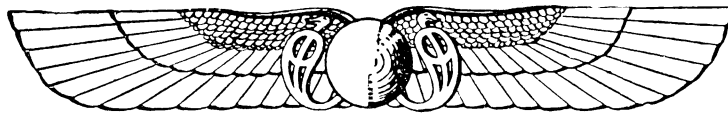


THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1906.

NO. 1.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

THE CONVENTION.

With this issue of THE VĀHAN the Report of the Convention (1906) goes to the members.

The following have been elected to serve for the year 1906-7:

Executive Committee: Mr. Marsden, Mr. Mead, Mr. Keightley, Mr. Glass, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Cattanach, Mrs. Hooper, Dr. Nunn, Miss Spink as General Secretary and Miss Ward as Treasurer.

(In giving the results to the Convention the name of Mr. Thomas was unfortunately omitted from the list by an oversight, another name being included in error. The attention of members present at the meeting is called to this correction.)

Honorary Auditor: Mr. Philip Tovey.

Rule 4 was altered by the Convention and now reads:

“A General Convention of the Council and of the Section shall be held annually, at such a time and place as the Executive Committee may determine, and preferably in the month of July, and twenty-eight days' notice, with a copy of agenda, shall be sent to all Branches and unattached members. The Convention shall be presided over by a Chairman to be elected at each Convention. The Quorum at any meeting of the Convention shall consist of seven, who shall be representatives of not less than seven Branches. Any member of the Section may attend and speak, but the power to vote is limited to the Council. Written Proxies special or general shall be allowed. The Chairman of any meeting shall have a casting vote.”

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

CLOSING OF THE SECTIONAL ROOMS.

As notified in the July VĀHAN the rooms are closed during the month of August and will reopen on September 1st, at the usual time.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

SECTION LIBRARY CATALOGUES.

A complete catalogue of the Section Library arranged under authors' names is now ready and can be obtained at a cost of 6d. from the Librarian after the reopening of the rooms in September. It is hoped that this will render the Library of greater utility and facilitate the borrowing of books by provincial members who may wish to avail themselves of the Library for the purposes of study.

The card catalogue of the Library has also been revised and brought up to date.

A manuscript index of articles in *The Theosophical Review* from the beginning is also available for reference.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to July 20th: F. F. L., £2 2s.; W. C. W., 5s. Total, £2 7s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *The Pedigree of Man*, Lecture I., Annie Besant. (In Braille): *Letters on*

Natural Magic, Sir D. Brewster; *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, Sir Walter Scott; *Entretiens Posthumes du Philosophe Pierre de Béranger (dit Abailard)*.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Herausgegeben von O. von Gebhardt und A. Harnack, 10 vols., 1882-1904; *Life of Richard Wagner*, W. A. Ellis, Vol. V.; *Mosaical Philosophy*, Robert Fludd, 1659; *The Bhagavad Gita*, A. Besant and Bhagavān Dās.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Men's Evenings.

These fortnightly meetings will be renewed in October, on Tuesday evenings, at 8.30. For October the following syllabus has been arranged:

October 2nd. "Karma."
" 16th. "Masterhood."
" 30th. "Psychism".

The Men's Evenings are open to all men members of the Society, and are specially designed for the frank and thorough discussion of all subjects of Theosophical study.

G. R. S. M.

Informal Meetings of Blavatsky Lodge.

During August these meetings will be held at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, Bayswater.

The speakers will be: August 2nd, Mrs. Alan Green, "The Happy Other World"; August 9th, Miss Ethel Wheeler, "The Mystical in Landscape"; August 16th, Discussion: "That the Modern Representation of Art is a Failure"; August 23rd, Miss Goring, "Mysticism."

The meetings begin at 8 p.m. All members of the Theosophical Society are cordially invited.

E. M. M.

Mrs. Corbett's Class.

A course of eight weekly lessons will be given in the autumn at 28, Albemarle Street, by Mrs. Corbett, on "The Physical Expression of Character and the significance of the Occult Arts." The first lesson will be on Wednesday, October 24th, at 8.30 p.m. Questions will be set at each lesson, and the answers to these questions will be discussed and criticised the following week. Fee for the course 10s.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. Informal meetings at 2, Argyle Street. Lectures resumed in October. Infor-

mation from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Meetings suspended till September 5th. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Closed for summer. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street, for study of *Studies in Consciousness*. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended for the summer. Library closed for August. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Meetings at 98, Bouverie Road West, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, at above address.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street, W.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Aug. 5th, "For Christ's Sake, Amen," Miss Margery Smith; Aug.

12th, *Vehicles and Environments*, R. Pexton; Aug. 19th, *Hinduism*, C. J. Barker; Aug. 26th, *Living Faith, a Wider Religious Outlook*, Mrs. Midgley. Lodge meetings for study of *The First Object of the Theosophical Society*, on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Informal Meetings during August, at 8 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. No meetings in August. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W. Meetings suspended till September 9th.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead. Regular meetings suspended till October.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. Meetings for children only, at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Meetings for young people on Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., for the study of *Esoteric Christianity*.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N. Closed during August.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings suspended during August.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBUY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road, study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from J. Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Weekly meetings on Tuesday evenings for study of *In the Outer Court*. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate, for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*. Information from J. E. Reid, Hon. Sec., 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CLOSING OF HEADQUARTERS.

While acknowledging to the full the necessity of the Headquarters' staff having a holiday, and of the rooms being cleaned, yet I would point out that for business men like myself the closing takes place just at the very times when we have the most leisure and opportunity of making use of the library and reading-room. The Easter and Whitsuntide holidays, and very often the whole month of August, when our women-folk are away, furnish us with many a quiet afternoon and evening for study, times difficult to obtain in ordinary working weeks, but alas! just when we are free, the doors of Headquarters are closed. Will not the Powers-that-be kindly consider this matter, and see what can be done to meet the wishes of what I believe to be no small section of the members of the Theosophical Society?

E. DE M. M.

VAN HELMONT AND THE SOUL.*

To the materialist Jean Baptiste Van Helmont remains a paradox. Accused of "Theosophical mistiness and alchemical error," he is, nevertheless, admitted to be the author of some of the most important discoveries in chemical science. He made, too, some discoveries in spiritual science which to him appeared no less important. For himself, indeed, they were not valueless, since they deeply affected his life.

The "Great Secret," says Van Helmont, the celestial strength that lies concealed in man, is "the power of the imagination to work outwardly," which "operates on the remotest objects." If we call this a "magical" power, only the ignorant can be terrified by such an expression. But if we prefer we may call it a spiritual power. "About the name I do not trouble myself; but I am accustomed to contemplate the thing itself as near as I can."

This magical power, Van Helmont goes on to instruct us, lies asleep in the ordinary man. It acts without being awakened, "like one drunken." It is necessary, then, to rouse it. This may be done by asceticism, by "Kabbalistic art, or by the illumination of the Holy Spirit." Those who rouse in themselves this force "may be called gold-makers, but their guide is the Spirit of God Himself." (Van Helmont's alchemical experiments evidently had for their object the transmutation of something other than the metals.)

It is necessary, he continues, that the magic strength should be awakened in the outer as well as in the inner man. "The devil" has power to awaken what is in the outer man, but "in the inner, in the bottom of the soul, is that Kingdom of God to which no created thing has entrance." "The devil" may preside over "vain ceremonies and superstitious practices," but the "pure primeval magic" is the calling forth of this divine power from the depth of the soul.

By all of which the old mystic seems to indicate the difference, as another presentment would put it, between Hatha Yoga and Râja Yoga.

Van Helmont, however, did not limit his experiments upon himself to spiritual methods. In the course of an investigation into the nature of vegetable poisons, he made a preparation of aconite, which he tasted without swallowing. He immediately passed into a condition of great intellectual clearness associated with intense pleasure. His consciousness appeared to him to be transferred to the solar plexus. He began to experience ecstasies, and for the first time his nightly sleep was filled with dreams which enlightened him and in which he greatly rejoiced.

It is upon this experiment that he seems to have founded his theory that the solar plexus is the seat of feeling, as the brain is that of memory, reflection and judgment.

* This is the third of a series of short papers dealing with meditation and kindred subjects, as found in the writings of mystics and others. Previous papers appeared in the February and March issues.

The first dream recorded—a grotesque one enough—occurred at the age of thirty-three. Van Helmont, having, as he says, "after a long weariness of contemplation," that he might obtain some knowledge of his mind, "slidden into a dream, and being snatched out of the paths of reason," found himself in a dark hall. Here he saw a table whereon stood a bottle containing liquor. "The Voice of the Liquor" said to him, "Wilt thou have honours and riches?" Amazed at this he walked about, considering what it could mean, when he suddenly beheld through a chink in the wall an extraordinary radiance, "exceeding cogitation or thought expressible by word." When the chink presently closed he returned to the bottle and endeavoured to open it. Succeeding, after great labour, he was about to taste the liquor, when, "sore stricken with dread," he awoke.

For twenty-three years he continued to "breathe with the great desire" to know his soul. He studied medicine very thoroughly, read every kind of medical book, made experiment after experiment, and came to the conclusion that he knew nothing. He fell into despair and became "terrified."

At length, when he was 56 years old, "a great repose invaded him," and he fell into what he calls an "intellectual" dream or vision. In this vision he beheld his soul "in a human shape, yet free from the distinction of sex." This shape, though seen "through a cloudy part," and "rolled up as it were in the husk of itself," appeared to be composed of a light unutterable, intense and incomprehensible. Then Van Helmont knew that this was the same light as that which had shone in his dream of the chink, twenty-three years before. And he realised the vanity of his long desire; for not a life-time could enable him to attain to the true knowledge of the soul.

But something he learned: for a splendour from his soul-shape seemed to pierce him, compared with which "the greatest light of this world is dreggish darkness." And his mind opened "the Eye-brow of the right Eye, which was not in the likeness of a man's Eye, distinguished by Coats and the diversity of Humours, but one only; round, clear, and even as the star of Venus seemeth to be afar off." With this eye, and by this light, the dreamer began to see new things. He found that his methods of seeking knowledge had been mistaken. For the Spirit, he now perceived, "understands in peace and rest, not bringing into itself blind likenesses of things true, intricate fallacies, neither rejoicing in running out to things like; by relations or things referring; stooping down into a solution or a composing." "But I have taken notice that the former majesty of the mind being fallen, the sensitive soul did exercise the Vicarship of the mind."

From these and other similar passages it is clear that Van Helmont derived from his visions the doctrine taught by so many mystics, especially of his epoch, which is, to put it more shortly than the philosopher, that true spiritual knowledge is not a function of the mind. It is not until we have

transcended the processes of the mind, its analyses and syntheses, that we can "remember that we understand," as he says. For the mind "proudly and vainly attributes to itself true self-consciousness." So that "we do not mark that we do know until the same action be propagated or planted within us by a sensitive order or government." That is, until the lower and the higher selves are made one: as Van Helmont (or rather, his translator) most quaintly expresses it, "when there is made a certain passing over of faculties, and as it were the corners of actions are wrapt together about the middle."

The Seer determined to examine himself henceforward by the light which he contemplated. But he knew well that "however beautiful the vision was," it was only a symbol. At his present stage he could never "in the most abstracted meditation," conceive "the thingliness of the Immortal Mind deprived of all figure." When he did attain the object of his life-long desire it would not be under shapes and figures that he would behold it. It would be "in Its own Idea."

Another "intellectual vision" related by Van Helmont came to him upon the completion of a book he was about to publish, in which he investigated the pretensions of the medical science of the day, and dismissed them as based on ignorance and arrogance alone.

During meditation he fell to reviewing his whole life, and became distressed to find that everything he had done seemed to have been undertaken solely for his own ends. He resolved to sacrifice the book on which he had spent so many years, since it had been written only to feed his vanity, and not "for the honour of God." But his hand was stayed. He saw before him "a most exceeding beautiful Tree, spread forth, as it were, thorow the whole Horizon, whose greatness and largeness notably amazed me. It was bespangled with flowers innumerable, odoriferous, and of a most pleasing and lightsome colour: everyone whereof had a bud behind it, a pledge of Fruit. Therefore I cropt one of so many ten thousands for myself; and behold the smell, colour, and whole grace of the Flowre straightway perished." This he interpreted to mean that "all the gifts of God are like Flowers, and more glorious than Solomon in his throne; indeed, of great expectations if they shall remain in the Tree. But if a man doth appropriate the gift to himself, or dareth to crop it off from its original, although the Flowre doth vanish from him, yet the cropper remaineth the debtor of the promised fruit."

Understanding, therefore, that however unworthy a man's motives may be, yet he may not for that refrain from an action which might be useful to others, he concluded to issue his book.

It is impossible, in reading Van Helmont's works, not to conceive an affection for the author. Something so naïf, so childlike, so real, gleams here and there out of their obscurity. Such a touch of nature is this reflection, with which he closes one portion of his reminiscences: "Although it be easie not to take praise while it is not given:

yet how hard it is not to take delight in the same when it is offered."

A. L.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 306.

S. C.—*What is the origin of the custom of drinking healths? In what way does the act of drinking make a wish more effective?*

A. H. W.—It must be remembered that healths should always be drunk in alcoholic liquors; drunk in water they are considered to be "bad luck." Hence it is the alcohol, not the act of drinking which is thought to aid the wish. Under the stimulus of alcohol, it is quite conceivable that a stronger act of good will may be made, in the case of people at certain stages of evolution. "Sobriety diminishes, discriminates, and says no; drunkenness expands, unites, and says yes. It is in fact the great exciter of the Yes function in man. Not through mere perversity do men run after it. To the poor and unlettered it stands in the place of symphony concerts and of literature; and it is part of the deeper mystery and tragedy of life that whiffs and gleams of something that we immediately recognise as excellent should be vouchsafed to so many of us only in the fleeting earlier phases of what in its totality is so degrading a poisoning." (*The Varieties of Religious Experience*, W. James, p. 387.)

From the theosophic point of view, it is comforting to reflect that there is some soul of goodness in so evil a thing for the single life as the alcohol craving which seems universal at the earlier stages of the great pilgrimage.

QUESTION 307.

M. A. S.—*In sending a thought message, is there any means of telling, in the absence of ordinary methods of communication, whether it has been received or not? Would a sense of satisfaction in response to the desire to know of its reception indicate anything? Does it take a longer concentration to transmit to a greater distance? If the exact position of the recipient were not known, how could the thought form reach him? Would not the idea that it would do so be crediting it with an independent power apart from one's own consciousness?*

A. B. C.—The reception of a thought message could not well be indicated by other than "ordinary methods" to a sender who had only "ordinary" powers of perception. Personally I should be very sorry to place any reliance on a "sense of satisfaction"—such a sense is far too easily induced, in some cases, to be regarded as evidence. The statement has been made, I think by Mr. Leadbeater, that a more concentrated force is required for transmission of a thought-form to a greater distance. With regard to the last two questions, M. A. S. appears to have not

very carefully thought over the whole subject. The answer may best be indicated by asking another question: How does the Marconi wave find the receiver? Surely M. A. S. does not credit it with an independent consciousness?

E. A. B.—I do not think that there would, as a rule, be any means but those of ordinary communication, of knowing that a thought message had been received, though this might not be so in a case of special sensitiveness on *both* sides. A sense of satisfaction alone would not be reliable evidence, as this might obviously arise from various causes. But mere distance would make no difference, nor would it be necessary to know the exact position of the recipient. If the thought were strong enough to reach him at all, it would reach him wherever he was. The thought-form, once started on its journey, would be so far an "independent power," that when once sent out it could not be recalled or diverted from its object—any more than an arrow shot from a bow could be recalled by a wish or its direction be changed when on its way. The thought is the impelling force of the form, vitalising it for the time it lasts, and the length of the time depends on the strength of the thought.

QUESTION 308.

G. P.—*May we not consider Art as leading to Yoga through aesthetic emotion, as Philosophy leads to it through contemplative and abstract reason and as Religion leads us to it through spiritual aspiration? Or is Art to be looked upon as a little by-way which is to be left aside for the Great Path of Wisdom or Devotion lest we should get lost in the thickets of emotion?*

B. G. T.—Assuredly Art may be considered as leading to Yoga. We often speak of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful as being three aspects of the Divine, typified in this world by Religion, Philosophy and Art respectively. To those who are attracted by the "Form" side of this universe, the path of the artist is often most helpful and necessary. I would not look upon it as a bye-way at all, nor compare the emotions aroused by Art to thickets, as though they were obstructions; but rather, let us say, to heavenly breezes which disperse the sluggish mists enwrapping this earthly life and let into our souls some gleams from the true Sun of Beauty.

The real purpose of Art is to train the soul in virtue; and for the artist, every manifestation of Beauty on this plane is an outward symbol which helps him to realise something of the inner ideal which lies beyond all form.

E. M. M.—It seems to me unquestionable that, paraphrasing G. P.'s words, the search for the Beautiful is the road to liberation for some, just as the search for the True, or the Good, is the road for others. The artist, whether he be musician, poet, painter or sculptor, is he who, more than

his fellow men, catches glimpses of the eternal beauty of Nature—or God manifest. His evolution then would seem to lie in the raising of his consciousness to the level at which these occasional glimpses have become a permanent condition, and he is in conscious, unbroken contact with the underlying beauty of the Universe. No one can doubt the enormous power of true Art who has watched a great audience, consisting of hundreds of average men and women, as they sit spellbound listening to the work of some great musician; their personalities for the moment have vanished, their whole souls seem to be drawn out and focussed in one point, reaching upwards, led by the glorious harmonies, to something above and beyond them—they know not what. If such a great effect is worked on average men and women, what must be the effect on the seer himself? Surely whilst his vision lasts all his vehicles must be purified by the inrush of the life from higher worlds. Just as the devotee reaching upward strives to unite himself with the ideal picture of Him whom he worships, so the artist seeks ever more and more to become one with the ideal beauty of which he is ever dimly conscious.

The special danger for the artist nature would seem to be that, as he is exceptionally responsive to the Bliss aspect of Nature, he is tempted to be always seeking for pleasurable and harmonious experiences; and when he cannot live in his higher emotions, the part of his astral nature which is allied to the buddhic, he is liable to seek for gratification through his lower astral nature. But for the artist, as for all men, will come a time when the power of the higher draws him with all compelling force, and deliberately turning his back on the lower, he sets to work to achieve union with the more spiritual side of his nature, so that through the development of his higher artistic emotions he may arrive at the point where, it is said, all paths converge and lead onward in The Way to final liberation.

P. H.—I would answer "Yes" to the first question; "No" to the second. It always seems to me that the three great Rays from the Supreme, the three great lines of our approach to Him, are best represented by the Trinity of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, as worked out by the Eclectic Philosophers.

The Philosopher, the Scientist, the man of creative intellect, works his way mainly on the line of the True: the Artist, the Poet, the man of creative imagination, works out his way mainly on the line of the Beautiful: while the Moralist, the man whose intuitive sense of right and wrong is strongest in his composition, works out his way mainly on the line of the Good. I say "mainly" because we are none of us wholly on one particular Ray; in each of us is something of the Philosopher, something of the Artist, and something of the Moralist, but the degree of the philosophic, artistic, or ethical element within each particular individual varies immeasurably.

If it be asked on this, "Where does aspiration,

where does devotion, where does love, come in?" I answer these are not aspects of the Trinity, but the response in us which each aspect of the Trinity calls forth from us, and calls forth from us just in that measure as we can sense the aspect. The Philosopher loves Truth with ever greater love as he attains to higher and yet higher truths: the Artist is devoted to Beauty with an ever-increasing devotion as he enters into deeper and yet deeper beauties: the Moralist—the religious man in one sense of the Word—aspires to Goodness with ever greater intensity of aspiration as he works his way to clearer and yet clearer intuitions of what Goodness is.

QUESTION 309.

K. v. G.—How may I reconcile the in my opinion opposite doctrines of the Bhagavad Gītā as laid down in the second discourse, verses 30-31-32:

"Further, looking upon thine own Dharma, thou shouldst not tremble; for there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than righteous war.

"Happy the Kshatriya, O Partha, who obtains such a fight, spontaneously offered as an open door to Svarga.

"But if thou wilt not carry on this righteous warfare, then, casting away thine own Dharma and thine honour, thou wilt incur sin."

And the absolute commandment of the Buddha:

"Kill not—for Pity's sake—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way."

Where in the Bhagavad Gītā the Dharma of a man (warrior) may be to kill, it is in the doctrine of Buddha the Dharma of man not to kill.

S. G. P.—If the context of the Buddhist verse is looked into, I believe it will be found that "Do not kill" is laid down by the Buddha as a general principle. And so also is it a general principle of the Bhāgavat Dharma, for we are repeatedly told "Harmlessness is the highest duty." The Teacher in *The Bhagavad Gītā* also includes compassion to all beings among the divine qualities which have to be attained before the soul can reach liberation (XVI. 2-5). But general principles in their naked purity could be applied only in the simplest cases. For, when we have to deal with the complicated phenomena of human society we find that principles have to be decently clothed or modified in order that they might fit into their complex surroundings, and thus prove of some practical value to individuals. So that "Kill not" would, for the large majority of men at the present stage of evolution, have to mean "Kill not unnecessarily or wilfully." And Shri Kṛishṇa in the *Gītā* does not recommend to Arjuna the seeking of war for the gratification of his cruel instincts, or for the widening of his dominion under the convenient excuse of spreading civilisation in heathen lands. But He tells him to engage in the *righteous fight spontaneously offered*. He is told that killing ceases to be sinful only when the killer is able to take as equal pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat (II., 38). For, then, he becomes one

of the many hands of the Divine, an instrument in the physical world for the carrying out of the decrees of Kārmic Law which is the expression of the will of God (XI., 33-34). Then his killing, when he does kill, does not "slay the meanest thing upon its upward way." On the contrary, it is just because that form or body has ceased to be useful, and has become a clog that stops the further evolution of that soul that the servant of God strikes away the hindering form. Out of his great compassion he gives the soul a push "upon its upward way," even at the risk of being misunderstood by the vulgar.

K. v. G. may find Mrs. Besant's lectures on *Dharma* very helpful in clarifying his ideas on the subject.

QUESTION 310.

F. F. M.—I am studying Mrs. Besant's Evolution of Life and Form, and in connection with the subject of Tattvas have formulated this brief definition of a Tattva.

A Tattva is a certain order of root-matter (*Mulaprakṛiti*) which is able to respond to a given *Tanmātra*. Thus, *Ākāshattattva* is that particular order of root-matter which has been endowed with the power to respond to the sound *Tanmātra*. *Vāyu* is the kind able to respond to the vibration we call touch, etc. This work in its entirety is the work of the "downward arc," in the evolutionary process. Have I caught the meaning correctly? Or, after the Tattvas have been created do they still need to be endowed with power to respond to *Īshvara's* vibrations before the "upward arc" of evolution can begin?

S. G. P.—It would perhaps be more in harmony with the text if we said that a *Tattva* is a modification in matter produced by its corresponding *Tanmātra*, which latter is a modification within the consciousness of *Īshvara*. Thus the *Ākāsha Tanmātra* working in root-matter would gather round it some of this matter and so dispose it as to form the *Ākāsha Tattva*. Then the *Vāyu Tanmātra* working in some of this *Ākāsha* matter would so arrange it as to produce the formation called the *Vāyu Tattva*. And so onwards.

QUESTION 311.

G. L. F.—What is the *Linga Sharīra* of Hindu philosophy, mentioned by Mrs. Besant in the footnote on page 177 of *The Ancient Wisdom, new edition*? What is the *Sūkshma Sharīra*?

S. G. P.—One can easily see that the word *Linga Sharīra* has been used in early Theosophical literature in the sense of (1) any one of man's superphysical bodies, (2) the astral body, or (3) the etheric double. The school of Hindu Philosophy known as the *Sāṅkhya* teaches that the *Linga Sharīra* or *Sūkshma Sharīra* consists of the five *tanmātras* + the five perceptive faculties + the five action faculties + the three inner organs—eighteen components in all.

QUESTION 312.

A. M.—What would be right from the Theosophist's standpoint?—A and B know they are affinities on all planes, but A and C, through ignorance, made a mistake in this incarnation and bound themselves by marriage law. C's physical brain becomes deranged (like C's mother). Is it wrong for A to desire to be free when the condition of C mars A's life (and others)? Would it be wrong for A and B to desire in thought that they should be united, as C would have to pass out of the physical body?

M. E. G.—The questioner in this case seems to be somewhat confused by the intricacies of his own problem. I will try to answer by the laws of right and wrong, so far as I myself see them—and remember always that right is right, and wrong is wrong, at any given step on the ladder; the relativity of these great factors only comes in with the question of evolution, and the want of a common basis. Take the ordinary moral standpoint in the first place. Can it ever be right to desire the death of another to benefit self, or even to benefit, as you think, one you love? Granted certainly that it may be very hard to resist the longings that “things had been otherwise”; but for those who wish to walk uprightly the thing has to be faced as it is, and not as it might have been. We are now talking of ordinary men and women puzzling out for themselves the conundrums of circumstance. In the case in point, however, it is somewhat different—A and B say they *know* that they are affinities on all planes. Should not such knowledge (if they really have it) be a “lamp unto their feet”? Can they imagine that this sympathy, affinity, call it what you will, has been won by one combination of circumstance only? Are not these “eternal” ties brought about by many lives of many relationships, by no means always ideal; each discord leading up to a richer and fuller harmony in the great symphony? Karma is ceaselessly bringing about these necessary variations; and it may be that A and C in fulfilling their destiny are being given a chance to wipe off some long-standing score; so, if B wishes to play the good part, *acceptance* of present circumstance is the one way of doing it. Perhaps, however, the questioner has somewhere in his mind some hazy conception of the doctrine of Twin Souls, which doctrine, often falsely construed, is responsible for much error and many backslidings. So far as this doctrine is brought forward as extenuating present circumstance, so far we may be sure we are removed from the truth! It is better to leave all such questioning alone, and live out fully the daily round of love and duty that Karma has allotted to each of us on lower planes. So, through many lives and gathered experiences, will the Open Vision be won, and Soul will at length meet Soul on the plane of Unity—and understand.

A. B. C.—If A and B “know” they are affinities on all planes one would suppose their knowledge sufficiently extensive to have made their dharma clear to them as well. But the statement that “through ignorance” A was bound to C, leads one to assume that A and B do *not* “know,” but only imagine, they are affinities on all planes, which was probably previously imagined by A with regard to C when they married. Under these circumstances it certainly would not be right from a Theosophist's or any other standpoint for A and B to wish for a physical union that would involve either C's death or a breach of the moral law. Let them reflect that if their present view of their mutual affinity is correct the bar to physical proximity in one life is a mere trifle in comparison with the reality and duration of the union on higher planes, and, on the other hand, if their present view turns out to be a mistake, like A's first view with regard to C, the present separation may prove a blessing in disguise.

S. C.—Regarding the question from the point of view of ordinary common sense, which I take to be the same as the Theosophist's standpoint, it seems clear that it would be wrong to desire that which it would be wrong to do. A and B would presumably think it wrong to kill C, and I should say that it would be equally wrong to desire her death. It is quite impossible that the condition of C should mar the life of A. Nothing can mar the life of A but his own thoughts, desires and actions. For instance, a desire that C should die might seriously mar his life. The object of life is not the satisfaction of desire, sensual or otherwise, but a training in character and a fulfilment of law. If A in a moment of impatience, perfectly natural under the circumstances, and perhaps inevitable, were to feel inclined to desire the death of C, this would be because he had not yet discovered his own deepest needs, or they were for the moment hidden from him. When a man makes a little swear he does not generally really desire the destruction of any one. It is often simply bad temper, and has no permanent meaning.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR
THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1906.

NO. 2.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donation has been received to August 20th: E. S., 5s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Telluris Theoria Sacra*, London, 1689; *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, G. W. F. Hegel; *The Sayings of Muhammad*, edited by Abdullah Al-Māmūn Al-Suhrawardz; *The Opening of the Gates*, James MacBeth; *Breathings of the Angel's Love*, James MacBeth; *The Bible's own Account of Itself*, Edward Maitland; *The Truth of Christianity*, W. H. Turton.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Cosmic Consciousness*, edited by Dr. R. M. Buck; *Thrice-greatest Hermes*, G. R. S. Mead, 3 vols.; *The Sub-conscious*, Joseph Jastrow; *Rusbrok (Œuvres Choisies)*, traduit par Ernest Hello.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Men's Evenings.

These fortnightly meetings will be renewed in October, on Tuesday evenings, at 8.30. For

October the following syllabus has been arranged:

October 2nd. "Karma."
" 16th. "Masterhood."
" 30th. "Psychism."

The Men's Evenings are open to all men members of the Society, and are specially designed for the frank and thorough discussion of all subjects of Theosophical study.

G. R. S. M.

Mrs. Corbett's Class.

A course of eight weekly lessons will be given in the autumn at 28, Albemarle Street, by Mrs. Corbett, on "The Physical Expression of Character and the significance of the Occult Arts." The first lesson will be on Wednesday, October 24th, at 8.30 p.m. Questions will be set at each lesson, and the answers to these questions will be discussed and criticised the following week. Fee for the course 10s.

Informal Meetings of Blavatsky Lodge.

These meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Thursdays, in September, from 8 to 9 p.m. The speakers will be as follows: September 6th, Miss Margery Smith, "Should Health be a Condition, a Gift, or a Possession?" September 13th, Discussion, opened by Mrs. Schofield, "That Duality, rather than Unity, is the ultimate Human Conception"; September 20th, the Discussion on Education will be continued; September 27th, Mrs. Betts, "Egypt."

All members of the Society are cordially invited.

E. M. M.

Practice Debating Class.

The meetings for October will be on Tuesdays, 2nd, 16th, and 30th, at 6.15 p.m., in the Lecture Hall, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

F. M. M. R.

Northern Federation.

The fiftieth Conference of the Northern Federation was held in Harrogate on Saturday, July 28th, Mr. G. R. S. Mead presiding. About sixty-five members were present. In the afternoon the subject of discussion was "Theosophy and Dogma." Papers were read by Miss Leslie Smith (Harrogate), Mr. E. J. Dunn (York), Mr. C. J. Barker (Sheffield), Miss Hilda Smith (Harrogate), Mr. O. Firth (Bradford) and Mrs. Bell (Harrogate).

Other members also took part, and Mr. Mead concluded with a short address.

After adjourning as usual for tea in the Winter Gardens the members reassembled at 7 p.m. in the Theosophical Hall, and Mr. Mead gave an address on "The Riddle of the Sphinx."

On Sunday afternoon Mr. Sakham Ganesh Pandit lectured to a large audience of members and their friends on "The Objects of the Theosophical Society."

In the evening Mr. G. R. S. Mead delivered a public lecture on "The Gnosis of the Mind."

