

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

VOL. XXXVIII, No. 1

TORONTO, MARCH-APRIL, 1957

Price 35 Cents

The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this Magazine, unless made in an official document

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

MR. N. SRI RAM'S ADDRESS TO THE 81ST INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION AT ADYAR, 1956

As I am reading the Annual Reports for the year 1955-56 from the General Secretaries, the Secretaries of the Federations, and the Presidential Agents, I was struck by the following from Israel, which I reproduce here, because it reflects so beautifully the spirit which should characterize the attitude of Theosophists everywhere. Says Mr. Hans Zeuger, the Presidential Agent:

"After having learnt the very gratifying news indeed, that 'the work of the Theosophical Society is once again active in Egypt,' we availed ourselves of the opportunity offered on the occasion of our Annual Meeting in Tel-Aviv, on the 2nd November 1956, of sending in common meditation—via Adyar—our profound thoughts of good-will, peace and friendship to our brethren in Cairo, hoping that Egypt and Israel may soon be drawn together in a spirit of forgiveness, unity and co-operation, now that the light of Theosophy is shining there again in full measure."

What does it matter to a true Theosophist whether he is an Israelite or an Egyptian, an Indian or a Pakistani? He should be able to view all matters from a standpoint which rises above these distinctions, a standpoint from which what is good and true on every side is

brought into a common focus. It may be thought by some: This is too difficult, too much to ask of an ordinary human being, who must have his allowance of such satisfactions and successes, whether as an individual or as a member of a national group, as will give him a sense of his own individuality, his distinctiveness. In other words, to put it bluntly, his separateness, his egoism.

But from the standpoint of Reality, we are most individual—and this is the true individuality—when we least think of ourselves. It is an individuality, a natural expression, in which one is just distinctive without being conscious of distinction, as the oak or date-palm is distinctive, without wanting to be distinguished. If Theosophists are not going to be different from the masses of people in every country, who like to feel that they are superior to all others, whether because of race, caste, religion, their particular philosophy, wealth, fashion, or what not, then we cannot hope for a condition radically better than the present, for a new age, a new cycle. A new cycle will not come into being, in any real sense, except through the minds of individuals. There may be a co-ordination in the complicated process we call evolution between its

mental, physical and physiological aspects, but any real change for us in the human stage has to come through a change of heart for which we ourselves are primarily responsible.

It is that change which is aimed at in the First Object of the Theosophical Society. If we are really Brothers in spirit, which is more than being brothers by blood or by any external tie, your welfare must be precious to me and vice versa. The sole criterion for any decision, for any disposition of affairs, is the happiness of the people concerned. To realize this is to rise to a height above the pairs of opposites, whether in race, sex, caste, creed, colour, or any political or national denomination. Especially at present when there are such acute conflicts in the field of human living, the best service that a Theosophist can render is that indicated by the First Object of the Society. This is done not by merely using the word Brotherhood but by illustrating in our lives, which means first in our thinking, the profound importance and meaning of a brotherly relationship with others, which is the only true relationship.

The Report on the work of the English Section from Mrs. Alice L. Berry, who has succeeded Mr. C. R. Groves as General Secretary, speaks of problems facing our Society as a result of several other bodies teaching Theosophy, each along its own lines, and particularly the appeal of various psychological groups with such doctrines as "dianetics," "scientology," and so on. It seems to me that such developments are inevitable because of the wide diffusion of Theosophical ideas—the very ideas which were scoffed at in H. P. B.'s time as so much unscientific nonsense—the increasing interest in psychological problems due to the intensification of a mental age struggling to overpass its

barriers, and the tendency of people everywhere to create an organization for every pet idea which they regard as especially their own. In this world market, with so many booths and stalls, each peddling its wares, what is our own particular mission? I use the word "mission"; but it is much more a commission or duty laid upon us. What is our dharma?

It is really for each member who is thoughtful to consider it carefully for himself. But it seems to me that the motto of our Society in the Sanskrit words indicates the answer. The words may be translated thus: "There is no dharma superior to Truth." Our dharma, our proper function, is to express this Truth, which is the truth of all things, of life and Nature, of what is and what takes place. Mr. Gosta Lindström, the new General Secretary for Sweden, says in his Report, that because Theosophy has so many different aspects they have thought it useful in the Swedish Section to prepare a booklet for enquirers expounding Theosophy from different points of view. This is an excellent idea, which brings out the fact that Truth, though one in its essence because of its being the very nature of the one all-pervading Spirit, is manifold in its expressions.

The Second Object of the Society calls for all-round study in order that we may find the common ground for these expressions. The human consciousness being like a funnel opening inward or outward according to the way in which we look at it, there are different ways in which it unfolds at different points, and different expressions of Truth. All of them, which make the totality of Truth, come under the term Theosophy.

Our dharma is to express the Truth, which is fundamentally the truth of the Unity, in such ways as we can and as will help those with whom our lot is

cast, to see a little more clearly into the true significance of things. This depends on life, on its purity and its flow, rather than on any self-centred attempt to advance and achieve something for oneself. Our aim in the Society is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. A cell or a nucleus is not a mere structure, but a life. It is a constitution for the flow of life, of the forces inherent in it, and life flows most beautifully, most efficiently, when it is perfectly related to all other lives. As I see it, Brotherhood means just this relationship which subjectively is a certain understanding, a communion with all that lives, and more objectively, co-operation with others, giving rise to an increasing harmony.

We do not need to compete with any other body. Any idea of competition will deflect us from our path, from that Truth which we should seek to express, unmixed with any element that seeks to attract by meretricious aids, by any cloak of authority, or by appeal to those weaknesses in people which are the main obstruction in them to the perception of the true as distinguished from the false. What is most needed in our Society is not more of such knowledge as others can give, nor any revelations to which there is no end, not anything which caters to sensation and curiosity, but something beyond all this, which is Life and Truth, realizable within ourselves. Psychology, as any other study, is good in itself, if it results in a better knowledge of oneself, a better guidance for life, but not any practice which strengthens the illusory psyche, the entity which feeds on pleasant reveries and is eager all the time to satisfy its ambitions.

If, as says H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*, Theosophy is a doctrine of pure altruism, the highest aim for any of us,

as well as the only way to gain true understanding, is selflessness in thought and action. In our studies, as in life, there are many things that present themselves, and we need that understanding, that pure discrimination, which will enable us to evaluate each thing in its proper place.

A number of Reports refer to the fact that there is a lack of good lecturers, especially in the smaller Sections. No doubt there is; to some extent this can be remedied by one Section helping another, but it is not easy to produce good lecturers, because to speak on Theosophy is not the same as speaking on any other subject. It is not possible to train anyone as a lecturer on Theosophy unless he knows what Theosophy is, not superficially by merely reading up the books, but by knowing the deep significance of what he can learn from books and what he can learn from life. What we may find in any book is but a stepping-stone to a discovery that we have to make for ourselves. It is a discovery of Law, Purpose, Organization and Process on the one hand, commingled on the other with Life, Love, and every beautiful response that can be evoked when we are sensitive enough to the contacts and the events that take place.

I have no doubt that our Society is sufficiently well set in the right direction, and sufficiently strong in the devotion and earnestness of many of its members, to go forward from where we are, according to the hopes and the plan of its Founders, a plan which must be more of a vision of possibilities than any rigid text incapable of addition or modification in a world that has been changing at a breathless and revolutionary pace.

