, across the wastes of life,
"O children! Little children, whom I
love!
Come home! Come home!"

Or is it as a wayfarer, astray
Amidst the fog and quicksands, who has
found
A sure and steadfast path; yet follows not
To peace and certainty, but yearns to us,
Poor shadows, lost in mists of Maya still,
"O children! Little children, all astray!
Come home! Come home!"

—Leslie Floyd.

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OFFICIAL NOTES

Mr. Ernest Wood when in Toronto recommended to students as a beginning the "First Book of Sanskrit," by R. G. Bhandarkar, which is published in India for about 18 cents. He suggested that tables of the equivalents for pronunciation should be compared in a number of standard works, as in this way the true pronunciation is readily acquired, and as the language is entirely phonetic, there are no subsequent difficulties in this respect.

MR. MITCHELL'S TOUR

Mr. Roy Mitchell's western tour ended on November 21, and he is now in Vancouver taking a six or seven weeks' holiday before starting east. During the interval in Vancouver he is delivering lectures for Vancouver and North Vancouver Lodge, and will make a couple of trips to Nanaimo and Victoria.

After leaving Regina Mr. Mitchell went to Medicine Hat, where he gave two public addresses in the City Hall, one on Occultism and the other on White and Black Magic. Passing through Calgary

on the way to Edmonton, Mr. Mitchell spent the evening with a number of the members of Calgary Lodge, and arriving in Edmonton on Saturday, Oct. 14, opened in the evening with a public address on The Crux of Occultism. On Sunday he addressed two meetings, one of the lodges in the afternoon on Numerical Symbolism, and one in the evening for the public on Walt Whitman and the Future in the Western World. On Monday afternoon he spoke on the future of the Society, and in the evening on Psychism vs. Occultism. On Tuesday afternoon Mr. Mitchell visited the University of Alberta and addressed the students on "The Little Theatre." The final meeting in Edmonton was on White and Black Magic, after which Mr. Mitchell went on to Calgary.

The Calgary series opened with a talk to lodge members on Oct. 18, followed by five public meetings and three lodge meetings. On Monday, Oct. 23, Mr. Mitchell, accompanied by Mr. Knechtel, of Calgary, went to Vulcan, where two public and three lodge meetings were held, and returning to Calgary Mr. Mitchell addressed an afternoon and an evening gathering.

The visit to Banff was confined to members and persons interested, and after a three-day rest and visit with Mr. George H. Paris, Mr. Mitchell went on to Nelson, where he addressed one public meeting and had a couple of sessions with members. West Summerland was the next stop. The first meeting was held in the Rialto Theatre, to a good audience, on Thursday, Nov. 2, on The Crux of Occultism. On Friday a meeting was held in Naramata, where Mr. Mitchell visited Mr. Carroll Aikens' Home Theatre, the unique and most significant little theatre experiment now being made in the west. On Saturday evening a meeting was held in Penticton, and on Sunday afternoon a public meeting was held in West Summerland. The stay concluded with a lodge meeting on Sunday evening, and on Monday morning Mr. Mitchell went on to Vancouver.

The Vancouver series opened with a members' meeting of the four lodges on

Tuesday, Nov. 7. Then followed a series of five largely attended public meetings under the joint auspices of Orpheus and Julian Lodges. On Monday Mr. Mitchell addressed Western Gate Lodge on The Tradition of the Master, before a widely representative gathering of Masons, the vote of thanks to the speaker being moved by Bishop de Pencier, of the diocese of New Westminster. On the same evening Mr. Mitchell spoke on the New Art of the Theatre at a meeting of the Little Theatre workers of Vancouver.

Three public meetings were held at Nanaimo in Foresters' Hall, on the evenings of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 14, 15 and 16, after which Mr. Mitchell went on to Victoria. On Friday and Saturday evenings he spoke under the auspices of Victoria Theosophical Society, and on Sunday went to Duncan, where he addressed a group of students in the afternoon and continued to Nanaimo, where he spent the evening and returned to Victoria on Monday. On Monday evening Mr. Mitchell addressed a public meeting held by the Humane Education and Anti-Vivisection Society; on Tuesday afternoon a meeting of the Canadian Women's Club in the Empress Hotel on "The Theatre and Modern Life," and in the evening a meeting of the members of Victoria and Brotherhood Lodges on problems arising out of the work of the Society.

