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THE FIFTH THEOSOPHICAL WORLD CONGRESS

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The 5th Theosophical World Congress held in Salzburg, Austria, July 14-22, brought together over 1,000 members from many countries, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, South, West and East Africa, South, Central and North America, and from most of the European countries. Significantly, for the first time in many years Yugoslavia was represented. Two days before the Congress opened the members there had received permission from the Yugoslavian Government to form a Theosophical Society in that country and to travel to the Congress; they met immediately, appointed Mr. Jesse as General Secretary, and seventeen of them were warmly welcomed by their brother Theosophists at Salzburg.

Salzburg, a charming old city on the Salzach river, is in the north-west corner of Austria, a few miles east of the German border. It is on the Bavarian Plain and the Austrian Alps surround it on the east, north and south. It was chosen as the site of the 5th World Congress partly because it is near the population centre of members of the Society; partly because the holding of the Congress in Europe would stimulate the work there, and partly because, being the centre for the internationally famed annual Music Festival, it offers such excellent facilities for the holding of conventions. In the Congress House, a modern,

well-appointed building convenient to hotels and the shopping district, there is a splendid auditorium seating about one thousand, with facilities for instantaneous translation through head-phones into six languages. Floor to ceiling windows on the east side overlook the famous Mirabelle Gardens. On the second and third floors there are the washrooms, offices, smaller halls for committee meetings and a commodious and efficiently run lunch room. The entire building was turned over to the Theosophical Society for the duration of the Congress; the Congress House authorities co-operated in every way to anticipate and provide for the needs of their guests.

Much thought and work had been expended on the careful planning of the Congress and hearty congratulations and warm thanks are due Mr. John B. S. Coats, the Chairman of the European Federation of National Societies; Dr. Norbert Lauppert, General Secretary for Austria, and to all others who helped with this work. Each delegate upon entering received a neat Congress badge showing his or her name and country; also a large folder containing the Congress programme, information respecting the use of the headphones, maps and descriptive booklets of Salzburg and the surrounding district, and other material which might be of assistance to visiting delegates.

July 14

The Congress officially opened on July 14 and registration began in the morning and continued all day. Dr. Lauppert was in charge of this and had the helpful and courteous assistance of a group of Young Theosophists (some of whom were bi- or tri-lingual). About two hundred Young Theosophists were present at the Congress. There was, of course, the inevitable confusion of an opening day, crowds arriving, registering, meeting friends and acquaintances, dispersing to the hotels which had been assigned to them, and then re-appearing to mingle with the other members. A Press Conference was arranged for 11.15 a.m. in one of the smaller Committee rooms and this was attended by Mr. Sri Ram and others. The Congress Committee met at 4 p.m. to review attendance figures, discuss minor changes in programme, etc.

Formal proceedings got under way at the 8 p.m. meeting which was opened with "Prayers of the Nations". Each representative of various faiths, Hindu, Parsee, Buddhist, Jain, Islam, Hebrew, Christian, uttered a short prayer of that faith. Mr. Dara Mirza, formerly of Pakistan but now of Toronto Lodge, gave an Islamic prayer. Dr. Lauppert as General Secretary for Austria, graciously welcomed the members to Austria and to this important Congress. There were about forty General Secretaries, Presidential Agents or their appointees on the platform and each conveyed greetings and best wishes from the members of the Section or Federation which he or she represented. After the greetings had all been given, the evening was well advanced. The President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, then spoke briefly and formally declared the Congress open. The members dispersed shortly after 10 p.m.

My report is expressed easiest in diary form, and as many of the talks will no doubt later be published in full I will merely record briefly from memory and notes.

July 15

Friday's proceedings were opened with a talk by the President at 9.45 a.m. on "The Need for a New Understanding". The theme of the Congress was "A World in Transition" and Mr. Sri Ram mentioned this and the responsibility of the individual member in this rapidly changing world. We should seek self understanding based upon the great Theosophical principles; it is not necessary for Theosophical students to know all about the elementals or the archangels, or to accumulate information about these and similar details; wisdom is not knowledge derived from formal learning; wisdom is of the Self and our task is to discover that Self Wisdom within ourselves.

The 11.15 a.m. session was devoted to the first section of a "World Survey of T.S. Work". The work in North America was spoken of by Miss Joy Mills of the American Section and by the General Secretary for Canada. Miss Mills told of the extensive work being carried on in the United States through many channels and mentioned the financial help available through the Kern Foundation. The Canadian General Secretary spoke briefly on the work here; the Canadian Section had always maintained an independent attitude in its approach to Theosophy, he suggested our members were "not orthodox Theosophists", a phrase questioned by the President. As Mrs. Gladys Cooper, Secretary of the Canadian Federation had not been asked to report, he also mentioned the work being done by the Federation, particularly on the west coast. The Report for England, Scotland, Wales, Eire and Northern Ireland was given by Mr. Leslie-Smith of England. Mrs. Radha Burnier, General Secretary for India, reported for that country—one serious problem in presenting Theosophy was the language difficulty—there are seventeen official languages and many dialects.

Mr. Sri Ram kindly found time in his busy schedule for a brief talk with me. A copy of the article, "The T.S. and the E.S."

(C.T., July-Aug. 1966) was given to him and he promised to read it carefully and to write to me about it. I mentioned four points which I hoped the General Council would consider at its meeting the next day;

1. The relationship of the T.S. and the E.S.
2. Official recognition of Mr. Wm. Q. Judge as one of the Founders of the T.S., a step which would be welcomed by other Theosophical organizations.
3. Complete revision of the Official Rules of the Society which had been amended and re-amended so many times over the years that they were difficult to follow and understand.
4. Enlarging the Adyar *Theosophist* to provide for correspondence pages.

Unfortunately the lengthy agenda did not permit of these points being brought up for discussion, despite the holding of an additional Council meeting on the closing day; possibly they will be referred to the General Council at its next meeting in December.

In the afternoon there was an open meeting of the European Federation Council and representatives of fifteen European Sections gave interesting accounts of activities in their countries. For example, in the small and isolated country of Iceland, which was ably represented by its General Secretary Mr. Sigvaldi Hjalmarsen, there are 630 members; the Section sends out regularly 2500 copies of its magazine, the cost of which is borne by the Section. It is impossible to give details of all these reports, but I must say that I was impressed with the devotion and energetic activity which was so manifest.

At 5.00 p.m. Mr. V. Wallace Slater, former General Secretary for England gave his address "Freedom and Responsibility"; Mr. Slater had visited Canada during his term of office and had met members in Toronto and Vancouver. He stressed the importance of maintaining freedom of thought in the Society.

In the evening there was a Civic Recep-

tion by Land and Stadt Salzburg, held in the beautiful Mozarteum near the river. (Salzburg was the birthplace of Mozart in 1756 and his memory is honoured by statues, place and street names; Paracelsus, the Theosophic doctor and philosopher is also honoured in Salzburg—he lived there for a time and died there in 1541.) This reception was attended by the Civic dignitaries and the Burgomaster warmly welcomed the Theosophical members to Salzburg. Mr. Sri Ram on behalf of the Society replied fittingly and thanked the Civic authorities for their kindness. A most delightful concert of the music of Mozart followed. The attendance was so large that all could not be accommodated in the main hall and had to listen through loud-speakers in an upstairs hall. Mr. and Mrs. Fitz Schleifer were in this hall and Mr. Oberlechner of Kitchener and I had the pleasure of meeting them. I also met some kindred spirits from the English Section; I was gratified that later there were several opportunities for further exchanges of views.

July 16

The day's activities commenced with a meeting of the General Council at 8.30 a.m. held in Markart Saal, the largest committee room. There was a lengthy agenda and Mr. Sri Ram suggested disposing of some routine matters first and to receive reports on other points which, owing to changed conditions, would not need to be dealt with officially. The proposal to increase the Executive Committee to 14 members was discussed. A suggestion that Sections having 1000 members or more be entitled to nominate an additional Executive Committee member was rejected, the Canadian representative's objection being that the Rules of the Society should not be amended to meet a condition peculiar to one Section. The proposal to increase was also rejected. But discussion of these several points took time and the meeting adjourned about 9.40 a.m.