An important event of the year was the holding of the European Federation Congress from September 8 to September 15 at Baden near Vienna. There

were some 327 delegates present, coming from 21 countries. I was there on my way back to Adyar from South and Central America and was happy to preside over the gathering. We were all glad to meet in Baden because of the fact that Austria had only recently gained complete freedom from the occupying Powers who had been in control since the close of the last World War, and the Austrian Section needed just the help that could be given by the Congress. The central theme of the Congress was the Rise of a New Cycle. There were a number of speakers, including myself, each dealing with it in his or her own way. Besides these lectures and other meetings, such as one to consider the work of the Theosophical Research Groups in England and Holland, and another to explain the work of the Theosophical Order of Service in Europe, there were a number of Discussion Groups into which the delegates divided themselves. The meetings of these Groups, of which four were conducted in German, two in English and two in French, were voted an unqualified success by all who took part in them. Each delegate, as a member of one or other of them, was thus an active participant in the proceedings of the Congress, making his own contribution to it, instead of being only a passive listener to speeches, however excellent. The success of the Congress was due largely to the efforts of our Austrian workers, headed by Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Schleifer, and also Mr. van Dissel, the European Federation Secretary, and his co-workers in the European Federation Council and Committee.

Mr. James Perkins, National President of the Theosophical Society in America, speaks in 1956 as an "extraordinary year" in its annals, because of the nation-wide interest in Reincarnation roused by the publication of the

book *Bridey Murphy* purporting to give details of a past incarnation of a person now living in the United States. This has resulted in many inquiries both at the National Headquarters at Wheaton and at other centres of Theosophical activity throughout the country. Naturally this has called for an increased effort on the part of the departments at Headquarters as well as the lecturers and Lodge workers to meet the demand for information not only on Reincarnation but also on other subjects connected with it. Mr. Perkins himself delivered with much success a series of lectures on Reincarnation in Chicago and later in other cities. In the United States the activities are carried on on a highly organized basis. Besides regular lecturing in the different parts of the country by lecturers sent out from Headquarters, special attention is given to areas where either there are no Lodges or the Lodges are weak and struggling to maintain themselves. This "Spotlight" activity, as it is called, is a concentration for the time being of the strength of the Section on a selected area. I might here mention that Mr. Felix Layton, who was at Adyar for a number of years, and Mrs. Layton are at present engaged in this particular work. The Section is also developing on a big scale a system of radio broadcasts, by which Theosophy can be carried to many homes which would not otherwise be reached. Material has been supplied to Lodges in 29 cities for over 657 broadcasts, and an increasing number of Lodges are extending their broadcasts, we are told, over the entire year. Obviously, this method of propaganda, while it cannot entirely take the place of lectures, informal talks and discussions, in which there is direct personal contact between listener and speaker, is bound to assume increasing proportions not only in the United States but also in every other Section. Gradually we

might develop a system of mutual help among the various Sections in the matter of radio broadcasts as well as tape-recordings of speeches that can be used for Lodge programmes.

Because of the European Federation Congress, there were no regional summer schools this year in the German and French regions, says Mr. van Dissel, but there were other summer schools, among them a British and Irish summer school at Swanwick and the summer school at Gammel Praestegaard in Denmark. Such gatherings under one name or another—study camp, summer school, week-end retreat and so on—are becoming increasingly a feature of Theosophical work all over the world.

Among the various Sections India has the largest membership. It has now over 6,800 members. The year 1956 has been notable as being the 2,500th year after the passing of the Lord Buddha, and there have been celebrations all over the country in which our Lodges and members have participated with very special interest.

India is a country where many Lodges have buildings of their own in which they can meet and where they can maintain a Theosophical Library for use by members and the public. Not infrequently, I might say in passing, the care of these buildings and the use to which they are put create problems for the Section. Nevertheless, I suppose one must concede that it is a good thing to have grounds and building which can be exclusively used for Theosophical purposes and where it is possible to build up a favourable atmosphere as well as other more tangible facilities for Theosophical work. For long, Delhi, the capital of India, has lacked such a centre but during the last year, thanks to the efforts of our members there, it has been possible to build a Lodge hall

with adjoining rooms on a small site in one of the extensions of the city, and it is now ready for use. The foundation for it was laid by the President of the Republic, Sri Rajendra Prasad, in April 1956, at a meeting in which he made a highly appreciative reference to the work of Theosophists in India.

It is a far cry from Delhi to Sao Paulo in Brazil, where thanks to the business capacity of the General Secretary, Señor Armando Sales, and his devoted efforts, it has been possible for the Section to establish itself in premises of its own, consisting of two adjoining floors in a big building in the heart of the city. I had the pleasure of speaking in this place a number of times while I was there in May.

It is not possible for me to refer here to each and every country where the Society is active; so I mention only some, but in all of them, except where the activities are under suspense, that is to say in the totalitarian countries, the work goes on, thanks to those faithful members who carry on day by day, spreading the message as they can, and the Lodges which keep the Theosophical Society alive and alight, diffusing its radiance.

In Germany they have had "a successful year". In Indonesia the membership has increased appreciably. From the Netherlands comes the report that "public interest in Theosophy is growing"—which does not mean that the number of members is increasing correspondingly. There are many people who are attracted by Theosophical ideas and even influenced by them, but for one reason or another do not think of joining the Society. I had unusually large audiences in South and Central America during the months I was there and those

(Continued on Page 17)

SIR CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS: THE MYSTIC (1860 - 1943)

BY ELSIE POMEROY

Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, the author of many volumes of nature or animal stories, is internationally known. Roberts, the mystic, is practically unknown. This is true, even in Canada, his native land, where he remained the dominant figure in Canadian Letters from the publication, in 1880, of his first volume, *Orion and Other Poems*, until his death in 1943. Yet he was fundamentally the mystic and mysticism is one of the essential characteristics of his poetry. The same quality, in a lesser degree, is also found unmistakably in his prose as well.

Reference is made to but two of the many reasons for this anomaly. The continued popularity of his nature stories—the modern *genre* of which he originated in the early nineties—overshadowed all his other work in the regard of the general reading public; and the fact that his poetry still quickens the imagination of the Canadian poetry-reading public in a national and patriotic sense. Roberts is, therefore, chiefly regarded, apart from his nature stories, as the first poet to sing of Canada with a patriot's devotion.

The poet's belief in reincarnation, which is expressed in many poems, would alone proclaim him the mystic. The following lines are from "A Blue Blossom" which appeared in his first volume.

Methinks immortal memories

Of some past scenes of Paradise
Speak to my spirit through the flower.

From a purely personal standpoint, this poem remained very important to the poet and, throughout all the long years which followed, the humble forget-me-not continued to retain its sym-

bolic value. After his death, on an old copy of *John O'London's Weekly*, was found a typical reference. The letter to "Gog and Magog," July 4, 1936, was an article on reincarnation suggested by a new book, *The Problem of Rebirth: An Inquiry Into the Basis of the New Reincarnationist Hypothesis*, by the Hon. Ralph Shirley. Along the margin Sir Charles had written: "This exactly states what I have believed since early boyhood and formulated more and more definitely ever since. See my boyish verses, 'A Blue Blossom,' written when I was seventeen."

Other poems on the same theme appeared in subsequent volumes, including "Rebirth" in *The Iceberg and Other Poems*. This poem, the last poem in which he expressed his belief in reincarnation, was written in 1932—fifty-five years after the writing of "The Blue Blossom." Its suggestive and highly original quality may be judged from the concluding stanzas:

In my heart, as it seemed, I heard a
craving, faint cry.

I was darkly aware of moving
warmth.

I thirsted, and my groping thirst was
satisfied;

And I slumbered, wrapt and folded in
the warmth.

Once again was I snared in the kindly
flesh of man;

The kind flesh closed away my sight.
But before the mists of temporal forgetting
closed me in

I had seen far off, the Vision and the
Height.

Various subjects relating to the Eternal Mystery are the themes of many metaphysical poems. A small group which include "In The Orchard" and the delicately suggestive "Presences" express the poet's awareness of the unseen, elfish forces pervading nature, such forces as the Celtic mind is constantly aware of. In many poems Roberts expresses his firm belief in immortality. "On The Road" is a fine example. The concluding stanza expresses so triumphantly the confidence with which Roberts looked forward to the life which follows "this brief span on earth."

So when my feet, failing, shall stumble
in ultimate dark,
And faint eyes no more the high lift of
the pathway shall mark,
There under the dew I'll lie down with
my dreams, for I know
What bright hill-tops the morning will
show me, all red in the glow.