Mr. S. G. Pandit has also made a tour amongst the Northern Lodges, visiting Harrogate, York, Whitley Bay, Middlesbrough, Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield. Much appreciation has been expressed by all who have had the privilege of listening to his able and interesting lectures.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m., informal meetings. Lectures resumed in October. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Information from O. Firth, Hawkswood, Baildon, Yorks.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Closed for summer. Infor-

mation from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street, for study of *A Study in Consciousness*. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 80, Richmond Road, Montpelier.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Lectures and study classes alternately. Information from M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings for study. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended for the summer. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Meetings suspended until the middle of October.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street, W.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Sept. 2nd, *Music an Expression of Life*, Miss Whitehead; Sept. 9th, *Brotherhood*, Hodgson Smith; Sept. 16th, *Reincarnation*, Mrs. Bell; Sept. 23rd, *On the Borderland of Theosophy*, Basil Hodgson Smith; Sept. 30th, *Purgatory, here and hereafter*, W. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 8 p.m. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 6, Hawthorn View, Chapel Allerton, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE.

Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanaich, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays. Informal Meetings during September, at 8 p.m. See separate notice.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W. On Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead. Regular meetings suspended till October.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., meetings resumed in October.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. 13, Tyndale Place, Upper Street, N.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. Meetings resumed Sept. 28th. Study of *Esoteric Buddhism* at fortnightly class. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE, Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brook's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public.

Enquiries to Dr. E. Mariette, Ford Park House, Mutley.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meeting on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Meetings on Tuesday evenings for study of *In the Outer Court*. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, High Ousegate, for general discussion. Information from J. E. Reid, *Hon. Sec.*, 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW COLLEGE IN KASHMIR.

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR,

July 18th, 1906.

DEAR EDITOR,

I think that those interested in Mrs. Besant's work in this far-away land will like to hear of an interesting ceremony which took place here yesterday,—to wit, the laying of the foundation stone of the first Kashmiri College. Being the birthday of His Highness the Mahārājah Pratāb Singh, after whom it is named, this date was especially chosen for the occasion. As one cannot with comfort or prudence go out much during the day—even though five thousand feet above the plains—the hour was fixed late in the afternoon and a large number of people proceeded to the site. The Resident Colonel, Sir Francis Younghusband, came from Gulmarg, a mountain resort some miles away, to be present; Mr. Moore, our old friend, now the genial Principal of the Institution, various state officials, Hindu and Parsi inhabitants, members of the Kāshyapa Theosophical branch, with a few English residents, including ourselves, gathered in the tent round Mrs. Besant and the Mahārājah, who as the country's ruler has made the founding of the College possible—nor must I forget to add that it is to be state supported for the education of all, irrespective of creed.

I should like to bring before your eyes a picture of the scene in that quiet field yesterday, surrounded by the grandest scenery imaginable, the snow-topped Himālayas far beyond us—the Jhelum and

its avenues of chinars and poplars near, all bathed in the evening sun. For we watched what shall surely be regarded hereafter as a historical epoch of this country. Those few of us who know something of the inner forces so strongly at work here, and who are in sympathy with them, remembered that not far off was the hill where Srī Shankarāchārya's temple stands, while on a sister summit rises the ancient fort of Akbar, and the shrine of a Hindu goddess to whom her children go to render worship.

But as the sympathetic words of the speakers fell on the air a few present might well dream that the Invisible Guardians of the land had vouchsafed their blessing, and, in the words of Sir Francis Younghusband, decreed that "One greater than those assembled should rise and lead us all to the heights of spiritual attainment," heights surely symbolised by those pure sunlit peaks which ring Kashmir to-day as in ages past.

It was but a few weeks ago a little band of us accompanied Mrs. Besant to see the spot where yesterday's ceremony took place, and would that in as short a time some might be found who would give themselves to the service of their land even as one who has identified herself with the needs of this and all countries, knowing not distinction of race, sex or creed.

EVELINE LAUDER.

PAPERS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

MADAM,

I beg to ask you to bring the following to the notice of members, as bearing on the question of papers for Congress. The type of paper adapted to the *Transactions* is rather different from that best suited for reading at length to the Congress, and it is to papers of the former type that the following suggestions chiefly apply. Members should consider which type of paper they wish to produce.

(1) Short papers are better than long ones (other things being equal)—except in exceptional cases (*e.g.*, comprehensive monographs), 5,000 words should be an outside limit.

(2) The type of paper required is not the same as that suitable for a Review or Magazine. The object of the *Transactions* is to record matter of permanent and intrinsic interest. Although elegance of expression is much to be desired, yet it is not to be looked on as sufficient in itself.

(3) The primary object of the *Transactions* is to embody original thought (along any line) or original observation (*e.g.*, psychic, scientific, experimental psychology, consciousness, etc.).

(4) As also included under the latter head might be suggested the collection of material, *e.g.*, bibliography, historical data on lesser known subjects, translations of valuable treatises in non-European languages, etc. In these cases the views of the writer and his authors should be clearly differentiated. (This is not intended to include

the paper which is practically the review of a single, easily accessible book.)

(5) The mere repetition of statements to be found in modern Theosophic literature should be avoided as far as possible.

(6) So far from lucidity of expression being incompatible with deep thought, the simplicity and directness of language in which many great men have put forward their ideas is a very noticeable fact and well worthy of consideration.

(7) It would save much trouble if papers were typewritten and had the name of the author and a (permanent) address on them.

(8) It has been decided by the Council of the Congress that no paper is eligible for printing in the *Transactions* which shall have appeared or be about to appear in any book or magazine. Special exception is made in the case of books which are not to appear within three years of the appearance of the volume of *Transactions*. The acceptance of papers by the Congress does not imply any guarantee that they will be printed in the *Transactions*; and moreover it is within the discretion of the Editor to decide whether a paper shall be printed in full, in summary, or by title.

I am, Madam, etc.

THE EDITOR OF "TRANSACTIONS."

THE CONGRESS, AND THE ANNUAL REPORT.

The announcement recently made by the Secretary of the Federation of the European Sections of the Theosophical Society, that the Congress might hereafter meet once every two years, must have been received by almost all members with uniform regret. The Congress has been doing excellent work, and it would be a clear disadvantage if the benefits of such a noble movement were to come to us at greater intervals in future. Should the practical work thrown upon the shoulders of the present Secretary prove too much for one man to cope with, I would propose that the Council may appoint a joint or an assistant Secretary to share his labours.

I am in entire sympathy with the excellent suggestion put forward at the last Congress by our worthy colleague Mr. Mead, to make the annual report of the Theosophical Society issued by the Headquarters at Adyar available to all the members of the European Sections. This report, which contains an account of the working of each Section throughout the world, gives a fairly representative idea of the achievement made by the Society during each year of its progressive career. I would respectfully suggest that the report of each Section should state definitely how far its members had succeeded in the year under review in promoting each one of the three fundamental objects of the Society, and give details regarding the methods followed in doing so. I venture to make this suggestion, because, reading several Section reports, I could not help feeling a desire to

know more specific details of the work done by the Sections concerned than I had been enabled to do from the general remarks contained in those reports.

In my opinion all educational and other public work of a useful character performed by members outside the strict province of the Theosophical Society should be recorded in a separate book, to which the Secretary of each Section might contribute a brief report based on reliable data received from authentic sources.

P. C. TARAPOREWALLA.

NIRVĀNA.

In view of the discussion which Question 301 has aroused, the following extract from an independent source (*Life of Anna Kingsford*) will, no doubt, be of some interest.

Anna Kingsford is receiving communications from her "Genius" on the subject of Souls. He says (Vol. I., p. 409):

"When a person dies, a portion of the soul remains unconsumed—untransmuted, that is, into spirit. The soul is fluid, and between it and vapour is this analogy, when there is a large quantity of vapour in a small space it becomes condensed, and is thick and gross. But when a portion is removed the rest becomes refined, and is rarer and purer. So is it with the soul. By losing a portion of its material it becomes finer, rarer, and purer; and it continues to do so more and more until, after many incarnations—made good use of—the whole of the soul is absorbed into the Divine Spirit, and becomes one with God, making God so much the richer for the usury. This is 'Nirvāna.' . . . Though becoming pure spirit or God, the individual retains his individuality. So that, instead of all becoming merged in the One, the One becomes Many. Thus has God become Millions."

It would appear that, according to this teaching, the "Progressives" have it—Nirvāna being the ultimate goal.

H. T.

ACHVAGHOSHA ON MEDITATION.*

In the hope that a few notes on this subject, drawn from Aṣhvaghosha's *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*, may be useful, I venture to add these paragraphs to the series which have already appeared in THE VĀHAN.

Aṣhvaghosha's essential predicate is that the "Soul as Suchness," by which he means the One

* This is the fourth of a series of short papers, dealing with meditation and kindred subjects, as found in the writings of mystics and others. Previous papers appeared in the February, March and August issues.

Self, "embracing in full from all eternity infinite spotless virtues and incomprehensibly excellent spiritual states *perfumes the minds of all beings.*" Waiting within the hearts of all beings is this Life, never to be thought of as separate or divided, which is seeking to find expression in countless different ways or modes, and this inherent perfuming principle is "embraced and protected by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas," and in consequence of this "one is enabled to see all Buddhas, to receive Their instructions, and to practise good deeds till Buddhahood is attained."

The form in which this essential predicate is given is important, inasmuch as our conception of the meaning of individuality seems to turn upon it, and also our views as to the goal to be reached by meditation. The Soul as Suchness is the goal which Aṣhvaghosha sets before us, and that which prevents our attaining this goal is the lower, particularising mind which is constantly moved and influenced by the impermanent external world. The lower mind is likened to the surface of a lake which is tossed into waves by the wind (of ignorance), and so reflects but brokenly the hills and the sky which would be clearly mirrored in still waters. Just so would the Soul as Suchness be imaged in the lower mind if it were tranquillised.

Aṣhvaghosha is asked how it is that all beings, uniformly in possession of this inner enlightenment and perfumed by it, do not respond to it and do not even believe in it. The same problem is propounded in the *Voice of the Silence* (p. 41). "Alas, alas, that all men should possess Ālaya, be one with the great Soul and that, possessing it, Ālaya should so little avail them! Behold how, like the moon reflected in the tranquil waves, Ālaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent." Aṣhvaghosha's answer is that it is the intensity of the influence of ignorance which varies, not the equal presence in all of the Soul as Suchness, and he illustrates his argument in the following manner: "The combustible nature of the wood is the *raison d'être* of a fire. But if a man is not acquainted with the fact, or, though acquainted with it, does not apply any method (whereby the potential principle can be actualised), how could he produce a fire and burn the wood?" It is even so with all beings—they are in possession of Suchness, "as the perfuming *raison d'être*," yet if they do not find the teaching of the Sages, or if, finding it, they "do not practise good deeds, do not exercise wisdom, do not destroy prejudices," how can they attain to Nirvāna?

Having attained in some degree "Faith in the Mahāyāna," in the sense indicated above, how is this faith to be cultivated? By the practice of the following five virtues: (1) *Dāna*, charity and love immortal, giving gladly so that the recipient rejoices, helping those in danger and imparting to

them a feeling of cheerfulness, teaching those who desire instruction, "and when performing these three acts of charity, let them not cherish any desire for fame . . . nor covet any worldly rewards." (2) *Çīla*, morality. In the case of laymen this referred to the ten well-known virtues, but in the case of Çramanas the obligations were heavier. (3) *Kshānti*, patience. "If they meet with the ills of life they should not shun them. If they meet sufferings they should not feel afflicted. But they should always rejoice in contemplating the deepest significance of the Dharma (doctrines)." (4) *Virya*, energy. The sufferings which come to themselves and to others through their having coveted worldly objects, should be borne in mind, and out of deep compassion they should give themselves to helpful works; they should constantly revere the perfect Buddhas, should aspire to the most excellent knowledge and "make great vows," thus shall ignorance be annihilated.

The fifth virtue is the practice of meditation, and in the present connection this merits a fuller treatment than the foregoing, which are hastily quoted to preserve the sequence of Açhvaghosha's method. There are two phases of this meditation, which are separately dealt with and which must at first be separately practised—later on they will become harmonised; the first is cessation, or tranquillisation (*çamatha*) and the second is intellectual insight (*vidarçana*).

Seated in a convenient attitude the Çramana (=Shravaka) should practise cessation. "Do not fix the thoughts on the breath," . . . or on forms and colours, or on space or earth or fire or water or ether; "nor on what you see, hear, learn, or memorise." That which induces thought is the external world, therefore the first step is to learn to abandon the thought of an external world; that which is left in the mind, when it is oblivious of the external world, is elaborated by itself, and this succession of thoughts must also be stilled. This tranquillisation, or "Samādhi of Oneness" as it is called, is a perfectly logical sequel to the assumption made that the lower, particularising mind prevents, by its continual change and disturbance, the manifestation of the inner enlightenment, but many dangers may be encountered in its practice. Evil spirits may assume beautiful or horrible forms in order to fascinate or to frighten; they may simulate lofty teachers and give instructions as to means of emancipation; they may reveal past and future states of existence, may show how to read the thoughts of others, may induce sleep or wakefulness, credulity or scepticism, and, in short, endeavour to perplex the Çramana in every conceivable way. "Therefore he should exercise a deep and thorough contemplation," and should remember that "all these are nothing but mental hallucinations," whereupon, Açhvaghosha cheerily adds, "the thoughts, visions and imaginations will instantly disappear, and, becoming free from all attributes (of limitation), he will enter into a true Samādhi."

But if cessation alone is practised the mind may sink down into a condition of indolence and

stupidity and may become estranged from compassion. (Açhvaghosha's discourse breathes compassion from the beginning of the Way to the end.) Therefore the Çramana should discipline himself in intellectual insight, which consists in the contemplation of the constant change and unsatisfactoriness of the things of the world, the shadowy nature of the past and the future and the brief illumination of the present, and, in general, the steady effort to see things as they are and not as they appear, and to realise the hard case of those who suffer so continually and do not know why they suffer or how their sufferings may be ended. Apparently from this Buddhist point of view all are considered to be suffering who have not Faith in the Unity, even although the circumstances of their lives may be favourable; their happiness has no sure foundation. "After these contemplations the practiser should awaken positive knowledge, feel the highest and deepest compassion for all suffering beings, rouse dauntless energy and make great vows"—vows of self-discipline, "to the end of the future" and of Service of Man until all beings are brought "to the highest bliss of Nirvāna." Further, "he should consider that nothing is self-existent and things (in their essence) are uncreate, and eternally tranquil." He should, nevertheless, take into account the limitations of the unreal and should ponder upon the law of causation, both in its good and evil Karma. Living in the world among people who are immoral, fearful, infatuated with the three venomous passions and clinging to false doctrines, the Çramana may be discouraged. Let him then cherish this thought: "All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the ten quarters having great, unimpeded supernatural powers, are able to emancipate all suffering beings by means of various expediences that are good and excellent."

If all Buddhas do possess such infinite powers of benediction why is it, Açhvaghosha is asked, that all beings do not see or hear their teachings. He answers that the Buddhas are only waiting to reveal themselves to all beings as soon as the latter can purify their own minds, and he remarks that "when a mirror is covered with dust, it cannot reflect images. It can do so only when it is free from stain. It is even so with all beings. If their minds are not clear of stain, the Dharmakāya (Divine Knowledge, equivalent to the Soul as Suchness) cannot reveal itself in them. But if they be freed from stain, then it will reveal itself." We have not to create or evolve a divine creature within ourselves, but to unveil That Which is there.

If this is so, "is there ever any need for one to discipline oneself in all good deeds and to try to save mankind . . . since all beings . . . will . . . have nothing to do but calmly to contemplate Suchness?" Açhvaghosha replies that the mind may be likened "to a precious jewel, which is pure and bright in its essence but buried in a gross veinstone." One cannot hope to make it clean and pure only by contemplating it and "without any means (of purification) or a degree of workmanship." So with the jewel of the higher mind, pure and

bright in essence it is, but buried in and mixed with external defilements; it cannot be purified from the dross simply by earnest contemplation and without means of emancipation (such as meditation) and of discipline.

By the perfection of faith three faculties of the soul will be awakened: "(1) Rightness of comprehension, for it truthfully and intuitively contemplates Suchness; (2) profundity of virtue, for it rejoices in accumulating all good deeds; (3) greatness of compassion, for it desires to uproot the miseries of all beings." "And the greatest of these is Charity" said another Teacher who has several points in common with Açhvaghosha.

H. W.

STRAY NOTES.

Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.

Colour and Form, or East and West.—Many pairs of opposites have been fitted into the terms East and West, but we do not remember hearing before the opposition (if indeed there be opposition) expressed as that of colour and form. Yet that is L. March-Phillips' thesis in an article in the *Contemporary Review* for August. Colour and emotion, he says, make up the East; while form and intellect characterise the West. The East feels. The West reasons. Emotion and colour belong to and complete each other; and so also do intellect and form. Moreover, the two modes of expression are irreconcilable; colour can only be used emotionally when it is allowed to supersede the intellectual sense of form, and form can only be used intellectually when it is allowed to supersede the emotional sense of colour. Concluding, as is proper, in something like the high philosophic strain, the writer says:

"I sometimes venture to think that in these two great factors, so strangely interdependent yet so strangely inconsistent, on which the whole of art is based and reared, we have the artistic aspect of a dualism that runs through the universe and through human nature, and that intellect and emotion, West and East, man and woman, are the ethical and physical statements of a difference which in art is summed up by the difference between form and colour."

O.

Holy Paraffin!—The literal interpretation of mystical terms is always an occasion for mirth. Mystical phraseology stands in the same relation to mystical meaning as pen and ink stand to ideas. It is merely the mode and instrument of transcribing states of consciousness. When therefore Mr. F. H. Balkwill undertakes in the *Nineteenth Century and After* for August to prove circumstan-

tially, cumulatively and positively that the sacred fire of Israel was "a highly inflammable fluid, probably a preparation of refined petroleum," we are sure to find a good deal of excellent ingenuity wasted. As fire is mentioned fifty odd times in the Bible, and how many more times in mythologies and traditions from lands innocent of naphtha; and the writer of the article quotes *Bibby's Quarterly* as an authority on Zoroastrianism; and concludes by modifying his bold statement into the feeble one that the prophets and priests of Israel "at least occasionally" employed petroleum to bring down fire from heaven; which modification empties out the baby with the bath, and leaves us to conjecture what the sacred fire was on the occasions when it was *not* petroleum; we may safely conclude that the pillar of naphtha cloud which led the Israelities did not lead the author of the article into the promised land.

O.

Kant and the Buddha.—Mr. W. S. Lilly has an interesting article in the *Fortnightly Review* for August on the parallels between the philosophy of Kant and of the Buddha. The parallels are all the more strange, Mr. Lilly thinks, because Kant could not possibly have had access to any Buddhist literature, as its discovery by Western scholars did not take place till long after his death. By a coincidence, however, an article in the August *Contemporary Review* on "Goethe's Orientalism" leads us to a different conclusion. It may be true that there was no scholastic Buddhism accessible to Europeans in Kant's day, but the author of the *Theologia Germanica* had been long in his grave when Kant first saw the light, and the *Theologia Germanica* is Buddhistic by simple virtue of being mystical. If Goethe could and did derive some of his "Oriental" ideas from the *Theologia*, there is no reason why Kant, who was an omniverous reader, should not have done the same. In any case, it is time to abandon the silly theory that parallel lines of thought are only to be sought in historical lines that meet.

Mr. Lilly discovers seven points of resemblance between the doctrines of Kant and the Buddha. Both based their philosophy on a distinction between real and empirical being; they were at one as regarded the antinomies in which reason is involved so soon as it travels beyond the phenomenal order; both held that the world as object is conditioned by me as subject; both regarded the moral law as the supreme guide of life; and for both the moral law was transcendental; both insist upon the will as man's distinctive endowment, in virtue of which man is an ethical being. Finally both take the same attitude towards the religions prevailing in their respective age and country.

There are, however, important differences. Kant was a theist, an optimist and an egoist; Gautama was none of these things. Mr. Lilly forgets to add that Buddhism is now a religion, while Kantianism is still a philosophy. To which of the differences is this difference due?

O.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 300.

(Continued from Vol. XV., p. 79.)

G. F.—What do Theosophists mean by the word “Brotherhood,” and is “Brotherhood” an original and fundamental object of the Theosophical Society? Is there any place for women under “Brotherhood”? Is there any vital objection to the use of the word “Fellowship” as expressive of what is meant by “Brotherhood,” and as removing any ambiguity as regards women?

M. E. G.—When the Apostle in the New Testament exclaims “Brethren, now are we the Sons of God,” surely no reasonable doubt exists in the mind of any that the whole human race is included? So is it with the term Brotherhood as applied by the Theosophical Society. The word in itself implies *Children of one Father*, and no other term would so fully and simply embrace the conception of the Divine Fatherhood linked with the Divine Sonship. Truly in this sense “Brotherhood” is the fundamental note of all Theosophic teaching, and “Fellowship” would be but a sorry makeshift for such an indissoluble union. We are all too apt to look on theosophic nomenclature as hard and fast literals of the physical plane, instead of remembering it is only an attempt to voice shadowy concepts of great spiritual truths. If the inner and mystic meaning were more realised and the concrete expression thereof less dwelt upon, Theosophy would become more of an indwelling spirit, and less of a perturbing element on physical planes.

E. M. M.—Speaking not for “Theosophists” in general, but for a single unit in the Theosophical Society, I should say that “Brotherhood” is not *a* but *the* “original and fundamental object of the Theosophical Society.” When Brotherhood is realised on all planes there will be no more need of a Theosophical Society. Most certainly there is no distinction of sex in this great word, nor even, perhaps, distinction of kingdom—inasmuch as all lives which proceed from the ONE LIFE, sometimes called the Father, are Sons of that Father, and therefore brethren of each other.

There does not seem to be any reason why the word “Brotherhood” should be changed for the less comprehensive word “Fellowship”; for surely no Theosophist—who believes that the *Ego* inhabits in turn male and female bodies—could fail to regard women and men as equally included within the term Brotherhood.

QUESTION 305.

(Continued from Vol. XV., p. 96.)

E. E. L.—Is one justified in believing that Jesus, the Christ, as an historical personage, was a man in his

last physical incarnation, one who, by virtue of his crowning act of self-renunciation, won redemption from the cycle of birth and rebirth, and now exists as a spiritual entity, infusing his followers the world over with his spirit, ever seeking to proclaim to them their at-one-ness with the Father, or that he was a man who, by reason of his extraordinary physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual advancement, had rendered himself a fitting instrument for the fulfilling of a great mission, but one which he, as he was constituted, was unable to accomplish, and therefore a higher spiritual entity, one capable of carrying out the work, entered into his physical shell, mingling with or absorbing his (Jesus) spiritual self? Or was Jesus one who had achieved emancipation from physical incarnation, but who deliberately chose to incarnate that he might become a World Teacher and aid the mighty work of evolution thus?

H. T.—The following extract from the *Life of Anna Kingsford* (Vol. I., p. 420) will probably interest E. E. L. The information is described as being given under the inspiration of her “Genius”:

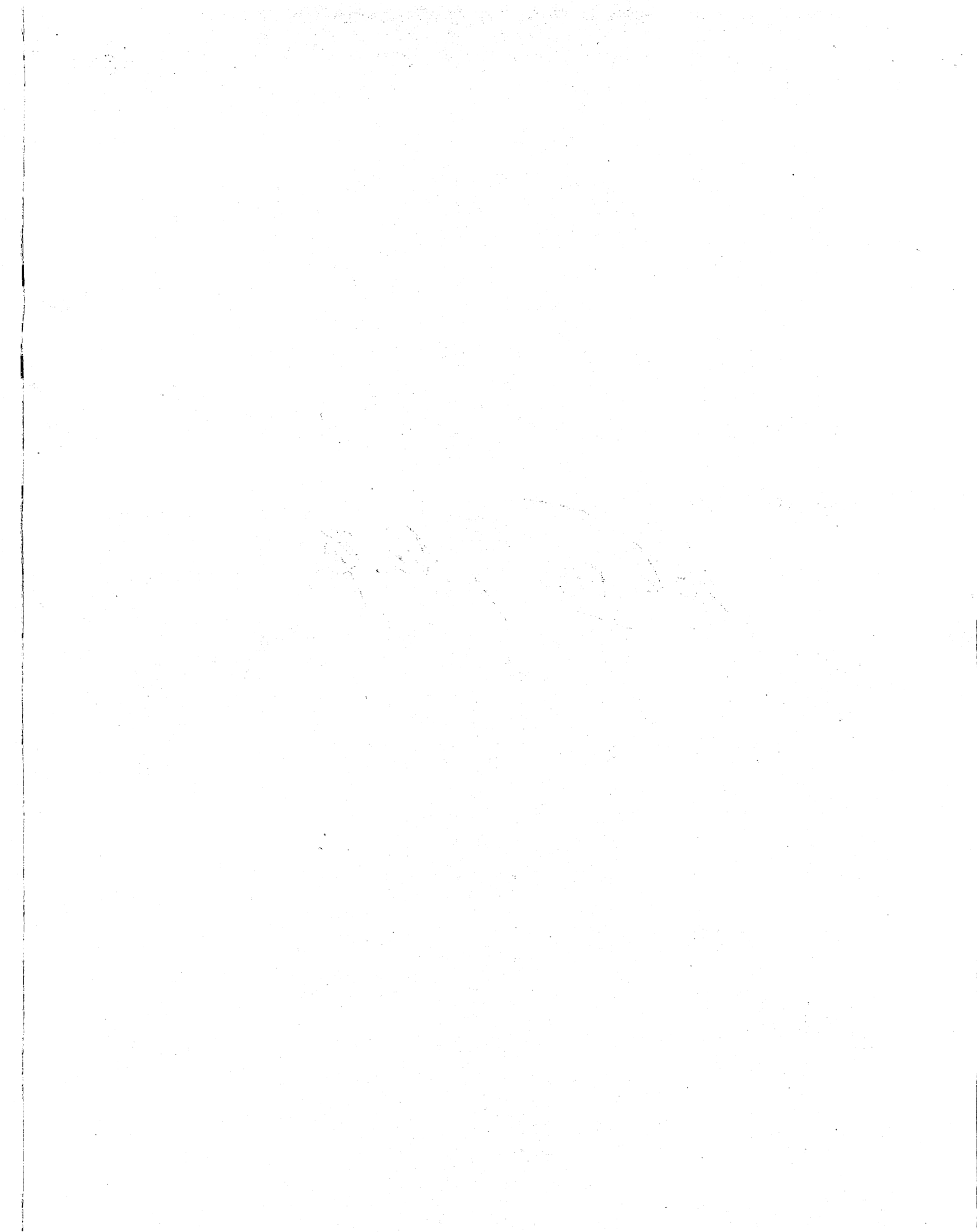
“An Initiate of the highest grade, one who has power to command the Elemental Spirits, and thereby to hush the storm and still the waves, can, through the same agency, heal the disorders of the body; and this he does by an exercise of his will which sets in motion the magnetic fluid. Such a person, an Adept or Hierarch of Magnetic Science, is necessarily a person of many incarnations. . . . The greatest Hierarch—he, that is, who has the most perfect control over nature—not only is a man of many incarnations, but has obtained from God the greatest of gifts and the rarest, that of being a Medium for the Highest, the Planet-God himself. Such an one is the *Æon*, and has what is called the ‘Double Portion.’ Elisha craved and received this grace.

“‘Where now is the God of Elijah?’ he cried, when endeavouring to work his first miracle; and he besought Elijah that a portion of his Double might rest upon him. For Elijah had so transmitted his soul into spirit that it was doubled; and a portion of this he bestowed upon Elisha. Such an *Æon* it was that descended upon Jesus, to quit Him at the moment of His death.”

The subscription to THE VAHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

Vol. XVI, No. 3



THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1906.

NO. 4.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

It is with great regret that we have to announce that Colonel Olcott's tour in Italy has had to be abandoned owing to an unfortunate accident which happened on the boat shortly before he reached Genoa, resulting in an injury to the leg as well as a general shock. The Colonel writes that his escape from death was regarded by the doctors on board as astonishing, as he tripped at the top of a steep flight of fourteen steps and fell to the bottom. He is in a private hospital, but hopes that he may recover sufficiently to return to Adyar by the boat originally arranged for, sailing on Nov. 7th. He will not, however, be thoroughly fit for his active work for two or three months. The hearty sympathy of all members will be with him in his present condition of suffering, which it is earnestly hoped will be brief.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Centres.

New Centres have been formed at Skipton, Yorkshire, and at Crouch End, London, N. The Secretaries are Mr. E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, and Mr. Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N., from whom information can be obtained.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to October 20th: C. M., £10; E. W., £5 5s.; J. B., £5; G. T., £10; G. R. S. M., £2 2s. Total, £32 7s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *James Mill*, by A. Bain; *Das Rätsel des Menschen*, C. du Prel; *Les Lois de la Destinée*, Th. Pascal; *Nārada Sūtra*, translated from the Sanscrit with an Independent Commentary by E. T. Sturdy; *The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy*, 2 vols., edited by J. C. Ghose; *The Holy Lives of the Āzhvārs or the Drāvīda Saints*, Ā. Govindāchārya; *The Yoga Philosophy: Being the Text of Patanjali*, edited by T. Tātīā; *Henri Dominique Lacordaire*, H. L. S. Lear; *Transactions of the First Annual Congress of the Confederation of European Sections of the Theosophical Society*, edited by J. van Manen; *The Argument, a Priori, for the Being and the Attributes of the Lord God, the Absolute One and the First Cause*, W. H. Gillespie.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gītā*, Annie Besant; *The Awakening*, M. Collins; *The Book of Enoch*, translated and edited by R. H. Charles; *Strange Houses of Sleep*, A. E. Waite; *A Literary History of Persia from Firdawsi to Sa'di*, E. G. Browne.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

Meetings will be held at Headquarters during November, on Monday afternoons, 3.30-4.30. The speakers will be: Nov. 5th, Mr. P. C. Tarapore,

"The Religion of Zoroaster"; Nov. 12th, Madame Naigi-Peters (Christiania), "First Impressions of Theosophy"; Nov. 19th, Miss E. Ward, "Illusions"; Nov. 26th, Mr. Faulding, "Forgiveness."

Members of the Society and their friends are welcome.

E. M. M.

Social Committee Debating Society.

During the month of November meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Fridays, November 9th and 23rd, at 3 o'clock.

L. S.

Elementary Class.

An Elementary Class for the Study of Theosophy will be held, during the winter, on Friday afternoons, at 3.15 p.m. (in the General Secretary's Office). The Class will be conducted by Mrs. Currie, and will begin on November 2nd.

E. M. M.

Men's Meetings.

These fortnightly meetings will be continued with the following syllabus up to Christmas:

Nov. 13th, "Orthodoxy"; Nov. 27th, "Asceticism"; Dec. 11th, "Initiation."

They are held at 28, Albemarle Street, W., on alternate Tuesday evenings at 8.30 p.m. All men members of the Society who are interested in a serious discussion of these subjects are invited to attend.

G. R. S. M.

Practice Debating Class.

The meetings for November will be on *Thursdays*, 1st, 15th and 29th, at 6.15 p.m. exactly, in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W.