On his return to Vancouver Mr. Mitchell spoke for the Vagabonds Club. It is improbable that his eastern journey will commence until the middle of January, and possibly not until the first week in February, when he will revisit most of the cities included in the outbound trip and will try to visit some of the smaller centres where there are groups of students but no lodges.

AMONG THE LODGES

The Secretary of London Lodge writes: Our Lodge would like to express its appreciation of Mr. Mitchell's visit, as he gave us one of the very finest series of lectures we have ever had. On Sunday evening, Sept. 17, came "The Crux of

Occultism"; Sept. 18, "The Presence of God"; Sept. 22, "Spirituality"; Sept. 23, "Magic, Black and White" (a talk to members); Sept. 24, "Walt Whitman and the Future of America." Mr. Mitchell's work must always, of course, be valued as propaganda, since he is so able a public speaker with so remarkable a fund of knowledge. Besides this, our members, generally, felt that his message was peculiarly valuable to students of The Secret Doctrine. Therefore, Lodge members and public alike will welcome him very warmly if he comes again.



MADAM BLAVATSKY

The portrait of Madam Blavatsky presented herewith is a small reproduction of the large photograph now in the possession of Mrs. Albion E. Lang. It was done about the year 1884, probably, and copies of the original, about 9 x 11, may be had from Mr. George McMurtrie, 65 Hogarth Ave., Toronto, for 75 cents each. The portrait is unique in many respects and presents the "Old Lady" in a more human and everyday mood than we have been accustomed to see. The first supply was sold off at once, so early orders are necessary. The portrait is copyrighted in the United States.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood's visit to Toronto began on Tuesday, November 21, extending to the following Monday, during which time they were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Titus. He spoke at three public meetings in the Theosophical Hall on Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday evenings on "The Sub-conscious Mind," "The Yoga of Will—Patanjali" and "The Yoga of Love—Shri Krishna," and on Saturday night to the members of the city Lodges, giving an account of his tour in Europe, Mrs. Wood also speaking. On Thursday evening Mr. Wood spoke on "The Problem of Death," under the auspices of the Annie Besant Lodge, in Armstrong Hall, in the east end of the city, and on Friday evening under the auspices of the West End Lodge for the Psychology Club on "Theosophy and Applied Psychology." On Sunday afternoon he spoke on "What Theosophy Is" for the West End Lodge in the Orange Hall, Euclid Avenue.

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No doubt the Section will be interested in having a short report of Mr. Wood's lectures while on his visit to Ottawa, writes the Secretary of Fellowship Lodge, Ottawa. Mr. and Mrs. Wood reached Ottawa on the 15th November, and on the same evening Mr. Wood addressed a members meeting, under the auspices of Fellowship Lodge, on the subject of the "Higher Self." On the following evening Mr. Wood spoke under the auspices of Ottawa Lodge. The public lectures were held on Saturday and Sunday, the 18th and 19th, in the Palm Room, Chateau Laurier. The subject on Saturday evening was "The Self and the Personality"; on Sunday afternoon, "The Problem of Death," and on Sunday evening, "God and Man"; and the lecturer dealt with these subjects in his usual lucid and logical manner. The question period after each lecture proved as interesting as ever. The musical program, which was arranged by the ladies of the lodge, was greatly appreciated, and the thanks of the lodge is tendered to the artists who gave their services. The program was as follows: Saturday, solo, Miss Margaret Packman, "Wake Up," and in response to an encore

Miss Packman sang "The Call of the Winds." She was accompanied by Miss Grafton. Sunday afternoon, solo, "There is no Death," Miss Bertha McMeekin; accompanist, Mrs. Kemp. Sunday evening, solo, "Out of the Silence," Miss Vivian Grafton; accompanist, Mr. Howell. The audiences were small but appreciative. The poor attendance of the general public can, no doubt, be partly accounted for by the weather, which was particularly disagreeable at this time. In this connection the support of the Theosophists and members of the Society in Ottawa did not come up to expectations. As Mr. Wood is a lecturer of known ability a considerably greater attendance might reasonably be expected from this quarter. It is unfortunate that a rush of local news over the week-end squeezed out the reports of our lectures, the only notice to appear being a mention in the radio column of one of the papers of Mr. Wood's radio talk, which was broadcasted just previous to his lecture on Saturday night.