The two sonnets, "In The Wide Awe and Wisdom Of The Night" and "O Solitary of the Austere Sky," have their genesis in cosmic consciousness.

In the wide awe and wisdom of the
night
I saw the round world rolling on its
way,
Beyond significance of depth or height,
Beyond the interchange of dark and
day.
I marked the march to which is set no
pause,
And that stupendous orbit, round
whose rim
The great sphere sweeps, obedient unto
laws
That utter the eternal thought of
Him.
I compassed time, outstripped the
starry speed,
And in my still soul apprehended
space,

Till weighing laws which these but
blindly heed,

At last I came before Him face to
face,—

And knew the Universe of no such span
As the august infinitude of Man.

Many of Roberts's metaphysical poems are blended with his love of nature. Over forty years ago, the distinguished English critic, William Archer, wrote: "A deep and intimate love of nature and a vivid metaphysical imagination are, I conceive, Mr. Roberts's master qualities. In some poems his spirit soars at a single bound from contemplating the smaller lovelinesses of nature to the dizzy heights of Cosmic vision. In others we see the poet's thought in the act of passing from the infinitely little to the infinitely great, or rather of demonstrating their oneness. Here again is a poem of purely metaphysical inspiration, perhaps his masterpiece in this key, "The Unsleeping'."

Much of the poet's philosophy is expressed in these mystical poems. His philosophy, indeed, is so closely interwoven with his mysticism that he, himself, preferred the term *philosophic mysticism*. In "The Unsleeping," for instance, the poem to which Archer referred as perhaps his masterpiece in this key, Roberts asserts his belief in the predominance of man's spirit and the ultimate triumph of man's soul through the long procession of the ages. Its closing lines are:

Space in that dim predestined hour
Shall crumble like a ruined tower.
I only, with unfaltering eye,
Shall watch the dreams of God go by.

"Kinship" expresses the poet's search for wisdom through communion with nature,—one of the poems in which we see the poet's thought in the act of passing from the infinitely little to the in-

finitely great. In "Authoethon," which reflects the influence of his illustrious kinsman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, the poet asserts his belief in the one power working through nature and humanity alike. "Falling Leaves," a poem of but ten lines, exemplifies the poet's spirit going in a single bound from contemplating the lovely things in nature to what William Archer called "the dizzy heights of cosmic consciousness."

Lightly He blows, and at His breath
they fall,
The perishing kindreds of the leaves;
they drift,

Spent flames of scarlet, gold aërial,
Across the hollow year, noiseless and
swift.

Lightly He blows, and countless as the
falling

Of snow by night upon a solemn sea,
The ages circle down beyond recalling,
To strew the hollows of Eternity.

He sees them drifting through the
spaces dim,

And leaves and ages are as one to Him.

The poet's belief in the all-healing power of nature is expressed in several poems. "A Breathing Time," written when he was but twenty-one is, perhaps, the most significant. The concluding lines are as follows:

Fighting, at last I have fallen, and
sought the breast of the Mother,
Quite cast down I have crept close to the
broad sweet earth.

Lo, out of failure triumph! Renewed
the wavering courage,
Tense the unstrung nerves, steadfast
the faltering knees!

Weary no more, nor faint, nor grieved
at heart, nor despairing,

Hushed in the earth's green lap, lulled
to slumber and dreams!

During the many years of close association with the poet when writing his biography, the writer learned the vital importance of this facet of his philoso-

phy. Reaching the boat-house after his last paddle on the winding lagoons of the Toronto Islands—even then too ill to paddle himself—he said: "Now I can face the winter so much better." And later, as he walked into the park: "When I can't come with you to the island I won't be here much longer." A few weeks later plans for another visit to the island—the one place within reach where he could avail himself of the all-healing power of nature!—had to be cancelled. He was too ill to go and, even as he had predicted, six weeks later he passed away.

This mystical relation with nature is the predominant characteristic of *The Heart Of The Ancient Wood*. A novel in form, it belongs in spirit to such poems as "Kinship" and "A Breathing Time." Kirsty Craig, stunned by the sorrow which had come to her through the world, left the so-called civilization and, accompanied by her little daughter, Miranda, journeyed to the *ancient wood*. There, in the years which followed, she found wisdom through communion with nature and strength to face the world and its problems through nature's all-healing power.

Many of the poet's short stories, which were written in the earlier years before the nature stories had become a vogue, were marked by the quality of mysticism. Particularly is this true of three symbolic stories which had their origin in dreams. The writer clearly recalls hearing Roberts refer to the first of these symbolic stories, "The Stone Dog." So vivid had been the dream that fifty-seven years later he told the story as if it had been an actual experience of the day before. "I woke up," he said, "feeling the blunt pressure of the beast's teeth in my shoulder," and quite unconsciously he reached up to touch the still sore spot.

Certain poems also originated in dreams. Chief of these is the long mys-

tical poem entitled "Beyond The Tops Of Time." On waking, the poet was able to write immediately from memory several stanzas in their entirety and the formative part of the others. Sometimes only unrelated lines remained with him on waking. In a notebook in which the writer recorded the dreams which the poet talked about, is found the refrain of his last poem,—“Oh clear and high summon the trumpets.” The entry is dated August, 1934: the poem was written in April 1942. In the same notebook is recorded a dream he related one December evening in 1939. The previous night he had dreamed that he was with a party of Finns and all were singing ecstatically a song for which he had composed both words and music. He seemed irritated that the chorus only remained with him, but this he sang over and over again, hoping that he might yet recapture the entire song.

Many of his dreams referred to his father and several were included in the biography. Even in memory his father remained the poet's closest and most beloved companion. Dreams concerning his father he always remembered and was deeply affected by them at the time. In fact he never seemed to be able to dismiss them as *just dreams*. It was by no means rare to hear him remark at the close of a silent evening: "I dreamed about father last night," and frequently followed by: "It made me feel lonely all day."

In conclusion, one must turn again to the poetry of Roberts which is marked by his most profound expressions of mysticism. Certain poems, like "O Earth Sufficing All Our Needs," reveal his consciousness of another world all around us, impinging on this world, if we had but eyes to see.

Not far and cold the way that they have
gone
Who through your sundering darkness
have withdrawn;

Almost within our hand-reach they
remain
Who pass beyond the sequence of the
dawn.

Not far and strange the Heaven, but
very near,
Your children's hearts unknowingly
hold dear.

At times we almost catch the door
swung wide,
An unforgotten voice almost we hear.

This consciousness was his when, a
youth of sixteen, he wrote:

Surely I have seen the majesty and
wonder,

Beauty, might and splendour of the
power of song;

Surely I have felt the spell that lifts
asunder

Soul from body, when lips faint and
thought is strong;

Surely I have heard

The ample silence stirred

By intensest music from no throat of
bird:—

The writer, indeed, was often reminded of the poet's poem, "To A Certain Mystic," and felt like saying to him, in his own words:—

Sometimes you saw what others could
not see.

Sometimes you heard what no one else
could hear:—

A light beyond the unfathomable dark,
A voice that sounded only to your ear.

There is no more valuable thing possessed by any individual than an exalted ideal towards which he continually aspires, and after which he moulds his thoughts and feelings, and forms, as best he may, his life.

—H. P. Blavatsky in
Practical Occultism.

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I had a lengthy and enjoyable letter from Mrs. Buchanan, president of the Vancouver Lodge informing me of her visit to the Old Country. In it she gives an account of how she and her husband spent their vacation. Naturally most of the time was taken up in visiting long last seen relatives, heightened by the sight of new arrivals in the many families visited—and these were not a few as both have brothers and sisters in Scotland and England—and the glimpsing again of old familiar sights and scenes made up a most delightful odyssey. Particularly interesting to me were the impressions gleaned on visiting the many theosophical lodges from Aberdeen to London. The account of the way these were housed, how the meetings were conducted and the degrees of enthusiasm displayed, was most informative. In comparison, I think Canada is more than holding her own in these respects. After all, Canada is a young and growing country, and youth and enthusiasm naturally is on the upswing. In spite of bad weather they did not fail to get around and that quite considerably. Notes on conditions everywhere were not too comforting, and generally complaints seemed to be rampant, these of course we are cognizant of by reading of them in the press. However the holiday was a glorious one, and we in Toronto echo their regrets that they were not able to make a stop-over here and pay us a long deferred visit.