F. M. M. R.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

The subject of Mr. Mead's November Course of Lectures will be: "The Mystic Psychology and Philosophy of 'The Dream of Rāvan,'" and the Lectures will be delivered in the Lecture Room, 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Tuesday afternoons from 5 to 6, according to the following syllabus:

Nov. 6th, "Man—The Prophet, Historian, Painter and Sculptor"; Nov. 13th, "Three-fold Nature—White, Red and Black"; Nov. 20th, "The Body of the Resurrection"; Nov. 27th, "The Final Goal."

N.B.—No previous acquaintance with "The Dream of Rāvan" is necessary for following the Lectures.

Course Tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., or at the door. Admission to each Lecture 2s.

Northern Federation.

The Fifty-first Conference of the Northern Federation will be held in Manchester in the Deansgate Hotel, on Saturday, November 10th, when Mrs. Hooper will take the chair.

In the afternoon at 3.30 there will be a discussion on "Mysticism," followed at 7 p.m. by an address from Mrs. Hooper on the same subject.

On Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock, Mrs. Hooper will lecture on "Was Reincarnation taught in the Early Christian Church?" to members, associates and their friends. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend the Federation meeting, and it is earnestly hoped that as many as possible will make an effort to be present, so that this new experiment, namely, that of holding the Conference in Manchester, may prove an unqualified success.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary Northern Federation.

Hampstead Heath Centre.

A lecture on "Thoughts and Things" (illustrated by the lantern), will be delivered by Miss Edith Ward in the Lecture Room at the Subscription Library, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Monday, November 12th, at 8.15 p.m. Admission, one shilling. Members having friends in the district are asked to make this lecture known.

K. S.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 5th, . . . ; Nov. 12th, *The Polarity of Creation*, E. H. Bellairs; Nov. 19th, *Colour and Number Symbolism*, W. Tudor Pole; Nov. 26th, *The Mystic Mind*, A. R. Orage. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gītā*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 15, Old Steine.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: Nov. 6th, *The Joys of the Spiritual Life*, Miss E. Severs; Nov. 13th, *Nature's See-saw*, E. H. Bellairs; Nov. 20th, *Maimonides on the Future Life*, Rev. J. Ableson; Nov. 27th, *Occult Faculty*; A. R. Orage. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Personality and the Future Life*, Miss Joynt; Nov. 8th, *A Passage from "The Secret Doctrine"*; Nov. 15th, *Dreams*; Nov. 22nd, *"The Secret Doctrine."* Information from the Secretary, 34, Wicklow Street, Dublin.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 2nd, *The Group Soul*, A. J. Faulding; Nov. 15th, Conversational Meeting; Nov. 22nd, *The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society*, E. J. Cuthbertson; Nov. 8th and 29th, *Old Scotch Stones and their Symbolism*, Miss Forsyth. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street: Nov. 6th and 13th, at 8 p.m., Study Class; Nov. 20th, *The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society*, E. J. Cuthbertson; Nov. 27th (members only), *Theosophy and Social Problems*, R. H. Andrews. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m. Short papers by members. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Nov. 4th, *Why I am a Theosophist*, A. Haddock; Nov. 11th, *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, F. R. King; Nov. 18th, *Theosophy in Daily Life*, J. M. Watkins; Nov. 25th, *Life of Buddha*, H. J. Adams. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Nov. 1st, *Ibsen*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; Nov. 8th, *The Virgin of the World, II.*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 15th, *The Goal*, J. M. Watkins; Nov. 22nd, *Ethics of Islam*, H. E. Sheikh Abdullah Quilliam Bey; Nov. 29th, *The Doctrine of the Heart*, Miss C. E. Woods. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Nov. 4th, *Temperament as a Mode of Karma*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Nov. 11th, *The Bridge of Failure*, Mrs. Sharpe; Nov. 18th, *From the Hymns of Hermes, II.*, G. R. S. Mead; Nov. 25th, *The Theosophical Point of View*, A. R. Orage.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane: Nov. 4th, *Dreams*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; Nov. 11th, *Man and his Bodies*, L. Stanley Jast; Nov. 18th, *Prayer*, A. Haddock; Nov. 25th, *Training the Emotions*, Alan Leo. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon; Nov. 7th, *The Second Object of the Theosophical Society*, F. Horne; Nov. 14th, *The New Gospel of Interpretation*, S. Hopgood Hart; Nov. 21st, *The Bhagavad Gita*, E. Horowitz; Nov. 28th, *Gospel Growth*, Rev. A. Baker. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Nov. 5th, *Symbolism*, A. H. Barley; Nov. 12th, *The Emotions*, Mrs. Leo; Nov. 19th, *The Theosophical Ideal*, Miss C. E. Woods; Nov. 26th, *The Eternal and Eternity*, A. P. Cattanch.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Sundays at 6.30 p.m.: Nov. 4th, *Forgiveness*, A. J. Faulding; Nov. 11th, *W. B. Yeats*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; Nov. 18th, *The Teachings of Zoroaster*, P. C. Tarapore; Nov. 25th, *Study of a Theosophical Poet (A. L.)*, Clifford Bax. Class for study on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at 8

p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Sundays, at 3.15 p.m., for children, and Saturdays, at 7 p.m., for young people: Nov. 3rd and 17th, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*; Nov. 10th, *On being Disillusioned*, Mrs. Esther Wood; Nov. 24th, Discussion.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at the Reading Room, Brotherhood Trust, 37, Newington Green Road, N.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Nov. 2nd, 16th, and 30th, The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society will be dealt with by Mrs. Sharpe, P. Tovey and Mrs. Hooper; Nov. 9th and 23rd, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester: Nov. 4th, *Man and his Past History*, Miss Hilda Smith; Nov. 11th, . . . ; Nov. 18th, *The Mystery of Pain and the Problem of Evil*, Mrs. Bell; Nov. 25th, *Reincarnation and Science*, E. Wood. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4.30 p.m. Library open on Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m. and on Wednesdays and Fridays, from 1 to 2 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from J. Walter Cock, 37, Beechcroft Road, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 12, Green Street.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., Wednesdays, at 6.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers,

Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Nov. 6th, *What is Truth?* S. H. Old; Nov. 13th, *The Bacon-Shakspeare Controversy*, Mr. Maher; Nov. 20th, *Some Aspects of Cardinal Newman*, A. C. Howard; Nov. 27th, Questions and Discussion. Study of *A Study in Consciousness*, on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton: Nov. 4th and 18th, Study of *Man and his Bodics*, Nov. 11th, *Astrology and Reincarnation*, Alan Leo; Nov. 25th, *Salvation*, A. J. Faulding.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at the Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street: Nov. 1st, *Theosophy and Christianity*, J. I. Wedgwood; Nov. 8th, *Have we ever lived before?* Hodgson Smith; Nov. 15th, *Karma*, Miss H. Hodgson Smith; Nov. 22nd, *The Ideal and the Actual*, W. Bell; Nov. 29th, *Character Building*, Mrs. Bell. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate: Nov. 2nd, *Reincarnation*, Mrs. Bell; Nov. 9th, *Meister Eckhart*, Rev. A. H. Lee; Nov. 16th, *Philosophy of Marcus Aurelius*, W. H. Sanderson; Nov. 23rd, *The Life Side of Theosophy*, C. J. Barker; Nov. 30th, *Purgatory Here and Hereafter*, W. Bell. Study class at 7 p.m., preceding the lectures. Information from J. E. Reid, Hon. Sec., 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPIHICAL LODGES.

Friend Thomas raises a most interesting question for our consideration. To keep Theosophical Lodges alive he suggests introducing Theosophical ideas into existing institutions, and where such institutions do not exist he suggests our starting organisations likely to be of general service to our fellows. This would, no doubt, be valuable work, but how would it keep Theosophical Lodges alive, as such?

The fact of the matter is: the Theosophical movement has outgrown all Theosophical Societies, and no genuine effort has yet been made to unite the various Theosophical Societies. Our methods have not appreciably altered to suit the changed conditions. Our propaganda is carried on on the old lines. Our annual Conventions afford us an opportunity to consider our work—our real work—but we spend the time discussing paltry rules and regulations. How can the Spirit descend among us? Our cut and dried programme will not admit of it. Could we not, at least, change this and come together for the consideration of real and vital issues affecting the life of men and our relation thereto as a Society? *The Theosophical Review* is beyond the scope of our deliberations

and we can give no consideration to any suggestions for its improvement! THE VĀHAN must go on as it has from the beginning! Our meetings must be carried on exactly on the old lines!

Well, if we cannot change these activities we can change ourselves. In the end it all comes back to each of us individually. One of my most excellent friends in his own inimitable way recently made some excellent suggestions in relation to work of another kind. Let me briefly summarise what I think applies to ourselves. We have surrendered to books much other activity associated closely with the life of men. Spiritual culture in the old time came "as an exaltation of life itself"—not at the expense of life. In our Lodges we should stir up the old imaginative life. The true philosophy of *life* is seeking its masters again. We must get nearer to human life till religion grows "like a flower out of the stem of life."

Specialised energy is not life, and "life forgets what is self-sufficient."

In our Lodges, in our Conventions, and in all other Institutions, we should appear as Messengers who carry great news—interesting and even exciting. We should speak "of far-off things" with animation. The ways are endless, but the Messengers—what of them? Are they not at fault? Do they not speak with sleepy voices and give utterance, for the most part, to second-hand platitudes? Do we think to find the shining Soul by psychical research or through some spiritualistic *séance*? I think, my friends, we lose our life among the tombs. The old enchantment thus forsakes us and we look weary. Life will return to our Lodges when the spring awakens in our hearts the magic of the first days. Be of good cheer! the greatest sinners among us (I wish we loved sinners more) may become the magicians and builders. Let us meet the Master in our own hearts and He will restore memory of our powers and show us again the plans of the great building.

D. N. DUNLOP.

Mr. Thomas's letter on this subject will have caused much searching of heart among Lodge authorities and members. Is it true that the Lodges want keeping alive? Why do "the majority of members take a very languid interest in Lodge studies and lectures?" Mr. Thomas says that: "The majority of members have absorbed as much Theosophical teaching as they are able to take in for the present. What is the next step?"

I answer that in my belief he is entirely mistaken. These members have taken nothing in, they have never really grasped the point at all; there would be no question of languid interest if they had. Why is this? They have attended lectures perhaps for years, they have read all the manuals and text-books through; why then is it that still they hearing hear not, and seeing they see not, neither do they understand? It is because Theosophy is very difficult to understand, and they have never been taught to learn. They have not been individually taken in hand by a teacher, and led through the subject in a systematic way. Con-

sequently they have never mastered the true inwardness of the theosophic point of view, and therefore they cannot follow the lectures and teaching given from that standpoint. They are always wandering in a maze, and at last grow weary, and give it up in despair. I well remember myself being in this condition of puzzlement: what on earth the lecturers were driving at I could not conceive; and but for a teacher who led my stumbling steps up the hill of difficulty, till I grew strong enough to toil on alone, I might well have abandoned the whole thing as hopeless. Even then I was no novice, I was accustomed to learn from lectures, and habituated to the use of books. Not so our members as a rule; consequently they require all the more personal teaching and united help in their attempts at study. It is here that the "next step" comes in.

The Lodges are working on wrong lines. They provide strings of disconnected lectures on Theosophical matters, but conveying as a whole no general view of the subject, and affording no grip of its main position. Instead of "feeding their babes with the milk of the word," they expect them to grow strong on a diet of mixed drinks. Instead of humbly trying to teach them to "take notice," so that they may become "able to see, able to hear, able to speak," they are just keeping them amused with an endless supply of nice new rattles. All they do really is to foster the lecture crave, that condition of ever seeking to hear some new thing; vaguely interested in anything from the Mysticism of China to the Magic of Peru; but totally incapable of putting so much as two and two together. They are leading their innocent "babes" into this deadly habit of intellectual dram-drinking, under the delusion that they are providing draughts of living water. The children come into the Lodges asking for bread, and are given what—to them—are stones.

A few strong ones, driven by a consuming passion for truth, help themselves unaided; they take the kingdom by violence, and then find suitable fields for their energies. Not so the majority, they go on feebly snatching at the scraps provided, growing more and more bewildered; till perhaps after years of Lodge-going, they find that even fairy tales from the astral plane have become a burden, that the whole thing is vanity and vexation of spirit, that they have learned nothing, done nothing, and become nothing. Then they drift despairingly away; or continue coming, led by the blind force of the lecture-habit, to cumber the ground in their dead Lodge. I fear this picture is not overdrawn, and the Lodges had better face it; and cease to delude themselves that they are alive because their habitual lecture-cravers cannot stay away; while the propaganda brings in a stream of new members, to be lectured to death in their turn.

"What, then, remains to be done that the Lodges may be kept alive?" The authorities must recognise that they are not mere purveyors of a Theosophical variety entertainment, but keepers of a Gate of the Way, where every individual member should be taken by the hand, and

led carefully through the whole subject by a teacher who knows something about it. The teachers should not be too advanced; university professors are out of place in a kindergarten. Systematic instruction should be the main object of the Lodge, and everything else should be subordinated to it. The weekly lectures, if continued, should be on the subject which the students have considered in their instruction during the previous week. This could easily be arranged, and would result in a systematic series of lectures, going over the subject in the course of the year. The students would thus be in a position to understand the lecturers, and get some good out of their efforts; while even the dead-heads would at least have the subject systematically dangled before their eyes.

How should the systematic study be managed? I worked out a simple method by experience, and advise the Lodges to try it. The members of the Lodge who desire to learn, should be gathered into a study-circle, containing at the outside twelve members—the traditional number. If the Lodge is large, a number of such circles should be arranged, and each put in charge of a senior member, accustomed to teach—the active members in the Lodge in fact. A syllabus should be drawn out, dividing up the work for the year, and the lecture syllabus should be made to correspond, so that all the students would study the same matter at the same time. No strangers should be admitted to the study-circles, as it is most important that the members should become accustomed to each other. A book should be taken which goes over all the central ground of the subject in a systematic way, as the basis for operations. I took the *Ancient Wisdom*. Each member must have a copy, and study carefully a given section, noting on the margin any question he cannot understand, or anything on which he can give further information to the others. The president, of course, does the same, and is the person who will be able to bring most additional matter to the general fund. When the circle meets, the members should literally sit in a circle, with no back seats for lazy people to go to sleep in. The president introduces everyone to everyone else, and greets each member as he comes in. Then he takes the book, which does not need to be read, as everyone has already studied it. He says: "Has anyone noted anything on page so-and-so?" Then he goes slowly round the circle, eliciting a question, an idea, a doubt, an explanation from each in turn, so that everyone has the direct opportunity of getting what he wants and saying what he thinks. All sorts of discussions arise on just those questions which the members want and on no others; these the president directs, elucidates, moderates and closes, adding whatever he can from his own knowledge.

In this simple way, without a brilliant teacher, members may be led to think, reflect, and discuss for themselves: different points of view emerge to the enlightenment of all, difficulties are brought to the surface, doubts are frankly faced, and if possible cleared up. I will not

speak for other members of my old circle, but I learned and realised a very great deal by its means; and I retain a lively recollection of many good talks, keen discussions, and hearty laughs. Sometimes the tension evolved by the friction of mind on mind caused ideas to fly about till the very air seemed to crackle.

The president of such a circle is able to keep members up to their work, to guide them to other books bearing on the matter in hand, to encourage those who show ability to undertake work on their own account. He gets to know all his students personally and can help each one in his own way. This personal relation between teacher and pupils is the secret of life; it has been so from the beginning, it is founded on the rock of human nature. Let the Lodges reform themselves on the old, old lines and all may yet be well.

I am certain that most new members, and many old ones, would be only too thankful to be taken by the hand in this way, and led through the profoundly difficult studies we call Theosophy. They cannot do it alone, that is evident. Let the Lodges try the power of the united circle to awaken the light of understanding in their members, and we shall have no more infants crying in the night, and no more need to ask "what must we do to keep alive?" Just suppose a circle carefully went through the *Ancient Wisdom*, the *Growth of the Soul*, and the *Secret Doctrine*, in three successive years. Consider how vastly more advanced they would be, than the same twelve if they had just sat and listened to Lodge lectures for the same period. In the latter case they would know practically nothing; in the former, some at least would have made themselves ready—and "when the disciple is ready the Master is ready also."

Let the Lodges see to it, and do their duty by every individual member.

Now is the time for a reformation, for experience has sufficiently demonstrated that individual progress is but little helped by listening to endless lectures, however brilliant or boring they may be; while the experience of the ages has shown that it is very greatly helped by steady, well-directed, personal effort, reinforced by the relationship of teacher and pupil, and stimulated by the vital action of mind on mind in the Circle of Discipleship.

. For to *know*
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.

A. H. WARD.

Mr. Thomas asks in his letter on this subject "What then remains to be done in order that the Lodges may be kept alive?" I should answer: "Make the members of the Lodges into Theosophists," *i.e.*, make the members comprehend the object with which the Society was founded, the method and the spirit in which they should be worked, a result which it is obvious from his letter and many other signs of the times, has not yet been achieved. To return to fundamentals and

an oft-told tale. The Theosophical Society was founded to carry out a certain purpose and to do a definite spiritual work, not to be merely a literary, debating or social institution, the ideal now apparently of some of its members. Mrs. Besant, in her article "A Lodge of the Theosophical Society," *The Theosophical Review*, January, 1902 (I wish the Theosophical Publishing Society would reprint the article as a pamphlet, I fancy it has been done abroad, but not here), has told us that the use of a Lodge is to serve as a channel through which spiritual energies may be conveyed, the members forming the necessary physical nucleus. If a Lodge is not regarded in this light, I, for my part, fail to see any reason for its foundation or its continued existence, as the general culture of the day is impregnated with Theosophical thought, and, as has been said before, there are many other societies in which the second and third Objects of the Society are pursued more adequately than we are able to do. But for the first Object, Brotherhood, we can, in my opinion at least, do what no other society attempts at present to do, if we try to work our Lodges on the lines indicated by Mrs. Besant, bearing in mind "the increased force that may be obtained by the union of several people to help a common object." To effect this result, self-sacrifice, a sense of duty, devotion, are absolutely necessary. Given this frame of mind on the part of the members, and the ideal Mrs. Besant sketches will soon materialise, otherwise the Life will leave the Society and seek some other channel for its manifestation. That many members, I believe, do attend Lodge meetings in the fitting spirit is due the success the movement has achieved. And they have the reward they do not seek, for they do not find Lodge activities uninteresting and dull, they derive benefit from them. I notice in all Lodge work that the members who criticise most harshly the activities of other members and Lodge activities in general are as a rule the drones in the hive. Those who give—receive.

Mr. Thomas's panacea for existing ills seems to be propaganda, always propaganda. Surely we can only take part in organising new movements outside the Society in our individual, not in our Theosophical capacity, otherwise we should infringe on the constitutional neutrality Colonel O'cott so strongly upholds.

The second Object seems more a matter for individual than collective work, but I suppose study, research, collection of material, might be arranged among small groups of similarly interested people. As regards the third Object Captain Prince suggested in his article "The Third Object of the Society" (*Theosophical Review*, June, 1905), the formation in the Society of a regular department of psychic research and the collection of cases of psychic or abnormal experience. Perhaps he will tell us later what response was made to his suggestion.

A practical point to be considered is whether country Lodges do not sometimes attempt too many activities, considering their limitations, and needlessly waste their energies. It has always struck me that the lecture is a very much overdone

activity with us. It is a great tax on the few who can adequately do the work, the quantity given must militate against the quality, besides rendering the lectures cheap.

Personally, I think it would be an advantage if some scheme could be devised by which the country Lodges might be more closely connected with Headquarters and the General Secretary for the time being. At present the Lodges are practically autonomous, and run a danger of becoming narrow and self-centred and of losing the sense of the international character of the movement. I am loth to add to the work of the General Secretary but if his or her work could include a personal visit to each Lodge of the Society, I think it would be advantageous in many ways. The desire for a closer touch with Headquarters led many country members, I believe, to favourably consider Mr. Faulding's abortive proposition at this year's Annual Convention.

With due regard to the increase in membership of the Society, need of expansion of the original methods of working the Society becomes a necessity. I think it might be advisable to hold more general business meetings of the Section, or if that is not practicable, at any rate to allow more time for the discussion of business at the Convention. Whatever business is before it the Convention has, according to past arrangements, to be crammed into the meagre time of two or two and a half hours. The result is everything seems done in a hurry, very important business is effected without adequate ventilation, a general sense of friction and want of proper management is felt as delegates and members realise that owing to want of time they have no opportunity to express their views, the very business for which they are there.

I must apologise for the length of this letter. I hope many other members will put forward their opinion on the very important subject Mr. Thomas has raised.

ELISABETH SEVERS.
(*President of the Bath Lodge.*)

(Other letters have been received, but owing to lack of space they are being held over. It is hoped that it will be possible to insert most of them, and as the subject is of importance the correspondence will be continued for some time. —ED.)

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 314.

M. R. P.—*I should like to know if Theosophy offers any explanation regarding children who are born hopeless idiots. We meet with some who appear to have no glimmer of mind, no reason, and are below the animal. What object can their earth-life serve, so far as they themselves are concerned, and what is their condition after death? Is it likely that in their past lives they have completely broken away from the Higher Manas, and that the end of this life means the end of all? This view sounds pessimistic, but I cannot see how*

otherwise the condition could be at all, and being so, how the soul can make any further progress. I shall be most thankful for light on the subject.

E. A. B.—The Law of Karma is far too complex in its workings for us to be able to follow it in detail, but we may learn enough of its general principles to help our thought in many of life's problems. Thus, in the cases supposed, there must have been some cause, in some past time, which is working itself out in this terrible way. But this is far from meaning that this life is "the end of all." We must remember that the real man—the Ego—is greater than any temporary personality, and can find only partial expression in any one life; but in ordinary evolution each earth-life adds more or less to the growth of the Ego, by the experience gained. In a case of hopeless idiocy, with "no glimmer of mind, no reason," the Ego finds himself bound to a body which he cannot use as an instrument of expression, one through which he can gain no fresh experience. But this sad fact is in itself the needed lesson, and he will have learnt through it to avoid in future what has caused such a condition. So even such a crippled life as this is not utterly wasted as regards himself, while in developing special tenderness, patience, etc., it may have its uses for the parents and others concerned. In the Great Economy nothing is really wasted.

A. R. O.—The difficulty about such questions as this is that they apparently demand a very considerable amount of psychic knowledge on the part of the answerer. Unfortunately, there are very few who possess such a qualification; and still more unfortunately, they by no means always agree. Thus even under the most favourable circumstances, we are driven to rely either upon authority or upon our own judgment. For should all the experts agree, the opinion we thus obtain is authority *in excelsis*; and should they all differ, we have to exercise our judgment in choice. From my standpoint, it is better to exercise a personal judgment at once and have done with it. Authority, even that of archangels, I am willing to reverence and—ignore. My own judgment, right or wrong!

Approaching this question, therefore, with the best mind I have, the following remarks result. In the first place it is by no means necessary to suppose that all the human bodies we see are possessed of a soul at all. Anybody who has ever been gathering nuts (as I have recently) will have been struck by the number of empty shells. Ex-

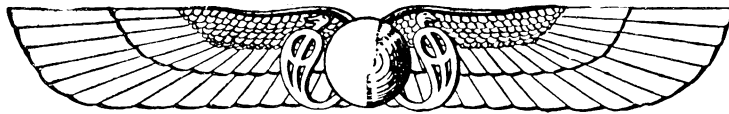
ternally there is nothing to distinguish them from nuts with kernels. Nature, I have said to myself, has taken all this trouble to produce a mere simulacrum of a nut; just as much trouble, apparently, as to produce a full nut. Why? I can only suppose that Nature's object was more than nuts, something over and above nuts with kernels. Perhaps the passage of matter through the nut-form served some purpose. Perhaps the tree was desirous of producing nut-forms. Perhaps—but one might go on guessing for hours.

Anyhow, the point lies in the application. Why should not, I suggest, the tree of Humanity put forth and produce forms without a kernel, human bodies, that is, without human souls? There is nothing pessimistic in such a supposition. After all, the business of men is to learn discrimination; and if Nature should have played this little trick of mixing confusedly bodies with and bodies without souls, I, for one, am rather glad. It would in some ways be a blessed relief to discover that what we have often suspected is really true, namely, that there are many human forms without souls. Think of the useless pity that has been and still is being poured out on what may to the discriminating eye be no more than shells! And think, too, of the delightful exercises in discrimination that await the student when he ventures to award praise or blame to souls. To end these speculations, I repeat that we need not believe that idiot children have any Higher Manas or whatnot at all; in which case we may ease our minds of the burden of pity for them. To sympathise with and understand and help living souls is a great art, of which sympathy with bodies may be, and I suggest often is, only a poor, pale imitation.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1906.

NO. 5.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

CLOSING OF THE SECTIONAL ROOMS FOR CHRISTMAS.

The Rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed for Christmas from Friday evening, December 21st, and will reopen as usual on Friday, December 28th.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branches.

Charters have been issued, dated November 16th, 1906, to the members of the following Branches, all of Budapest, Hungary.

A Hungarian Section is in process of formation, so that these Branches are only temporarily connected with the British Section.

Krishna Branch: Stojits Iván, Biro Mór, Wimmer Jenő, Aughy Ernő, Barthoss János, Mrs. Barthoss Jánosné, Alesuti Agoston.

Pythagoras Branch: Agoston Gyula, Nagy Béla, Hauser Adoyán, Windisch Herrmann, Würrh Kálmán, Mrs. Berthe Renaud, Biesz Ödön Ede.

Altruismus Branch: Stark Lipot, Kepes Andor, Weinberger Vikár Geyer, Mrs. Stark Lipotné, Markovits Ödön, Mrs. Garbanyi Árpádné, Lucin Silvius.

Apollo Branch: Nadler Robert, Mrs. Harsinji Bolcskey Seraphia, Mrs. Szent Máriay Dezsőné, Schurtz Sandor, Agoston Kálmán, Sebesta Kolos, Mrs. Sebesta Koloné.

Blavatsky Branch: Ott Jozsef, Kaszal Miklos,

Hackenberger László, Miss Edith Abbott, Mrs. Bironé Ringer Flóra, Mrs. Golonya Jenoné, Mrs. Nerey Ödöné.

Bolyay Branch: Nérey Ödön, Nagy Dezső, Zipernofsky Károly, Harsanyi Jenő, Anyos István, Szent Máriay Dezső, Kaczianyi Ödön.

Clio Branch: Déry Ernő, Nagy Mihály, Matzal Vinczéné, Fáy Elek, Wayditsch Alajos, Radnay Arnold, Mrs. Zipernofsky Károlyné.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to November 20th: A. P., £2 2s.; E. A. B., £6; S. C., £1. Total, £9 2s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *The Temple of Deir El Bahari*, Part V., E. Naville; *The Songs of Christine*, E. M. Holden; *Songs at Dawn*, E. M. Holden; *Argemonde*, E. M. Holden.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *An Essence of the Dusk*, translated from the original manuscript by F. W. Bain; *The Culture of the Soul among Western Nations*, P. Rámanáthán; *The Magical Writings of Thomas Vaughan*, edited with preface and essay by A. E. Waite; *La Clef des Grands Mystères*, É. Lévi; *Christian Iconography*, 2 vols., M. Didron; *Celtic Researches*, E. Davies; *The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*, E. Davies; *The Turba Philosophorum*, translated from the Latin by A. E. Waite; *Translations from the Greek of some Treatises of Plotinus*, by Thomas Taylor; *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 2 vols., translated from the German of

Dr. E. Zeller by S. F. Alleyne; *Leonardo Da Vinci's Note Books*, rendered into English by E. McCurdy; *Saint Catherine of Siena, as seen in her Letters*, translated and edited by V. D. Scudder; *Mazzaroth, or, The Constellations*, F. Rolleston; *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, J. E. Harrison.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

At a recent meeting of the Library Committee it was decided that the works of Mrs. Besant, pre-Theosophic as well as recent, should be included in the Section Library. As, however, a very large proportion of the Library funds has this year been spent on the printing of a catalogue and on the binding and rebinding of books, it will not be possible to purchase them for some time. Possibly some of our members possess copies of these works, and would be glad to give them to the Library. Mrs. Besant seems to have contributed regularly to the *National Reformer* between August 30th of 1874 to August 30th of 1891. If any numbers of this period were given her articles could be taken out and bound separately.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

Advanced Study Class.

Miss Woods proposes to conduct a Class for studying some of the basal conceptions of Theosophy, such as the Monad, the Ego, Manifestation, Planes, Vehicles of Consciousness, etc., and would be glad to receive names of members wishing to follow these lines of study. Her desire is to help to build up by metaphysical thought and reading, sound and clear conceptions on these often misunderstood subjects.

The Class will begin in January, and will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on a day suitable to the majority of the members—preferably on Saturday afternoon.

All those desiring to join will kindly notify their wish to Miss Woods, 125, Victoria Street, S.W., before December 18th. If the response is sufficient a syllabus and particulars will be issued in the January VĀHAN.

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

Three meetings will be held at Headquarters during December, on Monday afternoons, 3.30 to 4.30. The speakers will be:

Dec. 3rd, Mr. Mead, "An Ancient Theosophical Treatise"; Dec. 10th, Mr. Faulding, "Forgiveness"; Dec. 17th, Mrs. Despard, "The Ancient Wisdom in Modern Life."

Members of the Society and their friends are welcome.

E. M. M.

Blavatsky Lodge Informal Meetings.

These meetings will be held on Thursdays at 8 o'clock during the Christmas holidays. On January 3rd and 10th the meetings will be at 28, Albemarle Street. On December 27th, as the Headquarters will be closed, the meeting will be held at 8, Inverness Place, Bayswater, by kind permission of the West London and Lotus Lodges.

E. M. M.

Social Committee Debating Society.

There will be only one meeting of the above Society in December, on Friday, 14th, at 3.15, in the drawing-room at 28, Albemarle Street.

L. S.

Practice Debating Class.

Owing to the continued falling off in attendance, these meetings are discontinued for the present.

F. M. M. R.

London Federation.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, December 8th, at 8 o'clock, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., when Mr. Sydney Sprague will speak on the subject of: "Abbas Effendi, the new Prophet, and his work."

A Council Meeting will be held at 7.30 p.m.

P. T.

Northern Federation.

The fifty-first Conference of the Northern Federation was held in the Deansgate Hotel, Manchester, on Saturday, Nov. 10th, Mrs. Hooper presiding. Over 100 members were present.

In the afternoon there was a discussion on "Mysticism," papers being read by Mr. Firth (on behalf of Mrs. Dunn (Skipton), who was unable to be present), Miss Pattinson (Bradford), Mr. Wedgwood (London), Mrs. Midgley (Didsbury), and Mr. C. J. Barker (Sheffield).

A lively and interesting discussion followed, in which several other members took part, and the meeting adjourned at 5.30 for tea. At 7 o'clock all reassembled to listen to a lecture by Mrs. Hooper on "Mysticism."