* * *

The Victoria Lodge has greatly enjoyed Mr. Mitchell's visit, the Secretary writes. The two public lectures were not listened to by many people, but the sort of people most likely to be benefitted by his presentation of Theosophy were well represented. If we had advertised the lectures by attractive titles no doubt the crowds would have been bigger; as it was, "Ways to God" drew honest enquirers. Members of the Lodge were greatly interested in his unusual way of putting things, which has stirred our minds to tackling some of the ordinary Theosophical statements anew. We had intended to have a meeting for our own Lodge members only, but owing to Mr. Mitchell unfortunately missing a train after his meeting at Duncan, that had to be called off. A meeting for both Lodges at Victoria was well attended and lasted from 8 till 11 p.m. The chief burden of his advice to us, to stand by the Society, was well received, for he gave us grounds for renewed hope and confidence in the strength and well-being of the Canadian Section. We rejoiced to hear his opinion of the condition of most

of the Lodges in Canada, especially that psychism and worship of personalities was giving way before a revival of the study of The Secret Doctrine. His visit has been not only a great pleasure, but of real service to the T. S. and the Movement. We hope to see more of him before he leaves the Coast. We enjoyed meeting him for his own sake—his jolly, cordial manner and amusing conversation.

FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

The death is announced of William J. Walters, of San Francisco, formerly editor and publisher of "Mercury," at one time the official organ of the American Section.

* * *

Lady Emily Lutyens contributes an article to The Messenger on the text "He that is without sin among you." She wonders from the stones hurled so indiscriminately in the Theosophical Society "whether we are a Society of exceptionally sinless people, or whether our members still need to learn the first principles of Christianity."

* * *

Willetta Huggins is a girl of seventeen in the Wisconsin School for the Blind at Janesville. She is deaf and blind, but can hear through her fingers, especially the middle finger of the left hand, with which she touches the diaphragm of a telephone receiver and listens when no one around can hear. She detects colour, or sees, by the sense of smell. It is an interesting example of the fact that the astral senses are not specialized as the physical senses are in special organs, but function through any adaptable vehicle.

* * *

Rev. Father Thurston, S.J., the well-known Roman Catholic writer, speaking at a meeting of the Catholic Truth Society on October 10, on "Physical Research," in which he reminded his hearers that Catholics were "forbidden to take part in spiritualistic manifestations," went on to give special warning against Theosophy, which he declared was "a much more fundamental attack on Christianity than spiritualism." The Church not only

"forbade good Catholics to enroll themselves in Theosophy, but forbade them to read its literature." The taboo on Theosophical literature, however, is by no means confined to the Roman Catholic Church.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE OCTOEDRAL PERSONALITY

Editor Canadian Theosophist: When the Jamaican Islanders saw the eclipse actually coming on after Columbus had threatened to take away their moonshine unless they brought him the supplies he needed, they at once set to work.

In such a case all the movements involved are worth while, and things idle, half-idle, or injuriously applied are a weariness to the patience. So also is a long road, unless the flora by the wayside are agreeable that the traveller retain his sense of destination.

A very special mood is required for so odd a question, but wilfully dragged forth all the same: Is there any vital sense or doctrine located within an equilateral triangle?

Well, not too much, of course; all space might be full of them to endless dimensions, with each and every in exact relation to the radius and circumference of its own circle. All are conceivable as having sides of eight units each, and an incommensurable vertical the square of which amounts to forty-eight.

Brought into contact with other shapes, this one betrays strong points and almost human perplexities.

John Tyndall states that space acts as a medium for light as if it had a jelly-like structure.

And the circulating waters arrested up there, as by some geometrical traffic policeman, have made the snowflake, a peculiar witness as to where polarity comes from. Sometimes a point of view is more essential than its subject matter.

Of a different order, though on a similar scale, the circulating life of man's total biographical merit has been touched by Personality, which may therefore claim the said incommensurable yet tensile vertical as its representative emblem. But it

is easier to stroke the colt's mane than explain terms of acceptance in the court of Septenary Constitutions.

One time in part a nuisance to (itself the ego), again in other part beyond such confusion of terms as grate on the ears of analysis: Personality is of and in "the ever-becoming," and is one of its clients.