* * * *

I was delighted to receive a cheery letter informing me of Professor Ernest Wood's election as President of the American Academy of Asian Studies in San Francisco. This by the way, is a school of The College of the Pacific, the oldest institution of higher education in

California, founded in 1851 as the Union of the Pacific. The purpose of the Academy is to establish a new approach to the study of Asian thought at the graduate level. Professor Wood has taken over an onerous duty and it will prevent him from giving his usual theosophical lectures, which is to be regretted, but we must not be selfish, what is our loss is somebody else's gain. Our best wishes are extended to him in his new field of endeavour, and we feel sure he will make it the success he has always had in whatever he undertakes to do.

* * * *

My daughter Gaile and I have had a joint display of paintings in the Toronto Theosophical Centre during the past month. Most of my work consisted of paintings lent by the owner Mr. Spencer Clark, Guild of All Arts, Scarborough, and were subjects painted on his beautiful domain.

* * * *

An interesting series of lectures is being given at the Toronto Lodge on Thursday evenings by Miss M. Hindsley on Patanjali's Sutras. They began in January and will last until Easter. The initial attendance was over fifty persons and is still going strong.

* * * *

The reception accorded the new pamphlets by the lodges is very gratifying. One and all acclaim the attractiveness of the format and the suitability of the subjects as contained in the brilliant coloured covers with the seal of the T.S. on the outside. These are beguiling, and have to be examined to know what is in the inside—thus the enquirer's interest is caught through his own curiosity!

* * * *

At his request Mr. Harry Marquis of the Toronto Lodge has been transferred as a Member-at-Large.

Mr. Charles R. Carter, President of the Canyon Lodge in a letter informs me of the passing of one, Mr. A. J. Harrison who was once president of the Hermes Lodge for many years. I did not know him personally, but I understand he was a good theosophist and a man who was liked and respected by all who came in contact with him, and that his presence will be sadly missed. However:

“Time like an ever rolling stream bears all its sons away.”

But they are not forgotten, they live on in happy remembrance.

* * * *

It is very heartening to know that there is a group of people in the Montreal Lodge who are anxious to form a French speaking circle to study Theosophy in their own language. This is quite an innovation and one to be encouraged. I will forward to them any magazines that I receive from France and any other French literature which comes my way, and I trust this venture will lead to something really worth while.

* * * *

Miss Joan Morris, Secretary of the Canadian Federation informs me that it is proposed to plan a convention of the Federation Lodges for the first time in the city of Vancouver during Easter Week. In view of Mrs. Harley's suggestion at the last meeting of the General Executive, this will be an opportunity not to be missed by our members in that city. Such a convention out West should be a pointer as to the feasibility of our doing the same thing in the East. I hope our members in Vancouver and vicinity will fraternize and help to make it the success it deserves.

* * * *

One of our members-at-large living in Napanee is very interested in starting a study group. Among his friends are several interested in Theosophy, so I am collaborating with him in order to bring

this about. We have quite a few members in the same situation as he is, namely being isolated from a lodge; and to those I would suggest that they and others interested in our teachings should try and get together say once a week in each other's homes and discuss articles from *The Canadian Theosophist* or any pamphlets which I could send them. Any isolated group or individual wishing for information and help should write me and I will do all I can to help things along.

* * * *

The disquieting information as disclosed in the Minutes of the last meeting of the General Executive re the possible retirement of our editor, Mr. Dudley Barr will no doubt be read with some consternation. If such an event were to occur, and we fervently hope it will not, I trust those who have the interests of the Canadian Section to heart will give this matter their deepest attention.

* * * *

It is with much pleasure that I welcome the following new members into the Society: Mr. Arthur Cattaneo and Mr. Paul Denis of Montreal Lodge; Mrs. Ann Belanger, Mrs. Anne Dickson, Mrs. Dorothy N. Laughner and Mr. Max Duenzi, of Toronto Lodge; Mrs. Mabel C. Ellis and Mrs. Anne Kember of Victoria Lodge.

E. L. T.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Executive of The Theosophical Society in Canada was held at 52 Isabella St., Toronto on Sunday January 6, 1957.

The following members were present: Mrs. M. Harley, Miss M. Hindsley; Messrs. D. W. Barr, C. E. Bunting, G. I. Kinman and the General Secretary.

Mrs. Harley had a warm welcome, this being her first appearance since her election, and all appreciated the fact

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST
THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

Published Bi-monthly.

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.



Subscription: **TWO DOLLARS A YEAR**

OFFICERS OF THE T. S. IN CANADA

GENERAL SECRETARY

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O., 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.

To whom all payments should be made, and all official communications addressed.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE

Dudley W. Barr, 18 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Charles E. Bunting, 75 Rosedale Ave., Hamilton, Ont.

Mrs. W. S. Harley, 254 Pine Beach Blvd., Dorval, P.Q.

Miss M. Hindsley, 52 Isabella St., Toronto, Ont.

George I. Kinman, 262 Sheldrake Blvd., Toronto 12, Ont.

Washington E. Wilks, 925 Georgia St. W., Vancouver, B.C.

Emory P. Wood, 9360 — 86th St., Edmonton, Alta.

EDITORIAL BOARD, CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

All Letters to the Editor, Articles and Reports for Publication should be sent to The Editor,

Dudley W. Barr, 52 Isabella St., Toronto 5, Ont.
Letters intended for publication should be restricted to not more than five hundred words.

Printed by The Griffin & Richmond Co., Ltd.,
29 Rebecca Street, Hamilton, Ontario.

that she had made a long journey in order to attend. The Minutes were read and approved also the Financial Statement. On reporting for the Magazine, Mr. Barr brought forward an article recently received from the Orpheus Lodge. This was discussed at some length and finally it was decided that it should be published under a Lodge Heading.

Mr. Barr then made a disquieting announcement re his probable retirement in the not far distant future when he would be unable to continue as Editor. He suggested that the Executive seriously consider the matter of appointing a sub-editor with the view of eventually taking over as editor.

This is a serious matter and Executive

members are urgently requested to think the matter over and bring forward the names of any members who would be able and willing to fill the post.

The Pamphlet Committee reported its work practically completed and now we have pamphlets in attractive folders available on request.

The Animal Welfare Committee reported being now well under way. Several meetings had been held and a fund established from donations sent in by well-wishers. Quite a large list of persons interested in the movement has been prepared, and it is confidently expected that it will not be long before a concerted plan of action will be in operation.

Mrs. Harley elaborated her ideas of Unity among Theosophists as brought forward at the previous meeting. Its many facets were discussed at length and eventually it seemed that the amalgamation of the different groups was not so much desired as the bringing about of more friendliness and brotherhood. The discussion then turned on how this could be brought about, and the idea of a possible convention mooted. Pros and cons were considered and finally it was decided to await events and see whether a modified convention could be held in places either East or West. In the East, Toronto or Montreal were thought to be centres most suitable for such a purpose. Mrs. Harley further stated that a group of Theosophical members were enthusiastic about forming a group of French speaking members of their own in the Montreal Lodge. It was felt that this would bring in other French members. The means of helping such a group toward their aspirations was discussed.

The General Secretary read a letter received from Mr. Sri Ram's private Secretary, in response to one of his to the President, in which she informed

him of the ill health of Mr. Sri Ram. This was most sympathetically received and Col. Thomson stated that he had prepared a statement for publication in the present issue of the magazine. He also read a letter from a Theosophical Group in Krakow, Poland requesting books for study and their library. Mr. Kinman stated he would send some immediately and if they got through would send more. Many mentions were made of the effects of Mr. Kinman's article in *Liberty*; which has produced good returns. Several new members and subscribers have resulted and enquiries are still coming in. The next meeting was arranged for April 7. The meeting then adjourned.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
The Canadian Theosophist,

Dear Sir:

To correct any wrong impressions created by recent correspondence, Phoenix Lodge wishes to state that in the closed meetings the members do not indulge in psychic practices, which are expressly forbidden by the Lodge By-laws. The bylaws further require that any new member shall have an understanding of the fundamental principles of Theosophy.