At 9.45 a.m. Mr. James S. Perkins, Vice-President, spoke on "The Transforming Principle". This was a very good talk, a

well-arranged, sensitive approach on the transforming power of Theosophy.

One difficulty in the lectures was that in addition to the interpretation coming through the head-phones, a running interpretation was made by an interpreter standing beside the speaker. The speaker would utter a sentence or two and then pause until his words were spoken either in German or French. The speeches had therefore to be condensed to about a half-hour, but delivery took an hour or more.

Mr. Joan Coats was an excellent "master of ceremonies" in getting the audience in and seated, making announcements and trying his best to have the lectures begin promptly at the appointed time. His commanding presence and voice and his ready and kindly humour served him well in this task. Despite difficulties the time schedule was adhered to fairly well.

11.15 a.m. The next item was the second session of the "World Survey of T.S. Work". Miss Helen Zahara, former General Secretary for Australia, told of the work in Australasia and Southeast Asia. Mr. John Coats reported for the European Federation. Mrs. M. E. Nairn, General Secretary for Southern Africa spoke of the activities there and in West and East Africa. Mrs. Nairn stated that it was difficult, but not impossible, to arrange mixed meetings of all races in Southern Africa. She mentioned the contribution of books and literature made by Canada to members in Ghana. Mr. Arture V. Lopez, General Secretary for Mexico, and Senora Cinira R. Figueiredo, General Secretary for Brazil reported for Central and South America. Senora Figueiredo stated that the population of Brazil is of several racial origins—there is no problem of racial distinctions—all races are equal—the unity of life is felt in their daily lives. One problem facing the Theosophical Society in Central and South America is that of obtaining suitable literature in Spanish and Portuguese; printing costs are very high.

1 p.m. The Theosophical Society in Europe had kindly invited the General Sec-

retaries for luncheon in Markart Saal. A delicious vegetarian lunch was served; the place cards were so arranged that guests did not congregate in familiar groups. The lady on my right was the representative from Indonesia and she was interested to learn of the gift of a copy of *The Divine Plan* sent by the Canadian Section to a member in Jakarta. The Theosophical Society in Indonesia has been suspended by the government, but the members are hoping to keep together. Mr. Jesse from Yugoslavia sat opposite and we heard something of the problems there after the barriers closed down. Miss Ruth Beringer of Australia, on behalf of all the guests thanked the European Society for its kind hospitality.

4 p.m. Mr. Dara Mirza and I attended the first session of the Special Conference on Publications where some of the practical problems of publishing were discussed. Mr. Perkins spoke of the difficulty of obtaining suitable book paper in India as currency restrictions prevent importation; he suggested that donations of paper might be sent from abroad. The meeting discussed the printing at Adyar of books in different languages—at present English only is used. Adyar cannot send money out of India to finance printing in other countries. Delegates from Portugal, Iceland and Uruguay told of their printing problems. Mr. Leslie-Smith suggested that the European Federation might aid the printing of non-English literature through loans which might be repaid as books were sold.

5 p.m. Two lectures in French were given by Mr. Georges Tripet of Switzerland and Miss Pascaline Mallet of Holland. Mr. Tripet's paper was "The Duty of a Theosophist in a World of Transition". He recounted some of the marvellous advances in knowledge in the past few decades. "We live in a world of superwonders". This acceleration does not modify our responsibility—rather intensifies it—we must respond by deepening our understanding of Theosophy and by the daily application of Theosophy in our lives. Miss Mallet's paper was

entitled "The Removal of Barriers". The main barrier to universal brotherhood is egotism which poisons human relationships and prevents perception of truth.

The 8.00 p.m. lecture was by Mr. F. L. Kunz: "From the Unreal to the Real", with films to illustrate some of the new scientific data to which Mr. Kunz referred. Modern science has made available to us corroborations of theosophical hypotheses which could not be furnished by the materialistic science of 1875. The crest wave of intellectualism must be guided into spirituality. The fundamental concepts of Theosophy can now be demonstrated as knowledge, not theories.

July 17

A meeting for E.S. members only was held in the main auditorium from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. The numbers of those who attended is not known, but a sizeable crowd of non-members were waiting at 9.30 a.m.

The lecture at 9.45 a.m. was by Mr. Geoffrey Hodson, "Through War Caused by Ignorance to Peace Founded upon Knowledge"—a self-explanatory summary of the main theme of the talk. Mr. Hodson mentioned the need for modern Theosophical literature to disseminate the Ancient Wisdom and dissipate the ignorance and lack of spirituality which bring about wars.

The 11.15 a.m. session was a forum on "The Place of Religion in a World of Science and Technology", the speakers being Mr. Sigvaldi Hjalmarsson of Iceland and Mr. Felix Layton of the United States. (I find that my notes are too scanty to report on these talks and the mimeographed copies were unavailable.)

The General Secretaries had been invited to a meeting with the Young Theosophists at 3 p.m. in Mozart Saal. This was a revealing experience. About 200 young people in their 'teens or early twenties, from many countries, had come to the Congress and were encamped at Camp Aigen about five miles from Salzburg. Some were T.S. members, others not. These young men and women were articulate, intelligent, fearless in

attitude, original in thought, emancipated from many of the prejudices and partialities which dim older eyes, and were linked together in close friendship as partners in the adventure of facing and understanding the swiftly changing standards and innovations of the modern age. Henk Verhoog of Amsterdam is the President of the European Young Theosophists Executive Committee, and was Chairman of the meeting. Opinions were expressed frankly—someone referred to the Y.T.s as the future workers and leaders of the T.S. One young man was not sure that he wanted to be cast in that role—that was something he would have to decide for himself—Theosophy could be found through other avenues than the T.S.—older members were often complacently settled in their own concepts of Theosophy, oblivious of the sweeping changes in science, art, moral standards, etc.—don't try to tell us the answers, help us to ask the questions. The hour passed very quickly.

4.00 p.m. Miss Joy Mills of the American Section, described in greater detail the "Workshop" procedure in the presentation of Theosophy which she had mentioned briefly on the previous Friday.

5.00 p.m. Two short lectures in German: "The Spiritualizing of Daily Life" by Mr. Axel von Fielitz-Coniar; and "Man and his Work in the World of Tomorrow" by Mr. Curt Berg, of Sweden.

I missed these lectures; after the Young Theosophists' meeting some members wished to talk and over coffee we exchanged views on some controversial matters. There is a strong element in the Society—or more correctly among English speaking members—who are not in the E.S. or in the Liberal Catholic Church. The article, "The T.S. and the E.S." had been read by some of them and they agreed with the views expressed. The activities of the Liberal Catholic Church are apparently more widespread in Europe than in Canada, and its influence on the future of the Society is causing concern.

8.00 p.m. Mr. N. Sri Ram's evening lecture was on "A Turning Point in Human Life."

July 18

No meetings—the day had been left free for sight-seeing. Bus excursions had been arranged; some members took the long trip up into the High Alps (12 to 13 hours), others visited the lake country and the salt mines; Mr. Oberlechner and I chose an afternoon trip through lovely mountainous country to Berchtesgaden and Konigsee, including a five mile boat trip on the mountain lake there.

It was a morning to relax; after some letters and cards I called in at Congress House and found Dr. Lauppert working away at his registration records—960 delegates had registered by Sunday night and many badges were still waiting to be picked up. Dr. Lauppert had many duties at the Congress; in addition to keeping the registration records, he was usually on the platform to give the German translations—and he attended all committee meetings and conferences. Upstairs I met John Coats and thanked him for his part in making the Congress a success. He too was a very busy person at Congress, but John is "unflappable", courteously imperturbable no matter what happens or how many persons are all trying to talk to him at once. In the deserted lunchroom, Miss Katherine Beechey, Recording Secretary at Adyar, was reading some letters. Over a cup of coffee we talked for awhile on the unique Oneness of the All—and other subjects, until I interrupted her and went downstairs. In an organization the size of the Theosophical Society the duties of the Recording Secretary are many and varied. Miss Beechey carries on with a quiet efficiency which makes molehills out of mountains of work, and yet finds time to greet and converse with all who approach her.