Hamlet seems to use it like an oceanic monocle for apprehension; he would have all his Labour in action most like an angel, and his Capital in form and moving most express and admirable.

Wherefore the question laid down has not been answered to suit all manner of nurseries, but the island is enchanted in that direction.

A. I. C.

Scarboro.

BROTHERHOOD ONLY

Editor, Canadian Theosophist: Referring to Mr. Wm. H. Griffiths' letter in the November issue of the Canadian Theosophist, in which he says, in part (referring to the E. S. T.), "the cycle of the school closed with the death of the teacher, H. P. B. Enough teaching, however, had been given out to last for centuries," etc.

One cannot help remarking how frequently one sees statements made having a tendency to put forward H.P.B.'s "Secret Doctrine" as the final Theosophical authority, in fact an effort seems to be afoot to give it an infallible status, to make of it a sort of Bible. This seems to my mind to be only another form of dogmatism, as dangerous perhaps as setting up an infallible church. Some of the statements made by adherents of the Back to Blavatsky group give one the impression that they cannot accept any work subsequent to the "Secret Doctrine." There is surely room for later writers who have thrown light on many Theosophical questions, as well as for H.P.B. To elucidate this point I quote from an article in the November "Beacon" by Jacob Boggren: "Those who want to make H.P.B. the only Theosophical guide seem to forget her own disclaimer. When they want to make of her Secret Doctrine a dead letter, a crystallized infallibility that cannot be added to and that must be taken literally,

having no more than one meaning, they forget her own theory of continuous spiritual evolution and her statement that there are seven different methods of interpretation."

So much for H.P.B. Another contributor, Mr. W. D. Newman, in his letter to you, expresses the opinion that the gravest charges against the Society "are those concerning the setting up of creeds and hierarchies within the Society." Whatever may be the cause, there is no doubt that a great many people outside the Society get the idea that we are a sect. No less a periodical than the "Literary Digest" (Nov. 4th) quotes from an article in the "Living Church," in which it is stated that "there are thirty-six Spiritualist churches, thirteen New Thought and three Theosophic churches which are meeting every Sunday in various hotels and halls" in New York. Other similar references to the T.S. will occur to your readers. Now for the public to get impressions such as these there must be something in the T.S. which looks like dogmatism or churchianity to outsiders. Surely we should endeavor to dispel such ideas. The one object of the T.S. which is binding on members is the first, viz., "To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity," etc.—the others are subsidiary, although, of course, some of the members may attach more importance to one or other of the remaining objects. There is therefore no mention of any doctrine having to be accepted by members of the Society—not even reincarnation or karma.

It seems, then, that the greatest danger to the T.S. from within is that of crystallization either into a church with an infallible hierarchy, or the probably equally great danger of sole reliance on an infallible book. Neither would give any scope for independent investigation or thought. Both would be a definite check to all progress, and both are based on the hypothesis that nothing more can be learned, and would belie the teaching, often reiterated, that we should rely on the "inner ruler." H. M. Bradley.

Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 9, 1922.

QUARTERLY LETTER FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

I am unable to give you any direct news of the President, as I am writing from Australia. But Indian correspondents tell me that, since her return from Australia, she presided at three Theosophical Conferences at Chidambaram, Bellary and Kurnool. She is busy as ever in the political field. In addition, she delivered a lecture on Shelley, the great English poet, which I am informed drew a very large audience in Madras. She is seventy-five to-day.

During my stay in Australia, another brilliant chapter has been added to the work hitherto done on "Occult Chemistry." In the work so far done by the President and Bishop Leadbeater by clairvoyant investigation, only the "chemical elements of the "Periodic Table" were examined and described. The new work deals with "chemical compounds"—compounds of Oxygen with Hydrogen, Hydrogen with Nitrogen, and so on. Thirty-six compounds have been examined, including members of the "Chain Series," like Alcohol and Chloroform, and of the "Ring Series," like Benzene and Naphtalene. But a work on Occult Stereo-Chemistry will find few readers, and the many diagrams will make it a costly work, and it is scarcely possible for our Theosophical Publishing Houses to invest their limited capital on such a highly technical work. If I could find donors to guarantee the costs of publication—which I fear will not be less than four or five hundred pounds sterling, as at least two hundred copies will be needed for presentation to scientific libraries and scientists—an edition of "Occult Chemistry" could be brought out about four times the size of the book now in circulation. My keen interest in Occult Chemistry is of an ethical nature, if I may so term it; for since the main theme of our teachings is "God's Plan which is Evolution," that Plan is revealed with a deep fascination in the building of elements and their compounds. I do furthermore believe that in a few generations these clairvoyant investigations into Chemistry

will lead scientists to discover that "universal power" which will transform civilization, and I desire greatly that we should, as Theosophists, share in bringing about that aspect also of the Golden Age.