Phoenix Lodge's interpretation of the Third Object is that of the early days of the Society, namely that it is concerned with the development of the moral character and intuition of the members. In furtherance of this object, in the closed meetings, the members humbly endeavour to apply the principles, hints, explicit instructions and *urgings* contained in the writings of H.P.B. and the Mahatmas, and in the recorded sayings of great teachers, such as Paul, Jesus, Sankaracharaya and Buddha.

The members may say, with what they hope is all due modesty, that in their public meetings they strive to present to others what has been called the "eye doctrine," that is, an intelligent *understanding* of Theosophy, and in their closed meetings to encourage the "heart doctrine", that is, the *living* of Theosophy.

It may be added, as a matter of information, that in the Supplement to *The Theosophist*, of August 1883, the editor, who was then H.P.B., referring to the establishment of *three* lodges in Paris, France, states "each of them works on its own special lines of sympathetic preference, free from any restriction or trammels from any of its sister Branches (as Lodges were then called) whether in Paris or elsewhere."

Yours fraternally,

Phoenix Lodge.

THE ROAD

"There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind—but yet a road; and it leads to the heart of the Universe. I can tell you how to find Those who will show you the secret gateway that leads inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer. There is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through. There is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards, there is reward past all telling; the power to bless and save humanity. For those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come."

H. P. B.

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

The Hammer and the Anvil

Theosophy teaches that Man, in his true essence, is a timeless imperishable being, a centre of the One Life. But Man, as we know him, is very much a child of Nature. His terrestrial part is compounded of the living matter drawn from her various levels, and through him pulse Nature's energies. Through his desires the Great Mother dominates him, and at the same time, she affords him protection, for as long as he is under her sway nothing permanently serious can happen to him, though he will certainly suffer desolating reactions at times. Nature is here used in the usual literary sense, to denote everything in manifestation below the self-conscious mind of man. Symbolized by the Square, Nature manifests the great Kamic energies of attraction and repulsion throughout her realm. These energies express themselves in Man as desire, feeling and emotion. The Kamic energy constitutes the great blind, driving force in life and provides the motive force, the incentive, to all activity in ordinary human life.

Nature has brought Man up from the primitive state by dangling her glittering gifts before his eyes,—wealth, possessions, the power of domination, and fame. Reaching for these, he invoked the creative powers of Mind and Will, from his higher spiritual nature, to obtain them; and so civilized man came into being. Human growth so far has been a matter of the increasing incarnation of Manas, and this creative power from the Spiritual Triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, besides giving man the power to think, plan and execute, has extended the range of Nature's forces within him. Above all, Manas has given him self-conscious power for good or evil.

Evolution has carried man to this point by 'natural impulse' but Nature cannot take him any higher. Man can hold his place for a time, or drop back; not for long is it possible to remain still. To go forward, Man must depend wholly upon his own inherent spiritual powers; he has to depend upon his own 'self-induced, self-devised effort'. Not by mere lapse of time can he go beyond this point, be it a million years; self-conscious effort, awakening and giving conscious expression to the sleeping powers of his Spiritual Triad, alone can do this. So before every truly civilized man stand these alternatives—to mould, or to be moulded. There is no third choice. He can either mould Nature, or be moulded by her. He can be either the Hammer or the Anvil. Either he gets from Nature what he goes after, or he gets something palmed off on him.

There are two great phases in the evolution of Man,—the Path of Forthgoing and the Path of Return. Where the one merges into the other is the Turning Point. Here stands fully civilized Man. He has been carried through the first path by Nature, by natural impulse as a child is brought up by its parents. The Path of Return must be travelled by 'self induced, self devised effort'. The crucial point is where he stands at the Turning Point, with Nature's domination still strong within him; with all the momentum of past living at the behest of desire, still upon him, he has to turn to the East, whence Light comes, and start to rule his life.

So civilized man is confronted with these alternatives,—either to steer or to drift. He can lay a course and make for the land of his heart's desire, or he can

drift back and forth, carried hither and yon on Nature's tides. This he can do endlessly, life after life, for Nature is in no hurry, she is not going anywhere, but will always be in business. Her business is to produce bodies and destroy them—this she does ceaselessly throughout her changing, ever-recurring cycles, for all time. If we want to remain pure children of nature, letting her live through us, instead of living our own lives, she is content. But if we desire to free ourselves and take our lives into our own hands, then effort is required, intelligent effort.

Every serious student is faced with these alternatives, and if he decides to take a hand in running his own life, to steer and not to drift, his first task is to find out *what it is that he wants from life*. This is not easy to discover; we want so many things,—wealth, honour, fame, security, happiness, but do we really want these things, or shall we perhaps become disillusioned with them before even we achieve them? There are one or two ideas which we can use to clarify the mind and help us to get down to what we really want from life. For instance, we can ask ourselves, "Is there anything at all for which I would give my life; supposing I had to die tomorrow, but could be granted what I wished, what would I ask?" Or again, the days and the years are passing, what have I to show for the passing years, what at the end of my life would I be content, fully satisfied, if I had spent my life striving to acquire it, or accomplish it? In these ways, if we are in deadly earnest and refuse to be diverted from our purpose, we shall discover what is our heart's desire, *what* we would be fully satisfied to exchange for our life.

At first, we may choose some high and fine thing which we feel we ought to want, but which in reality, fails to call out our whole-hearted response. *It*

*is what will satisfy the finest, the most impersonal part of our being; it is what we aspire to, that we seek to discover, not what others want, nor what we only think we should want. This, our basic human value, once found, we can dedicate ourselves to it whole-heartedly, and consequently it will draw out our powers to make it our own. We may find that what we really deep down want is merely some mundane thing, such as possessions or money. Well, if that is truly what we want, we should go after it, and if we have not been deceived, we shall be content and life will be full. But the earnest student is not likely to go far before he discovers that there are other things he wants more. There are fine things that come to light as he learns to value them above those that concern only his petty personal self. If he could contribute to *their* existence in human life, *then* he would consider his life well spent.*

Having discovered what he wants from life, the student no longer lives aimlessly, attracted first to one thing and then to another; he orientates his life. In doing this he is bringing some portion of his life under the control of his best intelligence; he has wrested some part of his energies from Nature's sway, and has made them his own. At the same time, he is consciously identifying himself with the finest thing he knows, and in doing so, he is invoking the forces of impersonal intelligence, Buddhi-Manas, from his spiritual being. This is part of the technique by means of which any student can by self-induced, self-devised effort begin to make something of his life.

With the realization that it is our own choice to be either the Hammer or the Anvil; to mould life, or be moulded by Nature, and that there is nothing mysterious or occult about it, nor any demand which is not well within our power, and with the clear knowledge re-

garding what we are seeking to do and how to go about it, we can take the first positive step toward bringing our lives under the control of intelligence.

“Man has all that Nature has, and more, and in that more lie all his hopes of good”.

Orpheus Lodge, C.T.S.,

CREATING THY MORROW

BY WINIFRED TIPLIN

“Thou canst create this ‘day,’ thy chances for thy ‘morrow’.”

—*The Voice of the Silence.*

The explanation of this quotation is closely linked with the law of karma. This law forces us to realize the fact that every experience we encounter, every pleasure, pain or disappointment is the precise result of the cause to which it is due.

“Chance” is a word devoid of meaning. There is no such thing as chance and what seems to be the merest accident springs from the deepest source of destiny.