July 19

The 8.30 a.m. Conference on the Presentation of Theosophy, presided over by Mr.

N. Sri Ram, was an encouraging meeting. Mr. Dara Mirza and I attended. Mr. Sri Ram's opening remarks emphasized the complete freedom of members—everyone is free to understand Theosophy in his own way, and to express it. He suggested that lecturers avoid making positive statements about matters on which they have not positive knowledge, Chains, Rounds, etc., and introduce such subjects by saying "We are told" or "There is an old tradition." We should try to present Theosophy in the beauty of its wholeness. In the general discussion, all speakers were critical of what was called "the middle period" literature, i.e., between H.P.B. and the present time. "Great areas of contradiction exist between *The Mahatma Letters* and, for example, *Leadbeater's Life After Death*." Miss Zahara said that some books of this period were dogmatic and this dogmatism was one reason for decreased attendance at meetings. "We must face unflinchingly the faults of prior presentations". Mr. Layton agreed—some literature, regarded as classic, should be updated, which led Mr. Sri Ram to ask drily, "How would we update *The Voice of the Silence*?". There were suggestions about re-writing and editing some of the Leadbeater books, or inserting explanatory introductions. The President said it was very difficult to re-write books of another author—let them stand for what they express—today's members should produce new introductory literature for this age. All delegates agreed that the appeal of lectures was waning, but people welcome group discussion.

Senor Bonilla of Venezuela asked me to read his message urging more work with young persons, even children of school age. I spoke of the vital importance of presenting Theosophy in our daily lives, quoting Whitman, "I and mine do not convince by argument, simile and rhyme; we convince by our presence."

9.45 a.m. Mrs. Rukmini Devi Arundale spoke on "The Way of a Theosophist". Mr. Sri Ram had left unanswered the question

"Is there an orthodox Theosophy?" "Yes," said Mrs. Arundale, "there is for those who accept a stereotyped Theosophy". She spoke of the great need for individual thinking—there is complete freedom of expression in the Society. She felt more free now than in the time of A.B. and C.W.L. when she was much younger and tended to accept everything. We must form our own opinions. The second part of her address dealt with vegetarianism and the compassion for animals which moved many vegetarians.

11.15 a.m. Forum on "The Open Mind and Positive Teachings", Dr. Hugh Shearman of Northern Ireland and Mr. A. J. H. van Leeuwen of Holland. As Dr. Shearman was not at Salzburg his paper was read by Miss Grace Blanch. Dr. Shearman said there is the Theosophy of H.P.B., the Theosophy of Mr. Sinnett, the Theosophy of Mrs. Besant, Leadbeater, Wedgewood, etc. Some are *superficially* in conflict with each other!!, but all agree there is a reality above mind.

3.00 p.m. Had a long talk with Mr. Pierce Spinks whose compelling interest is the re-unification of all Theosophical societies.

4.00 p.m. 2nd conference on Publications; Mr. Mirza and I represented the Section. Much of the discussion was on the problem of literature for non-English speaking countries; there was amplification of the scheme for a Non-English Publications Loan Fund to be administered by the European Federation and T.P.H. (London). Next business was increasing circulation of the *Adyar Theosophist*. I said it should be made more vital and have correspondence columns thus giving more members a personal interest in the magazine—there was some talk of "opening a dialogue" in *The Theosophist*. The need for more subscribers to the *Adyar News Letter* was mentioned. Mr. Leslie-Smith mentioned need for new pamphlets and their search for P.P. (the Perfect Pamphlet!) Some thought contents of pamphlets should be decided by a committee—Mr. Leslie-Smith welcomed the suggestion but said the writing should be left to one man.

5.00 p.m. Miss Joy Mills spoke on "New Frontiers for an Ageless Wisdom"—new concepts of science, sociology, art . . . and Theosophy.

The evening was occupied with entertainment by Salzburg Jugend (Youth) with music, songs and dancing. Mr. Oberlechner and I did not attend; over a late dinner in an old Austrian restaurant, where we were unexpectedly joined by two charming Austrian ladies, we discussed Congress activities to date; took apart some of the speeches and speakers; by 10.30 p.m. most of the Theosophical problems had been settled—for the night at least.

July 20

8.30 a.m. The 2nd Conference on the Presentation of Theosophy was attended by Mr. John Oberlechner, Dara Mirza and I for the Canadian Section. Miss Hoskins, Publicity Dept., England, said first priority in presenting Theosophy is to arouse deeper understanding for individuals—re group work; unless the group has a competent leader group discussion often wanders and becomes a mere sharing of ignorance. Mr. Geoffrey Hodson said much misleading information is given from our platforms as authoritative statements and he favoured modernizing our literature and methods of presenting. Mr. Ross of Los Angeles, who characterized himself as "the gadfly on the Theosophical ox" spoke vigorously in criticism of our superiority complex—"some-day Science will know these things"—modern psychology is not catching up, it is way ahead of us. Mr. Leslie-Smith said "Watch Tower Notes" in *The Theosophist* deserve much wider distribution.

9.45 a.m. Mrs. Radha Burnier's talk on "Liberating Beauty" was a well thought out paper but did not touch upon the mystery of man's capacity to know Beauty, the Socratic "Never hath a soul perceived Beauty unless it were itself first beautiful".

11.15 a.m. 3rd Forum on "The Role of the Theosophical Society in Present Conditions". Mrs. E. Stakesby-Lewis, former Gen-

eral Secretary for Southern Africa, was Chairman, the speakers being, Mrs. Gool Minwalla, Presidential Agent for Pakistan, and Miss Ruth Beringer, General Secretary for Australia. Again there was emphasis on freedom—each individual member has utmost freedom to follow his own path to truth.

1.00 p.m. A lovely sunny day and a group picture of the delegates was taken in the Mirabelle Gardens.

Mr. and Mrs. Fitz Schleifer of Vienna, had lunch with Mr. Oberlechner and me and told us of the closing of the headquarters and lodges in Austria in World War II. The books and records were confiscated. After the war, they turned up, all neatly packed in boxes, in a castle in Czechoslovakia. No one knew how they got there; the Austrian Government returned them to the Society. Mr. Schleifer gave us many details of the work in Austria.

The afternoon had been set aside for further excursions—Congress House was deserted. Mr. Oberlechner and I walked to the old city, and visited the castle and fort overlooking Salzburg and its environs.

8.00 p.m. "Questions and Answers". Mr. N. Sri Ram. There were many questions, but only a few could be answered—again, the translation from the platform took up time. One question: "Can the T.S. give any scientific proof of Reincarnation—not C.W.L.'s *Life after Death*"? Mr. Sri Ram replied: "Mr. Leadbeater claimed to describe what he saw clairvoyantly of the process of reincarnation. You may or may not accept this claim—that would depend upon what you thought of him and his capacity—no one known to us should be considered infallible—I do not think that reincarnation can be scientifically proved—science cannot prove or disprove the soul."

"Is Reincarnation a cornerstone of Theosophy?" "If you think it is that important, then it is for you, but I would not say it is a cornerstone—the Society is what we all are; if we are narrow-minded, the T.S. is narrow-minded—we do not tell members

you should do this or that—this is left to each member's understanding."

"How does Theosophy define God?" "Theosophy is not an entity and does not describe anything". A question was asked about the Liberal Catholic Church; in answering this the President said that the T.S. had its own distinctive character and we should at all times preserve its standing—the T.S. stands apart from organizations having creeds. Other questions dealt with animal experiments, Young Theosophists in India, etc. The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

July 21

The 8.30 a.m. meeting of the General Council was addressed by Mr. Hans Zeuger, Presidential Agent for the State of Israel concerning difficulties which had arisen between him and a group near Galilee, some of whom had suffered greatly in German concentration camps. Mr. Zeuger's presentation of his case took up most of the time. The President said that the First Object of the Society must be accepted by all members. In order to provide a practical solution to the several problems there he had suggested a separate Federation. As there were many other items on the Agenda another meeting of the General Council was called for 8.30 a.m. next morning.