On Sunday afternoon many of the members assembled in the drawing-room of the Hotel for an enjoyable concert, organised by the Manchester members, which, with an interval for tea, was prolonged until nearly 7 o'clock, when Mrs. Hooper gave an interesting lecture on "Was Reincarnation taught in the Early Christian Church?" in the large Dining Room, to members, associates and their friends, the audience numbering 147.

This brought to a conclusion what was unanimously felt to have been one of the most successful

Federations held in the North during the past few years. The next Conference will be held in Sheffield some time in February.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary.

Chatham Study Group.

Meetings for the study of Theosophy are being held at Chatham. Members of the Society, or friends, in that district, who are interested, should communicate with Mr. J. Sullivan, "Finvarra," 77, Boundary Road, Chatham.

T. A. C.

Folkestone Centre.

On Friday evening, November 16th, Miss Ward kindly gave a public lecture at Folkestone, the subject being "Thoughts are Things." In spite of stormy weather there was not a seat vacant in the room at the Wampach Hotel, engaged for the occasion, and judging from the enthusiastic reception accorded to Miss Ward throughout the lecture we are justified in concluding that the audience was entirely appreciative. Thanks are especially due to Mrs. J. B. Scott and to Miss Maclure for well-directed efforts in advertising the lecture.

E. G.

Dublin Lodge Library.

Will any Irish members of the Theosophical Society settled out of Ireland help the Dublin Lodge to make its library a greater centre of usefulness than it can be at present, owing to the very limited number of books in its possession? The Lodge would thankfully receive donations of all classes of books dealing with Science of all kinds, Theosophy, Psychology, Mysticism and all kindred subjects; so that in time a small Lending Library could be got together, which would greatly help the work in Dublin. Valuable books are often bought by individual members, read, laid aside, and never looked at again. It is for books of this kind that the Lodge asks its friends, books which they have almost forgotten that they possess, and yet which would prove an invaluable addition to a small library. Parcels will be received and gratefully acknowledged if addressed to the Librarian, Theosophical Society, 34, Wicklow Street, and she would ask for even small and single volumes from those who possess duplicates, or who no longer require the copies they have.

MARY E. GREENE,
Vice-President.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *Some Clerical Objections to*

Gnosticism, J. R. Anderson; Dec. 10th, *On Facing the Situation*, Miss Codd; Dec. 17th, *Ghosts*, F. Bligh Bond. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, Boscombe, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gita*, at Penny Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Compton Hall, 17, Compton Avenue, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 105, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street: Dec. 9th, at 3 p.m., *The Gospel of the Gnosis*, G. R. S. Mead; Dec. 13th, at 8 p.m., *Alchemy and the Alchemists*, J. L. Thomson. Lodge meeting on Dec. 8th, at 8.30 p.m., *The Aeon*, G. R. S. Mead. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street: Dec. 4th and 25th, study

class; Dec. 11th, *Bhagavad Gītā*, W. M. Kilday; Dec. 18th, *Pythagoras and his School*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 2nd, *Theosophy and Art*, Mrs. Duncan; Dec. 9th, *Theosophy and the Drama*, Miss Hope Rea; Dec. 16th, *Theosophy and the Simple Life*, Mrs. Midgley; Dec. 23rd, *Theosophy and the Religion of the Day*, Hodgson Smith; Dec. 30th, *Theosophy and Socialism*, Mrs. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m. Short papers by members. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Dec. 2nd, *The Eternal and Eternity*, A. P. Cattanach; Dec. 9th, *The Message to Mankind of Certain Races*, Miss Foster; Dec. 16th, *Animal Instinct and Human Knowledge*, W. C. Worsdell; Dec. 23rd, *The Mystic Christ*, Mrs. Dunlop; Dec. 30th, *Education*, Miss Lilian Lloyd. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 6th, *Occult Faculty*, A. R. Orage; Dec. 13th, *Virgin of the World, III.*, G. R. S. Mead; Dec. 20th, *Pythagoras*, E. G. Kilroe. For informal meetings see special notice. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Dec. 2nd, *A Seventeenth Century Theosophist*, Miss Spurgeon; Dec. 9th, *Parables of the Fourth Gospel*, Miss C. E. Woods; Dec. 16th, *The Brāhma Samāj; a modern Religious Movement in India*, J. C. Chatterji.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon: Dec. 5th, *Imagination*, Mrs. Holmes; Dec. 12th, . . . L. Stanley Jast; Dec. 19th, *Unity*, F. Clayton; Dec. 26th, No meeting. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Dec. 3rd, *The Celestial Harp*, Alan Leo; Dec. 10th, . . . ; Dec. 17th, *Theosophy*, J. M. Watkins.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Sundays at 6.30 p.m.: Dec. 2nd, *Santa Teresa*, Miss E. M. Mallet; Dec. 9th, *The Evidence for Atlantis*, H. L. Shindler; Dec. 16th, "For Christ's Sake, Amen," Miss Margery Smith; Dec. 23rd, No meeting; Dec. 30th, *Evolution* (illustrated), Max Gysi. Class for study on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays at . . . p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Sundays, at 3.15 p.m., for children, and Saturdays, at 7 p.m., for young members and visitors; Dec. 1st and 15th, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*; Dec. 8th, No meeting.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at the Reading Room, Brotherhood Trust, 37, Newington Green Road, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Dec. 7th, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*; Dec. 14th, *The Brothers of the Rosy Cross*, Mrs. Betts. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester: Dec. 2nd, *Reincarnation and Religion*, E. Wood; Dec. 9th, *Reincarnation and our Purpose in Life*, E. Wood; Dec. 16th, *The Problem of Sorrow*, Mrs. Smith; Dec. 23rd, *The Three Paths to Union with God*, E. Wood. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4.30 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row. Fridays, at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 12, Green Street.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., Wednesdays, at 6.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. Hanover Chambers, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Dec. 4th, *What is the Christ?* S. H. Old; Dec. 11th, *Catharine of Siena*, Miss Severs; Dec. 18th, *An Avatar*, Miss E. M. Green. Study of *A Study in Consciousness*, on Sundays, at 3.15 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SURBITON CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton: Dec. 2nd and 16th, Study of *Man and his Bodies*; Dec. 9th, General questions.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Off Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at the Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street. Dec. 6th, *The Present and the Future Man*, W. H. Thomas; Dec. 13th, *Thought made Visible*, E. E. Marsden. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate: Dec. 7th, *Theosophy and Occultism*, E. J. Dunn; Dec. 14th, "*The Light of Asia*," W. H. Sanderson. Information from J. E. Reid, Hon. Sec., 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPHICAL LODGES.

There is but one sure way of making our Lodges centres of vital force, and that is through the inspiring example of individual members—whether in family, in business, or in social relations. If we lived even one-third of what we talk, we would become so irresistibly attractive to our fellow men out in the world, that the Lodges would soon be thronged with people eagerly desirous of finding what it could be that made the Theosophist so lovable, such a comfort to the sorrowing, so wise a counsellor. If we thought more of the duties of the Theosophic life, and less of frequenting meetings—accepted heavier responsibilities, and depended less upon the efforts of others—our Lodges would soon wake up, and our lecturers would soon be speaking to large audiences, audiences drawn together by the one thing that never fails to excite enthusiasm—namely, the *example* of members. When the sojourner in the Lodge tarries too long and feasts too richly, the good he might have gained is turned to mischief to himself, and, worse, to others. The spread of atrophy will continue, the Theosophical Society will fall into disrepute, the work of the movement will be given into abler hands, if those who profess to be Theosophists fail (through unlovableness, narrow-mindedness, or incapacity) to show forth that Divine Wisdom which,

when demonstrated to the world in the common-places of daily life, draws even the proudest to her fountains!

M.

Mr. Thomas's remarks in THE VĀHAN of October last are very much to the point. I don't know if the writer has ever had the opportunity, as I have, of attending Lodge meetings outside his own country. Everywhere I noticed the same thing—that the members have reached the saturation point; so I think this question is of international interest.

I don't know if this question was discussed at the last Theosophical Congress in Paris; if not, I hope that it will be treated at Munich.

The first remark I wish to make is this: How many people enter the Theosophical Society with the intention of becoming thoroughly versed in the Theosophical system? It seems to me that we have reached the point where everyone thinks himself obliged to know something about Theosophy and the borderland questions, just as one feels oneself bound to know something about N rays and wireless telegraphy, and members too often enter the Theosophical Society as children enter a preparatory school. Only at school the children are obliged to study, whereas in the Theosophical Society how many members really study! I think that what seems the saturation point is really a state of indigestion brought on because people do not masticate the Theosophical teachings. Is it then unnatural that the more complex teachings do not interest them? And how many of our members, even if they at last grasp the elementary notions of Theosophy by dint of repeating over and over again the same teachings, how many of them know more about the essence of Theosophy than children about geography after having left a preparatory school, or boys about liquefaction of air when they have heard it explained at a lecture?

If our Lodges are not flourishing because the members are wanting in enthusiasm and interest, I think that the leaders must also be at fault. How many schoolmasters with the best will in the world are unable to impart their knowledge because they miss the gift of teaching, and is it easier to teach Theosophy to a number of adults than mathematics to a number of boys? I have attended study classes for beginners and though I have studied fairly well myself, I understood very little of what the leader said. Therefore, I don't think it necessary to reform the study classes for members who really study at home and like an interchange of thought on Theosophy with their fellow members; but what seems to me of great utility is to make study classes for beginners interesting and comprehensible, so that if zeal be lacking on the part of the listeners the leader may still *interest* them in the more abstruse points of Theosophy, may impart to them something of his own love for the wisdom of the Gods. In this case only is there no need to fear a saturation point.

But I fear it will always be very difficult to teach things which most of us know in theory only, for to speak with authority asks first-hand knowledge.

J. D. R.

It seems to me that Mr. Thomas's letter to THE VĀHAN is most opportune, and I am sure that many members after having attended a Lodge meeting ask themselves the question: "Of what profit has the meeting been to others and to myself?" How seldom does one leave a meeting filled and satisfied!

How can this state of things be changed? Perhaps through the suggestions which will be sent to THE VĀHAN, and I would take this occasion to send some observations and suggestions bearing on this subject.

Would it be wiser to adopt the plan of limiting Lodge meetings to perhaps once a month, thus giving the President more time to arrange and collect matter which could be of more value and interest than when there is an interval only of a week between the meetings?

A great drawback to the variety and interest of Lodge meetings is the indolence of members, who come to be fed but refuse to make the effort necessary to give anything in return for what they have received; they attend regularly, do not criticise too freely, but unconsciously they act as a drag which keeps things always on the same level, and leaves all the work in the same hands. It seems to me that these meetings are considered more as a social feature than as a valuable occasion for the interchange of serious opinions, or as a meeting of students anxious to add to their store of knowledge. It is thus that these Lodge meetings can degenerate into a mutual admiration society or be considered as an occasion for meeting certain persons: surely this should not be the *raison d'être* of a Theosophical Lodge meeting!

It is all very well to listen to conferences on Theosophical subjects but it seems to me we need, as Mr. Thomas says, "to apply the principles we have accepted to the concerns of daily life"; thus everything which can elevate, help or better all those who surround us, should be of interest to a Theosophist, whether it comes from Theosophy proper or from outside.

We are told that ignorance and intolerance are the great barriers which hinder the upward trend of evolution; would it not be a good thing to study, when together, glean knowledge from the different members, the best methods for reaching those who need to be helped spiritually, intellectually and physically?

Are we not prone to forget that the windows of the mind must remain wide open to let all the outer air in? Are we not inclined to close the windows against the outer air and only let a certain kind of air penetrate, so that outsiders often accuse us of indifference to social problems, and ignorance of efforts for the elevating of the masses?

I would suggest that a Lodge meeting should be a gathering where all the members come with the ardent desire to learn how they can live broader, more useful lives, where they feel that between the members exists a real bond of brotherhood founded on the recognition of what they owe to the teachings of Theosophy, which has

helped them and makes them desire to spread abroad in actions these truths which have transformed their lives and brought joy and hope to them; would not such gatherings create centres full of forces for the upbuilding of character through the practical application of the great truths found in all Theosophical teachings?

M. A. T.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 315.

J. W.—I have just read Mr. Kingsland's Esoteric Basis of Christianity and should like answers to two questions.

1. Mr. K. says that Paul's Epistles have been unscrupulously tampered with. What proof has he?
2. He says that the Church selected the four canonical Gospels out of an enormous number. As these four had obtained their position at the close of the second century, when was this selection, and how does he know there was an enormous number of competing Gospels?

W. K.—In both these questions, J. W. is apparently asking for *authority*; but I am afraid that the question of authority is much too large a one to enter into in the pages of THE VĀHAN. Anyone at all familiar with the questions of origins, and with textual criticism in general, cannot but be aware that even for those who are specially equipped for this line of research, the difficulties in arriving at any absolute certainty are in some matters practically impossible. Where one authority differs from another—who shall decide? I am of opinion, however, with regard to question 1 that it is common knowledge that the Gospels and Epistles as we now have them have been edited and re-edited many times, so that—to quote from the Preface to our present Revised Edition: "Textual criticism, as applied to the Greek New Testament, forms a special study of much intricacy and difficulty, and even now leaves room for considerable variety of opinion among competent critics."

Putting aside, therefore, the question as to verbal authority, I would simply submit that of internal evidence; and I would say, that if my contention be valid, that Paul was an Initiate in the Ancient Wisdom Religion, then he could not have preached the doctrine of a carnal Christ or Saviour, which has been the orthodox doctrine of the Church, and which he is apparently made to support in some passages which are imputed to him—though it does not appear to be certain that he wrote all the Epistles with which he is credited.

With regard to the second question, I am under the impression that a general consensus of authorities would support the statement that our present canonical Gospels were selected out of a large number. But to enter into such a question of authority would be out of place here. One might query J. W.'s own assertion that the

four Gospels "had obtained their position at the close of the second century."

But what I do wish to point out very clearly here is this: that to one who has understood that the real basis of Christianity is *not historical at all*, but that it lies in that great Wisdom Religion which has been the inner esoteric spiritual teaching of the great Initiates of all ages: all these questions of *authority* are of little or no moment. Such an one has found a basis which lies altogether outside of the storms of controversy which rage in the minds of those to whom the letter is everything. Perhaps only those who have fought their way in the first instance through these controversies, and criticisms, and authorities, can really appreciate the enormous gain, the peace of mind which such a position bestows; for on the one hand the strife is seen to be non-essential, and on the other hand there is no fear lest the foundations of one's faith should be suddenly undermined by some new discovery in literature, history, or science.

The Esoteric Basis of Christianity is a very imperfect attempt to set before the reader this deeper knowledge which shall free him from all those controversial questions which rest upon *authority*,—from which may all good angels deliver us.

QUESTION 316.

E. M. W.—*What relation has the second Mosaic commandment to symbolism?*

J. I. W.—None whatever, I venture to suggest. What claim has the very highly coloured account of the moral and social development of the Jewish race, as embodied in the Old Testament, over the conscience of posterity? It seems difficult to believe that any impartial thinker can continue, in the face of history, to give adhesion to a musty belief in a divine revelation expressed through the Jewish race in any more special manner than through any other ancient civilisation. It is even a moot point with the orthodox Christian Churches as to how far the Mosaic decalogue can be regarded as binding on Christians. As a code of morals its authoritative and legislative character was obviously a matter of local and contemporaneous application: and the injunction relative to the observance of the seventh day as the sabbath is manifestly obsolete.

Of recent years, the particular commandment in question, the second, appears to have served more than anything else to demonstrate the singular lack of intelligence which seems to accompany the somewhat lucrative profession of Protestant agitator. The crucifix (whether portraying the suffering Christ or the far more pregnant emblem of the Christ reigning from the Tree of Glory), sacred statues and sacred pictures, have alike appeared abhorrent to the Protestant type of mind. They have contravened the sacred ordinance by reason of being "graven images," or the likeness of something "in heaven above or the

earth beneath," etc. It mattered not whether the qualifying or complementary clause "thou shalt not bow down to them or worship them" was involved or not: the commandment was violated when the first clause, which was regarded as self-contained, was broken. It seemed idle to point out that this first clause might literally be held to inhibit all forms of art, the graving of any image, or the painting of any picture. More futile was it to explain that reverence paid to an image was directed, not to the wood or stone, but to the Being typified—that the worship offered to the Sacred Host was offered to Him Whose Presence the Sacramental Elements were held to veil. The second commandment, in short, has proved a splendid bogey-man with which to obstruct the progress of ecclesiastical art. Yet it is instructive to notice the curious inconsistency of the Protestant mind. Before the existing mania for destroying the interior arrangements of most old-fashioned Anglican churches arose, the Ten Commandments above the Holy Table were almost invariably flanked either by paintings or graven images of Moses and Aaron, the very persons who, it might be supposed, would object most strongly to such representation.

If, however, the question be phrased "what relation *had* the second Mosaic commandment to symbolism?" then the point raised becomes invested with genuine historical interest. Present-day religion can never hope to wield the power it should until a frank recognition of the bearing of occult science enables it to cast off the twin shackles of superstition and ignorance, and to emerge from its routine conventionality. It is not possible to estimate the significance of the second commandment without some knowledge of the *causal nexus* with the past, of the events which led up to it, and which rendered such an injunction necessary. And here occult research takes us back to the days of Atlantis, to the conditions prevailing at the time of the decadence of that vast civilisation, and described in Mr. Scott-Elliott's *Story of Atlantis*. We are told that the Atlantean religion had gradually degenerated into a variety of Ancestor-worship, and finally into a truly appalling state of affairs, in which, surrounded on every hand with licentiousness, the inhabitants caused costly images of themselves to be made, and setting these up as gods, actually worshipped them. Present-day developments in modern America tend to show that the type of thought is not entirely extinct.

As a protest against the idolatry and luxury of Atlantis, the priest-led emigrations, destined to lay the foundations of the Fifth Race, were encouraged to mould their religion according to a severe type, as exemplified in such temples as Stonehenge, whose ineffable grandeur was procured by natural means rather than by resort to the fine arts. Mr. Sinnett, in his admirable London Lodge Transaction on the *Beginnings of the Fifth Race*, points out the resemblance between Jewish traditions and the decrees of the Manu of the Fifth Race—furnishing some highly important and interesting information concerning the early history of the Semitic people

and their legislature, as well as some illuminating hypotheses concerning the influence of the Manu reflected in traditions relating to the personage known as Moses. He points out, also, that the Jewish national consciousness of being a "peculiar people" originated with the segregation of certain of the Semitic fifth sub-race of the Atlanteans in Syria, in order that the germs of peculiar characteristics which the new race was destined to develop, might be infused into it. They *were*, in truth, a "chosen people," though they soon suffered degradation by reason of their intermarriage with Third Race tribes, and the Manu had to select from among them certain whose physical stock was yet unimpaired, and make a fresh beginning. All of which is instructive as showing how gigantic a superstructure may spring from slender beginnings.

A symbol may be regarded as an attempt to portray in terms of the physical plane the great verities of higher planes.

A dogma is a thought-symbol, an attempt to express in physical terms certain interior processes of the soul, or certain cosmogonical facts, for the benefit and guidance of the neophyte. A symbol, in short, is a special attempt to materialise the spiritual: and is, consequently, a peculiarly living thing. The process may be very helpful, so long as it is borne in mind that it is pre-eminently a crude and imperfect process; the danger steps in when, in the course of time, the symbol becomes interpreted too literally. The whole experience of mankind shows, most conclusively, that symbols are perfectly indispensable. Anyhow, the whole history of the Old Testament and of the early centuries of Christianity reveals one continuous attempt to shelve this awkward second commandment, and to bring the conception of Deity and of the Hierarchies more within the grasp of the average worshipper. In the early Christian Church these artistic impulses were further accentuated by the anti-Judaic feeling; and there are, also, records of the fine arts being employed as handmaids to worship by some of the Gnostic communities. The use of graven images, or statues, does not appear to have become frankly recognised until a comparatively late period. The Eastern Church evolved a curious form of compromise in the shape of pictures in relief, or "ikons." These ikons are

not, to the present day, permitted to exceed half-length portrayals, and no representation of the Godhead or Trinity is sanctioned. Similarly, in early Christian art there seems to have existed a distinct unwillingness to portray the First Person of the Trinity, such representations being conspicuous by their absence from early stained glass. This may possibly be entangled with some conception of the Unmanifested Deity. Scientific Christian theology always distinguishes between *latria*, or the worship due to Deity alone, and *dulia*, or the lesser reverence fittingly paid to the Saints and the Hierarchies, whose prayers on human behalf may lawfully be invoked.

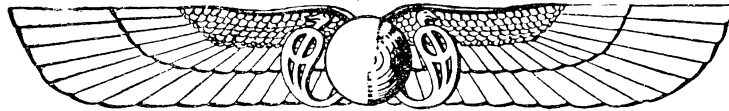
The aim of ceremonial worship is undoubtedly to lead the aspirant upwards through the emotions to the intuitions and the spiritual powers of the Unseen World. So long as grossly anthropomorphic conceptions are avoided, symbolic representation surely serves an important function.

But, behind all this, there is the deeper question of magic. The practice of Image worship is inextricably bound up with tapping the vast reservoirs of magnetism, of which the image is the immediate channel. And the constant prohibitions in the Old Testament of such practices may, conceivably, be due to the dangers of fetish worship, and of contacting the loathsome artificial elementals, which are said even now to survive from the days of Atlantean sorcery, or may even be due to the jealous intervention of the tribal deity of the earlier books.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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NO. 6.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

ILLNESS OF COLONEL OLCOTT.

I have to announce with great regret that the President-Founder had a serious attack of heart failure soon after his arrival at Colombo and for some time his recovery was doubtful. The latest news available at the moment of writing, states that he was making good progress, but required absolute rest, and it was feared he could not go to the anniversary meeting of the Society in Benares. He has, however, been able to proceed to Adyar. As no cabled news has been received it may be presumed that there have been no further adverse changes, and it is earnestly hoped that complete recovery will soon follow. The Colonel, in spite of his alarming accident before reaching Genoa, as announced in the November VĀHAN, was doing well on the Indian voyage, and it was not until after his reception in Colombo that he collapsed.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

RULES AND INFORMATION.

The Rules of the Theosophical Society and of the British Section as revised to date have been reprinted and can be obtained by any members. The general Rules of the Society are materially altered owing to the Registration of the Society in India, and the new Rules are those which have been embodied in the Memorandum of Association.

A new pamphlet of information on the British Section, corrected to date, is also ready and Branches and members can on application obtain a supply of these for the use of enquirers. Branches having some remaining copies of the last *Information for Enquirers* are desired kindly to

return these to me, as more copies are required for the records. The information in the new issue is more extensive but the list of books is omitted. A short list, suitable for loose insertion in the pamphlet, can be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE PRETORIA LODGE.

The Pretoria Lodge of the Society is making efforts to acquire a Lodge room, for the purposes of study, lecturing, reading, and library accommodation. An appeal has been issued, asking, amongst other things, for donations of books to the Library, to comprise works on religious, philosophical, scientific, Theosophical, and other subjects. Members who may feel inclined to assist the Lodge in this manner, should communicate with Prof. B. Parmanand, "India House," 65, Cromwell Street, Highgate, London, N. The conditions of work in South Africa are somewhat difficult as yet, and any assistance would be most welcome.

K. S.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to December 20th: A. C. P., £12; E. G., £1; A. J. R., £3 3s.; A. H., £5; M. M., 10s.; M. A. N., 10s.; E. W., £2 2s.; F. G., £20; J. T. P., 10s.; H. B., £1; F. Z., £2; J. Q., £1; A. T., £2 2s.; M. E. T., £2 2s.; F. T., 5s.; E. de M. M., £1 1s.; E. J. G., £1 1s.; J. G., 5s.; E. A. B., £8; Anon., £1 5s.; A. McD., £5; K. K., £2 2s.; R. T. P., 5s.; E. P. D., £1; J. E. H., £3; F. C., £1. Total, £77 3s.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Vistas*, William Sharpe; *Commentary of Hierocles on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras*, edited by F. M. F.; *A Buddhist Catechism*, H. S. Olcott; *Man's Place in the Universe*, W. Scott-Elliot; *The Marriage of the Soul and Other Poems*, W. Scott-Elliot; *Man and His Bodies*, A. Besant; *Illusions*, M. Collins; *Love's Chaplet*, M. Collins; *The Christian Creed*, C. W. Leadbeater; *Clairvoyance*, C. W. Leadbeater; *Reincarnation*, A. Besant; *Karma*, A. Besant; *The Scroll of the Disembodied Man*, M. Collins and H. Bouchier.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *A Few Helpful Thoughts from the Writings of Annie Besant*; *The Path to the Masters of Wisdom*; *The Gnosis of the Mind*, G. R. S. Mead; *The Mountain Lovers*, Fiona Macleod; *Where the Forest Murmurs*, Fiona Macleod; *Ecce Puella*, William Sharpe; *Reflections from the Mirror of a Mystic*, translated from the works of John R usbr ok, by E. Baillie; *The Secret Rose*, W. B. Yeats; *Christian Mysticism*, W. R. Inge; *The Writings of S. Francis of Assisi*, translated into English by Father Paschal Robinson; *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, Parts I., II., translated by Rev. John Parker; *The Shanachie*, An Irish Miscellany, Illustrated; *Friedrich Nietzsche the Dionysian Spirit of the Age*, A. R. Orage; *Science and a Future Life*, J. H. Hyslop; *Enigmas of Psychological Research*, J. H. Hyslop; *A Catalogue of Rosicrucian Books*, F. L. Gardner; *L'Astrologie Grecque*, A. Bouch -Leclercq; *The Earth Breath, and Other Poems*, A. E.; *The Mask of Apollo*, A. E.; *Epitome of Theosophical Teachings and Esoteric Theosophy*; *Agrapha*, Alfred Resch; *Die Briefe des Libanius*, Otto Leeck (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur); *The Life of the Bee*, M. Maeterlinck.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

These meetings will be resumed at 28, Albemarle Street, on Monday, 28th inst, at 3.30 p.m., when Mr. Mead will speak on "The Upanishad of the Sacred Word." A syllabus of the lectures may be obtained at Headquarters. Members and their friends are invited to attend.

E. M. M.

Miss Woods' Study Group.

Miss Woods has decided to start her proposed group for the study of the more abstract tenets of Theosophy on January 10th. The group will meet on alternate Thursdays, from 6 to 7 p.m.

The following Syllabus is a tentative outline (subject to such alterations as may afterwards be found necessary) of the work to be taken up. Miss Woods thinks it may be found helpful to issue questions at the close of each meeting, as a guide for the next fortnight's work.

For the first meeting she ventures to suggest the following:

Can we arrive at any conception of the Monad (a) in his relation to the Logos, (b) in his essential nature? Is he a soleity or a unity, an entity or a cosmos of entities? In what sense is he the *Eikon* or "Image of the Father"? Is he the fruit of a past Universe or a "New Creation" of this Cosmic Period? How are we to employ the time-conception with regard to him? What is his need for, and purpose in, manifestation? What do we understand by manifestation, and does the Monad gain by it? How do we interpret the "coming forth" of the Fourth Creative Hierarchy in the *Pedigree of Man*?

It is strongly recommended that students should not necessarily confine themselves to Theosophical works, though all the important Theosophical text-books may be brought into requisition.

Jan. 10th: The Monad: his source: his nature: an entity or a unity? his "coming forth." Manifestation: its purpose: is there growth or gain for the Monad?

Jan. 24th: "Descent" of the Monad; his association with various planes of matter. What is a "plane"? What is meant by the seven Primordial Rays?

Feb. 7th: Evolution of the Monad in manifestation, i.e., Ego, or Monad manifesting in Permanent Atoms.

Feb. 21st: What is a "Body"? The Chh y s and the Progenitors: how are we to understand them?

Mar. 7th: Relation of the Monad to pre-human kingdoms.

Mar. 21st: What is a "Planetary Chain"?

C. E. W.

Mrs. Betts' Study Group.

The group for more advanced study, under the charge of Mrs. Betts, will meet on Tuesday afternoons, at 3.30, in the Lecture Room at 28, Albemarle Street, the first meeting being on January 29th. The group will devote its attention to the study of *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*.

K. B.

Elementary Study Group.

Members wishing to form part of an elementary study group are requested to send in their names to me before January 14th, so that a new one may be formed if need be. Those already existing have their full number of members.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge Informal Meetings.

Informal meetings will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on the first two Thursdays in January, at 8 p.m.

On Jan. 3rd, Professor Parmanand will speak on "The Theory of Yoga"; and on Jan. 10th, Mr. N. W. Pradhān will speak on "Indian Life."

All members of the Society are cordially invited to these meetings, and it is particularly hoped that these two Indian gentlemen, who have not before lectured to London members, may have a good audience.

E. M. M.

Meetings in Halifax.

In connection with the Northern Federation Propaganda Committee a series of public lectures on Theosophy has been arranged for in Halifax during part of January and February. The meetings will be held on Thursday evenings, at 8 o'clock, in the Mechanics' Institute, Crossley Street, and will be prefaced each week, after the first lecture, with a class to be conducted by the chairman, Mr. Hodgson Smith.

A small travelling library will be taken over for loan to those attending the meetings.

The list of lectures is as follows:

Jan. 17th, "Have we ever Lived Before?" Mr. Hodgson Smith; Jan. 24th, "Karma; how we Reap as we Sow," Mr. E. Wood; Jan. 31st, "Man and his Bodies," Mrs. Bell; Feb. 7th, "Life after Death," Mr. Wedgwood; Feb. 14th, "The Power of Thought," Miss Hilda Smith; Feb. 21st, "Practical Theosophy," Miss Burt Woodhead; Feb. 28th, "Theosophy and the Religions of the World," Mr. E. E. Marsden.

Admission Free. Discussion invited. Collection to defray expenses.

M. B. H.

Lotus Circle.

By kind permission of the General Secretary a Lotus Party will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Saturday, January 19th, 3.30-6 p.m. All Lotus Circle and Golden Chain children who may be in London are cordially invited to attend. Members who would like their children to come should write for an invitation, which will be most gladly sent, to the Lotus Circle, 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W.