The decrees of fate are neither more nor less than the law of karma in action. Man is truly the master or slave of his fate since it has its origin within himself. Our lives are a continual succession of opportunities either to be taken advantage of or lost. Within the depth of our own consciousness we must seek and find the path that is everywhere and nowhere and climb to success by our own efforts. To do this is the whole business of life. “Man must learn to become the architect of his own success.”—Francis Bacon.

The study of karma is inexhaustible with its various phases of action and reaction. Wars, accidents and other disasters are all a part of this great law of cause and effect in its destructive form; but happiness, health and wealth and all the constructive phases of life also come within the workings of the karmic law. Those who believe in karma have to believe in destiny which, from birth to death, every man is weaving thread by

thread around himself as a spider does his web. This destiny is guided by a voice outside of ourselves or by our most intimate, astral or inner self. These lead on the outward man but one of them must prevail and when the last strand is woven, man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing.

“It then fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or carries him away like a feather in a whirlwind raised by his own actions, and this is—Karma.”

S. D. Vol. I., p. 639.

Karma is not only the cause and effect in time, rather it is the law which governs the inter-relation and solidarity of the universe and all its parts. Hence, in a way, the karma of one such unit is the karma of all. It is the interdependence of humanity which is the cause of what is called distributed karma and it is this law which affords the solution to the question of collective suffering and relief. No man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so small, the whole body of which he is an integral part.

Karma involves the element of time and it is unreasonable to hold that all causes generated in an average life will produce their full effect before the last day of that period. One of the oldest sages once admitted that at the close of a life of study his wisdom was as a rain-drop in the ocean.

Although karma is spoken of as a law, there is no law giving, no over-ruling

entity who decrees this or that, rather it is a quality inherent in the very nature of all things. The ancient teaching is that every action is the result of a previous cause and then becomes cause for a future action and so on indefinitely. This constant movement is not the outcome of blind forces but a living stream of changes flowing from thoughts, acts, emotions and feelings, aspirations and desires of the lives which makes up and are the universe. Everything we do, every thought we think is a productive cause affecting us and those around us yet leaving seeds and the fruits of such thoughts and actions in ourselves. We have laid up for ourselves in past lives treasures for happiness or a treasure house of another kind and we are doing similarly in our present life.

“Thou can't create this 'day' thy chances for thy 'morrow.' In the 'Great Journey,' causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World.”

—*The Voice of the Silence.*

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

(Continued from Page 5)

present seemed to be quite interested in what I had to say. Yet I do not expect more than a very few of them even to consider becoming members, because of the strongly Catholic atmosphere in those countries. If our main object is to help those whom we can reach by what we say and do, we may be content if this object is achieved to a greater or lesser extent. Those who want to join the ranks of the helpers, and share the burden of the work, will do so when the spirit moves them. The Society has grown so widely throughout the world that if there is some slackness in one part of it there is activity in others.

There was “great activity” in Iceland, says Mr. Gretar Fells, who has just retired from the post of General Secretary after 21 years in that office. From Venezuela, the youngest of the Sections, the General Secretary, Señor Pablo Bonilla, sends the cheering report that they have had “many new members”. Similarly, Mr. Ricardo Michell, the new General Secretary for Chile, another small Section, speaks of public attendance in larger numbers at Theosophical lectures.

A considerable amount of good work is done in a number of Sections by the distribution of Theosophical leaflets and even booklets. I referred to this last year but wish to mention here that in Viet-Nam the Section, which has only 393 members, is distributing free of cost no less than 5,000 copies of *At the Feet of the Master* translated into Vietnamese and 2,000 copies of a booklet entitled *Practical Theosophy*.

An interesting event, which seems to hold much promise for the future, is the formation of a West African Federation for which the Charter was issued on 1st January 1956. The Federation includes four Lodges and five Centers, all of them enthusiastic and active. It has already held a summer school at Nkawkaw, which is described by the Secretary of the Federation as successful “beyond all expectation”. Evidently because of the paucity of experienced members in these Lodges and Centres, any difficult points arising from their studies are referred to the Organizing Secretary, so that he has not only to organize but also to instruct. Another Federation was formed, during the year, for Malaya and Singapore, with Dr. C. H. Yeang as the Organizing Secretary. It received its Charter on 1st October 1956.

After a long period of Theosophical inactivity once again a Lodge has been

formed at Cairo in Egypt with the name Hikmet El Kadima, with Mr. Zaki Awad as President. It is to be hoped that this fresh beginning will prove successful, and the Lodge will grow into a steady movement, shedding on all those who come under its auspices the calming and harmonizing influence of the Wisdom, particularly needed amidst the agitations of that region.

While I was in Peru I found that the Section was in a somewhat disorganized condition due to various causes, and there seemed to be no way of re-establishing it on a proper basis. Therefore, with the consent of all the members whom I could meet, I decided to suspend the Section for a time, withdrawing its Charter. Though this was regrettable it seemed to be the only course to take, but I am sure there will be a Peruvian Section ere long, because there are so many earnest Theosophists who highly value their membership of the Society. In the meanwhile the existing Lodges—there were only three of them in good standing at the time—have been allowed to affiliate themselves directly to Adyar.

The Theosophical Order of Service is active in all the countries mentioned by me last year. There is much humanitarian and public work which either Theosophical Lodges or individual members carry on, apart from the Order as such.

I was for five months away from Adyar during the year, mainly on a tour of the South and Central American Sections. I was accompanied on this tour by Señor Alfredo Puig, Jr., of Havana, Cuba, who not only translated me into Spanish with a readiness and accuracy which elicited the admiration of the audiences, particularly those who knew English, but also helped me personally in every way possible, including the obtaining of visas and the ordering of

meals at hotels and restaurants. We visited Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. After Mexico I went on to "Olcott," the Headquarters of the American Section, for a few days before proceeding to London, Paris and Baden near Vienna. On the way to Puerto Rico from India I stopped for two days at Athens, and also at Paris where they had arranged to hold the French Section Convention just at that time in order that I might be present and meet the delegates.

Mr. Geoffrey Hodson has made another extensive tour in the United States and Canada, arriving at San Francisco in time to take part in the National Conference of the American Section which was held there during the last week of November 1955. Such a Conference has been held during the last two years, somewhat on the lines of the Annual Convention, especially for the benefit of members who are not able to attend the Convention at "Olcott," and with a view to strengthening the work in different areas far away from "Olcott". Mr. Hodson's tour culminated in his participation in the Annual Convention and Summer School at "Olcott" in July 1956, after which he spent some time at "Krotona," Ojai, California, giving talks, before returning to New Zealand.

During the months of April to August Mr. Rohit Mehta, on an invitation from the English Section, made a tour of a number of Lodges in the United Kingdom and Eire, and was the chief speaker at the English Convention held at Whitsuntide in London, and also at the Scottish Convention held in Glasgow. During his absence from India, Srimati Shridevi Mehta acted as the General Secretary for India.

Mr. M. Subramaniam made a tour from the latter part of April till early in September in Indonesia, Malaya and Viet-Nam, visiting all important Lodges, and also Rangoon, Burma, on the way back to India.

I might here also mention Miss Helen Zahara who, after completing her 1955 tour of South and Central America, was requested by the Australian Section to tour and strengthen the work in that country. En route to Australia she stopped briefly in England and also went to Northern Ireland. In Australia she has been travelling from Lodge to Lodge, and at the end of this tour she will be present at the Diamond Jubilee of the New Zealand Section and then tour that country for three months.

We have reason to be grateful to all these workers and others whom I am not able to mention here, for the help and inspiration they have carried to the areas visited by them. I have had highly appreciative letters from the General Secretaries and very many members regarding their work.

At Adyar there have not been many changes in the staff, except that Mr. Alain Danielou has given up the post of Director of the Adyar Library in order to concentrate on some literary work, and I appointed Miss Ann Kerr temporarily as Director of the Library. I want here to say how much I appreciate the improvements Mr. Danielou has made as Director in the general organization of the work, the preservation and repair of manuscripts, and the Library Bulletin. I also relieved Mrs. Radha S. Burnier, at her request, of the office of Assistant Director, but she has continued to help the Library informally in many ways, particularly in the editing of the Bulletin. Mrs. Mary G. Patterson was relieved by me of her post as Librarian of the Adyar Library in order that she might devote her time to the

work of the School of the Wisdom. Another change is that Mr. D. V. Syamala Rau has been working during the greater part of this year as an assistant in the Treasurer's Office, instead of as Superintendent of the Vasanta Press.