Now that the T.S. has come to the end of its latest "crisis," it may not be out of place for me to say something about crises in general. We may be excellent students of Theosophy, but that does not prevent us from being like the rest of our fellow-men in some of their limitations. I have gone through several crises, and in one of these disturbances, that of 1906, I was myself expelled from the T.S. This was one result of the clouded vision of the majority of the American members in that crisis. Nothing was charged against my character as unfitting me to be in the T.S., except that I refused to bow down to the decision of a Section Executive and that I insisted on making a distinction between Bishop Leadbeater as a Theosophical worker and certain of his ideas on the sex question which he personally held, but which he had never proclaimed as Theosophy. On the motion of Dr. Annie Besant, who was not then President, the General Council of the T.S. enquired into my expulsion, and in due course restored me to my membership in the T.S. I mention this incident merely to show how unbalanced on occasion Theosophists can become.

Most of these crises in the T.S. manifest their phases of rancour and bitterness largely because members imagine that a local trouble in a Section involves the Society throughout the world, with its 36 National Societies. So they proclaim that the "T.S. is in danger," and circularize all Sections with the particulars of their local disputes. I need not detail what has been happening of late. All this largely arises because of a lack of vision about the mission of the T.S. Our Society exists because Humanity needs it, and it will grow because mankind benefits by its growth. Nothing that you or I, or the most prominent server in the T.S., can ever do will hinder the ultimate growth of the T.S., for those who are no longer helpful to the Society "drop out" and those whom the Society needs are found "in the ranks" to the end of their

days. For there is a Karma of the Society as definite as the Karma of an individual, since the T.S. is, as a great Master described in 1881, "the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity," and the strongest among us *cannot* wreck what the Guardians of Humanity have decreed as necessary for mankind. What we call Theosophy is only a fraction of that larger Wisdom which succeeding generations will gain. Our duty is to see that what is Theosophy to us to-day is indeed the unchangeable nucleus of Divine Truth, and not simply the speculations or dogmas of past generations. Most of us are not willing to analyze constantly whether our beliefs are indeed the Divine Wisdom or merely a tradition in which we trust blindly. We are apt to proclaim "Theosophy says," without being quite sure that it is Theosophy and not a tradition which we accept without question.

The biggest force to mould human destiny is Theosophy. But while we have to-day some truths of Theosophy firmly established because long discovered, we are in search of more truth. Theosophy is an ever-increasing body of knowledge, founded on facts to be discovered generation after generation. Our supreme duty to Humanity is to prevent any limitation to the discovery of truth. The value of the T.S. to the world just now is not only from what it proclaims, but also from what it does not proclaim. On certain great problems (like the Sex problem, for instance) we Theosophists are still in the dark, because we have not all the necessary facts whence to deduce truth. Let us not, therefore, because we have strong convictions on a subject, insist that our particular views are Theosophy, when a little inquiry will show how few are the scientifically established facts on which to base any conviction at all. The Theosophist is one who is eager for more and more truth, and is ever ready to renounce what he has believed, in order to accept a view of life more true to fact, and therefore more just to his fellow-men. The value of the T.S. lies in its lack of dogmatism, and in keeping the door open to new discovery.

One truth, and one only, we are pledged to as a Society, and that is Universal Brotherhood. All other truths of Theosophy can be questioned by any member of the Society. When so questioned it is foolish for us to say that "the T.S. is in danger." The largest possible freedom should ever exist in the T.S. for its members in their discovery of truth, and in the manner of their service of their fellows. Theosophists should be perfectly free to start any religious, educational, artistic, political, social or scientific movements which they like, provided Brotherhood is not denied in practice. Indeed, the growth of the T.S. is dependent upon the practical application of Theosophy by members along such lines of activity. For the more we apply Theosophy to change human institutions towards an ideal of perfection, the more we discover of Theosophy. Theosophy is not a mere intellectual creed, but a creative Power at the very heart of the Divine Spirit in man. So realizing, we shall all be able to work together, tolerant of each other's temperaments, and not infringing that neutrality which is essential to the T.S. as an unsectarian international organization.