H. W.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Jan. 14th, *What is the Christ?* S. Old; Jan. 21st, *The Theosophical Society*, Mrs. Hooper; Jan. 28th, *Mohammed*, E. R. Blackett. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gītā*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. Compton Hall, 17, Compton Avenue, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street: Jan. 10th, at 8 p.m., Conversational Meeting; Jan. 18th, at the Edinburgh Café, *Thought Forms*, Miss Ward. Lodge meetings: Jan. 14th, *The Fourth Dimension*, J. L. Thomson; Jan. 31st, *Philosophy of the Bhagavad Gītā*, G. L. Simpson. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 28, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., study class for members at 98, Bouverie Road West. Fortnightly meetings at 10, Clifton Crescent, The Leas. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street: Jan. 8th and 22nd, study class; Jan. 17th, *Thoughts are Things*, Miss Ward;

Jan. 29th, Lodge meeting. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 6th, *The World Invisible*, Miss H. Hodgson-Smith; Jan. 13th, *What Theosophy stands for*, Miss Ward; Jan. 20th, *Apollo or Dionysos*, Oliver Firth; Jan. 27th, *Theosophy an Inspiration to Life*, Miss L. Hodgson Smith. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m. Short papers by members. Enquiries to the Secretary, 37, Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquit Street, at 7.45 p.m. Reading circle on Wednesdays, at 3 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquit Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W.: Jan. 6th, *Some Signs of the Times*, Sydney Ransom; Jan. 13th, *Bahaism and its Leader, Abbas Effendi*, Sydney Sprague; Jan. 20th, *Astrology and Reincarnation*, Alan Leo; Jan. 27th, *Karma*, P. Tovey. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanaach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Jan. 3rd and 10th, Informal meetings; Jan. 17th, *The Voice of the Silence*, G. R. S. Mead; Jan. 24th, *Babism and Bahaism*, Sydney Sprague; Jan. 31st, *The Higher Self*, A. R. Orage. For informal meetings see special notice. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Jan. 13th, *The New Romanticism*, A. R. Orage; Jan. 20th, *Religious Life and Thought in India in the Nineteenth Century*, J. C. Chatterji; Jan. 27th, *"The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than that of the former"* (addressed especially to non-Theosophists), Rev. G. Currie.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 20th and 27th. Class for study on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m., resumed Jan. 23rd.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8

p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Sundays, at 3.15 p.m., for children, and Saturdays, at 7 p.m., for young people. Meetings resumed Jan. 26th and 27th.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at the Reading Room, Brotherhood Trust, 37, Newington Green Road, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Jan. 11th, *Conversazione*; Jan. 18th, *The New Thought Movement and Theosophy*, J. I. Wedgwood; Jan. 25th, . . . Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4.30 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *A Study in Consciousness*; at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 12, Green Street.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Jan. 13th, *The Problem of the Self*, W. H. Thomas; Jan. 20th, *The Evidence for Theosophy*, E. Wood; Jan. 27th, *The Poems and Plays of William Yeats*, Mrs. Duncan. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Jan. 15th, *Some Aspects of Karma*, Miss E. M. Green; Jan. 22nd, *Tidal Evolution*, Manuel Terrero; Jan. 29th, Questions and Discussion. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in

the month, at 7.30 p.m., study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street: Jan. 15th, *A Problem of Destiny*, Miss Ward. Study of *Man and his Bodies*, at 8.15 p.m. Elementary Class on Tuesdays, at 7.15 p.m. Study of psychology on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate: Jan. 4th, *Have we lived on Earth before?* W. H. Sanderson; Jan. 11th, *Light in Dark Places*, Mrs. Bell; Jan. 18th, *Karma*, Miss Hilda Hodgson-Smith; Jan. 25th, *The Myths of Plato*, Rev. A. H. Lee. Information from J. E. Reid, *Hon. Sec.*, 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHURCH HISTORY.

(See *Question 315*.)

I am greatly disappointed with the very unsatisfactory reply to my queries. Mr. Kingsland made definite statements on historical questions, and, as I am a student of history, I asked if anyone could give me any proof of his statements.

Most of W. K.'s reply is irrelevant to the question of fact, and I infer that he has not studied the history of the second century very closely. He queries my statement that the canonical gospels had obtained their position of pre-eminence in the Church at the close of the second century. Surely he has not read Irenæus' celebrated argument why there could only be *four* gospels? That could not have been written unless the four had been believed to be far above the others. I hope some historical student, like Mr. Mead, will throw light on this matter.

J. W.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPHICAL LODGES.

The problem of conducting our Lodge meetings in such a manner as to make of them living organisms with a distinct character and individuality of their own is no light task. The matter is a very complex one.

I would suggest that a Theosophical Lodge has three separate functions to perform: the first concerning its relation to the Society; the second, its relation to its members; and the third its relation to the outside world.

With regard to the first aspect it seems as though usually a Branch was only a receiver, instead of, as well, a contributor to the life and ideas and activities of the parent Society.

Our Lodges eagerly await the pouring forth of

fresh literature and the visits of members from Headquarters in order to imbibe as much wisdom as possible. But surely it is only Knowledge and not Wisdom we acquire in this way. We ourselves must receive, examine and think on the teachings given us, if we would transmute the knowledge into wisdom, which can then be turned to account for the good of the Society.

Surely each Lodge has really a definite part to play in the whole Society's life; each is a limb or an organ in the body, and each has its own contribution to make, its special work to do. We need to learn to give, to create, to contribute to the growing body of knowledge of which the Theosophical Society has, for the time being, been made the custodian.

We should first, then, seek to render active service for our Society—be contributive and not merely maintainers of Lodges but enrichers of the common life. Mr. Thomas stated in his letter that we had reached saturation point with regard to Theosophical teachings and could take in no more.

But surely, though we may have taken in a great deal we have not assimilated it; we have not meditated on it—extracted its inner principles; and by the law of correspondences, applied those principles to our own lives. Had we done so, then that glowing fire of zeal, of which Mr. Dunlop speaks, that great enthusiasm for the work, would have manifested itself through our Lodge life.

Turning to the second division—the relation of the Lodge to its individual members—we are here confronted with a difficult problem, because the needs of one are so different from those of another. But what all can equally appreciate and participate in is the Life, and I believe, with Miss Severs, that it is far more as vehicles for a life behind than as intellectual or social organisations that our significance as Lodges depends.

How are we to make our Lodges centres of high thought and aspiration, full of creative life and energy?

One element necessary seems to be good-fellowship: the recognition that in a Lodge a number of differing personalities have come together for a common work, and that the first step towards the accomplishment of that work is to try to understand one another. I believe the friendships that are formed in this way between members are one of the most precious things we should cherish.

Thus the spirit in which we carry on our meeting is the all-important factor in this second aspect, as the character of our work, intellectual or practical, was in the first division of Lodge life.

With regard to the last section—the relation of our Society to the outer world—I feel strongly that we are not doing all we could. A useful department of work might be organised by forming a group in each Lodge to keep the members in touch with the highest current thought. Some regular report of the problems and ideas agitating the highest minds of our day might be introduced with profit into the Lodge meeting.

We must also remember that a Lodge repre-

sents Theosophy in its own neighbourhood ; that Theosophy will be judged by the lives of its members and by the character of its meetings. Therefore we should aim for the very best work in our public meetings and propaganda schemes.

In conclusion I would suggest, that did we keep this three-fold function of our Lodges before us in our own arrangements for meetings, we might sometimes avoid the extremes of the too exclusively studious group, and the conversational meeting which is apt to degenerate into a mere narration of personal experiences and even gossip. Real study must always be done in small groups, but surely all members could come together at a Lodge meeting on some ground of common interest.

I believe that subjects rather than books are what we need to examine in our Lodge meetings, and we should bring to their consideration the light not only of our own literature, but of any other which will help us to understand the subject before us.

HILDA HODGSON SMITH.

STRAY NOTES.

Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.

Rapidly changing science :—It is but a short time since the most astonishing of all scientific theories of matter was placed before the world, and now the man perhaps most concerned in its birth appears to be planning its destruction. In a remarkable paper in *The Philosophical Magazine* of a few months back Prof. J. J. Thomson puts forward three distinct lines of evidence which point entirely away from the electrical scheme of the atom he did so much to develop, and he shows such slight paternal interest in this theory that he does not even discuss it in his new paper, although the later theory is in important features directly contradictory. The earlier electrical hypothesis is that the mass of an atom is practically the total mass of numerous rotating negative corpuscles or electrons within a relatively large sphere of positive electricity, the mass of the large sphere being almost negligible. On the view that mass is entirely an electro-magnetic phenomenon, any given electrical charge condensed within a small space would produce mass increasing as the space decreased, and thus the diffused positive charge would give an effect of mass extremely minute as compared with the electrons. Of the latter it was found, on the basis of this theory, that a hydrogen atom contained about a thousand and the heavier elements more in proportion, up to about two hundred thousand for the weightiest atoms.

Prof. Thomson now brings forward three kinds of evidence which appear to show that the mass of an atom is largely that of the positive sphere, and that hydrogen contains only one electron and other elements numbers equal to their atomic weights with hydrogen as unity. Of course the

latter statement can be only approximate, as the atomic weights are not usually nearly whole numbers. The evidence is of a highly technical character and depends a great deal upon hypothesis, but what is of great importance is that it appears to render the earlier theory very difficult of acceptance unless with some fundamental modification. The new lines of evidence are based on the dispersion of light by gases, the scattering of X-rays and the absorption of the β -rays (electrons or corpuscles) of radium and other radioactive materials. The first line of evidence may perhaps be explained in a simple manner. A ray of light is regarded as a rapidly alternating electric field varying many billions of times in a second. Such a field would move the positive and negative charges in opposite directions and polarise the atom. Suppose the mass of either positive or negative charges were negligible; then the atom would instantly adapt itself to the varying field, no matter how rapidly it altered. But if both charges were associated with appreciable mass this would take time, and the more rapid the vibrations the less complete the change, so that the effect on the light would vary and cause dispersion of the colours. A formula deduced from this theory is compared with some observations, and the result for hydrogen shows that the mass of the positive sphere must be a considerable part of the total mass of the atom, and that the number of electrons cannot differ greatly from unity. The other methods applied to different materials give numbers of electrons of the same order as the atomic weights, so that now we have to divide our abundance of electrons by about a thousand, and reduce their importance as regards material mass to at least as great an extent. A sad come-down in the world, indeed!

G.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 314.

(Continued from p. 32.)

M. R. P.—*I should like to know if Theosophy offers any explanation regarding children who are born hopeless idiots. We meet with some who appear to have no glimmer of mind, no reason, and are below the animal. What object can their earth-life serve, so far as they themselves are concerned, and what is their condition after death? Is it likely that in their past lives they have completely broken away from the Higher Manas, and that the end of this life means the end of all? This view sounds pessimistic, but I cannot see how otherwise the condition could be at all, and being so, how the soul can make any further progress. I shall be most thankful for light on the subject.*

W. C. W.—This question was answered by Mrs. Besant some years ago in THE VĀHAN to the effect that the being born into earth-life as an "idiot" is the karma consequent upon having, in a previous earth-life, thwarted in some very serious way the evolution of some fellow human being. Supposing you in any given earth-life deliberately,

and being to a large extent conscious of the nature of your action, hinder and impede completely as regards that one life the development (mentally and spiritually) of a fellow-being; would not the natural reaction upon you yourself of such a deed be that *your own* evolution and development as regards one earth-life should be completely frustrated and rendered void? We do not know the exact nature of the impediment which you have placed in the path of your fellow-man's soul-development, which results for you in the next life in being born with an idiot's brain. But the idiot's body and the surroundings inevitably resulting therefrom seem to be the natural environment into which the Ego, guilty of such infringement of the great law of being, is precipitated, as a natural result of his mode of energising in the past life. The idiot's brain is one which remains throughout life in a permanently rudimentary and infantile condition as regards much of its internal conformation; it thus acts as a prison house for the mind, whose cells will not respond to the promptings and impulses from within. Nor can the external world send anything from without to relieve this dreadful isolation.

The state of idiocy would appear to be, therefore, merely a diseased condition of the physical brain affecting a single incarnation, and is to be regarded as a purely temporary kârmic impediment to the soul's development; and, as being thus purely external, temporary, and therefore illusory, a comparatively unimportant misfortune in the long life-pilgrimage of the soul. The mistake we are all so apt to fall into is that of attaching such exaggerated importance to these external, superficial phenomena, forgetting the calm, deep, undercurrent of the Life behind all appearances.

As regards the after-death state of the soul who has passed a life within an idiot's body, I should say that, owing to the rudimentary state of his mind, which would prevent the refined and lively development of worldly desires and passions (this resulting also from his restricted and confined environment), the astral life of such a soul would be comparatively quiescent and uneventful; and as the soul imprisoned in the idiot's body could have had little chance of garnering any experience such as brings the harvest of fruition which we commonly speak of as the heaven-life, this latter for such a soul would be either extremely brief or non-existent. Under these poverty-stricken conditions of the after-death states, it would seem that reincarnation would be an early occurrence.

P. H.—If M. R. P. will study *Extracts from the Vahan*, pp. 405-10, he will be in possession of all the light that, so far as I am aware, has been thrown on this difficult subject.

E. M. M.—It has been said that being born an idiot is the terrible penalty of some great evil wrought in a past life. The state of idiocy is one in which the Ego, the Thinker, is chained to a physical body which completely fails to express him. He is encased in a prison and cannot find one single outlet through which he may hold com-

munion with his fellow men, or through which a ray of light from without may reach him. It is a living death. But strike away the prison walls, and the Man is free—uninjured (for here the simile breaks down)—and surely the awful agony that he has endured, the cramping, helpless loneliness, the baffling inability to make any effect at all upon the surroundings in which his waking hours were spent, surely the torture of such an existence cannot have failed of its effect, but must have brought home to the Thinker the lesson he needed to learn.

Looked at from below, his human existence seems nothing but a terrible waste, a stain upon the Creator, but looked at in a wider light, and regarded as an opportunity rather than as a calamity, such an example loses its horror and is seen as yet another example of the tenderness of the great Teacher, Who guides His children even by sharp lessons into the Way of Life.

M. B. T.—It has always appeared to me that idiots and all cases of lunacy, if studied from a Theosophical point of view, might lead to a far wider, and therefore probably a far truer, conception of man and his capacities than is normally held even among Theosophists.

Are we certain that it is such a "terrible way" for Karma to work out? Because the "nut" has no "kernel" is it certain it has no soul? Possibly not a soul but certainly *soul*. Though I demur at saying even that. We are so fond of talking as if Manas were, if not everything, at least essential to man's happiness and capacity for experience and growth. People say what a terrible blank the world must be to idiots, little realising what a terrible blank the world really is to us, who have only mental sight, compared with what it would be if we had attained to our full capacities. Perhaps they are no more blind than we, only blind to that small fraction of the world which *we* see.

Some years ago I was shown in dream various actions and motions which I understood were masonic signs or language, and I was told to learn them.

Whether they are masonic signs or not I am not yet mason enough to know, but great was my astonishment when, years afterwards, lying on the cliffs at the seaside, I happened to watch an idiot child at play beside me, and to see him gravely and deliberately acting out, evidently to his own complete satisfaction, these very signs and symbols. I have since watched closely several half-witted people, and have been greatly struck by their attitudes and actions. These appear to me such perfect signs and signals that it makes *me* feel the idiot not to be able to understand them!

I would recommend those who have the care of idiots to take courage. Give up thinking that the world begins or ends with higher or lower Manas and help us all to come to a fuller realisation that Âtmâ or spirit is wholly independent of mind for its operations, and in trying further to understand those souls who are not using any mânasic vehicle during this incarnation, to study the language of action.

The following belief, which I believe was fairly prevalent among the ancients, is still a superstition among many country folk—that in the presence of idiots we are in the presence of the Gods—some say the devil, but I suppose on the plane of Atman these two would be identical. Is there not truth behind this ancient superstition?

I have on more than one occasion caught well-known and highly honoured members of our Theosophical Society, when in deep reverie and visibly out of their bodies, unconsciously acting some of these same signals, giving these signs, which to me appear as language. I cannot help thinking that when we are a little less fearful of losing hold of our personalities, or individualities, or *limits*, and a little more practised in getting in and out of our minds as well as our bodies, that idiots may play a very important part in the language of the world which then surrounds us. I am told that H. P. B. recommended the study of idiots as a fruitful path along which to tread for the further understanding of the varieties of consciousness which lie latent in man.

I can see no grounds for believing with E. A. B. that the Ego finds himself bound to a body which he cannot use as an instrument of expression, one through which he can gain no fresh experience.

Because any being is incapable of benefiting by our learning, and offends our vanity by preferring to talk to himself rather than listen to us, is no reason for assuming that his existence is useless to him. Are not many idiots cultivating that invaluable faculty of mind—imagination?

Let us love and guard our imbecile children, recognising them all as manifestations of the divine though the consciousness in them does not function along the lines of normal humanity. And while we feed and protect these forms and guard them from harm, the over-soul who is responsible for them may on some inner plane be far more fully conscious than our souls, and be protecting and feeding us in lands where we are as yet mere babes.

While there is activity there is experience. Even the activity of digesting our daily dinner I believe to be an act of great importance. How little we know about the fire of digestion and its effects upon our whole fiery nature. About the mystery of the transmigration of life, the mystery of the many lives becoming the one being, which we *talk* so much about, while passing by almost unnoticed the fact that we *act* the same mystery every day. While any form is capable of acting this mystery, I believe it, as a separated form, is gaining experience, preparing itself for a fuller understanding of the Great Mystery. Let us widen our outlook on life and learn to learn through every act, for it is not through reason alone that we progress.

I expect, if we did but realise the "sad fact," we are all of us congenital idiots on the Buddhic Plane! capable of only the simplest and most elementary activities and quite irresponsible. Still we believe we progress even in this "crippled condition"!

QUESTION 317.

A. S. B.—In a work called *Della Religione Cristiana*, by Marsilio Ficino, published about 1476, this passage occurs: "Plato, on being asked how long the precepts of his philosophy would endure, replied: 'Until the coming of him by whom the source of all truth will be unsealed.'"

Ficino took this as referring to the coming of Jesus. Is it known on what authority this "saying" was quoted by Ficino, and is it correctly given? If so, it would appear important as pointing to a tradition or knowledge possessed by Plato, of one expected to come with authority to break down barriers and reveal some of the Mystery teaching publicly.

G. R. S. M.—It would be exceedingly interesting to discover the authority for Ficino's statement. I have never myself come across it, and I should say that had it been a saying for which there was any good authority it could not fail to have been quoted and requested many times. The term "unsealed," in my opinion, throws very grave doubt on the possibility of its being a genuine saying of Plato's. It is not a Platonic term, but belongs to the terminology of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic writers.

QUESTION 318.

F. L.—Is there any Gnostic explanation of the Saying: "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt., v. 5)?

G. R. S. M.—This saying is a verbal quotation from *Psalms*, xxxviii. 11: "But the meek shall inherit the earth." It is entirely Jewish in its conception, the expectation of "inheriting the earth" being the fulfilment of the covenant. The "earth" meant the earth pure and simple; the "Righteous" of the old school believed in what Harnack calls a "sensuous endæmonistic eschatology" of which the "inheriting of the earth" was the main ingredient. There is no Gnostic exegesis of this saying known to me; but it would be very easy to find one.

The "Promised Land," the "Land flowing with milk and honey," the "Good Earth," "Paradise," was the "Jerusalem Above," the "Ogdoad," the "Heavenly Mother," "The Sophia," "Wisdom." The "inheritance of the Kingdom" is inheritance in this "Earth," the Spiritual Earth. In our modern Theosophical terms, it is, I believe, to be equated with Buddhi.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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NO. 7.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

the Theosophical Society at Surbiton, to be known as the Surbiton Branch.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE CONGRESS AT MUNICH.

The date of the Fourth International Congress of the Federation of European Sections of the Theosophical Society has been fixed for Whitsuntide. The Congress will be held in the Tonhalle, Munich, and opens on Saturday, May 18th, closing Tuesday, May 21st. Mrs. Besant will preside.

It is earnestly hoped that there will be a fair attendance of members of the British Section, and that the Section will be well represented in the papers contributed. Papers should be sent to the undersigned at the Headquarters, 28, Albemarle Street, W., and must reach him by April 12th, at the latest.

At the invitation of the Executive Committee of the British Section, the following members have consented to serve on the British Congress Committee: The General Secretary, Miss Esther Bright, Mr. Gysi, Mr. Mead, Mr. Bertram G. Theobald, Mr. Thomas, and the undersigned as Secretary.

A Secretary who will supply particulars of travelling facilities will be elected later, and due notice of such election will appear in THE VĀHAN.

JAMES I. WEDGWOOD,
Hon. Secretary British Congress Committee.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to January 20th: F. C., £1; Anon., £4 4s.; H. E. C., 10s.; P. W. G. N., £2 2s.; M. C., £1 1s.; F. F. L., £3 3s.; E. T., £1 1s.; E. S., £1 1s.; T. R. F., 10s.; M. S., £1. Total, £15 12s.

Section Reference Library.

Members are reminded that books may not be borrowed from the Reference Library without the knowledge of the Librarians.

A Form is provided for every borrower to fill in before removing the book from the Library.

The books at present missing from the shelves are: *Contes Fantastiques*, E. T. W. Hoffmann; *La Clef des Grands Mystères*, E. Lévi; *Morning Thoughts for the Year*, adapted by a student from the Writings of Mrs. Besant; *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, M. Collins; *Love's Chaplet*, M. Collins; *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. III.; *The Magnetic and Botanic Family Physician*, Younger.

The Librarians will be glad to have these books returned.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

ACTIVITIES.

New Branch.

December 24th, 1906. Charter issued this day to Bessie Leo, Alan Leo, Terese Dexter, A. B. Dexter, Maude Hooper, M. W. Ingall, F. S. Bennett and their associates to form a Branch of

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

The speakers during February will be as follows: Feb. 4th, Mrs. Hooper; Feb. 11th, Professor Parmanand; Feb. 18th, Mrs. Betts; Feb. 25th, Mr. Mead.

The meetings are held at Headquarters, on Mondays, from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m. Members and visitors are invited to attend.

E. M. M.

Social Committee Debating Society.

The meetings in February will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on the 8th and 22nd, at 3.15 p.m.
L. S.

Mr. Mead's Lecture Course.

Under the general title "The World Mystery," Mr. Mead will deliver a course of four lectures on Tuesdays, at 5 p.m., in the Lecture Room, at 28, Albemarle Street, W., according to the following Syllabus:

Feb. 26th.—The World-Soul.

Mar. 5th.—The Vestures of the Soul.

„ *12th.*—The Web of Destiny.

„ *19th.*—True Self-Reliance.

Course Tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., or at the door. Admission to each Lecture 2s.

Northern Federation.

The next Conference of the Northern Federation will be held in Sheffield, in the Cutlers' Hall, Church Street, on Saturday, February 16th, when Miss Edith Ward will take the chair.

In the afternoon, at 3.50 p.m., the subject of discussion will be "Theosophy and Modern Life," and in the evening, at 7 o'clock, Miss Ward will give an address on "The Way, the Truth, and the Life." On Sunday, February 17th, the meetings will be held in the Lodge Room, Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street.

At 3.30 p.m. there will be a concert, and at 6.30 p.m. Miss Ward will give a public lecture on "The Creed of the Twentieth Century."

All Members of the Society are most cordially invited to attend.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary.

London Federation.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, February 9th, at 8 p.m., at 28, Albemarle Street, when the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis will speak on the subject of "Theosophy and the New Theology." All members of the Theosophical Society and members of Centres invited.

The Annual Meeting of the Committee will be held at 7 p.m. to receive report of the Activities Committee and to elect a Secretary.

P. T.

South Western Federation.

The Twelfth Annual Convention will be held at Exeter on Saturday and Sunday, February 9th and 10th. Mr. Mead has very kindly consented to preside, and will give two lectures on "The Wisdom of Egypt in Greek Tradition," and "The Initiation of Tat," also an address on "The Value of Theosophy." We shall be glad to welcome any friends at the meetings. The Lodge Room at Exeter is at 19, Bedford Circus.

J. W. C.

North London Lodge.

This Lodge has removed to comfortable and more central premises at 25, Compton Road, Highbury (near Highbury Station), to which members of the Society and their friends are warmly welcomed. A series of fortnightly popular addresses on the main Theosophical teachings commenced on January 30th, which it is expected will be well supported. On Wednesday, February 6th, the Rev. A. Baker speaks on the "New Theology," and on Wednesday, February 20th, Mr. Sydney Sprague on the "Teachings of Baháism."

V. L.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 4th, Questions and Discussion; Feb. 11th, *A Martyred Mystic*, Miss E. Severs; Feb. 18th, *The Lady Juliana of Norwich*, Miss Codd; Feb. 25th, *Theory and Practice*, H. von Kramer. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gîtâ*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The Arts Club, 19, West Street, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Christianity*. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *What is Mysticism?* H. Norman; Feb. 14th and 28th, *The Secret Doctrine*; Feb. 21st, *Light from some Sanskrit Words*, P. Hoult. Enquirers' meeting on Mondays from 4 to 5 p.m., and study of *The Bhagavad Gītā* from 5 to 6 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *The Value of a Dramatic Career*, Miss Pagan; Feb. 14th, Conversational meeting; Feb. 21st, *Mysticism, Eastern and Western*, Rev. J. Gardiner. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 28, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Mondays, at 8 p.m., study class for members: at 98, Bouverie Road West. Fortnightly meetings at 10, Clifton Crescent, The Leas. Information from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 4th and 25th, Class for study; Feb. 11th, *Pedigree of Man*, W. S. Stewart; Feb. 18th, *Pythagoras and his School*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *Man's Relation to the Animal Kingdom*, J. I. Wedgwood; Feb. 10th, *The Land of the Hereafter*, Mrs. Bell; Feb. 17th, *Religions of the World*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 24th, *Thought Control, its Purpose and Method*, E. Wood. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Feb. 1st, *The Myths of Plato*, Rev. A. H. Lee; Feb. 8th, *Brotherhood, True and False*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 22nd, *Vehicles and Environments*, R. Pexton.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquitt Street, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 6th, 20th, and 27th, Class for study; Feb. 13th, *The Evidence of Things not Seen*, E. E. Marsden. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquitt St.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Feb. 7th, *Some Difficulties of the Path as gathered from the Lives of Aspirants in India*, J. C. Chatterji; Feb. 14th, *The Two Paths*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 21st, Debate: *The Doctrine of Reincarnation is not inconsistent with Christian Teaching*. Opener, Miss C. E. Woods; Opposer, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 28th, *East and West: a Unity and a Contrast*, Miss C. E. Woods. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Feb. 3rd, *The Gnostic Transfiguration*, G. R. S. Mead; Feb. 10th, *Some Parables from the Synoptic Gospels*, Miss C. E. Woods; Feb. 17th, *Fate and Free Will*, P. Tovey; Feb. 24th, *What is Power?* Mrs. Sharpe,

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane; Feb. 3rd, *Religious Experience and its Value*, A. Haddock; Feb. 10th, *The Purification of the Physical Body*, B. G. Theobald; Feb. 17th, *The Mystical Philosophy of Wordsworth*, Miss Spurgeon; Feb. 24th, *Bahá'ism, its Master and its Message*, Sydney Sprague. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Feb. 4th, *What Theosophy can do for the World*, by members; Feb. 11th and 25th, Class for study; Feb. 18th, *Progress according to Theosophy*, G. W. Elliott.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 6th and 20th, Study class; Feb. 13th, *The Second Object of the Theosophical Society*, Clifford Bax; Feb. 27th, *The Third Object of the Theosophical Society*, Miss Aphra Wilson.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Feb. 5th, *The Second Object of the Theosophical Society*, H. Whyte; Feb. 14th (Thursday), *The Third Object of the Theosophical Society*; Feb. 19th, *Philosophy of*

Religious Experience, G. Dyne; Feb. 26th, *Characteristics of Religious Experience*, G. Dyne. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Sundays, at 3.15 p.m., for children, and Saturdays, at 7 p.m., for young people: Feb. 2nd, *Paradoxes*, S. Ransom; Feb. 16th, *Marcus Aurelius*, P. Tovey; Feb. 23rd, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 25, Compton Road, Highbury, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and lectures on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: Feb. 1st and 15th, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*; Feb. 8th, *Santa Teresa*, Miss E. M. Mallet; Feb. 22nd, *The Brotherhood of Healers*, James MacBeth. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester: Feb. 3rd, *Theosophy in Christianity and Islam*, E. Wood; Feb. 10th (in the Coal Exchange, Market Place), *Theosophy and Religion*, E. Wood; Feb. 17th, *Man and his Bodies*, E. Wood; Feb. 24th, *The Life Side of Theosophy*, C. J. Barker. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: study of *A Study in Consciousness*, Feb. 7th and 21st. Public lectures on Sundays at 6.45 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *Life and Teachings of the Lord Buddha*, Hodgson Smith; Feb. 10th, "Thus spake Zarathustra," B. Hudson; Feb. 24th, *The Civilisation of Ancient Peru*, O. Firth.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *A Study in Consciousness*; at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 12, Green Street.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Feb. 3rd, *The Spiral and the Serpent*, E. E. Marsden; Feb. 10th, *Theosophy and the New Thought Movement*, J. I. Wedgwood; Feb. 17th, *The Creed of the Twentieth Century*, Miss Ward; Feb. 24th, *The Conquest of Pain through Non-resistance*, Miss M. Smith. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in the month, at 7.30 p.m.; study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton: Feb. 3rd, *Baháism and its Leader, Abbas Effendi*, S. Sprague; Feb. 10th, *Theosophy and the New Psychology*, P. G. Tovey; Feb. 17th, *The Practical Value of Theosophy*, L. S. Jast; Feb. 24th, . . . G. R. S. Mead.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street. Study of *Man and his Bodies*, at 8.15 p.m. Elementary Class on Tuesdays, at 7.15 p.m. Study of psychology on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate: Feb. 1st, *Theosophy in Literature—"Faust"*, R. A. Coulthard; Feb. 8th, *Theosophy and the New Thought Movement*, J. I. Wedgwood; Feb. 15th, *Sidelights on Lytton's "Strange Story"*, J. E. Reid; Feb. 22nd, *Brotherhood*, Hodgson Smith. Information from J. E. Reid, 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPHICAL LODGES.

I have read your number of November, 1906, on the above subject, and confirm what your correspondents have said as to the uselessness of the usual lectures. I have been President of the Blavatsky Lodge, Bombay, for over twelve years, and my experience is that the lecturers, who are necessarily a few out of many members, get washed out, have nothing new to say, and the people simply give up coming to hear them. If, however, any of these lecturers take a tour out of Bombay, they get crowded audiences. Occasional lectures by our best speakers draw large audiences in the public halls of the city. When also any of our regular lecturers visit us they get packed, eager listeners for as long as we can persuade them to stay. Why? Because they have something new to tell us. We have, therefore, given up Sunday lectures, and depend now upon visiting lecturers. Our real work has developed into classes for read-

ing and discussing Theosophical books, with an occasional class on the *Bhagavad Gīta*, the *Upanishats*, or the Vedanta generally. These classes are held every evening of the week, sometimes two in the evening, occasionally one in the morning. The number attending these classes varies from eight to thirty.

Our membership is about 215, the majority Parsees, whose mother tongue is Guzerathi, but nearly all have an excellent knowledge of English. We have about seventy Guzerathi Hindus, a few European, Jew and Mahomadan members. The classes are mostly conducted in Guzerathi, one or two in English.