To all departmental heads and assistants, and to Miss Emma Hunt, the Recording Secretary, and Mr. Edwin N. Lord, the Treasurer, both of whom have carried on the work most capably, I want to express my deep gratitude.

The School of the Wisdom commenced its session this year on October 2, with Miss Emma Hunt as Director of Studies, with the help of Mrs. Mary G. Patterson who also acted as the Secretary of the School. There were 18 students, coming from eight different countries, namely, U.S.A., Viet-Nam, Malaya, Northern Ireland, India, Australia, Pakistan and England. I may say that all of them have greatly enjoyed the work of the School and the opportunity of being at Adyar and coming to know something of the activities here.

Among those who passed away during this year I might mention here Mr. Peter Freeman, who was for 22 years the General Secretary for Wales; Dr. James Cousins, who came to India in 1916 in order to assist Dr. Besant in her work and remained here till he passed away; Mr. Henry van de Poll, who was for many years a worker at Adyar and later at the Indian Section Headquarters at Varanasi; and Mr. C. S. Trilokekar, who worked for many years with Dr. Arundale in the Central Hindu College and School at Varanasi and later as Principal of the Theosophical College and School at Madanapalle. Both Dr. Cousins and Mr. Trilokekar had been latterly helping the Besant Theosophical School and Kalakshetra at Adyar. We greet these brothers and other members who have passed on with affection and gratitude.

I referred to the work of the Young Theosophists last year. Concerning the Young Theosophists in Australia, Mr. J. L. Davidge, the General Secretary, in his 1956 Report, writes that they are vigorous in the larger Lodges and show vision and originality in their presentations. This is an excellent testimony for the young people to have from their elders. I am glad that in Australia, as well as in some other Sections to my knowledge, there is a relation of cordial co-operation and mutual helpfulness between the young and the elder Theosophists. It is often said that we want more youth in our Society. We certainly need the freshness of youth and its enthusiasm, along with the wisdom and capacities of age. When Dr. Besant was eighty years old, Dr. Arundale described her as eighty years young. A Theosophist among other qualifications should be

able to remain young at heart, even when he is physically old, and if he is physically young, should be able to show something of the deep purpose and earnestness of his soul-nature.

I am grateful to all who have contributed to the Adyar Day Fund, without which we would not be able to carry on the work at Headquarters as we do. I want to make particular acknowledgment to the American Section for its most generous contribution. I also thank those who have contributed to the A. B. C., the Faithful Service, and other Funds.

Let us all resolve during the coming year to give of our best to the Society and to all whom we can reach through our Theosophical work, not to speak of those with whom we come into contact in our everyday lives.

HOW SHALL WE PRAY?

It is often said: "Theosophists do not believe in prayer." Because the concept of Theosophy in reference to God or Deity, and therefore in reference to prayer, differs from what the ordinary person understands by these terms, the misunderstanding arises that Theosophists do not pray. But as students of this great philosophy of Theosophy we do believe in true prayer. So much so that Theosophy endorses the advice of St. Paul: "Pray without ceasing." The *Gita* has very much the same to say. Emphasis is laid throughout on fixing our heart and mind on the Krishna within, the Higher Self, "the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings," and, full of faith and devotion, worshipping Him, as the New Testament puts it, "in spirit and in truth," *i.e.*, becoming worthy of relationship with that higher

aspect of Krishna. We are asked to become men of meditation and to be "constantly employed in devotion to meditation upon the Supreme Spirit." And what is meditation but "silent and *un-uttered* prayer, or, as Plato expressed it, 'the ardent turning of the soul toward the divine' "? (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 10)

When we say that prayer must become a continuous process, or that we must engage in constant meditation, the implication surely is not that we are to abandon the duties of life and attempt the impossible task of ceasing to act, for, though the senses and organs may be restrained, if the proper attitude of heart and of mind be not formed, such a course will eventually make of one only "a false pietist of bewildered soul." The correct implication, therefore, of

praying without ceasing is that all that we think, feel, speak or do should be offered, with humility of soul and purity of heart, on the altar of the Divine Presence at the very core of our innermost consciousness, which means that we must take care that all our actions are in harmony with the law of that Divine, which is the law of our true being.

If our concept of the object of our worship is a limited or an exclusive one, then necessarily our prayers and our worship will also be limited and will retard the progress of the aspiring soul. There is no supreme power outside of and separate from us to whom prayers can be offered for special favours and from whom responses can be expected. Besides, such forms of worship awaken certain forces which would better be left alone unless one has a pure motive and true knowledge and understanding. Says H.P.B.:—

“ . . . woe unto those Occultists and Theosophists, who, instead of crushing out the desires of the lower personal *ego* or physical man, and saying, addressing their *Higher* Spiritual EGO immersed in Atma-Buddhic light, ‘Thy will be done, not mine,’ etc., send up waves of will-power for selfish or unholy purposes! For this is black magic, abomination, and spiritual sorcery.” (*Key*, p. 68)

A proper understanding of the law of Karma will reveal to us the uselessness of personal prayer. For, if every man reaps the consequences of his own acts, does it not logically follow that it is futile to seek aught “from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,” or to bribe them “with fruits and cakes”? Karma, the retributive law, the unfailing redresser of wrongs, is no respecter of persons, and can neither be propitiated nor turned aside by prayer. “Therefore,” says H.P.B., “we try to replace fruitless and useless prayer by meritori-

ous and good-producing actions.” (*Key*, p. 70) And it is said:—

“ . . . the ‘service of man’ and what is more or less accurately described as the “Worship of God” must go hand in hand, until they finally become one and identical. It is this final unity which we desire to bring into prominence.’ (*The Path*, Vol. III, p. 373)

Man, being the highest manifestation on earth of the Unseen Divine Principle which is universally diffused, has a portion of that Divine reflected in him. The inner man, our “Father which is in secret,” is the only God we can have cognizance of, if we turn within, in the “inner chamber” of our Soul perception. So true prayer is an inward exercise, an inner communion with the Divine Presence in the only shrine where that Presence can be worshipped, and that is in our own heart.

It will be seen how different this idea of prayer, as communion with that part of man’s own nature which is ordinarily unrecognized and ignored, is from what usually passes as prayer and that demands the turning of the consciousness without, and which, Jesus shows, sometimes finds hypocritical expression. And hypocrisy, H.P.B. has warned us, is an unpardonable sin.

What happens within ourselves when we turn the consciousness within and enter the chamber of the heart? Having gone there we shut the door and reverently fix our consciousness upon the Spiritual Self. The “ardent turning of the soul towards the divine,” as Plato says, is

“not to ask any particular good, (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself—for the universal Supreme Good” of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged. Therefore, adds Plato, “remain silent in the presence of the *divine ones*, till they remove the clouds from thy eyes and enable thee to

see by the light which issues from themselves, not what appears as good to thee, but what is intrinsically good." (*Key*, pp. 10-11)

We, therefore, pray to be guided by that Light, to be illuminated by the Self within, so that we may curb and discipline completely our lower personality. And then our prayer, instead of being a petition to some power outside, becomes an act of will, an internal command to the lower man to obey the behests of the Divine in acting for and as the Self of all creatures. The inner man confirms his position as a spiritual being, and, on that firm position assumed, demands cheerful obedience from the lower self. Says H.P.B.:—

"The *Atharva-Veda* teaches that the exercise of such will-power [as the Adept is able to exercise] is the highest form of prayer and its instantaneous response. To desire is to realize in proportion to the intensity of the aspiration; and that, in its turn, is measured by inward purity." (*Isis Unveiled*, II., 592)

The inner communion in the sense of union with the Divine is true *Yoga*. The *Gita* teaches us that wisdom springs up within him who is perfected in devotion, and true prayer opens up the way for those aspiring to hear the 'still, small voice' of the God within us. 'Prayer opens the spiritual sight of man, for prayer is desire, and desire develops WILL.' (*Isis Unveiled*, I., 434) It puts the mind *en rapport* with great and noble ideas, with the laws of Nature and with superior intelligences, awakening our intuition or inner sight, which makes possible our being transported "beyond the scenes of this world, and . . . partaking the higher life and peculiar powers of the heavenly ones." Therefore inner communion in a higher sense means communion not only with our own inner nature or Spiritual Self, but

also with higher powers and potencies residing in the infinitudes of space.