I cannot report on either of the two following morning sessions as I was at an informal gathering with a smaller group. Miss Helen Zahara was the speaker at the 9.45 a.m. lecture, her title being "An Unfinished Symphony". The 11.45 a.m. session was on the "Theosophical Order of Service"; Mr. Sri Ram was Chairman and the speakers were Mr. Geoffrey Hodson and Mr. John Coats.

At 3.30 p.m. the Young Theosophists were represented by able speakers. The meeting opened with the singing of "The Family of Man", written and set to music by one of the Young Theosophists. Miss Mira Brandt of Holland, Secretary of the organization, said it was the great wish of the Young Theosophists that their activities be seen as a facet of the T.S. Jan Fjel-

lander of Sweden spoke on the problem of the increasing population, illustrating his points with carefully drawn diagrams. (European young people are very conscious of the "population explosion", the effects of which they observe around them.) The President of the European Y.T. Executive Council, Henk Verhoog, referred to Teilhard de Chardin's masterly summarizing of evolution in *The Phenomenon of Man*—for the new to be born, the old must be destroyed—should not judge motives of others—remove feeling of superiority so prevalent in T.S.—the awakening of world consciousness—one day the implications of modern knowledge will give birth to a mysticism of Science.

The 4.00 p.m. discussion of "Theosophists Reunite" enabled Mr. Pierce Spinks to present his thoughts on the reunification of all Theosophical Societies. In nine short years we may expect a new Teacher, but instead of the one united body which H.P.B. hoped for, we have several Theosophical Societies with little co-operation between them. Is this the Brotherhood which the Masters came to establish? The Society has a static membership which does not increase with world population. If the Movement were reunited how much more it could do for the world. Mr. Sri Ram deeply appreciated Mr. Spinks' efforts and praised his unremitting devotion of years to the cause of reunification. Adyar has cordial relations with other groups; is not conscious of any illwill toward them or any prejudice against them. He spoke of his meeting with the United Lodge of Theosophists in Los Angeles. We must recognize that these students have their own organization and, quite properly, carry on their work in their own way. He hoped that there would always be fullest co-operation wherever possible, but physical amalgamation did not seem possible at present. Mr. Leslie-Smith also replied to Mr. Spinks—union, he said, is a joining of parts; unity, a perception of wholeness. Without Unity there can be no union.

At 5.00 p.m. Miss Clara Codd spoke on "Our Real Work, Now and Always". Miss Codd is now over ninety, frail, but her voice reflected the inner power which has sustained her through uncounted years of Theosophical work. Miss Codd mentioned previous World Congresses which she had attended—but thought that this would be her last in this incarnation. At the conclusion of her moving address, the members rose and remained standing during a long ovation to a gallant old lady, a world figure, who had always given of her best to the Theosophical Society.

At 8.00 p.m. Mr. James Perkins gave a description of Adyar and showed many slides of the grounds and buildings on the beautiful two hundred and sixty acre estate.

July 22

Another General Council meeting at 8.30 a.m. The Council re-affirmed the Society's policy of dissociation from the many movements and organizations which had grown up around the T.S., and recommended that a reminder of this be sent to all Sections; this action was taken following a discussion on a motion suggested by Mr. E. L. Gardner asking that the lodges ensure the removal of all Liberal Catholic Church activities from the lodge rooms. Other discussion was on Kalashetra's occupancy of part of the Adyar grounds and its removal therefrom. There were several other items of business and an account of these will be given when the summarized report arrives from Adyar.

The 9.45 a.m. lecture was by John Coats "Transition into What?" followed at 11.15 a.m. by the official closing of the World Congress by Mr. N. Sri Ram. The programme called for an open discussion with the World Federation of Young Theosophists at 4.00 p.m., "After the Transition," and at 8 p.m. the Young Theosophists had arranged a Camp Fire at Camp Aigen.

But my flight left at noon and all closing ceremonies were missed. A scheduled Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt to New York had been cancelled but a flight the next

morning, Frankfurt to Toronto, via Air Canada had been arranged.

* * *

Canadian Delegates

Eight members from Canada were at Salzburg, two from the Canadian Federation, Mrs. Gladys M. Cooper, the Federation Secretary, of Vancouver, and Mrs. M. Milner, President of Mercury Lodge, Edmonton. The six members from the Section were, Mr. John Oberlechner of Kitchener, and five members of Toronto Lodge, Mrs. Lillie Hodder and her daughter Mrs. E. Russon, Miss Ruth Playle, Mr. Dara Mirza and the General Secretary. Mrs. Helen Barthelmes and her daughter had made all arrangements to be at the Congress but the airline strike upset their plans. Mr. Mirza and Mr. Oberlechner attended most of the lectures and committee sessions and each quickly established relationships with groups of members from other countries. Mr. Oberlechner and I met frequently; I am very grateful to him and to Mr. Mirza for their valued assistance.

Canadian Books and Pamphlets

A copy of each of the publications of the Blavatsky Institute of Toronto were taken to Salzburg together with samples of our pamphlets. These were prominently displayed on a separate table and much interest was shown in them, particularly in the writings of Roy Mitchell. Orders were received for copies which will be filled from Toronto. Mr. Fitz Schleifer of Vienna had been promised everything that remained, but on the final day only one small booklet was left.

London Visit

Two days were spent in London on the trip over and I visited the commodious and centrally located English Headquarters at 50 Gloucester Place, meeting the Librarian and members of the Publicity Department, several of whom came to the Congress. Mr. Leslie-Smith, General Secretary for the English Section was not at the office that morning, but we met frequently at Salzburg.

The next day Mrs. Elsie Benjamin of the Corresponding Fellows' Lodge very kindly came up to London from Worthing and we had, what was for me, a most enjoyable and instructive day, exchanging news and views and visiting the British Museum to examine the originals of the Letters from the Mahatmas. Mrs. Benjamin and Mr. Christmas Humphreys are the joint compilers of the recent new edition of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. The Museum authorities have had the original letters and some letters of H.P.B. carefully bound in six volumes, thus preserving these priceless writings for this and future generations of students. On leaving the Museum Mrs. Benjamin and I called on Mr. John Watkins, internationally-known publisher and book dealer; Mr. Watkins' father, John M. Watkins, was closely associated with H.P.B. in London. We talked about the possibility of bringing out another edition of William Kingsland's *The Real H. P. Blavatsky* which has been out of print for many years—there may be a copyright problem here. Mr. Watkins kindly presented the Canadian Section with photostats of H.P.B.'s last two letters to the Inner Group, together with photostats of G. R. S. Mead's address at the cremation of her body.

General

"The T.S. has grown out of its 'fairy tale days'" were the words first thought of to open the report on the Congress proceedings. In all addresses, in the discussions in Committee meetings, and in conversations with individual members, a growing maturity in the Society was evident. For many years the majority of members were guided and directed by the teachings of two prominent personalities in the Society and their followers; these teachings were seldom questioned and had a preponderant influence upon the whole Society. This influence has not entirely disappeared but it seems unlikely that among the members represented at the Congress there could be a return to the credulity which made former

(Continued on page 91)

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I regret to report the death on July 7 of a member of Montreal Lodge, Mrs. Elizabeth Slessor, who had been a member of the Society for many years. Our condolences are sent to her family and to her many friends in Montreal and elsewhere.

* * *

I also record with deep regret the death of Mrs. Frank Booth (Donnia Bax) on July 22 after a long illness. Mrs. Booth was not a member of the Society, but had attended the meetings of Toronto Lodge and had taken part in its activities for many years prior to her marriage to Mr. Booth, who is a member. Donnia will be affectionately remembered by all who knew her.