A few of our Hindu members some years ago started in their district a Lodge of their own, the Dharmālaya. Its membership is about 135. When lecturers visit us the Dharmālaya members form part of our audience. They also carry on their teaching by classes, by readings after the old Hindu style, and only occasionally by lectures, in much the same way as above described. They have a good knowledge of English, but as their mother tongue is Marathi they conduct their classes in that language. The work in both Lodges has gradually developed on these lines, and it is, I cannot but feel, a real living spiritual work, doing much good also among the many whom we call sympathisers. We cannot tell how far our influence extends, but we believe it to be great. Some of these sympathisers attend the weekly classes, many crowd our lecture hall. Their great annual evening is "White Lotus Day," which has taken on remarkably in Bombay. The morning meeting we reserve strictly for members. Our friends seem to think that the mere fact of their presence on that evening is in itself a blessing which goes with them throughout the following year. And I think they are right.

We have four weekly classes for Parsee ladies, one at the Lodge, the other three at private houses. These have a fair knowledge of English, but prefer conversation in their own vernacular. One of these ladies, quite young, has developed into an eloquent lecturer in Guzerathi, and attracts large audiences on Theosophy.

D. GOSTLING.

I have been reading with much interest the correspondence in THE VĀHAN concerning Lodges, and if I venture to add still another point of view, it is because certain aspects have not been touched upon by those who have already contributed to the discussion. What I write I throw out merely as suggestions; to write an article on the Ideal Lodge is not within the scope of this letter.

Now, as far as I understand the term, a Lodge is not a meeting place for lectures, nor a club, nor any of the things into which people enter carelessly for their own benefit or amusement. He who enters a Lodge takes upon himself certain definite duties and responsibilities; he becomes one of the members of a body, what ought to be a choate body, and not what it often is at present, an un-

fortuitous concurrence of atoms. Unless a member is willing to try to fulfil his function in the particular body of which he desires to become a part, had he not better enter as an unattached unit in the Theosophical Society itself? The fee for unattached membership is, I believe, nearly double, which would meet, I think, the pecuniary side of the question, but in this I may be wrong. Having by this means got rid of unnecessary fringes to Lodges, one comes to the constitution of the Lodge itself. Probably the introduction of unattached membership on a wider basis would help to meet another difficulty, *i.e.*, overgrown Lodges. I myself would like to see Lodges limited as to membership and becoming, as it were, more individualised. Of course many Lodges suffer in just the opposite direction, but only time and a wider spread of occult teaching will obviate that difficulty.

In strong centres of life and thought, however, the multiplication of Lodges, within reasonable limits, would tend I think to a much greater interest and vitality in the Theosophical Society. Lodges would in time individualise; like would draw to like in their membership; each would become known as a centre of some special line of study and thought; those would naturally come to the front more particularly fitted to be the exponents of its views of Truth, and by a constant interchange of lecturers, and by social intercourse, the fresh breeze of opposite opinion would sweep through the Lodges, and in all probability would be more deferentially listened to and weighed, more, in fact, tolerated than if it emanated from the centre of wisdom to which the listener belonged! Again, in the limited membership of a Lodge it becomes so much easier for every member, or at least the majority, to be called upon to do an active something. A great deal lies with the Secretary, but also with the other office-bearers, in drawing forth and utilising the capabilities of the various units, but all should feel that they are members of a body and bound to fulfil their particular function. The sense of responsibility, of inter-dependence, makes for cohesion, and to expect a man to rise to the occasion is more than half-way towards his so doing; besides, beginners would have more confidence in addressing a more limited assembly, thinking somewhat on their own lines.

But of course all such changes are fraught with innumerable difficulties, and unless Lodges could combine so as to bear the expense of rooms, etc., they might be insuperable. One other point there remains to be dealt with, a subject of exceeding subtlety, and yet upon the proper understanding of which the very existence of every Lodge depends. As the Lodge may be considered a "body," so a body must be sub-divided into Life and Form, without these two the body is useless. "Builders" there must be, and "Sons of the Flame" there must be, both are equally parts of the Great Body. But down here, masked in troublesome personalities, they clash, they do not understand, and each expects the one to do the work of the other. It is all a question of evolution, a question of the path each individual member has to tread. It is not

to be expected that the generality will see the inner workings and understand, but those who stand at the helm, let them look to it; for the Life cannot manifest without the Form, both are equally necessary, and if both are not represented in the Lodge, the end is death.

MARY E. GREENE.

With regard to Mr. Thomas's remarks and those of J. D. R. on Lodge Meetings, are we not rather misusing the terms "Teacher" and "Student"? To my mind a Student is one who studies a given subject persistently, probably many hours a day, with a view to mastering it, and a Teacher is one who *has* mastered it. I have heard the expression "Theosophical Student" very often, and I have met the *bonâ fide* Student very rarely during the years that I have been a member of the Society. The fingers of my two hands are enough to count them on, and for the Teachers I think one hand would suffice. A President is not necessarily a Teacher, he is elected for all kinds of reasons other than learning, and it is a pity I think to refer to him as a kind of oracle, when we all know very well he is nothing of the sort. If we gave him the name of Chairman and restricted him to the duties of that office, we might get our meetings on to a more useful basis.

Perhaps very small study groups, for those who wish to understand *The Secret Doctrine* (these would be genuine Students probably), and a debating society for the discussion of more elementary works, so that those who feel they have the gift of eloquence may have the opportunity of practice, and so prepare the way for better lecturers in the future, would be more useful and successful than our heterogeneous Lodge meetings, where so much time is frittered away. There is an idea in the Society that it is a duty to attend Lodge meetings, that a complaint that you "don't get anything there," is almost a sin! You are at once told with grave reproach "you go to *give*, not to get." Personally I have never been able to summon up the vanity to suppose I had anything to give, and I think the maxim a dangerous one, letting loose the Bore upon the Society, for is not the man who is first to speak the last to see when the Lodge is mentally yawning? I believe Mr. Mead has suggested that Lodges should be used to train speakers, which would be much the same as making them into debating societies, and might be a great benefit in the future. Things seem sadly askew! Perhaps if you allow a thorough ventilation of the matter through the columns of THE VĀHAN they will right themselves once more.

S.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 315.

(Continued from p. 39.)

J. W.—I have just read Mr. Kingsland's Esoteric Basis of Christianity and should like answers to two questions.

1. Mr. K. says that Paul's Epistles have been unscrupulously tampered with? What proof has he?
2. He says that the Church selected the four canonical Gospels out of an enormous number. As these four had obtained their position at the close of the second century, when was this selection, and how does he know there was an enormous number of competing Gospels?

B.—As J. W. (see letter in January issue, p. 45) is dissatisfied with W. K.'s reply, perhaps another hand may fitly essay the task. But in the brief space at one's disposal, one is bound to appear authoritative and to state conclusions without the arguments that sustain them.

1. The Tübingen view of the Pauline Epistles was that Romans, Galatians, First and Second Corinthians were substantially accurate, and the rest sub-Pauline. Nowadays these four have been deposed from their special pre-eminency, except by the ridiculously belated Haeckel and a few orthodox pulpits which still, in quoting texts from these Epistles, declare that these at any rate are universally recognised as above suspicion. But while nobody has ventured to rehabilitate the Pastorals, we have had changes in two directions.

(1) Van Manen and the Dutch school repudiate even the sacred four, but this view is not yet common or likely to be. The main argument is that these epistles do not read like letters (which is true only of Romans), but most of us have received epistles that are even less epistolary.

(2) The Ephesians-Colossians group is decidedly more in favour than when Mr. Kingsland wrote, and this on two grounds:

(a) It is true that the cosmic Christ of this group is quite different from the personal Jesus of Thessalonians. But that does not mean that we have two separate writers, but only that Paul's Christology grew with his years and, therefore, his earlier views have no real value for us. This is now quite a commonplace of Nonconformist Sunday Schools.

(b) The Gnostic terminology of this group of epistles was supposed to relegate them to the second century. But we have learned that Gnosticism was contemporary with Jesus and even preceded Him. Thus the great argument for their lateness breaks down.

Hence it may be said that with the exception of the Pastoral Group and isolated passages in some other epistles, the Pauline Letters are authentic as they stand. W. K.'s quotation from the Revised Version in his reply in the December VĀHAN has to do with textual criticism, and refers to an altogether different department of criticism from that which concerns us here.

2. There was no formal selection of Canonical Gospels by the Church till long after they had been selected by public opinion. Largely as crystallising the opposition to free Christian thought, the Canon formed itself; and by the end of the second century four Gospels had so grown in favour as to out-distance the rest. To this you have the testimony of the Diatessaron, the Muratorian Fragment, and Irenæus; but other Gospels

were still in use, e.g., the Marcionite Luke in Syria, and Peter at Rhossus.

That these others were very numerous is proved by the following considerations.

(1) The "many" in the Introduction to our Luke.

(2) The Gospel Quotations in the early Fathers can rarely be identified. It is a convenient assumption of the orthodox that these Fathers *all* possessed treacherous memories and an habitual disregard for exactness of quotation. They did quote, but not from our Gospels; the contrary position of Tischendorf is quite untenable.

(3) It does not follow that when a writer speaks of a loving God, he is quoting from the first Johannine Epistle; yet this is a very familiar kind of argument in orthodox apologetics.

(4) Justin and others give as Gospel details incidents not found in our Gospels.

(5) Gospels are quoted by name, which are not our Gospels; J. W. might consult Baring-Gould's popular account of these; but let him not limit himself to the Gospels of the Infancy, which are poor specimens and mainly late.

(6) Where the names of our Gospels are quoted it does not follow that these are our Gospels in their present form; thus Papias' Matthew cannot be our Matthew, nor his Mark our Mark; and Marcion's Luke is not ours.

I think a modern critic would say that Mr. Kingsland's first point is decidedly not proven; whereas his second point is so elementary and notorious a fact that it has even found its way into the Christian Evidence Handbooks, and I cannot understand how J. W. can have any difficulty on this head.

QUESTION 319.

A. V. V.—Is it possible for the soul to attain perfection by proceeding through various stages of development unconsciously—by merely following what seems an instinctive course and with no effort of will, finding itself gradually dying to the world and desire? Can this process be a sub-conscious remembering of the wisdom of former incarnations, no special line of study having been pursued, and the intellect having altogether refused to accept any dogmatic explanation of the meaning of life—finding them all unsatisfactory?

P. H.—If A. V. V. will allow me to amend the terminology of his question, I think he will find the answer appear without the necessity of stating it in so many words. Since "soul" is rather a vague term, and the only "perfection" conceivable by us is necessarily a relative state, suppose we substitute for the one, "the self," and for the other "a higher state of being." In doing this, I take it that I correctly represent A. V. V.'s meaning. The question then is, simply: Can the self (the individuality) attain to a higher state of consciousness unconsciously? Put thus there is evidently but one answer: Since it is the self, it must be self-conscious.

With the "younger souls" amongst us, indubitably,

growth is mainly unconscious. But when, and whenever, the self (the individuality) emerges—and this must be when and whenever there is action higher than that of the personality—then the Monad takes in hand his own growth; and it is mere tautology to say that such growth is self-conscious, for all further growth means but increase of self-consciousness in the true sense of the term.

With reference to the second part of the question, "Yes." "Pre-existing or innate virtues, talents, or gifts, are regarded as having been acquired in a previous birth," says H. P. B. (Notes to *The Voice of the Silence*).

Roughly speaking, we may divide men into two categories:—those who are merely living on the capital they have already acquired, and those who are continually pressing forward to the acquirement of new capital. The character of those belonging to the first class may be of a far higher order than the character of those belonging to the second; the first may express themselves as great and good men, the second as narrow bigots; but all the same, from the point of view of their evolution, the first class may be comparatively at a stand-still, while the second is making progress. For, unless the affections are set upon something higher than their "natural expression" how shall progress be made? Aspiration must go before inspiration—the desire and longing before the recognition and realisation. A man may be radiating beauty on all sides, but if there be no looking upwards, no striving of the self for something higher, then I think the inference is that, for the present, the evolution of that man's self is stationary, its radiant beauty being due to the height to which it had attained by its struggles, defeats and victories in earlier lives. But the man who has an ideal towards which he consciously strives, though his ideal be not a high one, and his action falls far short of it, is making *some* progress now, withal he is still far behind that other one on the ladder of life.

Hence, as Dr. Arthur Wells has it in *The Theosophical Review* for September, "the true life of the soul is perpetual effort—ever striving to rise, ever falling again and again, and ever rising afresh to renew the struggle: never in peace, which, at this point of our development, can only be the peace of death."

E. A. B.—In the early periods of growth we pass through many stages of development "unconsciously"; but as the mental powers grow, we must learn more and more to co-operate consciously with the Divine Will, if we would gradually attain the far-off goal of "perfection." This is a very different thing from a mere passive acquiescence in a Will stronger than our own, and means a strenuous and persistent "effort of will," resolute to bring itself, at whatever cost and however slowly, into complete harmony with that Higher Will which it has consciously recognised as The Good. Without this aim and effort, it is possible even to "die to the world" in a bad sense instead of a good; for this world is our present sphere of

action and of evolution, of growth and of development—and if we simply drift when we could by effort of will do more, we shall never “attain perfection.”

E. M. M.—Having attained perfection, means, I take it, that a man has gained complete mastery over the “Three Worlds,” namely, the world of action, the world of desire, and the world of thought. Nothing on any of these planes has power to shake him. This implies the possession of an iron will, of a character that cannot under any conceivable circumstances be misled by ignorance or passion. Does A. V. V. seriously think that a character of this sort can be formed by “merely following an instinctive course . . . with no effort of will”? It seems to me just as reasonable to suppose that by spending his days in reclining on a couch or in an easy chair an athlete would be able to develop the muscle and sinews with which he performs greater physical tasks than other men. If right thinking and right acting in previous lives have made it easy to “die to the world and desire” in this life, the will must be braced, and all the faculties be intent on learning to master the next lessons in the School of Life.

A. R. O.—In one of Mr. Shaw's plays (*Man and Superman*) a useful distinction is made between following the line of least resistance and following the line of greatest advantage. From one standpoint the line of least resistance is the line of greatest advantage; but the point really lies in the extreme difficulty of following the line of least resistance. For example, it would seem easy enough to do as one likes. But in reality the tasks of knowing first what one likes and then of doing it are difficult beyond words. Thus I do not doubt that the soul may attain perfection by following an instinctive course. Unless, in fact, the instinct of the soul is towards perfection we are in mighty poor case. But how to discriminate between this instinct and the myriads of instincts which compose it is the real difficulty; and I do not myself see that this can ever be (at least in the later phases) unconscious. Remember that consciousness is no more (dare I say so?) than the internecine conflict of instincts, and that the absence of consciousness implies the absence of that conflict. When, therefore, all the little instincts have been swallowed up in one single instinct then the soul may become from our standpoint unconscious, but at the same time from our standpoint perfect. Imperfection implies division of instinct which is consciousness. Hence (I had almost said Q.E.D.) it is impossible to attain perfection unconsciously.

QUESTION 320.

A. P.—In his short story of “*They*,” Mr. Kipling has sought to give the impression that little children who have died a natural death may, under certain circumstances, return to visit those they loved on the earth. As far as I understand the teaching of Theosophy, such a return would be quite contrary to the funda-

mental laws which it teaches; but I shall be grateful to have more light on what is to me a most important matter.

E. M. M.—If A. P. will refer to *Invisible Helpers*, he will see that children who have passed out of the body very frequently *do* hover round those they loved on earth—whether the latter can see them or not is of course another matter, and depends upon the condition of psychic development of these persons. It has been suggested in Theosophical literature that it is not wise to long very ardently for the presence of one who has “passed over,” for this tends to keep their interest attached to earth, whereas now they should be rising into other conditions; but I know of no “fundamental law” taught by Theosophy which denies the fact that children can and do return to visit those they loved on earth. It teaches, on the contrary, that where the tie of a strong love exists those who are bound by it will be constantly together though they may not be at all times conscious of the fact.

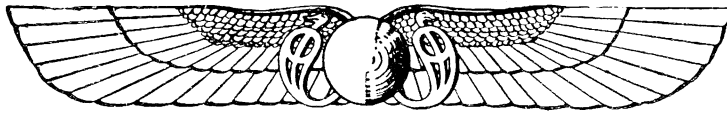
A. P. may be interested to read in this connection some articles appearing quarterly in the *Lotus Journal*, entitled “Life as seen by the Dead,” the first three of which appeared in February, May and August, 1906.

A. R. O.—The teaching of Theosophy is one thing; the teaching of Theosophists may be and often is quite another thing. Possibly, nay, probably, Mr. Kipling's “*They*” does contain certain statements which are different from certain other statements made by certain Theosophists. But what is the conclusion? Not at all that Mr. Kipling is wrong; not at all that the Theosophists are wrong; but that both may be either right or wrong, or one right and the other wrong. Well, in the latter case, who is to decide? Mr. Kipling may fairly say he is as likely to be right as anybody else. And why not? Surely it is time to put away the silly idea that we really know anything exclusive about the other planes. In this plain matter-of-fact world almost anything may be true; and if here, still more may anything be true in worlds beyond our space and time. At any rate, until we know quite certainly why Mr. Kipling cannot possibly be right, we shall do well to hold his statements as not necessarily wrong merely because they fail to corroborate the statements of some Theosophists.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “*Activities*” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, MARCH 1, 1907.

NO. 8.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

It is with the deepest regret that I have to communicate to members through the medium of THE VĀHAN the fact of the death of our beloved President-Founder, Colonel Olcott. His death took place on Sunday, February 17th, after a long and very trying illness. There had for some time been no hope of recovery, and it was only a question of how long he could linger in a frail and outworn body. A telegram of homage and respect was at once sent in the name of this Section.

Some letters have already been received from Branches expressing their feelings at the great loss the Society has sustained, and suggesting that a meeting of commemoration should be held throughout the Section. Possibly some official suggestions will be made in due course by the governing body of the Society and it might be as well for Branches to wait until a general arrangement embracing the whole Society can be come to, as the loss is that of the Theosophical Society in every part of the world. Failing any special day for commemoration members will be aware that May 8th was always held in special regard by their late President, and his strong desire was that this day should always be used in commemoration of the workers for the Society who had departed from this life.

Below will be found communications from two of the oldest friends of Colonel Olcott—the first an official and personal note from the present Acting President, Mr. Sinnett, and the second from Mr. Mead.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE LATE PRESIDENT-FOUNDER.

It has become my grievous duty as Acting President of the Theosophical Society, pending more permanent arrangements, to promulgate the melancholy news that Colonel H. S. Olcott, the President-Founder, departed this life on the morning of Sunday, the 17th of February, at Adyar, Madras.

Dating the beginning of his Theosophical activity from the year 1875, when the Society was first established, he has thus devoted thirty-two years of strenuous life to the noble purpose of extending the influence of the Society all over the world. Very few of its members now living can have known him longer or more intimately than myself, as I made his acquaintance in the year 1879 in the infancy of the movement, and have been in close touch with him ever since, and I venture to say that by none can his single-minded, unselfish devotion to the cause the Society represents be more cordially and appreciatively recognised than by myself. I affirm from long knowledge of the fact that he was never actuated in any course he ever took from the beginning to the close of his Theosophical career by any other than the purest motives, while the universal affection in which he was held throughout the Society was enough to show how widely his character was understood, how unreservedly it commanded admiration. The work he did has given rise to a structure of colossal magnitude. In all quarters of the globe its solid results are apparent. But for those who knew him best it is not so much for what he did as for what he was that his memory will be cherished with the tenderest regard.

A. P. SINNETT.

HENRY STEEL OLCOTT.

I have been asked to write a few lines about my old friend and chief Henry Steel Olcott, who

has passed hence after thirty-one years of loyal service to the Theosophical Society. I shall attempt to write an appreciation of his life-work and character for the April number of *The Theosophical Review*, seeing that there has not been time to include a fitting notice in the March number. Meanwhile, I gladly avail myself of the invitation of the Editor to pen a few words of homage to the memory of the President-Founder of the Theosophical Society and the chief organiser of its material destinies.

H. S. Olcott was a man of large heart, transparent honesty, wide tolerance and sympathy, of sunny disposition, even temper, and optimistic temperament; he was free from malice and of a forgiving disposition; practical and possessed of a shrewd common sense generally; unselfish, devoted and self-sacrificing; persistent and determined, though ever ready to acknowledge an error and set it right. He was neither a scholar nor a mystic, and made no pretence of being either. Indeed he boasted that his "theosophical education" was chiefly picked up in editing *Isis Unveiled*, and that he had since read little even of the literature produced by the members of the Society over which he presided. He was a journalist rather than a writer, a speech-maker rather than an orator.

He believed that he was better suited to keep to what he considered the more practical side of the administration of the Theosophical Movement, and never understood that his affectionate nature and familiarity were not always held sufficient in a Society that looked to the President for a constantly dignified presentation of great truths and wise advice in personal difficulties of a spiritual nature. Olcott with his good-humoured laughter and jests, kindly sympathy and shrewdness, was frequently a good tonic to wild enthusiasm and unbalanced speculation, but his boisterous spirits were not infrequently out of place and his answers showed that he had not appreciated the nature of the difficulties and the need of a more delicate treatment.

It is, however, almost certain that no man of a more delicate mould could have stood what H. S. Olcott has had to stand; it required a rough diamond and the sturdiness of a blunt pioneer to stand up against the countless difficulties and obstacles, the obloquy, calumny, malice and derision which he has faced so bravely all these years. No other man could have braved it out with H. P. B. within and the hostile host without; his has been the faith that has moved mountains.

Take, for instance, his connection with Buddhism; he was no scholar of Buddhism, no first-hand knower of its literature, and yet his common-sense *Catechism* has been translated into twenty-three languages, and is used by all the Buddhist children in upwards of 250 schools in Ceylon—schools founded chiefly by his endeavours. Ceylon has reason to bless the memory of H. S. Olcott. He unaided drew up fourteen propositions as a basis of agreement between the Buddhists of Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, and Japan, and obtained

their acceptance by the chief priestly authorities of these countries.

He has accomplished this in Buddha-lands, while in India he has started a great movement for the education of the Pariahs—a splendid idea; and these schools, like the Buddhist schools, are developing by their own inherent vitality.

Again, take the Adyar Library, so dear to his heart; it is now probably the richest MS. library in India. H. S. Olcott could not read a single one of these MSS., but he has got them together for others, housed them handsomely, and procured the beginnings of an endowment for future useful work.

As to the Society, that, whatever his other activities, was always his first interest,—he lived to see it spread into forty-five countries and number some 614 branches, with a membership of from 10,000 to 12,000.

The chief characteristic of Olcott was his transparent honesty; no one who reads his *Old Diary Leaves* can judge otherwise. A man of strong physical health, he was at one time a powerful magnetic healer; he was also always a keen investigator of psychic phenomena, of which he had witnessed many of a remarkable character, but he was not personally psychic; indeed, he was by temperament a phenomenalist rather than a mystic.

But his chief service to the Society is that he realised fully its international character and the importance of safeguarding the freedom of its platform; cosmopolitan and tolerant himself, he endeavoured manfully, as long as he had strength, to keep it free from dogmatism and sectarianism.

Henry Steel Olcott has deserved well of us, and his memory will ever be kept green in our hearts. Let any who think little of this brave old man do as much as he has done, and we who love his memory will think well of them though they think little of him, but not otherwise.

G. R. S. M.

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT.

February 21st, 1907.

To the General Secretary, British Section.

DEAR MADAM,

In accordance with Rule 27 of the Rules and Regulations for the management of the Theosophical Society, I have accepted the responsibilities falling upon me by the death of our late lamented President, Colonel Olcott. I shall, in accordance with that rule, "perform the duties of President until a successor takes office," and under the circumstances it may be inevitable that some delay will arise before the succession can be determined. If Colonel Olcott's nomination of Mrs. Besant had simply been made on his own responsibility, without any explanation of the motives by which it was dictated, the Sections could have proceeded without much waste of time

to vote on the question thus submitted to them. But, far and wide, documents have been published describing the conditions under which Colonel Olcott believed himself to have been visited by the great Masters of Wisdom, who, in accordance with a belief which many of us reverentially entertain, are especially interested in the welfare of the Theosophical Society, and prompted by them to make the nomination in question.

As you will be well aware, the character of this manifestation is the subject of widely conflicting criticism. The publication of the narratives Colonel Olcott issued for the purpose, is naturally giving rise to expressions of opinion from those who believe the manifestations to have been determined by an occult influence very different indeed from that of the great Masters above referred to.

Under these circumstances it has seemed to me highly undesirable that members of the Theosophical Society all over the world should be called upon to give their votes on the basis of a representation which might lead them to believe that the intervention of the Masters had been generally recognised as authentic. Inasmuch, therefore, as no rule determines the period at which the Society at large shall be asked whether it will ratify the nomination of a new President, I have held myself entitled under Rule 20, which invests me in my acting capacity with "discretionary powers in all matters not specifically provided for in these Rules," to appoint a date for holding the election which shall give time for the general circulation of all papers relating to the recent occurrences at Madras, and I have fixed the month of May as that in which the various Sections shall carry out the election. No election before the 1st of May will be recognised by me as valid, nor will the results of any elections held later than May be taken into account when it becomes my duty to investigate the results of the vote.

As it seems desirable that votes all over the world in this matter should be taken on similar forms, I will at a very early date forward you the form I consider it desirable to use,

Yours very truly,
(Signed) A. P. SINNETT.

NOTICE FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

A communication is being issued by the Executive Committee of the British Section to the members of the Section, containing documents received from the late President-Founder dealing with the nomination of his successor and other matters, and also certain resolutions thereon, passed by the Executive Committee. This communication should be received by members with or at about the same time as this VĀHAN, and if any member fails to receive a copy he is requested to apply to me.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations are acknowledged to February 20th: W. S.-E., £2; S. K., £1; N. G., £5 5s.; A. P. C., 10s.; W. F. W., 10s.; E. M. M., £10; H., £1. Total, £20 5s.

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

The following is a list of the meetings in March: March 4th, "Maeterlinck's *Joyzelle*," Miss Lilian Lloyd; March 11th, "Man's Relation to the Animal Kingdom," J. I. Wedgwood; March 18th, "Rāma-Prasāda—A great Devotee of Bengal," J. C. Chatterji; March 25th, "Theosophy and some Systems of Healing," Miss Charlotte E. Woods.

The meetings are held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Mondays, from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m. Members and visitors are invited to attend.

E. M. M.

Mr. Mead's Lectures.

The three remaining lectures of the course of four delivered on Tuesdays, by Mr. Mead, in the lecture room of the Theosophical Society, 28, Albemarle Street, W., from 5 to 6 p.m., are as follows: March 5th, "The Vestures of the Soul"; March 12th, "The Web of Destiny"; March 19th, "True Self-Reliance."

Course tickets, 5s. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., or at the door. Admission to each lecture, 2s.

Northern Federation.

Very successful meetings were held in Sheffield at the 52nd Conference of the Northern Federation, on February 16th and 17th, Miss Edith Ward presiding.

About seventy members were present. In the afternoon in the Cutlers' Hall the discussion was on "Theosophy and Modern Life," and papers were read, introducing the subject, by Mr. Wedgwood (London), Miss Furnell (Wakefield), Miss Leslie Smith (Harrogate, on behalf of Miss Hilda Hodgson Smith) and Mr. Marsden (on behalf of Miss Margery Smith). A fair discussion followed, several other members taking part.

At 5.30 p.m. the meeting adjourned for tea, re-assembling at 7 p.m. to listen to an address by Miss Ward on "The Way, the Truth and the Life."

On Sunday the meetings were held in the Sheffield Lodge room. In the afternoon there was a much appreciated concert organised by the Sheffield members, and the Conference was brought to a conclusion in the evening by a fine lecture from Miss Ward, on "The Creed of the Twentieth

Century." The next Conference will be held in Harrogate.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary.

South Western Federation.

The twelfth Annual Convention of the South Western Federation was held at Exeter on Saturday and Sunday, February 9th and 10th, Mr. G. R. S. Mead presiding.

On Saturday afternoon a reception was held in the Small Barnfield Hall, when Mr. Mead addressed members and friends on "The Elasticity of the Permanent Atom," after a few preliminary sympathetic remarks on the illness of our beloved President-Founder. In the evening a public lecture was given on "The Wisdom of Egypt in Greek Tradition."

Both reception and lecture were fully attended; members from Oxford, Plymouth, Exeter, Bath, Bristol, Bournemouth and Southampton, numbering thirty-two, were present to swell the audiences.

On Sunday morning a business meeting was held, when the minutes of the previous Convention were read. A regrettable feature of this meeting was the resignation of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. W. Cock, whose removal to the North necessitated this step. Only we in the South and West know how much has been done by him towards the success of our Lodges, and more particularly of our annual gatherings.

One prominent feature in this business meeting was the discussion of Mr. A. J. Faulding's propositions, voiced at the last Convention of the Section, for the more direct representation of provincial Lodges on the Executive Committee, a want being felt that our Lodges should be brought more into touch with the official workings at Headquarters.

In the evening Mr. Mead again addressed the members on "The Initiation of Tat." He held us spellbound throughout his discourse. Never had he more attentive and appreciative listeners.

The Convention has been in every way a great success, a sort of climax to the work of our retiring secretary and his Exeter colleagues. The Convention is to be held in Bath next year.

SYDNEY H. OLD,
Hon. Secretary.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 4th, Questions and Discussion; Mar. 11th, *The Opening of the Christian Way*, Miss E. M. Mallet; Mar. 18th, *How to combine Colour and Number Symbolism*, W. Tudor Pole; Mar. 25th, *The Human Form*, Rev. S. J. O. Goldsack. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information

from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad Gita*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The Arts Club, 19, West Street, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: March 12th, *Santa Teresa*, Miss E. M. Mallet; March 26th, *Form and Number*, F. Bligh Bond. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m.: Mar. 7th, *Pantheism*, Miss Mitchell. Enquirers' meetings on Mondays at 4 p.m., and study of *The Bhagavad Gita* at 5 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street, on Thursdays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 1st (Freemasons' Hall, George Street), *Ancient Cyclopean Remains*, Percy Lund; Mar. 21st, *Thought Power*, J. D. Crawford. Lodge meetings: Mar. 7th, . . . J. D. Crawford; Mar. 14th, *Some Remarks on Karma*, Mrs. Drummond; Mar. 28th, *The Seal of the Society*, E. J. Cuthbertson. Meetings on Sundays at 3 p.m. Library open on Mondays and Fridays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 28, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. 98, Bouverie Road West. Weekly class for study at 8 p.m. Information concerning general meetings from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 4th, *Ancient Cyclopean Monuments*, Percy Lund; Mar. 12th and 26th, Class for study; Mar. 19th, Lodge meeting. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Mar. 3rd, *The Wider Outlook*, W. Bell; Mar. 10th, *Heaven*, D. S. Ward; Mar. 17th, *Reincarnation*, Mrs. Duncan; Mar. 24th, *Is Man the Master of his Destiny?* Hodgson Smith; Mar. 31st, *The Symbol of the Cross: an Eastern Study*, E. E. Marsden. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *The Pedigree of Man*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, 95, Westbourne Avenue, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.: Mar. 8th, *Have we Lived more than one Earth Life?* C. N. Goode.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquitt Street, at 8 p.m.: Mar. 6th, *Character Building*, Mrs. Bell; Mar. 13th, 20th and 27th, Class for study. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquitt Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Mar. 3rd, *Esperanto and the First Object of the Society*, Albert Haddock; Mar. 10th, *Theosophic Study—its Value*, A. P. Cattanch; Mar. 17th, *Theosophy and Dogmatism*, L. Stanley Jast; Mar. 24th, *St. Francis of Assisi*, Miss E. M. Mallet; Mar. 31st, *Theosophical Ideas on Conversion*, C. W. C. Barlow. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanch, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: Mar. 7th, *The Sixty-fourth Chapter of the Book of the Dead*, M. W. Blackden; Mar. 14th, *The Seven Portals*, G. R. S. Mead; Mar. 21st, *Ibsen's Trilogy*, Miss Lilian Lloyd. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): Mar. 3rd, *Human Consciousness*, A. R. Orage; Mar. 10th, *The Gnostic Crucifixion*, G. R. S. Mead; Mar. 17th, . . .; Mar. 24th, *The Cult of the Body*, A. J. Faulding.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane: March 3rd, *Theosophy*, J. M. Watkins; March 10th, *Answers to Questions*; March 17th, *The First Object of the Theosophical Society*, Mrs. Sharpe; March 24th, *Multiple Personality*, Miss Lilian Lloyd. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at

8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: March 4th, *Theosophy and Phrenology*, Miss Dexter, and *The Value of Theosophy*, A. Ellerbeck; March 11th and 25th, Class for study; March 18th, *Ancient Religion and Modern Science*, Mrs. Sidley and J. W. Sidley.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. The Studio, Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead, on Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m.: March 6th and 20th, Class for study; March 13th, *Karma*, Miss Helena Clarke; March 27th . . .