The work in Australia is steadily progressing. During the last six months I have been lecturing in the principal towns of this large continent. The disputes among the members of the large Lodge in Sydney have been solved by those members who trusted to the direction of the President leaving the Sydney Lodge and forming a new Lodge, three hundred in number, sacrificed valuable rights to a large property in order to make one harmonious Lodge among themselves. I feel confident that the Theosophical movement in Australia has not only benefited by the formation of the new Lodge, but will progress rapidly as the result of the changes initiated by the President during her brief visit to this country.

My next letter will be from Adyar, where I shall be in December.

C. Jinarajadasa.

Adelaide, Australia, October 1, 1922.

MOTHER NATURE

By many names we've known and loved
Thee
Thro' the ages
Which like shadows
Have passed across the beauty of thy face,
Dear Mother Nature.

Under the ancient trees of China
Thou wert Kwan Yin
"The Merciful,"
Immortalized by artist-souls in ivory,
Pink jade and amber.

With folded hands and downcast eyes
We saw thee sit
Beneath the trees,
Reflecting on the jewel hid within
The Lotus-heart.

In Egypt we adored Thee,
Mother-Iris,
Our true king,
The vital-core of every atom
Which whirls in space.

In Greece (when Greece was known as
Thrace)
Thou wert Demeter,
Sad mother-heart,
Known also as the Dolorosa
Mary—Maya life's illusion.

The rhythmic tide, the flux and flow
Of things that are
And yet are not,
The warp and woof of that fair tapestry
Which is Thy raiment.

Great Mother Iris, Demeter and Ishtar,
Dana and Kwan Yin
The Merciful,
With many another name we have forgotten,
We pray Thee hearken.

Hide not Thy face amid the stars!
Turn towards us!
For without help from Thee
The task we have begun will never be
Accomplished by Thy offspring.

Who for ages Thou hast put to sleep
With lullabys

Whilst Time has rocked
Our cradle ceaselessly.
We would awake, arise, and walk with
Thee
Thro' space to learn its meaning.

—Freida Dunlop.

Onslow Village.

SRI BUDDHA'S LIFE

A revival of Buddhism in the land of its birth is a possibility foreshadowed in many ways. The increasing frequency of references to Buddhism in our journals is the most prominent of them. Sree Buddha-Charithamritham is a brief sketch of the life and teachings of Bhagwan Buddha in simple Sanscrit verse by Seimathi Mandayam Dhathi Alamelamma, intended for Hindu children, is another sign of the interest that is being felt in the study of Buddhism. The talented authoress has taken special care to impress on young minds the teachings of the illustrious Sakya Muni bearing on public service, non-violence, vanity of caste distinctions, the sin of untouchability, the law of Karma, and the disinterested performance of duty. Buddhism is thus a great inspiration for constructive national work. A Buddhistic revival will moreover restore the ancient spiritual and cultural solidarity of India, Thibet, Ceylon, Burma, Siam, China, Japan, Corea and the rest of the so-called Far East of European diplomacy. Srimathi Alamelamma's poetic composition is thus a significant sign of the times. The booklet can be had from the author, 101 Ramavilas Agrahar, Mysore.—The Indian Social Reformer.

* * *

The mark of the man of the world is absence of pretension. He does not make a speech; he takes a low business tone, avoids all brag, is nobody, dresses plainly, promises not at all, performs much, speaks in monosyllables, hugs his fact. He calls his employment by its lowest name, and so takes from evil tongues their sharpest weapon. His conversation clings to the weather and the news, yet he allows himself to be surprised into thought, and the unlocking of his learning and philosophy.—Emerson.

THE CANADIAN LODGES

BANFF LODGE.

President, vacant; Secretary, George Harrison Paris, Banff, Alta.

CALGARY LODGE.

President, W. J. Hoskyn; Secretary, James Rogers, 927 Fifth Ave., Calgary, Alta.

CREELMAN, SASK.

Address Frederick C. Williams.

EDMONTON LODGE.