* * *

Another member of Toronto Lodge, Mrs. Mary Warner, passed away on June 27. Mrs. Warner had been a member since 1934 and her valued assistance in Lodge affairs during her active years will be remembered with much appreciation by our older members.

* * *

Congratulations to Montreal Lodge for again being the first Lodge to send in its members' dues before July 1. This provision of our constitution has always been observed by Montreal; prompt payment of dues facilitates the work of our Treasurer.

* * *

On July 5 I was delighted to meet at 52 Isabella St. Mr. and Mrs. Stafford Thomson who were on a vacation from England and who wished to visit the scene of Lieut.-Colonel E. L. Thomson's labours for so many years. Mr. Thomson resembles his brother the Colonel, so closely, that recognition was instantaneous. They were interested in seeing the headquarters and the two large paintings by the Colonel which are hanging there.

Hearty congratulations are sent to The Corresponding Fellows' Lodge of England which celebrates its 21st Anniversary this September. Dr. and Mrs. Harry Benjamin established this Theosophical activity when they took up residence in England in 1945. The Lodge is not affiliated with any Theosophical organization, but has attracted members from many lands who keep in touch through the lengthy Correspondence section of the Bulletin. The Bulletin is one magazine which is always read with much interest not only because of the interesting comments in the correspondence, but also because of its well-written and instructive editorials.

* * *

At the postponed meeting of the Canadian Executive held on August 7, the Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$1012.59 despite large expenditures in the past fiscal year, including nearly \$2000.00 on the project of supplying the Libraries of Canadian Universities with copies of *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and sets of *The Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky*, together with bound sets of *The Canadian Theosophist*, some dating back to 1920. Other expenses included \$1200.00 for printing and mailing the magazine, cost of plates and pictures, express charges, etc. The General Secretary's expenditure of \$686.00 on the Salzburg trip was also included. The report showed that 22 members joined during the year and that four former members were re-instated; there were eight deaths to report, and 18 new subscribers for the magazine. There will be a vote this year for the International President and the Executive members unanimously nominated Mr. N. Sri Ram. It was agreed that the magazines from other Sections which are received in exchange for our magazine, should be distributed among the lodges. The next meeting will be held on Oct. 2.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Editors,

The Canadian Theosophist

The Canadian Theosophist for July-August contains as lead article one entitled "The T.S. and the E.S." by Dudley W. Barr. This is one of the best articles that has been written on this subject nowadays and it is to be hoped that it will get as wide a circulation as possible and actually should receive more circulation by being printed in a small pamphlet form and at a nominal charge to those who wish to find out the truth about this subject.

Actually, from personal knowledge I can say that there are also some independent theosophists, some members of Adyar and other theosophical groups who are attempting to run Personal E.S. sections which have no affiliation with any other group. Having received several invitations to join such a group, and having the letters to prove this statement, I am giving actual facts with regard to this matter. Of course, I refused, in the politest terms, to have anything to do with such organizations because they are not democratic, because they violate the fundamental freedoms that we are all most privileged to enjoy in countries such as Canada where British Common Law is our most fortunate background, because they follow exactly in the steps of George Orwell's terrible book, *1984*, and because, as Mr. Barr so truly remarks, such E.S. groups "lack the one essential which made H.P.B.'s Esoteric Section unique—the living presence of an occult teacher."

No one need feel aggrieved that there is no genuine E.S.: we have enough in theosophy to last us for a lifetime and more. It is not being too optimistic to suggest that if we attended to what we have now, exoteric theosophy, perhaps the genuine article with a real teacher will appear, with all the proper signs, after 1975, which is only nine years away.

"With what measure you mete, it shall be meted to you again." We theosophists

I have much pleasure in welcoming into the fellowship of the Society Mr. Lloyd Newton of Montreal Lodge and Mr. K. S. Senathi Rajah of Toronto. Mr. and Mrs. Herman Sukava formerly of Finland and now residents of Vancouver, have transferred their membership to Vancouver Lodge. —D.W.B.

get what we deserve: if the law of cause and effect rules, as it certainly does, we will get the true group. "When the pupil is ready, the teacher will appear." But we must all use that great natural gift: discrimination, and especially in matters such as philosophy and religion.

Referring again, in conclusion, to Mr. Barr's description of the modern day rules for the E.S.: vegetarianism, non-smoking, non-drinking and abstaining from sexual intercourse, none of these rules applied in the H.P.B. original E.S. See *The Key to Theosophy*, where she describes the rules of conduct for E.S. members and states that vegetarianism, etc., were not requisites and that married E.S. members were not required to be celibates. She even said that marriage was a necessary thing as a barrier to even worse immorality, such, one would suppose, as the dreadful sexual perversions carried on by Leadbeater, who called himself a celibate and preached "purity" perpetually. With regard to alcohol, however, she was sternly against it as it is a terrible poison, not only to the physical body but to man's higher sheaths. So we can say, as Mr. Barr shows in his article, that not only the requirements for E.S. membership today, but also the structure of the modern E.S. is actually opposed to what H.P.B. required in her E.S.

Elouise R. Harrison

☆ ☆ ☆

The July-August issue received. It does seem a pity that a very lengthy article by Dudley W. Barr should be given space.

The central and basic problem that arises from reading it is how to reconcile his candid statement that Olcott was rebuked by the Masters for not favouring the projection of the Esoteric Section and Mr. Barr's own words at the tailend of his writing. And I quote:

"it is hoped that there is a sufficient number of members who will recognise that the E.S. no longer has any valid place within the body of the Theosophical Society—and should be quietly dissolved."

I find this amusing. And do not think it will ever take place. But rather it will become evident in the next decade, the last quarter of the first century of the Society, that the E.S. will again be brought forward. And with many of the Neo-Theosophical notions in the past considered redundant, coming forward again. If flesh is to be given to the bones remaining from what is left of the Society of yesterday, and a new tide of events ushered in, it will be by first paying tribute to those who have gone before us. A more wholesome appreciation of the E.S. is needed.

Frederick E. Tyler

☆ ☆ ☆

Re C. Benton's article, "The Kingdom of the Flesh". It is impossible for me to believe that "No man can reach the gates of salvation with an imperfect body . . . etc." and a vegetarian diet will not lead to salvation either. All the exercises in the world will not lead there. H.P.B. knew that. True, such things lead to "powers", but great power over flesh can lead to death, not life.

We are to seek God with all our might—that is the way to salvation, when we can truly say the Father and I are one. The flesh profits nothing. Besides, one man's idea of perfect flesh differs from another's, so who is to tell us when we are perfect in *flesh*? Some noses are straight, some turned up or down; people are tall or short or fat or thin; some have glasses or false teeth; and so on.

"If your right hand offends, cut it off." It is better to enter the Kingdom with one hand than to be held back by one that offends.

S. Tratnik

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YOUNG THEOSOPHISTS AT CONGRESS

DARA MIRZA

The recent World Congress of the Theosophical Society held at Salzburg attracted many of our younger members from all corners of the world. The European Federation of Young Theosophists had organized a summer camp for Y.T.'s which was very well attended. The camp started a week before the opening of the Congress and lasted until the end, hence extending over a period of almost three weeks. The camping site was situated at Aigen, just outside Salzburg, in a very beautiful setting of hills, woods and meadows.

All those who participated felt that the camp was a great success. The activities combined study and meditation with healthy and constructive recreation. There was much opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas, and this aspect of the work was particularly vigorous because so many nations were represented. Most of the Y.T.'s were from Europe, but there were also members from more distant countries such as India, Pakistan, Africa, Mexico and South America. It is estimated that over 100 Y.T.'s attended the camp; of course, there were many more of our younger members who attended the Congress but who could not come earlier for the camp. These included Y.T.'s from Canada, U.S.A., Australia and other countries.