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham: March 5th, *Conclusions*, G. Dyne; March 12th and 19th, *Sound, the Builder*, G. Dyne; March 26th, *Gregorian Music and the Rationale of Mantras*, J. I. Wedgwood. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, LOTUS LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Sundays, at 3.15 p.m., for children, and Saturdays, at 7 p.m., for young people: March 2nd, *The Nervous System*, Mrs. Betts; March 16th, *Man's Relation to the Lower Kingdoms of Nature*, J. I. Wedgwood; March 9th and 23rd, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 25, Compton Road, Highbury, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and lectures on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: March 13th, *Reincarnation*; March 27th, *The Justice of Destiny*.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m.: March 1st and 15th, Study of *Esoteric Buddhism*; March 8th, *Cosmic Religion*, Miss Ward; March 22nd, *A Persian Mystic*, J. M. Watkins. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester: March 3rd, *The Uses of Evil*, E. Wood; March 10th (in the Coal Exchange), *Exertion or Destiny; which is the stronger?* E. Wood; March 17th, *The Search for Happiness*, E. Wood; March 24th, *Theosophy and Human Consciousness*, Miss H. Hodgson-Smith; March 31st, *The One and the Many*, E. Wood. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MOSS SIDE CENTRE. Information from W. Pitt, 137, Beresford Street, Moss Side.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road: Mar. 3rd, *The Work of the Theosophist*, W. H. Thomas; Mar. 10th, *The Vedānta Philosophy*, C. J. Barker; Mar. 17th, *The Christian Religion*, Mrs. Bell. Mar. 1st, 15th and 29th, study of *The Evolution of Consciousness*.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *A Study in Consciousness*; at 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 53, Peverell Park Road.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: Mar. 3rd, *Life in Three Worlds*, Mrs. Marsden; Mar. 10th, *A Prophet in our own Country*, R. Pexton; Mar. 17th, *Brotherhood*, Hodgson Smith; Mar. 24th, *Life: Simple versus Complex*, J. Chappell; Mar. 31st, "*Thus spake Zarathustra*," Baker Hudson. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in the month, at 7.30 p.m.; study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, Cranleigh, The Polygon.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton: Mar. 3rd, *Destiny and Astrology*, Alan Leo; Mar. 10th, *The Life after Death*, J. I. Wedgwood; Mar. 17th, *The Goal*, J. M. Watkins; Mar. 24th, *The Teachings of Theosophy*, Mrs. Leo.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street. Study of *Man and his Bodies*, at 8.15 p.m. Elementary Class on Tuesdays, at 7.15 p.m. Study of psychology on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate: Mar. 1st, *The Theosophic Doctrine*, W. H. Sanderson; Mar. 8th, *Another Hour with Emerson*, F. Walker; Mar. 15th, *Public Spiritedness*, O. Firth; Mar. 22nd, *The Spiral and the Serpent*, E. E. Marsden. Information from J. E. Reid, 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE WORK OF THEOSOPHICAL LODGES.

I read with great interest the letter from M. E.

Greene in the February VĀHAN, and would like to add a few remarks, if room can be found for more on this already well-ventilated, but most momentous and vital subject.

M. E. Greene, speaking of "Limited Membership Lodges," says: "It becomes so much easier for every member, or at least the majority, to be called upon to do an active something."

There lies the crux of the matter to my mind, and this feeling "of doing something," of being an active worker, would in time, I feel sure, obviate the "waiting to be fed" air with which so many students attend lectures. If each, in however small a way, were called upon to help, he would feel that interest which seems to be so lacking, and make our Lodges living organisations, sending the "Life" pulsing through the whole body of the Theosophical Society. Now I happen to know of at least one Lodge in which this principle is such a working one that, in a recently published syllabus, the name of every lecturer is drawn from the Lodge membership, no outside help has been asked, and, at the members' own suggestion, an evening has been set apart, when those who wish can speak for five minutes on any subject they—the members—choose amongst themselves, the President not even arranging this.

Moreover, I know of another Lodge just recently founded, where this same principle will be most certainly applied, indeed, is already at work.

Much has been said about our hard-worked lecturers, and indeed they are most self-sacrificing, and to help them should not we as students be more really alive to our responsibilities when we enter a Lodge, or if we do not choose to work actively—become unattached members?

T. D.

When this question arose in THE VĀHAN a few months ago my only surprise was that it had not arisen a few years earlier; and it seems to me that one or two who have dealt with it have half desired to express the truth concerning it but have not dared. For the truth is that the fault is in ourselves, though in a way we perhaps little expect.

The real reason for the stagnation in so many branches is due to this—that so many of us have of late been doubting our ideals. Four years ago I came to London from foreign lands and I remember vividly the impression I received of the atmosphere at Headquarters then; there were all round one signs of "Danger!" It was, *Beware* of believing this statement about the permanent atom!—*Verboten* to believe that about the astral plane!—*Defense de* believing something else! It seemed that our ideals were somewhat shaken, for our feet did not find the path so sure as we had thought. Why? Each had his own reason, I suppose, but the fact nevertheless is that it is dangerous to doubt our ideals. It is the tragedy of Elsa and Lohengrin. Doubt your ideal—to your loss.

Moreover of late years we have been priding

ourselves much on our intellectual abilities. *Everybody* was to be in a critical frame of mind—as though there were many who knew what criticism really was! Criticism is *judgment* and judgment is always from above, dispassionately, in the light of a knowledge from a dimension transcending that of the thing judged. True judgment can only be in the light of the only true Idea of Plato's archetypal realm, and short of that it is not judgment at all. We have been deluding ourselves that we were critical; instead we have been more or less skilfully expounding the prejudices in which we have nurtured ourselves for lives. And now we complain of lack of interest!

We have, I hold, not yet realised the significance of theosophic study, which is to see the world and humanity as God sees them. It is not intellect that can lead us there; emotion and intellect are two wings, the intuition must be the eye that sees whither the path goes and the spirit the life and strength to energeise it all. That is why brilliant lectures, while satisfying the mind, still often leave the inner life in gloom; that is why too often a small Branch meeting of motherly old ladies, whose combined intellect is less than that of a pupil-teacher of a London Board School, has more of the true theosophic spirit. I have often been present where a Branch was so composed mostly of women, and most of them unintellectual, and yet I have learned much of Theosophy from their quaint generalisations about nature, human and divine, arrived at not through process of mind, but surely by some process that transcended it.

Lectures are not necessary for a successful Branch meeting; *lectures* are not absolutely essential to spread the knowledge of Theosophy. Numbers in a Branch matter little; two sympathetic, earnest souls make a strong steady centre, and two make an excellent study class. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." It is the spirit in which we meet that matters. As is the cause so *must* be the effect. If we gather together in earnest faith and hope and striving to travel to the light; if, putting aside prejudice, we try to realise the worth of the essential compared to the non-essential in discussions and in activities; if we truly, and far more with the heart than with the head, try to realise the new standard of values as shown by Theosophy—then there can be *no* stagnation. The Light then will be with us, and we shall better see the significance of what is being constantly told us, that what matters is the life and *not* the form.

G. K.

STRAY NOTES.

Readers are invited to send in material which they think the editor could use in this column. The co-operation of many persons will greatly increase its scope and interest.

The Mysteries of Tibet.—Some information which

may be new to most of the readers of THE VĀHAN is given in a very interesting review of the cheap edition of Waddell's *Lhasa and its Mysteries*, contained in *Nature* of September 20th.

The reviewer's way of disposing of modern Theosophical ideas is light and airy and does not require serious attention, but the connection of the famous Lord Chesterfield with the persistent notion of some profound mystery connected with Lhasa and Tibet is a fact of considerable interest.

After referring to the incongruity of the title with what, for the most part, is a guide-book to the sights of the country, the reviewer continues in the following strain:

"He [the author] refers in his preface to the curiosity stimulated by the belief that somewhere behind the mighty Kanchenjunga there would be found a key to unlock the mysteries of the world; and the belief in the possibility of this is widely diffused.

"The ball was set rolling, though this is not generally known, by the famous Earl of Chesterfield, the author of the well-known letters to his son. This was done in another work of his entitled *The Economy of Human Life*, published in 1751. Unwilling, at that date, to give his views of life and religion under his own name, he wrote anonymously; and the method he adopted was to prefix to his book an elaborate introduction, in which he describes Lhasa, its palaces and its libraries, tells us how the Emperor of China, fully convinced that there could be found in those libraries ancient books of wisdom, sent a learned minister, 'of a grave and noble aspect'; and armed with an autograph letter from the Emperor to the Grand Lama, to discover them; tells us, further, how the minister found many 'curious pieces of antiquity,' and how the most ancient of them all was precisely the original of this *Economy of Human Life*; and finally explains the very curious ways in which this ancient MS. was translated, and then sent to him, who now gives it to the world. It is all very well done—as romance; but it was taken in sober earnest.

The book went through more than fifty editions, and has been often translated. No one seems to have divined, until last year, that it was merely an English book of the eighteenth century. The editor of the last English edition (1902) still speaks of it as 'this ancient wisdom'; and its great success led to no less famous imitations purporting to be the work of the so-called Mahatmas of Tibet. On these interesting delusions the author merely states that inquiries of learned Tibetans he happened to meet with, and such cursory examination as was possible of the libraries passed on the road, led to no result. Such negative evidence is not of much value. He might have added that the mystery is not in Tibet at all, but in certain phases of European thought."

It would be of interest if any readers of THE VĀHAN who may have read early books referring to mysterious or profound teachings to be found in Tibet, would send particulars, which might be published if thought of sufficient value.

G.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 321.

B. L.—In *The Seven Principles of Man* (p. 15), we are told that “Prāna has for its lowest sub-division the microbes of science; these are the invisible lives, etc.”

Further: “The ‘fiery lives’ are the controllers and directors of these microbes, these invisible lives.”

Has Prāna then any higher sub-divisions? If so, how may they be distinguished and explained from the lowest?

In specialising Prāna or in the passing of Prāna through the *Etheric Double*, have we all these sub-divisions expressed?

The “*Fiery Lives*” are said to be (ibid., p. 15) the “vital constructive energy,” the essence, of “the invisible lives” that build up the physical cells.

Are they (the *Fiery Lives*) a finer sub-division of Prāna? If not, what are they?

In *The Growth of the Soul* (p. 167) Prāna is said to be “specialised *Jiva* discernible when circulating within the ‘*Etheric Double*’; it is then of a delicate rosy tint, but loses this and becomes a faint bluish white as it radiates outwards.”

Can Prāna be discernible when not circulating within the *Etheric Double*? If so, what colour is it before it is appropriated in the *Etheric Double*?

Is it possible for man, by the exercise of will, to modify the whole ocean of Prāna by modifying the Prāna which for a time he specialises or passes through his *Etheric Double*?

W. C. W.—As I understand the matter “Prāna” is any part of the great ocean of the Life of the Logos in our universe, which is, as it were, drawn away and specialised for the process of vitalising any separate organism, vast or minute, which may arise within that universe. It is, in a sense, misleading to speak of a “sub-division of Prāna,” as also, in my opinion, to speak of Prāna as one of the “principles” at all! What is meant is that each minute organism, even each atom, each electron, is informed by its own special “portion” or volume of life or Prāna, drawn, like water into a sponge, out of the great ocean of life for the temporary vitalisation of that temporary form. The “fiery life” is the Prāna informing the atom, whether chemical or etheric, each of which is, as it were, an organism or a world in itself; when these are associated together to form a mineral, a vegetable, or an animal organism, then, in that case, all those innumerable “fiery lives” are controlled *en masse* by the Prāna or vitality which informs, and is peculiar to, the organism as a whole, and which is, in that sense, distinct from the Prāna which informs, and is peculiar to, each of the atomic constituents of the organism.

Inasmuch as the etheric double has an atomic constitution these “sub-divisions” of Prāna must be there represented.

I should say it is possible for man to modify the whole ocean of Prāna by the modifications set up in his own specialised Prāna when this latter once more mingles with its ocean-source; the Logic “group-life,” so to speak, of the Universe must necessarily experience modification by the dwelling of its separated portions in innumerable varied forms.

QUESTION 322.

B. L.—On the analogy of further dimensions, have we any reason to presume the existence of another system of vibrations?

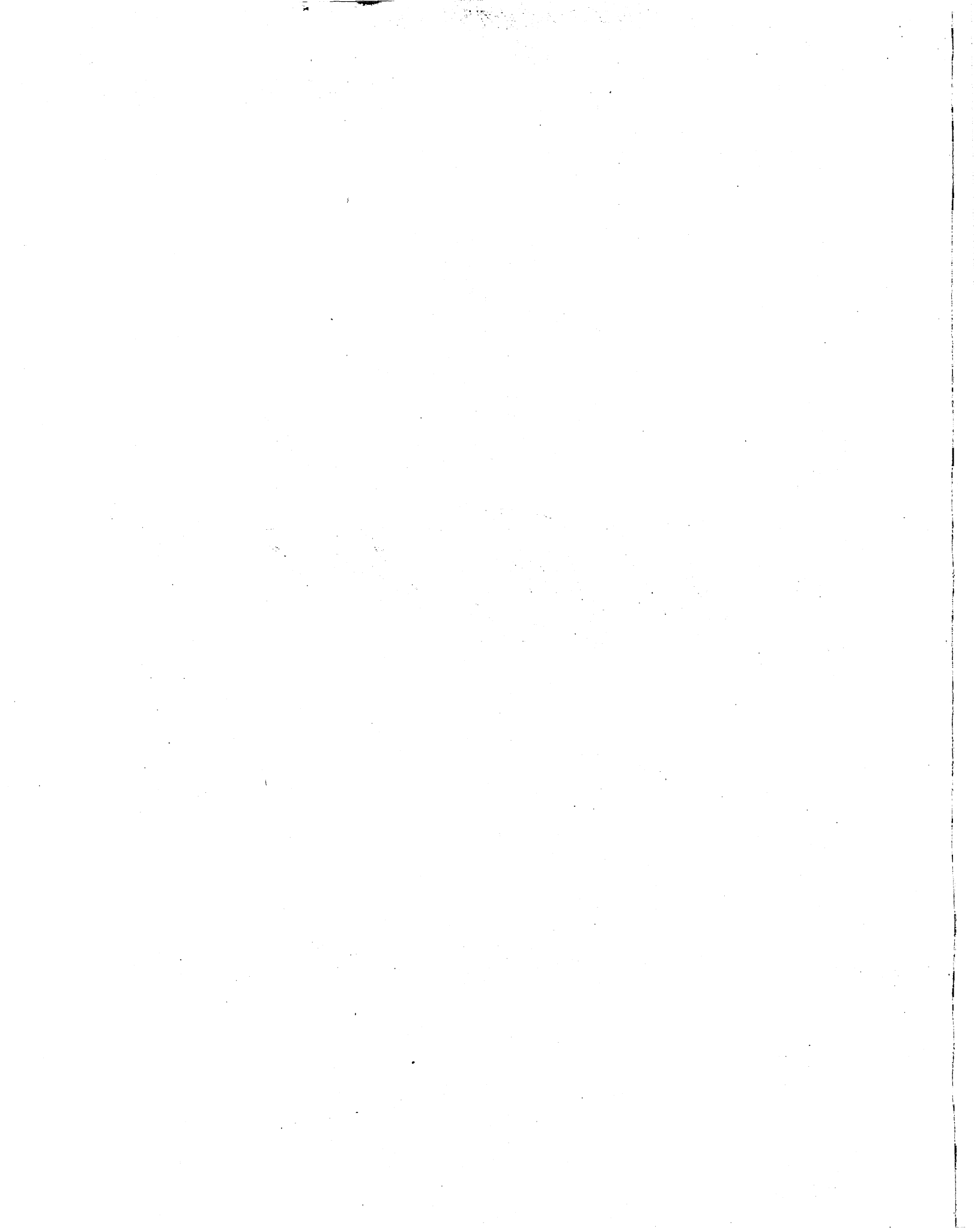
A. R. O.—Reasoning from analogy is all very well, but reasoning from analogies with analogies is intellectual foolhardiness. The “further dimensions,” for example, are themselves mere conclusions from analogy with the known dimensions: and it is unwise, to say the least, to make of these supposititious dimensions a ground for the deduction of other systems of vibrations. Moreover, it is quite unnecessary. Nobody pretends to have exclusively sounded all the depths of vibrational possibilities. If B. L. likes to imagine a whole world or series of worlds of entirely different modes of vibration from ours there is nobody to say him nay. On the other hand, there is also nobody to say him yea. He must not, that is, expect permission to believe in his own reason, nor regard the prohibition not to believe in it. It is probably true that “the Infinite is infinite in an infinite number of ways.” B. L. may be pretty sure that his wildest presumptions will not outrun possibility, so long as they remain rational.

S. G. P.—Certainly. A million worlds exist in a place, says the *Yoga Vāsishtha*. Only the grade of matter and the kind of vibration has to be different in each. Else no two worlds can exist in the same place at the same time.

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for “Activities” must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

Vol. XVII, No. 9



THE VĀHAN.



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, MAY 1, 1907.

NO. 10.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

VOTING ON THE PRESIDENCY.

Voting papers are being sent to members of the British Section at about the same time as this issue of THE VĀHAN. Branch members will receive their papers through the Secretary of their Branch. The papers for unattached members will be sent direct. Should any member not receive a paper by May 10th he should apply to the Secretary of his Branch or if unattached to the General Secretary. After careful consideration a method has been adopted enabling the voting to be by secret ballot and full particulars are issued with the voting paper, together with envelopes to be used in returning the votes. Members belonging to more than one Branch must see that no duplicate vote be sent, otherwise the papers will be cancelled.

The votes should be sent *at once* to the General Secretary. All votes must be sent during the month of May.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE CONVENTION.

As already announced, the next Convention will be held on Saturday and Sunday, July 6th and 7th. The business meeting will be held on Saturday, July 6th, at 2.30 p.m., at a hall which will be announced in the next VĀHAN. In the evening there will be a conversazione of members, at 28, Albemarle Street, and on Sunday afternoon, at the same address, a meeting will be held for discussion by members, particulars of which will be announced in due course. On Sunday evening there

will be a public meeting, at which addresses will be delivered.

The Secretaries of Branches are reminded that they should send a complete list of their members with addresses as early as possible, and at least ten days before the Convention, in order that the Section registers may be corrected where necessary.

Reports of Branches, Centres, etc., should be sent in at latest ten days before the Convention.

An agenda paper goes out with the next VĀHAN and any nominations for the officers and Executive Committee which are desired to appear on the agenda should reach me not later than May 20th.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE CONGRESS AT MUNICH.

Information has been received to the effect that Mrs. Besant will preside at the Congress, which opens on May 18th. It is hoped that the British Section will be well represented.

Congress Tickets may be obtained from the undersigned, price 5s. each, by members of the Society only.

JAMES I. WEDGWOOD,
Hon. Sec. British Congress Committee.

Return tickets from London to Munich may be obtained, through the American Express Company, 5, Haymarket, London, S.W., at the following rates: *Via* Hook of Holland, or Flushing, £8 12s. 2d. (1st class) or £6 1s. 4d. (2nd class); *via* Ostend (shorter sea route), £9 16s. 9d. (1st class), or £7 os. 2d. (2nd class). If only *hand baggage* be taken a *Rundreise* ticket can be obtained *via* Ostend for £9 6s. 10d. (1st class), or £6 14s. 8d.

(2nd class). The journey takes about twenty-six hours. Trains leave Liverpool Street Station (Hook of Holland Route), 8.30 p.m.; Victoria Station (Queenboro' and Flushing Route), 9.45 a.m. and 8.35 p.m.; Charing Cross Station (Dover and Ostend Route), 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

If there are still members who wish me either to find rooms for them at Munich, or to procure their tickets, I must ask them kindly to let me know *immediately* at 28, Albemarle Street, as I shall be leaving England about a week before the Congress.

E. M. MALLEY,
Travel Secretary.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE SECOND EUROPEAN CONGRESS.

A review of the *Transactions* is unavoidably held over till next month on account of the lack of space.

I should like to call attention to the fact, which seems to have been generally forgotten, namely, that the continued existence of the *Transactions* depends entirely on the financial support given by members of the Society. Unless during the next few months the sales of this volume show that members are taking a greater interest in the publication than they have hitherto done it will have to be discontinued. The Publishers should at any rate feel that they can count on the support of the Lodges—were every Lodge library to purchase a copy it would go far towards making the undertaking a success.

KATE SPINK.

“WHITE LOTUS” DAY.

The usual meeting will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Wednesday, May 8th, at 8.30 p.m., to commemorate the work of Mme. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, and also that of other workers who have passed out of this life.

Flowers for the decoration of the room should be sent on the morning of May 8th.

ACTIVITIES.

The Whitsuntide Holidays.

The Sectional rooms will be closed for four days at Whitsuntide, from Friday evening, May 17th, to Wednesday morning, May 22nd.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations are acknowledged to April 20th: A. A., £3; H. L., £1; C. M., £10; T. P. S., £50 (for Reference Library). Total, £63.

Return of Charter and Lapsing of Centres.

The Charter of the Lotus Lodge is being returned, as will be seen from the notice from its Secretary, given below.

Owing to removal of the Secretaries, the Tavistock and Chiswick Centres lapse from the list. The Secretary of the Moss Side Centre (Manchester) has also asked for its name to be removed.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

Lotus Lodge.

Owing to the fact that so many of its members, now grown up, have moved from London, and are attending the meetings of adult Lodges, the remaining members of the Lotus Lodge feel that they can no longer usefully sustain the responsibilities involved in maintaining a regular Lodge of the Theosophical Society, and they therefore regretfully return their Charter.

Some of the members feel that without these responsibilities their hands will be freer for the furthering of the vital parts of the Lotus work, and they wish very clearly to state their intention of carrying on these activities as usual in the *Lotus Circle* for children, which has met for fourteen years in London, and which will continue to meet on Sundays, at 3 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Bayswater; the *Lotus Journal*, edited by two members of the Lotus Lodge, and supported by workers in the Lotus movement in many parts of the world; and the *Correspondence Bureau*.

H. W.

Monday Afternoon Meetings.

There will be two Monday afternoon lectures at Headquarters in May, beginning at 3.30 p.m. On May 6th, Miss Lilian Lloyd will speak on “Health and Discrimination”; on May 13th, Mrs. Hooper will speak on “The Descent into Hell.” Members and visitors are invited.

E. M. M.

Northern Federation.

The next Conference of the Northern Federation of the Theosophical Society will be held in the Theosophical Hall, Harrogate, on June 1st, when Mrs. Besant will preside.

The discussion on Saturday afternoon will be on “Methods of Theosophical Work,” and it is hoped that many good papers will be sent in.

All members of the Society are most cordially invited to attend.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
Hon. Secretary.

Blavatsky Lodge.

The Annual Business Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 30th, at 8.30 p.m. Members are requested to send to the Secretary, before May 10th, nominations for the Council and any resolutions to be discussed at the meeting, in order that they may be included in the agenda, which will be sent to every member two weeks before the meeting.

F. E.-W.

Section Reference Library.

The following books have been gratefully received for the Library: *Vom Glück und von der Liebe*, G. W. Kiderlen; *Steps to the Crown*, A. E. Waite; *The Lotus Song Book*; *The Reconstruction of Religious Belief*, W. H. Mallock; *The Word, a Monthly Magazine*, edited by H. W. Percival; *La Ley Naturel*, José Granés; *Origen y Orden de las Cosas*, José Granés; *Index to the Path*, Vols. 1-8.

The following books have been purchased for the Library: *Synesius the Hellene*, W. S. Crawford; *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, G. R. S. Mead (Second Edition); *The Growth of the Soul*, A. P. Sinnett (Second Edition); *Texte und Untersuchungen*, xxxi. 1, 2; *A Vade Mecum of Theosophy*, Leeker; *Gems from the East*, a Theosophical Birthday Book, compiled by H. P. B. and Others; *Incubation and the Cure of Disease in Pagan Temples and Christian Churches*, Mary Hamilton; *Towards Democracy*, E. Carpenter; *Studies in Mysticism and Certain Aspects of the Secret Tradition*, A. E. Waite; *Children of the Motherland*, published by the Trustees of the C.H.C.; *Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries*, E. Schuré, translated by F. Rothwell; *Unto a Perfect Man*, I. K. Murray; *The Substance of Faith*, Sir Oliver Lodge; *The Divine Vision and Other Poems*, A. E.

R. A. HOBSON,
Assistant Librarian.

Dublin Lodge Lending Library.

In response to the appeal made in the December number of THE VĀHAN for contributions of books for the above library, we very gratefully acknowledge a copy of the *Hermes Trismegistus*, by G. R. S. Mead, the gift of a few friends in memory of the late Miss Elaine Pattrick, a member of the Blavatsky Lodge: also of forty-nine volumes on theosophic and kindred subjects from "Gomghal"; nine volumes of Mrs. Besant's works from Mrs. C., and other smaller gifts and valuable loans from various friends. Several of our members have also contributed, and we hope before long to have a thoroughly representative, even though small, lending library.

MARY E. GREENE,
Vice-President.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: May 6th, *The Apotheosis of Woman*, Miss E. Severs; May 13th, *India*, Mrs. Lauder; May 20th, no meeting; May 27th, *The Need for Socialism*, Mr. Logie. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's

Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *The Growth of the Soul*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The Arts Club, 19, West Street, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street: May 7th, *The Astrological Future of the Earth*, Mrs. Forbes Williams; May 14th, *Some Indian Experiences*, Mrs. Lauder. On Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., May 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd, a course of lectures on *The Gnostic Point of View in Modern Christianity* will be delivered by Mr. J. Redwood Anderson. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. May 2nd, Annual Business Meeting, at 8 p.m.; May 8th, White Lotus Day. Library open on Mondays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Drawing-room meetings fortnightly. Information from Miss Pagan, 28, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. 98, Bouverie Road West. Weekly class for study at 8 p.m. Information concerning general meetings from Mrs. J. B. Scott, 98, Bouverie Road West.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: May 5th, *Christianity*, Mrs. Bell; May 12th, *Prayer*, W. Bell; May 19th, *Superman*, A. W. Waddington; May 26th, *Methods of Self-Mastery*, J. I. Wedgwood. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *Elements of Theosophy*, and Sir Oliver Lodge's *Substance of Faith*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, Beech Croft, Newland Park, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquitt Street, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquitt Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattanach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: May 2nd, *The Gospel of the Truth*, Rev. Dr. Cobb; May 9th, *The Ethical Teaching of Ruskin*, Miss Spurgeon; May 16th, *Zosimus on Hermes*, G. R. S. Mead; May 23rd, *Devotion as taught by Chaitanya*, J. C. Chatterji; May 30th, Annual Business Meeting. On Sundays, at 7 p.m. (open to visitors): May 5th, *The Gnostic Hymn of the Soul*, G. R. S. Mead; May 12th, *Divine Comprehensiveness*, Mrs. D. R. Sharpe.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: May 6th, *Bahatism*, Sydney K. Sprague; May 13th, Study Class; May 20th, No Meeting; May 27th, *That the Teachings of Theosophy are Reasonable and Practicable*, G. W. Elliott.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. Meetings suspended till the autumn.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham: May 7th, *About the Chromosphere*, G. Dyne; May 14th, *Poetry and Spiritual Life*, Miss Lilian Lloyd. Information from P. Tovey, 122, Barry Road, East Dulwich.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 25, Compton Road, Highbury, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and lectures on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: May 1st, *Theosophy and Spiritualism*, J. I. Wedgwood; May 8th, *Theosophy and Modern Science*, H. Twelvetrees; May

15th, *Theosophy in Relation to Life*, Albert Haddock; May 22nd, *Theosophy and Modern Thought*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; May 29th, *Theosophy and Evolution*, W. C. Worsdell.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Manchester: May 5th, . . . C. H. Minton; May 12th, *Finding the Self*, Mrs. Larnuth; May 19th, *Reincarnation: what it is*, E. Wood; May 26th, *Reincarnation: why it is*, E. Wood. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE: Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *A Study in Consciousness*; 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 53, Peverell Park Road.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *Esoteric Buddhism*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in the month, at 7.30 p.m.; study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, "Henley," Roberts Road, Hill.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton. May 5th, *Theosophy*, A. J. Faulding; May 12th, *Meditation*, J. M. Watkins; May 19th, no meeting; May 26th, *Theosophy and the New Theology*, G. W. Elliott.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Co-operative Hall, Smyth Street. Study of *Man and his Bodies*, at 8.15 p.m. Elementary Class on Tuesdays, at 7.15 p.m. Study of psychology on alternate Sundays, at 6 p.m. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate. Information from J. E. Reid, 9, First Avenue, York.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

At a special Committee Meeting of the Bath Lodge, held on Saturday, April 6th, I was instructed to inquire of the Executive Committee of the British Section why Col. Olcott's official notice of January 21st, nominating Mrs. Besant as President in accordance with the rules of the Theosophical Society, was suppressed?

MARY K. SWEET,
Hon. Secretary.