President, Reginald D. Taylor; Secretary, Miss Alice M. Daley, 2 McLean Block. Rooms, 204 Empire Building.

HALIFAX LODGE.

Dormant. Address Mrs. Moore, 60 Larch St.

HAMILTON LODGE.

President, C. Dumbay; Secretary, Miss Nellie Gates, James and King William Sts. Lodge room, Royal Templars' Building, Walnut and Main Streets.

LONDON LODGE.

President, Richard H. Cronyn; Secretary, Mrs. Helen M. Shaw, 287 King Street, London, Ont. Meetings held at 212 Dundas St.

MEDICINE HAT LODGE.

President, Oswald A. Rimmer; Secretary, C. Barton Browne, P.O. Drawer 800, Medicine Hat, Alberta.

MONTREAL LODGE.

President, David B. Thomas; Secretary, Mrs. Alice H. Hamaker, 90B St. Joseph St., Dorval, P.Q. Meetings at Room 12, Tooke Building, St. Catherine and Peele Streets.

NANAIMO LODGE.

President, Dr. W. E. Wilks; Secretary, Mrs. Nora Reynolds, 31 Kennedy St., Nanaimo, B.C.

OTTAWA LODGE.

President, Mrs. Myra Cox; Secretary, David H. Chambers, 515 Bronson Ave., Ottawa, Ont. Lodge room, Thistle Building, Wellington St.

FELLOWSHIP LODGE, OTTAWA.

President, Alfred James Franklin; Secretary, H. M. Bradley, 4 Rockcliffe Way, Ottawa, Ont.

REGINA LODGE.

President, Mrs. Stevens; Secretary, George A. Palmer, 2850 Garnet Street. Lodge meets Success Business College, cor. Cornwall and 11th, Sunday, 7.30 p.m.

ALCYONE LODGE, REGINA.

President, H. G. Smith; Secretary, Mrs. Clara Forler, 1304 Cameron St., Regina, Sask.

ST. THOMAS LODGE.

President, George L. Haight; Secretary, Mrs. Hazel B. Garside, 19 Park Ave., St. Thomas, Ont.

SUMMERLAND LODGE.

President, Mrs. Kate Bentley; Secretary, J. W. S. Logie, West Summerland, B.C. Lodge rooms are in the Ritchie Block, West Summerland, and Library in Drug Store below.

TORONTO LODGE.

President, Albert E. S. Smythe; Secretary, Harry R. Tallman, 71 Ellerbeck Ave., Toronto, Ont. Lodge rooms, 52 Isabella Street.

TORONTO WEST END LODGE.

President, Frank E. Clarke; Secretary, Walter Cotton, 29 Bird Ave., Toronto.

ANNIE BESANT LODGE.

President, Ernest Jackson; Secretary, James A. Wallace, 93 St. Joseph St., Toronto.

VANCOUVER LODGE.

President, James Taylor; Secretary, Miss Catherine M. Menzies, 1242 Nelson St., Vancouver, B.C. The Lodge rooms are at 221-5 Duncan Building.

ORPHEUS LODGE, VANCOUVER.

President, W. C. Clark; Secretary, A. L. Crampton Chalk, Gilford Court, Pendrell St., Vancouver, B.C.

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President, Mrs. Edith Fielding; Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Keir, Osborne Road W., North Vancouver, B.C.

JULIAN LODGE, VANCOUVER.

President, A. M. Stephen; Secretary, D. C. Macnair, 2590 Fifth Avenue West, Vancouver, B.C.

VULCAN LODGE.

President, Guy Denbigh; Secretary, Mrs. T. B. Davenport, Box 473, Vulcan, Alta.

VICTORIA LODGE.

President, Will Griffiths; Secretary, W. B. Pease, 2840 Cadboro Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. Lodge meets at 101 Union Bank Building.

BROTHERHOOD LODGE, VICTORIA, B.C.

President, Odo A. Barry; Secretary, Ashley Wilfred Boyden, 126 Pemberton Building, Victoria, B.C.

WINNIPEG LODGE.

President, Laurance H. D. Roberts; Secretary, Fred. W. Hall, 67 Oak Street, Norwood, Man. Lodge room, No. 33, Music and Arts Building, Broadway and Hargrave Sts. Public meeting, Sunday at 7.30 p.m.