The Young Theosophists made valuable contributions to the organization and working of the Congress. They volunteered to work at the Registration Office, the Information Counter, and in distributing and collecting the ear-phones used in the simultaneous translation of the lectures and meetings. As in the camp, the work in the Congress Hall was well organized and efficient. It was much appreciated by all and was commented upon by Mr. John Coats, the organizer of the Congress.

Some of the more talented Y.T.'s gave short but inspiring musical performances

before most of the lectures and this helped set a calm and meditative tone.

The official programme of the Congress included a special symposium sponsored by the World Federation of Young Theosophists. The subject was "After the Transition"—reflecting the theme of the Congress which was "A World in Transition". The meeting was attended by both the young and adult members.

Some of the Y.T.'s were given the opportunity to be present at the special conferences on Publications and Presentation of Theosophy, and thus were able to observe and learn something about the administration of the Society's affairs. Likewise, a special meeting was arranged wherein the General Secretaries met and talked to the Y.T.'s, and it was generally felt that both groups benefitted by this meeting.

At the Council Meeting of the World Federation of Young Theosophists, Mr. John Coats was re-elected as Chairman, and Miss Mira Brandt was re-elected as Secretary. We are very grateful to both for their dedicated work for the Y.T. movement. A new Executive Committee was elected at the same meeting. In opening the Council Meeting, Mr. Coats added a touch of humour when he encouraged the young people present to work hard at making friends and establishing links so that in future when they all were General Secretaries of busy and active Sections, and had to correspond with each other, they would be writing to a friend, and not just a name.

In short, the Y.T.'s found the Camp and the Congress very invigorating and encouraging. They are all once again fired by that wonderful spirit of Brotherhood that invariably results from a meeting of this nature and they look forward to a future of renewed work and effort for the cause of the Theosophical Society.

PERENNIAL THEOSOPHY AND THE MODERN WORLD

ROBERTO HACK

The following is an extract from the report of Signor Roberto Hack, Secretary General of the Italian Theosophical Society, to the 52nd National Congress held at Perugia, Italy, on April 23, 1966. For this translation we are indebted to Mrs. R. M. Vosse, of South Africa.—Eds.

It is not my intention to linger over a description of the world as we see it today; practically all of us, both young and old, are well aware that the world around us and the human environment in which we usually live make us feel as if we are faced by a veritable chaos of contrasting ideas, that this world is dominated by the excessive pressure of desires and ambitions, of uncontrolled vital and biological impulses, of the most unbridled thirst for the purely material satisfactions of life; while relations between one state and another are always subject to the diffidence and suspicions which serve to neutralize even the best and most sincere aspirations toward a more human and brotherly way of co-existence on the part of the nations.

Those who are familiar with *The Secret Doctrine*, the fundamental work of the great founder of the modern Theosophical Movement, H. P. Blavatsky, cannot help acknowledging the prophetic truth of the words written by her in 1888 in the Introductory: "The world of today, in its mad career towards the unknown—which it is too ready to confound with the unknowable, whenever the problem eludes the grasp of the physicist—is rapidly progressing on the reverse, material plane of spirituality. It has now become a vast arena—a true valley of discord and of eternal strife—a necropolis, wherein lie buried the highest and most holy aspirations of our Spirit-Soul. That soul becomes with every new generation more paralysed and atrophied."

Today I would rather bring to light some

aspects which are possibly less noticeable, but doubtlessly more *positive*, than the *negative* ones that have been briefly mentioned. Among these positive elements—leaving aside the Theosophical Movement, which has an unmistakable essential character of its own—everybody will no doubt list the United Nations Organization which, notwithstanding its numerous defects and shortcomings, has been and still is one of the few bulwarks so far capable of preserving humanity from an unprecedented cataclysm.

... One of its activities, UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization), contains one of the greatest promises for the future of humanity. In its constitutional act the following clear and symptomatic statement is made: "As wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men themselves that the defences for peace must be built." The constitution then goes on to point out clearly what are the dangers arising from the reciprocal lack of knowledge about the way different nations live, about their character and mentality; a fact which nourishes mutual suspicion and mistrust, thereafter confirming that the last war was made possible by the negation of certain fundamental rights—"the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men"—substituting them with "the inequality of men and of races." Furthermore the constitution declares that "the education of humanity to the cult of justice, or freedom and of peace" is indispensable and is a sacred duty for all nations; finally recognizing "that a

peace based only upon agreements as upon political and economical compromises between governments, would in final analysis be unsatisfactory. *In order to be truly lasting, peace must be based upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of Mankind.*"

For us Theosophists who are more or less directly aware of the great importance of the power of thought, who know that it is actually thought which creates character, that ideas rule the world—the informing concepts of UNESCO have a particular and deeply symptomatic value and at the same time confirm one of the truths contained in Theosophical teachings. As Giuseppe Mazzini wisely said: "But once that ideas have been thrust into the world of the intellect they do not die any more. Others pick them up, even though their origin may have been forgotten. Men admire an oak; who thinks of the seed from which it grew?"

The main thing is that even people in high places should begin to understand that, in order to build new human society, the foundations of which rest on solid rock and not upon shifting sands, the sympathy and understanding both "intellectual and moral" of the whole of mankind are required; that each action should rest upon a vision of the whole which is both clear and luminous, because *thought and action* are in fact inseparable things, or rather, action is nothing other than the concrete form of thought. If we analyse any action—be it individual or collective—we shall see that its real roots lie in thought and in feeling. Before we perform an action we cast the base and make, so to speak, an ideal model of that which we are planning to translate afterwards into a practical, positive action. The resulting action will be the concrete product of that which, in the first place, had been created and visualized by our thoughts and our feelings.

* * *

In a UNESCO report regarding the problem of universal civilization, it is stated that the universal unity of its aim "rests

upon the unity of human life and spirit" . . . Furthermore, in order to reawaken in all human consciences the feeling of their *spiritual unity* and to persuade them to join the universal organization which is founded on this unity, UNESCO proposes: "to seek for a system of ideas and of principles, for a concept and a general synthesis of philosophy, which may assist the world to emerge from the present chaos of separateness and to discover a real unity, in a still wider sense, that may help humanity to take stock of its possibilities and fulfil its destinies as quickly as possible. Such a general philosophy must be essentially a philosophy of human progress; it must find out of what progress consists and what are the conditions for its practical realization. It must be a humanistic philosophy in the widest sense of the word, so as to include all the possibilities of human nature and its spiritual and aesthetic progress, over and above the practical and intellectual side . . . ; it must be scientific . . . it must finally be a global, universal philosophy which takes in the whole world . . . The task of UNESCO is that of fighting against the spiritual hunger and mental poverty of the entire world."

The well-known English biologist, Julian Huxley, commenting favourably on these statements of UNESCO, wrote that its constitution expressly repudiates all racialism and, consequently, the general philosophy it promotes must be a form of pure humanism which is truly universal.

There is no doubt that the conflicts which are at present disturbing human relations, such as those between nationalism and internationalism, the growing struggle of the coloured races against the supremacy of the whites, the class struggle between the different strata of society—when regarded in the light of evolution *must be* resolved by cultivating and developing to an ever larger degree *the consciousness of human unity, spiritual and moral unity, social and economic unity*, recognizing the intimate and close connection between all the peoples of

the earth and between all the social classes, a truly global, universal Unity, if humanity wishes not only to survive, but to grow strong and prosperous.

Generally speaking our daily papers in their search for the "sensational", neglect or fail to lay sufficient stress on the *positive* sides of an ever-growing tendency towards the recognition of the spiritual unity of mankind, and of international co-operation in the many fields of human activity; whereas they very often merely accentuate the differences and frictions between governments, nations and individuals. We cannot, however, objectively discount the importance of the fact that, for the first time in history (as we know it) men of different races and civilizations are agreeing to recognize and affirm the spiritual unity of mankind and the reality of its spiritual evolution; to confirm that human spirituality is a natural evolutionary energy and that, realising this impulse to be identical in all men, we should unite in order to stimulate and cultivate its experience, so that a new, more human and more brotherly civilization may be built up on it; that we should feel the need of a real philosophy of human progress which will integrate the past of man and direct his future, and that we should also recognize the necessity for man to take resolutely into his hands his own spiritual and moral progress, at the same time expressing his will to promote this progress among all people by means of an education which leads to spiritual autonomy. Because of the source from which these statements come, I consider that they may be looked upon as a sign of the times, which testifies to the dawning, slow and painful though it may be, of a new era in the history of mankind; the era foreseen by Giuseppe Mazzini and by all the great pioneers of mankind, the era towards whose rising and growth the Theosophical Movement all over the world has been working consciously and silently for over 90 years!