Among the preliminary steps necessary for preparing ourselves for spiritual prayer or meditation are purification, concentration and eradication of selfishness and egotism. When asked what was the greatest obstruction in the way of meditation and that most frequently present, Mr. Judge replied that it was "memory or recollection." To prevent images, impressions and sensations of the past from trooping through the brain and disturbing the meditation Mr. Judge emphasized "the need for less selfishness, less personality, less dwelling on objects and desiring them,—or sensation."

Those training themselves for true prayer or meditation should maintain an attitude of steady watchfulness with regard to their thoughts. Constant practice in dispassionate refusal to harbour evil thoughts, and in immediately replacing an undesirable thought by a good one of the opposite character, will so tune the mind that by degrees it will spontaneously think on a high level. And when a man's thoughts are pure and noble he will attract around him beneficent influences.

"When he hath abandoned every desire that ariseth from the imagination and subdued with the mind the senses and organs which impel to action in every direction, being possessed of patience, he by degrees finds rest; and, having fixed his mind at rest in the true Self, he should think of nothing else." (*Bhagavad-Gita*, VI., 24-25)

Our task will be easier if the effort is kept up unremittingly and definite hours are fixed at which, for a few moments, we may withdraw inwards. The most suitable times for so doing are at the beginning and the end of the day. Beginning with the night, it is very necessary for one who desires to

have a spiritual influence in his life to undertake, as a daily exercise or prayer, self-examination of four departments of his activity—thoughts, feelings, words and deeds. This review of our personal actions must be pursued in the light of the great philosophy which we call Theosophy and, noting our good points and our defects, we should resolve to strengthen the good ones and eliminate the others. This review need not be very long. But in examining ourselves we must act, not as a lawyer trying to defend the lower self, but as an impartial judge who reviews the proceedings dispassionately and passes fair judgment on that lower man.

Having completed our self-examination we should think of the nature and character of our Spiritual Self, the thinker and the discerner, the seat of true compassion, which hardly gets an opportunity to express itself in our mundane existence. Next, we should read a passage from one of our devotional books, selecting perhaps one verse or statement and repeating it mentally so that we go to sleep with it in our mind.

On waking in the morning we must again prepare ourselves for a period of prayer or meditation or inner communion. We should try to remember the verse or the passage which we had taken up the night before and attempt to understand its full implications, finding applications of its contents to the affairs of daily life, so that it will recur to the mind again and again during the day that has just opened. To gain a clear perception of what is implied in that verse we should think of our own inner Self as our real friend, refuge and guide. Then, making the mind tranquil, we should fix our Soul's gaze upon the star whose ray we are, that star which is our goal and which burns overhead.

Such inner communion will bring us understanding, contentment and peace,

but we should ever remember that "the way of inward peace is in all things to conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will."

In *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 280) H. P. B. has described the highest aspect of prayer:—

"The ever unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless Cause* of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through 'the still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*.

The Theosophical Movement,
May, 1953.

NEWSPAPER STUFF

Many years ago an American president made a speech. The following comments are typical of some newspapers' reactions to that address . . . A Springfield paper: "The president merely showed he is a Simple Simon" . . . A Boston gazette: "The president was ludicrous" . . . A Pennsylvania rag: "We pass over the silly remarks of the president; for the credit of the nation. We are willing that the veil of oblivion should be dropped over them" . . . A Chicago organ: "He perverted history, misstated the cause for which Americans died and with ignorant rudeness insulted the memory of the dead."

The president's name: Lincoln, The speech: Gettysburg address.

ORIGINAL AND UP-TO-DATE THEOSOPHY

We lend freely by mail all the comprehensive literature of the Movement. Catalogue on request. Also to lend, or for sale at 20c each post free, our eight H.P.B. Pamphlets, including early articles from LUCIFER and Letters from the Initiates.

THE H. P. B. LIBRARY

1385 TATLOW AVE., NORGATE PARK
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.

BLAVATSKY INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS
by H. P. Blavatsky.

THE EVIDENCE OF IMMORTALITY
by Dr. Jerome A. Anderson.

MODERN THEOSOPHY
by Claude Falls Wright.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA
A Conflation by Albert E. S. Smythe.

These four books are cloth bound, price \$1. each.

THE EXILE OF THE SOUL
by Roy Mitchell, a key to the understanding of occult psychology.

THROUGH TEMPLE DOORS
Studies in Occult Masonry
by Roy Mitchell, an occult interpretation of Masonic symbolism.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION
by Roy Mitchell, a re-examination of Theosophical ideas, and their practical application in the work.

THEOSOPHIC STUDY
by Roy Mitchell, a book of practical guidance in methods of study.

The above four books are attractively bound; paper bound \$1.00, cloth, \$1.50.

COURSE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING
by Roy Mitchell. Especially written for Theosophical students. \$3.00.

THEOSOPHY, AN ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE
by Dudley W. Barr. 50c.

CANADIAN LODGES

CALGARY LODGE:

Address enquiries to Mr. Stanley S. Elliott,
No. 3, 1735 College Lane, Calgary, Alta.

EDMONTON LODGE:

President, Mr. Emory P. Wood; Secretary,
Mrs. Madeline Williams, 10943, 77th Ave.,
Edmonton, Alta.

HAMILTON LODGE:

President, Mr. C. E. Bunting; Secretary, Mrs.
Clare Lakin, Ancaster, Ont.

PHOENIX LODGE, HAMILTON:

President, Mr. Cecil Williams, 49 E. 7th St.;
Secretary, Miss Stella Ballard.

KITCHENER LODGE:

President, Alexander Watt; Secretary, John
Oberlerchener, Kingsdale P.O., Kitchener.

MONTREAL LODGE:

President, Mrs. H. Sora; Secretary, Miss E.
L. J. Tolson. Lodge Rooms, 1501 St. Cath-
erine Street West, Montreal.

OTTAWA:

Enquiries respecting Theosophical activities in
Ottawa should be addressed to: Mrs. D. H.
Chambers, 531 Bay St., Ottawa.

ST. THOMAS LODGE:

President, Benj. T. Garside; Secretary, Mrs.
Hazel B. Garside, 71 Hincks St., St. Thomas,
Ont.

TORONTO LODGE:

President, Mr. G. L. Kinman, 262 Sheldrake
Blvd., Toronto 12 (phone Mohawk 5346). Re-
cording Secretary, Miss Laura Gaunt. Lodge
Rooms, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ont.

VANCOUVER LODGE:

President, Mrs. Buchanan; Secretary, M. D.
Buchanan, 4690 W. 8th Avenue. The Lodge
rooms are at 151½ Hastings St. West.

ORPHEUS LODGE, VANCOUVER:

President, R. H. Hedley; Secretary, L. C.
Hanson; Copp Bldg., Vancouver, B. C.

CANYON LODGE, NORTH VANCOUVER:

President, Mr. Charles R. Carter; Secretary,
Mrs. A. R. Creeth, 344 East 26th St., North
Vancouver, B.C.

VICTORIA LODGE:

Apply to Mrs. W. Gilmour, 2540 Cotswold Road,
Victoria, B.C.

WINNIPEG LODGE:

President, Mr. Percy H. Stokes, Suite 8 Bra-
deen Apts., 149 Langside Ave., Winnipeg, Man.
Secretary, Mr. Henry Gadd.