At the present time Theosophy—*perennial Theosophy*—once more revealed

to the modern world by the great Adepts, the Elder Brothers of Humanity, through their messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, is the only philosophy that synthesizes man's spiritual evolution; while the Theosophical Movement all over the world perseveres in its efforts, albeit in the face of misunderstanding and against enormous odds, to form as a practical reality, the "nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity". Theosophists, therefore, more than anybody else, have a duty to contribute all they can towards the successful outcome of the efforts undertaken, and to the working out of the science of the spiritual evolution of life in man and in the universe.

The fundamental principles of this philosophy are to be found in the three propositions stated in the "Proem" of *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, which all Theosophists should keep constantly in mind, and which I shall now briefly summarize:

(1) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought . . . "unthinkable and unspeakable".
Could there be any better definition of that which philosophy calls the *Absolute*, and theology *God*?

(2) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing," called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity." "The Eternity of the Pilgrim" (that is to say, our Monad) is like a wink in the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan.) "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux."

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and re-

flux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches:

(3) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation (or “Necessity”) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle,—or the OVER-SOUL—has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

Theosophy is a synthesis inasmuch as it integrates into a *whole* both sociological psychology and individual psychology, at the same time bridging the gap between the purely religious experience and point of view, and the ideas of the humanistic philosopher. Up to the present each religion has declared itself to be absolute and definite, the only way by which transcendence could be attained. Theosophy alone looks

upon religions from the point of view of their evolutionary *relativity* and of their psychological meaning. For Theosophy, spirituality in evolution is at the same time *transcendent* and *objective*; and every true synthesis of history must take these two factors into account.

H. P. Blavatsky correctly defined the Theosophical teachings in *essence*, to be a synthesis of *principles* operating in depth; consequently, by learning to use these principles in the proper way, the human being was made capable of acquiring an *independent knowledge* of the Laws of Nature and of the deeper truths underlying human experience. She based this proposition on the *actual* existence of men whose life revealed the living mastery of such principles and who had been her own instructors. But while she presented Theosophy as teachings coming from those whom she called the “Adepts” or the “Masters”, on the other hand she constantly admonished seekers after the Truth not to accept them blindly, on faith—the Theosophical Movement required serious students and not devout believers. “The Society, as an organism, has no creeds,” she wrote in *The Theosophist* in 1879, “because creeds are only the outer shells that enclose spiritual knowledge, and Theosophy is, in its essence, spiritual knowledge itself—the real essence—of philosophical and theistic research. The basic idea of the Society is free and courageous investigation . . .”

Thus Theosophy, while giving to the world a science of spiritual evolution in which the psychological relativity of religions is kept in mind, still preserves the religious inspiration which is necessary for the ascent of man, by means of its doctrine of the “Hierarchy of the Elder Brothers of Humanity”.

It is possible to organize a political community of men on the basis of rights; in the same way also it will be possible to plan an economic distribution which is more in line with requirements than with interests; a cultural exchange may be established in order

to universalize knowledge and the technicalities that pertain to it. All this can partially remedy the injustices of the past and the sufferings of the present, but it will not be able to disclose the spiritual future that is due to humanity. The universal community which our present-day spiritual elite desires and to which UNESCO also looks forward, includes all races and all civilizations, as well as grades of human evolution, and must therefore equally include all the religious and spiritual experiences of humanity. The new civilization therefore requires a spiritual inspiration capable of illuminating the revelations of all the past religions, including all religious messages; and at the same time it needs a mysticism of spiritual evolution and a technique for inner spiritual growth. THEOSOPHY, the *synthesis* of all human sciences and all human mysticism, also gives us the inspiration of its Masters, the Elder Brothers of Humanity.

In order that we may help the world effectively to attain these high ideals, we must concert, first of all on the intellectual plane on which mankind is living nowadays, so as to work out a positive science of spiritual evolution, a biology of the spirit, which can be objectively verified by psychology and by history. But Theosophy is not merely a *theory* of evolution, by which we can make a mental image from studying the theosophical texts. It is also a mysticism of this evolution; it is an *inner* experience of those teachings, a continuous verification of the reality of spiritual evolution on the part of each one of us. All our studies and research would have only a very relative value if the principles and spiritual truths of which we have caught sight were not translated into living realities in our daily life. If there is no love for wisdom in our hearts, we do not really possess it. In order to know Truth deeply, we have to feel the beauty of it and see what meaning it has for us in our everyday living. Before we can communicate Truth or Wisdom to others, it is necessary to feel them truly and deeply within ourselves. Every Theosophist ought

to try out *personally* the change of heart and mind which derives from the practical application of such teachings in his daily life. In this way there will arise in each one of us an ever more deeply felt sense of UNITY; a wider understanding, a spirit of human solidarity and of true brotherhood will naturally emanate from each of us, and we shall become *positive* elements for the establishment on earth of a new, more loving and more spiritual, human community.

By really living Theosophy, by cultivating and developing the divine potentialities that are latent in our deepest selves, we shall contribute in the most certain and efficacious way to the transformation and uplift of the mental and moral atmosphere of our nations and of the entire world. By means of our help the law of hatred and of mutual destruction can be gradually replaced by understanding, by brotherly co-operation, by the law of love; thus bringing ever nearer the realization of that era of Universal Brotherhood in the cause of which the Theosophical Movement came into being, and of which we can today distantly see the signs, vague though they be, shining as luminous points in the yet gloomy darkness of the immediate present.

THE FIFTH THEOSOPHICAL WORLD CONGRESS

(Continued from page 82)

extravaganzas possible. Mr. N. Sri Ram's quiet, scholarly manner, his appeal to reason, his constant reminders of self-responsibility, and of the complete freedom of thought within the Society have encouraged the exercise of individual judgment on all ideas presented to the members. Other factors have helped; Mr. E. L. Gardner's designation of much of Mr. Leadbeater's imaginings as "unconscious Kriyasakti" acted as a catalytic agent to precipitate and consolidate a wide-spread doubt among the members concerning the validity of these "revelations". The use of *The Mahatma Letters*

in the lodges has acquainted students with the actual teachings of the Masters themselves thus giving a standard against which to evaluate other teachings, and re-directing students to the rich heritage in the writings of their agent, H. P. Blavatsky. It is almost unbelievable that forty years ago *The Mahatma Letters* were banned—and the study of *The Secret Doctrine* was discouraged; happily the World Congress indicated that this period is now over.

In listening to the discussions on the presentation of Theosophy and on Theosophical literature, I thought often of Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, Mr. Roy Mitchell and other stalwarts who, from the chartering of the Canadian Section in 1920, fearlessly upheld the Theosophy of H.P.B. and the Masters against the invading psychism which almost swamped the Society. How gratified they would have been to observe the change in attitude and to note the generally accepted agreement that many contradictions exist between much of the "middle period" literature and the original Theosophical message.

And what emerged from the World Congress of Theosophical students? Of significance was the opportunity given to the representatives of our world-wide membership to meet personally, form friendships with one another, discuss Theosophical topics and gain firsthand knowledge of the problems, plans, aspirations and attitudes of the Society as a whole and of its many Sections. The information thus gathered, the impressions they received, will be passed on to other members and, in addition to influencing their thoughts, will help to form ties of closer understanding throughout the Theosophical world. Great changes have taken place since the last World Congress; Theosophical members are faced with new problems and responsibilities which are a challenge to our ability to respond correctly and adequately. What was appropriate in the 1930's is not sufficient for today. The great Truths of Theosophy are unchanging, but our presentation should communicate

these in contemporary terms and methods if the modern world is to understand and respond to their profound import.

The delegates were reminded that each of us has an individual responsibility in this, for each member's daily life is a standard by which Theosophy is appraised by others around us. As Mr. Sri Ram said, the Society reflects the psychological status of its members—if we are limited and narrow-minded the Society becomes limited and narrow-minded. Our dissemination of Theosophy in our lives and in our words should reveal the universal spirit of Theosophy "in the beauty of its wholeness" free from partialities.

The proceedings at the Congress indicated that the Society is aware of some of the errors of the past and is taking action to correct these. The members recognized that the essential message of Theosophy must not be stultified by blind adherence to past misconceptions. The whole spirit of the Congress augured well for the future of the Society which H.P.B. said would "depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last but not least, on the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed" by the members who would carry on after the death of the Founders; they would also need "unbiased and clear judgment" in their work to ensure that the unique character of the Society is always upheld. It was encouraging to note that these qualities which H. P. Blavatsky deemed so important were all in evidence at the 1966 World Congress.

THE T.S. AND THE E.S.

A few comments, both written and oral, have been received concerning the article "The T.S. and the E.S."

Mr. Cyril Benton questioned the reference to the eating of meat by Madame Blavatsky, and quoted from *The Real H.P.B.*, by William Kingsland, one of her close associates in London, to disprove this. On the other hand, Col. H. S. Olcott in

Old Diary Leaves said that meat formed part of their diet. Possibly the fact is that H.P.B. did eat meat at one time but later discontinued it.

Mr. Boris de Zirkoff drew attention to an error in describing Mrs. Besant as Recording Secretary of the Inner Council. There was apparently no such office. Mrs. Besant acted as secretary to record teachings given to the Inner Group.

The oral comments included statements to the effect that while conditions described in the article may have existed 35 or even 25 years ago, they do not now. For example it was said that there was not now a pledge of obedience "without cavil or delay" to the present "outer head".

—D.W.B.

MISS HELEN ZAHARA VISITS HAMILTON AND TORONTO LODGES

Miss Helen Zahara, former General Secretary of the Australian Section recently paid her first visit to eastern Canada in many years.

"A Philosophy for the Man in the Street" was the subject of a public lecture by Miss Zahara under the auspices of the Hamilton Lodge at McMaster University on Wednesday evening September 7. The same title was used the following evening when she addressed an appreciative audience at the Toronto Lodge, 52 Isabella Street.

While in Toronto, Miss Zahara gave a special talk to members only on Saturday evening, September 10. Her subject on this occasion was "Wings of Consciousness".

Miss Zahara also gave the Sunday evening lecture on September 11. She spoke on "The Enigma of Death".

It was in 1946 in India that Miss Zahara began her Theosophical work at the International Headquarters in Adyar. Later she was appointed Recording Secretary of the Society. From 1953 to 1957 she was at the National Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in America. In 1957 she went to Australia where in addition to serving as

the General Secretary she also edited the Section magazine, *Theosophy in Australia*.

Miss Zahara is now once more with the American Section, having returned in 1965.

SOCRATES IS ALIVE IN LOS ANGELES

BY RICHARD J. NEEDHAM

Are you puzzled about a birthday present? A Christmas present? An anniversary or wedding present? If the recipient is at all thoughtful, at all intelligent, at all educated in the correct sense of the term, I don't see that you could do any better than buy him or her a year's subscription (\$5) to a little weekly called *Manas* which is published at P.O. Box 32112, El Sereno Station, Los Angeles 90032.

This eight-page tabloid is, to me, the modern equivalent of Socrates. It asks the right questions about the right things—education and religion and politics and war and child-raising and freedom and "progress" and all the rest. It stands for the individual, for the human being, against the crushing forces of the mass, of the machine, of the compulsion and regimentation that go with modern society. It stands for reason and kindness and decency.

I look forward to *Manas* each week as most people look forward to Friday night. I make liberal use of it for what I call the Saturday jollies. I find in every issue enough ideas for a dozen columns. It helps me think, it helps me to change my thoughts, and I just wouldn't be without it. I'd especially commend it to teen-agers, to their parents and to their teachers, because it brilliantly bisects the school system.

—*The Globe and Mail* August 9, 1966

Mr. Needham writes a daily column on the editorial page of *Toronto's* morning newspaper. His tribute to *Manas* will be echoed by all who appreciate this thought-provoking weekly.

Manas is the work of devoted Theosophical students, and provides a link with independent thinkers all over the continent.

—Eds.

BOOK REVIEWS

An Abridgement of The Secret Doctrine. H. P. Blavatsky. Edited by Elizabeth Preston and Christmas Humphreys. Published 1966 by The Theosophical Publishing House London Ltd. xxxii + 260 pp. Price 37 shillings and sixpence.

An editorial foreword mentions the "need for some abridgement, or condensed version of *The Secret Doctrine* . . . partly for the general reader unwilling to embark on the thirteen hundred pages of the original two volumes, and partly for the serious student, to serve as an introduction and guide to the larger work."

That there is a need for such an abridgement will hardly be denied. Many newcomers to Theosophy are overawed by the sheer physical challenge of the literature. The availability of condensations of the major works might well prevent some from losing interest or from taking the "easier" path with pseudo-theosophical books.

How was the selection made? Say the editors: ". . . the introduction, the Proem, the actual Stanzas of Dzyan and the Commentaries thereon take precedence . . . long quotations from contemporary writers are the first to be cut out . . . Much that is off the main axis of the book's development, on symbolism, comparative religion, and scientific theories of the 1880's must also go, for this material does not actively enlarge our knowledge of Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis, the coming into being of the Universe and the origin of Man. Within this field the editors have made such cuts as were inevitable, realizing that much material of value would thereby be omitted".

There are bound to be individual objections to this or that part of the original being left out, but the editors, Miss Elizabeth Preston and Mr. Christmas Humphreys, assisted by a team of theosophical scholars, have undoubtedly taken great care to present the essentials as they see them. Hopefully, the reader will be inspired by the *Abridgement* to go on to a study in depth

of the complete S.D. and the other works of H. P. Blavatsky.

The *Abridgement* is usefully supplemented with a brief biography of H. P. Blavatsky and some notes on "The Genesis of *The Secret Doctrine*".

In *The Middle Way*, May 1966, Mr. Christmas Humphreys wrote: "Had the Theosophical Movement remained true to H. P. Blavatsky and to the Secret Doctrine which her Master taught her in Tibet, there might be now a nucleus of universal brotherhood to form which the Theosophical Society was founded. But Theosophists pursued phenomena, and were content with ethical principles and a gentle version of Karma and Rebirth, and the very name of H. P. Blavatsky was all but forgotten. This *Abridgement* may help to restore the Teacher and the Teaching to their rightful place in the Movement."

If it does that, it will have served its purpose well. —T.G.D.

THE THREE TRUTHS

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, yet remain silent for lack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.

Idyll of the White Lotus

The Theosophical Society In Canada



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1. The competition is open to all. It is not necessary to be a member of the Theosophical Society in order to enter.
2. Entries will be judged by a panel of readers to be appointed by the Theosophical Society in Canada. Decision of the judges is final and irrevocable.
3. All entries must be typed double-spaced, on one side of the paper only.
4. The preferred length of the essay is between 2,500 and 4,000 words.
5. All entries must be original, unpublished work.
6. Each entrant must put a pseudonym on his manuscript, and with his entry enclose a sealed envelope which has his full name and address inside and the pseudonym on the outside.
7. All entries should be addressed to The Theosophical Society in Canada, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto 5, Ontario, Canada, and be clearly marked “Essay Competition”. Manuscripts not selected will be returned only if requested.
8. The winning essay will be published in the September-October, 1967 issue of **The Canadian Theosophist**.

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