Statement of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee deem it desirable to state, in response to inquiries from some members of the British Section with reference to the circular issued in the beginning of March:

(1) That the original presidential notice, dated from Adyar, January 7th, was headed, *To the General Secretary of the British Section*, and was accompanied by a copy for publication headed, *To the Theosophical Society, its Officers and Members*. It contains the official notification of the late Colonel Olcott's intention with regard to his successor in the following terms: "I therefore appoint Annie Besant to take the office of President of the Theosophical Society at my death." For reasons stated in its resolution of February 2nd, the Executive Committee regarded this official notice as irregular and forwarded the resolution to the late President-Founder.

(2) In the meantime a letter containing instructions to vote, as printed in THE VAHAN for April (see page 69), had been forwarded from Adyar to Miss Spink. This document, dated January 21st, refers to the original notice as follows: "As already notified to you I have, under Rule 9, nominated, etc." An instruction to vote upon an invalid notice does not constitute it a valid one. The claim made since Colonel Olcott's death, that this instruction to vote was itself the legal notice, and that the original document was intended as a mere friendly communication, may be dismissed from consideration in the face of the documents themselves.

(3) The Executive Committee, having the two documents before it, on hearing that death had closed the lips of the late President, requested the Acting President, Mr. Sinnett, to regularise the notice of Colonel Olcott's obvious intention in order that everything might be placed in proper train for the forthcoming election.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

I am asking the Secretaries of the Lodges and Centres of the British Section to put before their members an address to Mrs. Besant with a view to their signing it if they approve. The address is as follows:

"We, the undersigned members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society, and of the Lodge, hereby express our deep sense of gratitude to Mrs. Annie Besant for all the help, guidance, and inspiration she has brought to us, by her speech as well as pen, and in other subtler, but equally real methods. We also desire to assure her of our love and loyalty."

In the event of any members who, by reason of illness, absence, or other cause, have not had an opportunity of signing this address and approving the same, I shall be glad to add their names on receiving their written consent to do so. I hope to send the address to Mrs. Besant to greet her on her arrival at Trieste.

ALFRED J. FAULDING,
53, Warrington Crescent, W.

Returning from a two months' sojourn abroad I find the British Section of the Theosophical Society in what appears to me a very unnecessary state of excitement over the nomination by Colonel Olcott of Mrs. Besant to the Presidency of the Theosophical Society.

It appears that he used the word "appoint" instead of "nominate." Last summer, when staying in my house, he spoke several times of the difficulty he felt in "appointing" a successor. (By the bye he always used the words "appoint as my successor," never "nominate," so that it need not be taken for granted that when the time to nominate came and he used the word he was accustomed to use, he was the victim of cerebral collapse.)

I suggested the names of those who might have a possible claim for the office, but he had some objection to make to every one of them.

Under these circumstances, he asked the help of his Master, and believing he had received it, he gave the name of Annie Besant as the one he desired to succeed him.

Who could have imagined that when "our honoured and beloved President" chose the name of the most distinguished personality, the best loved and the most gifted among all the members of the Theosophical Society, the Council of the British Section should have sent him a cold rejection of his choice on the ground that he had used the word "appoint" instead of the word "nominate"! Still more extraordinary that she should be rejected because he says his Master desires her to be chosen—the Master who, according to the testimony of H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott, founded the Society.

Another mysterious circumstance. After the rejection of the nomination of Mrs. Besant as *not* valid, the Council appeals to Mr. Sinnett to "regularise" it, and he does so. Why? Because he says the "evident intention" of the late Presi-

dent was to nominate her. Marvellous discovery! May one ask why, if the "intention" was so "evident," it should have been necessary to fling into the face of the suffering and dying man, "the much revered and honoured President," a cold and cruel refusal to accept his nomination of the noblest, most unselfish, the best known and most loved of all Theosophists?

He who ascends to mountain tops will find
The loftiest peaks most veiled in cloud and snow,
He who surpasses, or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.

Fortunately the eyes that look down on the strange bewilderment below, in this case, are eyes full of compassion and tender forgiveness.

On another subject. Has it ever occurred to our members that when Jesus said to the woman taken in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," he was seriously imperilling the cause of marital morality? Can anyone imagine that He who was reproached as the friend of publicans and sinners could by any possibility turn his back on the most sinful? Who, may I ask, has ever heard, by the way, that the particular sinner of whom some people are so terrified wants to return? Need we load our guns till the enemy appears at the gate? Fear is the root of all cruelty; fear of our reputation as a Society; fear that the public won't join us. Who cares whether it joins us or not? It does not join us now, but the teachings of Theosophy are steadily penetrating every strata of Society. There is no need to fear for the Theosophical Society. It will go when it has done its work, not before. And after all what is it? Listen to H. P. B.

"Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of Universal Truth, Love and Wisdom reflecting its radiance on the earth; while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflexion."

URSULA M. BRIGHT.

P.S.—I would like also to point out the singular disrespect and distrust shown in "heckling" Mrs. Besant, thousands of miles away by cable, as to "what she would do if elected," as if she were the quite unknown candidate for a little Scotch Borough.

No one can deprecate more strongly than myself the introduction of ordinary electioneering tactics into the business at present before the Theosophical Society, and no one can more regret the various factors that render anything of the kind necessary. Personally, it seems to me that the whole question has been greatly complicated and the issues much confused by a misapprehension (caused, as I cannot but think, in some cases by the difficulty of postal communication with so distant a country as India) of Mrs. Besant's attitude with regard to two points, which, while they cannot be ignored in the present question, yet certainly should have been treated in a very different spirit to that in which they have been dealt with hitherto.

I will take these two points under the headings (a) and (b).

(a) Referring to the question whether or not the nomination of Mrs. Besant for the office of President was endorsed by those whom we have been accustomed to speak of as "the Masters," Mr. Mead says: "The ratification of it (the nomination) by a two-thirds' majority vote means the death of the constitution and the handing over of the Society to the mercy of an irresponsible psychic tyranny."* Many entirely unjustifiable and wholly unsubstantiated inferences have been drawn from Mrs. Besant's statement that she personally *does* accept the endorsement by the Masters of her nomination; but that there is no fear whatever of her imposing her views on others, and that the accusation of tyranny is altogether baseless, may be shown by quoting her own words, taken from *The Theosophist* for March, 1907.

"It should be remembered that while I personally regard myself as the nominee of my Master as well as of our President-Founder, no member of the Society is bound to take that view, nor to base his vote on any authority save that of his own private judgment. . . . Belief in the Masters is not incumbent on any member of the Society: those who believe in them are not bound to believe in any particular manifestation asserted as genuine by others. Perfect freedom as to belief or non-belief in any view or statement is the precious heritage of the Theosophical Society, and while I myself know the manifestations to be genuine I defend the right of every member to disbelieve them."†

Can anything be less like "tyranny," psychic or otherwise? Could any society desire a basis more eclectic than one from which *any* member is at liberty to doubt *anything*—even the existence of beings who would seem to be a logical necessity in a scheme of evolution that begins with the clod and ends with the Christ! I do not personally fear for the liberty of the subject under Mrs. Besant's leadership, but the point is not what any one member feels or knows about her, but what she herself has *said*—and here we have her refutation of the accusation of lending herself to tyranny and autocracy. The question has resolved itself into one which our members have no right to shirk, *viz.*: do we, or do we not believe what she says? Is her word to be trusted even to the same extent as we should trust the word of any man or woman we know in everyday life? It would surely seem strange to the casual observer that the answer to this question appears to be in the negative, in a Society which lays no small stress on truth, even among its obscurest members! But let us ask ourselves, with her own words before us, do we or do we not believe her when she says we have *entire* liberty to use our private judgment to the utmost limits of its capacity? If we do, then point (a) is disposed of, and we may vote for or against Mrs. Besant "on her own merits" (if we are able to dis-

* Letter to Lodges, by G. R. S. Mead, March, 1907.

† It should be stated that Mr. Mead had not seen these words when he wrote his letter, and it is for this reason that I place them together here.

cern them !), and exercise our British prerogative of weighing everything in the Universe in our particular pair of scales. A highly proper and desirable proceeding, as I should be the last to deny, so long as we remember that there *are* scales a size larger, and therefore able to hold what ours can't, to be found here and there.

To proceed to point (b). Referring to the question as to whether, if Mrs. Besant were to be elected, she would use her position to reinstate Mr. Leadbeater in the Theosophical Society, Dr. Wells says: "The price we are asked to pay for having Mrs. Besant for our President is that Mr. Leadbeater is to be restored to his place as recognised Teacher of the Society."* Now, here again we have Mrs. Besant's own statement, clear and definite as her utterances usually are; but Dr. Wells, in a short appendix to his article, tells us that he cannot take her seriously, in effect, that *he* does *not* believe what she says! What she does say is, however, this. Asked by cable if, in the event of her election, she would "permit X.'s (Mr. Leadbeater's) readmission," she answers: "If publicly repudiates teaching, two years after repudiation *on large majority vote of whole Society* [italics mine, E. M. G.] would reinstate, otherwise not."

It is surely a liberal education in the study of human nature to see the havoc played in man's critical faculty by selfish fear and prejudice. This cable has been construed by some as a condoning on Mrs. Besant's part of moral evil! and by others as a further instance of "tyranny." To deal with the latter first: how about *tyranny* if she had merely cabled "on no account readmit." Is a "large majority vote" the usual method of tyranny? To take the second and more universal construction put upon her answer, especially when taken, as most people *have* taken it, in conjunction with her article in *March Theosophical Review*, "The Basis of the Theosophical Society." Let me here point out that Mrs. Besant is speaking of *expulsions* from the Theosophical Society, and is not questioning the right of individual action, or of collective action on the part of bodies of individuals; she carefully guards herself from misunderstanding there in her paragraph beginning "I do not question the right of any Branch, etc." The point she raises is whether *expulsion from the Society* is desirable, be the wrong-doing ever so culpable, the moral disease ever so dangerous? Mrs. Besant emphatically pronounces against expulsion, and for this she is accused, both openly and by insinuation, of condoning and thinking lightly of moral evil!

May I take an analogy which seems to be a very close parallel, and ask you to consider for a moment the treatment of physical disease in the ordinary life of the world in which we live.

What do we find when we look at the treatment of disease among savage and primitive communities? Expulsion, abandonment, desertion for the sufferer: panic, selfish fear, inhuman cruelty on the part of those who still have a whole skin!

* Article "New Basis of Theosophical Society," *Theosophical Review*, April, 1907.

Yet with the knowledge of the laws of sanitation and hygiene, and with the development of the philanthropic instinct, we find the point of view has somewhat changed! The sick person is no longer *expelled from* the community, he is nursed and tended *within it*; and if his complaint be incurable, he is watched and carefully prevented from spreading disease in its more loathsome forms. Yet who is there who would assert that in the eyes of an experienced physician a case of confluent small-pox is less "grave" than in those of a panic-stricken savage? Or that by his treatment of the evil he can be said to incur the charge of *condoning* it? We have heard a good deal lately of Mrs. Besant's fall from the moral and spiritual altitudes from whence she gave us such books as *In the Outer Court*. Personally I see very little difference between her point of view to-day and when she wrote the following words: "Within that calmer atmosphere of the Court of the Temple there is no place for anger of any sort, even though the anger be purged from personal antagonism. For the aspirant has now to learn that those who do the wrong are also his brothers, and that they suffer more in their wrong-doing than do their fellow men by the injury they may inflict; he has to learn that this noble indignation of his, and this passion of his against the wrong . . . is not the characteristic of the soul that is striving onwards towards the Divine."* It may be argued that *we* are not there yet! That if Mrs. Besant is capable of acting from that standpoint we are not! Granted. But is that a reason for hurling anathemas at her head and suggesting that she no longer takes her stand on Truth, Righteousness and Purity! She ends her article: "Thus believe I," but she began it by recommending each of us to think of it for ourselves. "You did right to doubt, for it was a doubtful matter," are the words which she quotes as applying to this question. Let us differ, if differ we must: but let us not call her immoral whose morality transcends our own!

E. M. GREEN.

This month's *Theosophical Review* contains many articles and letters from such varied sources concerning the present crisis, that Mr. Fricke can, I think, no longer believe that Mr. Mead's circular, "The Coming Election to the Presidency," expresses merely his personal conclusions. Mrs. Besant's article on "The Basis of the Theosophical Society," and her pronouncements to the Society, have roused an expression of dismay and disagreement that is without parallel in the annals of the Society; probably also in Mrs. Besant's own experience.

People do *not* willingly come forward to oppose a woman like Mrs. Besant; friends do not like to hurt friends, especially when that friend is Mrs. Besant.

It is, therefore, easy to believe that one and all have written with the deep regret that they express.

* *Outer Court*, p. 30.

Not one, or, at least, very few, who has not made repeated attempts to approach Mrs. Besant by private letters. Her only reply to some of us is the publication of the article in question and the various pronouncements against which it is our simple duty to protest openly, either by word or by pen. Unfortunately we must speak of Mrs. Besant because the battle rages round her, and her position, and her writing. And the battle has only begun.

The evidence already of confusion of thought, of agitation of mind, because of their veneration for Mrs. Besant, which makes them fear the voice of their own conscience, among members who *want* to do right—indeed, Mr. Fricke's own letter—shows us pretty clearly what is to follow. For this reason I want to say plainly, at once, that hard things will have to be said, and the only wise thing is to ask—*not*, are they hard? but are they true? Do they help to clear our minds?

If they are true we may be sure they will one day be forgiven. If they clear our minds they help us to find out if they are true.

That we are bound to say the hard thing as fairly, as courteously, as possible, goes without saying; and we deserve any blame we get if we wilfully hurt by saying the thing that we know will irritate and rankle, no matter how true it be, if it is not necessary to say it.

There are many points which could be taken in Mr. Fricke's letter, but a careful reading of it and of Mr. Mead's circular will make it clear to most people that Mr. Mead has said temperately what has been in the mind of every correspondent. But my object is not to defend Mr. Mead—his own circular is, in my opinion, his best defence. I want to insist that the circular proves my point—that these things must be said, and that it is childish to call them attacks upon character.

It is time we realised that reasoned statements of the case against Mrs. Besant, and of members' views on the case, are not only permissible but are an imperative necessity.

We do believe that we are right and that Mrs. Besant is wrong.

We do decline to be governed by psychic methods. We declare that to believe in these particular apparitions would be a violation of every ideal of Holiness, of every sense of common morality we have ever had; we think it a terrible thing to be the means of confusion of mind upon an issue that would be absolutely clear to every honest man and woman were it not for Mrs. Besant's special pleading on behalf of one whose treachery and whose abuse of trust, unquestioningly given *because he came in the name of the Masters*, is proved and confessed.

We do say that we have no guarantee for the future that these things will not be repeated; Mrs. Besant gives us no loophole for saying anything else.

How can these things be said without hurting Mrs. Besant? without seeming hard to her in her present state of mind? It is, alas! impossible. But how can we keep silence when the principle at stake is vital? Would Mrs. Besant impose

silence upon herself or others if she thought as we do? Will she, in fact, want to impose silence now? Not if she is true to her often repeated warning to fake nothing from her that does not commend itself to our best judgment—the judgment of mind and heart.

I, for one, feel really thankful that the fight is now in the open—at whatever cost—and I bless those who have the power to say well, for us, what has to be said.

To help by clear presentment of facts is to help towards a "right judgment," and is, at this critical juncture, a very great privilege.

CAROLINE MARSHALL.

Everyone seems to be rushing into print so perhaps you will allow me to say a word or two with reference to the present state of affairs. I confess I feel a bit stifled amid all this discussion and a great desire to open the windows and let in a little air; quite wrong, I know, and not showing forth that "selfless love and goodwill for his fellow beings" referred to by Babu Upendranath Basu, which looks so nice in print but is so difficult to find in practice; however, since Dr. Wells has written about the original sin of the Society, referring apparently to attention being paid to psychic phenomena, I think I may whisper that perhaps we are in danger of falling into a sin which I, personally, think more grievous—namely, hypocrisy—all these expressions of sorrow and all this blarney, to use an Irishism, run it very close.

Cannot we admit frankly that for years there have been various people both in the East and West who have consistently opposed Mrs. Besant, and who, I think, are fully entitled to have and express their opinions both of herself and her actions? It would be much simpler and franker to admit this at once. The members in general would then be able to distinguish the speeches of the counsel for the prosecution and estimate them at their proper value.

Why, for instance, is the name left out in Mr. Mead's letter when referring to the other candidate for the Presidency—of course a good many know that Mr. Keightley is referred to, but why not let all know? Then Mr. Keightley's own letter falls into its proper place and with it Babu Upendranath Basu's, and the opinions of the party to which they both belong. These gentlemen are, of course, quite entitled to voice their opinions, but their general attitude towards Mrs. Besant of late years should be known in order to enable members to judge fairly. As regards Mr. Keightley, I think, to do him justice, he has not been at pains to conceal it, and anyone who was present at the Adyar Convention of 1905, and knows how Mrs. Besant was left off the Council of the Indian Section without her knowledge, would know what Babu Upendranath's attitude has been, even if they had no very inside knowledge of the state of affairs in India.

Mr. Keightley's statement as to the Colonel's condition of mind seems hardly borne out by his last pronouncement, which is singularly coherent;

and to my own personal knowledge the Colonel talked about his power of nomination in a way which showed he regarded it as practically a power to appoint; he also, I may add, expressed his opinions as to the competency of others for the office of President in quite as free a manner as he is said to have spoken of Mrs. Besant's.

I am a little at a loss to understand Mr. Keightley's references to the bolstering up of a position by appeals to Higher Powers, and his suggestion that if Mrs. Besant and Colonel Olcott had these experiences they should have kept them to themselves, and left the Society in ignorance. It seems to me an extraordinary position to take up, and I am loath to comment on it.

I do not personally know much about the utterances of advanced disciples, which are said by both Mr. Keightley and Babu Upendranath to be elevated and dignified, but I should say from some of the letters in the April *Theosophical Review* we could do with a few of such utterances over here.

As regards the suggestion that Mrs. Besant is holding these phenomena over us, after the manner of the "Absolute Autocrat," it seems to me that an impartial consideration of her communication in the current *Review* will dispel that, shall I say, illusion—it is a dangerous word just now.

Finally, I would urge that it be not put forward as a dogma that we are a society of saints, or else I, for one, dear Editor, would feel so out of place that it would be impossible for me to remain and, mayhap, soil the wings of those to whose lofty position I could only hope to rise after an untold number of incarnations.

W. B. LAUDER.

I herewith state that I so emphatically concur in all the above that, in the event of my own VĀHAN letter being crowded out, I wish you to take the above as an expression of my own views in the matter.

EVELINE LAUDER.

So many have voiced their ideas and expressed their opinions in *The Theosophical Review* which seem to have but one set purpose, *viz.*, to belittle Mrs. Besant, and to throw doubt upon her utterances—that I think it time for someone to speak up.

According to some, Mrs. Besant is found wanting in truthfulness, simply because she states openly and frankly what she knows of the communications from the Masters of the late Colonel Olcott.

Others suggest ulterior motives and dark influences being at work.

To my mind it shows a weak and paltry spirit to descend to such recriminating utterances.

We who have felt the power and beauty of the wholesome words that none can deny come from Mrs. Besant, are sure that she would not spoil her life of usefulness, by deliberately or in any way whatsoever, being party to anything so utterly false and untheosophical as to impersonate or connive at the impersonation of the Masters—as in plain English that is what the accusation amounts to.

I for one believe absolutely in the truth of Mrs. Besant and the Masters, and whatever others may say or do I shall give my entire support to Mrs. Besant in every way possible.

Let us live the life and not merely be professors of Theosophy. Intellect without the Spirit is dead. Let us see to it that truth prevails, and show to the world that we can rise above all petty differences in our desire for that which is good and true. "There is no religion higher than truth."

A. J. SMITH.

The discussion now proceeding in most of our Theosophical Periodicals *re* the Election of the President, raises so many side issues as to "The True Basis of the Theosophical Society," "Expulsion of Members," "Real and Ideal Morality," "Irresponsible Psychic Influences," "The Danger to the Freedom and Sanity of the Theosophical Society," that the real issue is becoming totally obscured.

Will you therefore allow me to state this real issue concisely, plainly and clearly, as follows:

"Has Mrs. Besant sufficiently shown in the past, by her wide mental grasp, depth of sympathy, and untiring activity, by her unselfishness, sincerity and organising ability, that she is the fittest person we can find to occupy the position of President of the Theosophical Society?"

I think most members who are at all acquainted with her past record must admit that she has sufficiently shown her fitness in every way.

Even those who are opposed to the ratification of her nomination, have not called in question in any slightest particular these superlative qualities of hers.

We are asked to vote against the ratification of the nomination:

1st. Because that nomination was given under psychic "orders," and was not according to Colonel Olcott's normal best judgment as expressed to Mr. Mead and others when he was last in Europe.

2nd. Because Mrs. Besant by her unqualified endorsement of the aforesaid psychic "orders" warns us that we have no guarantee with her as President, that she will not at any moment force other similar psychic "orders" upon us.

3rd. Because Mrs. Besant is in this, acting contrary to her own declared normal better judgment, in that she had previously favoured someone else's nomination.

4th. Because Mrs. Besant is already far too much overburdened with grave responsibilities, and we require someone for President who can give undivided attention to the onerous duties of that high post.

5th. Because Mrs. Besant is already Head of the E.S. and it is inadvisable that the two offices should be held by the same person.

6th. Because the Rules of the Society being absurdly drawn, there is no provision for the nomination of other candidates.

7th. Because the ratification of the nomination by a two-thirds majority vote means the death of

our constitution, and the handing over of the Society to the mercy of an irresponsible psychic tyranny.

With regard to reasons one, two and three, I think far too much has been made of the psychic "orders." They can have no weight except with those who receive them, and they seem to have been made public only to explain Colonel Olcott's and Mrs. Besant's changes of mind.

The Theosophical Society as a whole and its members individually, already owe so much to Mrs. Besant, that, in the light of reasons four and five, they would not have been justified in asking her to assume the thankless burden of being President of the Theosophical Society also, but knowing how whole-heartedly she throws herself into everything she undertakes, whether they believe in the possibility or reliability of psychic "orders" or not, they should rejoice that *something* could induce her to do what they had neither the right nor the power to do, and may rest assured, the best interests of the Society will not suffer from any inattention on her part.

If the Constitution and Rules mentioned in reasons six and seven are not already sufficiently safeguarded from arbitrary interference and irresponsible psychic tyranny they can be altered in a legitimate manner and need not be brought forward as an electioneering cry.

Finally, is it not absurd to even hesitate in the slightest when we are getting for nothing, services which if our Society were a commercial undertaking would be underpaid if they received the whole yearly income of all our Branches, Sections, Headquarters and allied institutions?

H. ARTHUR WILSON,
Late General Secretary Australian Section.

Briefly stated the main facts of the situation may be taken as follows:

1. The imposition of a personal psychic dogma upon the Society.
2. Mrs. Besant's acceptance of these phenomena because of the sanction of her own practised super-conscious experience, which corroborated the death-bed communications.
3. Her profound disturbance at the suspicion that certain teachings which she received in conjunction with the discredited X. might be "glamour."
4. Her reluctant acquiescence in accepting nomination to the arduous post of President.
5. Her ardent expression of opinion, open to great misunderstanding on the part of many of the members of the Society, in her article in the March number of *The Theosophical Review*.
6. The virulent personal attack of her *confrères* in a magazine in which she appears as co-editor.

It seems to me, as one who stands outside the inner circle of the Society, that the storm of feeling, repudiation and indignation having raised such a cloud of disturbance, naturally no fighting member can be expected to discern aught but his own immediate weapon and the weapon of his adversary. In these circumstances it would be

well to separate the points at issue and arrange them as "for" and "against" her election; placed arithmetically the values *pro* and *con*, appear to be as follows:

Question: Shall Mrs. Besant be elected President of the Theosophical Society?

FOR.

Colonel Olcott's nomination	-	-	1
Mrs. Besant's corroboration of the mandate from personal conviction	-	-	1
Her telegram of repudiation in answer to vital question	-	-	1

AGAINST.

Spook suspicions and psychic dogmatism	1
The shock to the feelings of many members of the Society, who conclude from the tone of the March article that Mrs. Besant upholds X.	1
The failure of Colonel Olcott's mental powers before his passing	1

Total: 3 for, 3 against, leaving the balance equal, and the matter one for the private judgment of each member of the Society.

It might be argued that the bitter personal attack of so many of her own friends, her disciples, those who owe her deep material debts of gratitude and obligation, is no reason for mentally adding a unit to the scale in her favour; but in view of the many members of the Society likely to be biased by this special pleading against Mrs. Besant in the magazine of which she is co-editor, it strongly predisposes one to accord this unit a weight in the scale of sentiment, not sentimentality. The sight of this clamouring crowd of attackers, the baying of the hounds of death, is very distasteful and offensive and engenders a strong reactionary desire to see fair play for a woman thus attacked in her own magazine.

M. C. D. HAMILTON.

We should *all* do well to vote for, or against, the appointment of Mrs. Besant *according as* we think her suitable or not to fill the post. A vote used for any other reason—as, merely to counter-balance that of those who "obey"—is misused. Those who believe that the recent "psychic pronouncements" are from the dark powers would act unwisely in voting against Mrs. Besant on *that* account alone, since one may argue that the dark powers have done what they have for the purpose of keeping Mrs. Besant *out*, knowing that it would raise a great feeling against her being appointed. On the other hand, if they be due to bright powers the crisis may be intended as a weeding agency, *either way*, for there are many things in such a Society as ours more detrimental to its stability than is, for example, personal moral lapse. Thus the psychic events do not count, and we are left to use our own best judgment as to Mrs. Besant's fitness.

ERNEST WOOD,
Hon. Librarian, Manchester City Lodge.

If the outer world ever glances at *The Theosophical Review* its April number must have given them matter for reflection on the way a leader of Theosophy is handled in the house of her friends.

Before this singular unanimity of stone throwing, a few words may not seem amiss, spoken from another point of view.

When Mrs. Besant wrote that now celebrated article on morals, that has evoked such a hysterical outburst of indignation, it seems to me that the ideas she suggested were primarily ethical, and conveyed the mystical Indian teaching that right and wrong are both one with Brahman, and pertaining to the body, which reflects the conditioned Saguna Brahman, have no power over the unconditioned Nirguna Brahman, Who is the true Self. The unity between these two fully realised, sins that still dim the manifestation of the Spirit in that lower Self have no power to affect the higher Self or retard its progress, being recognised by illumination as mere creatures of Māya, as "when a man is wakened from sleep, the objects seen in his dream perception are found to have no existence outside the wakened soul."

It naturally follows that power for the helping of others may pour through such a channel; if Mrs. Besant is mistaken in supposing this, at least she shares the delusion with the Sages, whose judgments are as far above our puny grasp, as their lives are beyond ordinary human comprehension.

Such a one, it is recorded, said, "Judge not,"—judge not, for we cannot penetrate behind the veil, the action lies ready for our condemnation, but the motive must ever be a mystery to those who would measure all greatness with a carpenter's rule, and sound virtue with the plumb-line of their own self-righteousness.

Therefore, let all members who cannot recognise the nobility behind Mrs. Besant's conception of brotherhood refrain, at least, from imputing to her motives to which every word she has spoken and written while among us, gives the lie, lest the Bible prophecy be carried out to the letter, and some day the measure that they mete be measured to them again. Rarely does so beautiful a soul come forth for the helping of mankind; if we cannot rise to the conception of truth as seen by her on inner planes, gratitude and loyalty at least are virtues pertaining to this world, and well within the comprehension, if not within the practice, of Theosophical members.

ALICE C. AMES.

No psychic authority would be imposed on the Society by electing Mrs. Besant. She should be judged entirely on her own merits by those who do not believe in the Masters, and it is very evident that there is no other such great and commanding soul in the Society able to guide it.

Personally, I see no reason to disbelieve the "Conversations," for at a crisis like this one might expect the Masters to give advice. As it was They who founded the Society by means of H. P. B. and Col. Olcott, it is only natural They should nominate their successor.

Also what They say with regard to Mr. Leadbeater appears to me most wise and reasonable. All this foolish outcry in the Society arises from self-righteousness and pride, and people must learn to be grateful to one who teaches them spiritual Truths, whatever errors he may commit.

In my opinion it will be the downfall of the Society if it does not elect Mrs. Besant as President.

MARGARET MATTHEWS.

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To the Editor of THE VĀHAN.

Do those who reject Mrs. Besant's evidence as to recent happenings at Adyar quite realise what their rejection implies? It means nothing less than this, that after all these years Mrs. Besant cannot be trusted to recognise her own Master (to say nothing of other Masters and of H. P. B.) when she sees him. If this is true of her, why should it not also be true of others who have functioned on inner planes since the Society was founded, H. P. B. included, and who have given out a multitude of teachings based directly or indirectly upon such experiences? The acceptance of this proposition would cause such a mass of confusion and fog that any apparent difficulties arising out of the events of January and February last seem very small in comparison.

The Society was founded in the midst of psychic experiences, would never have existed without them, and always been more or less surrounded by them. They seem to me an essential factor in the kind of "nucleus" the Society is in process of evolving, if it is not to end in a vague and nebulous mysticism on the one hand, or a kind of religious materialism on the other. That untrained psychics and mediums are constantly in error most of us know by personal evidence; but the idea that an occultist of training and experience is likely to blunder on an elementary matter of personal recognition, which blunder can be detected at once by those who have themselves had no personal training and have never even seen a Master, seems to me unlikely, and to need better argument than has yet been adduced in support of it.

H. S. GREEN.

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The election of a President to fill the place of our much beloved Col. Olcott must necessarily be a matter of the gravest concern to all who have the interests of the Theosophical Society at heart, for it is really as difficult to replace him as to find one who could adequately fill the gap which his co-founder H. P. B. left behind her. Moreover, it is inevitable that there should be much difference of opinion as to the fitness of any individual who might be nominated to fill the highest office in the Society.

But unfortunately the election has been rendered still more difficult, and, indeed, turned into nothing short of a serious crisis, by reason of two pronouncements recently made by Mrs. Besant, who,

being Col. Olcott's nominee, stands alone for election or rejection.

The first of these issues turns on the basis of membership in the Society. Mrs. Besant published an article in the March number of *The Theosophical Review* in which she asserts that the Society has no right to expel a member for immoral or criminal conduct. This condition is supported by a number of amazing statements, with which, however, I do not propose to deal now, but only to enter my strongest protest against them.

What I do wish to point out, however, is this: that if the Society were unable officially to take notice of, or action against, immoral or criminal conduct on the part of a member—especially a prominent member—the result would inevitably be that individual members would be compelled to resign, and would probably do so wholesale, as the only means of repudiating such conduct or teaching, which would practically be condoned by the Society if no official action were taken.

The other issue which Mrs. Besant now presents to the Society is even more critical than the above. It appears from the so-called "communications" from Adyar that we are once more called upon to make a stand against official psychism in the Theosophical Society. We had certainly congratulated ourselves that we had finally disposed of that when Mr. Judge's "Masters' Orders" were repudiated. The present recrudescence is most deeply to be deplored. No one doubts either Col. Olcott's or Mrs. Besant's sincerity or honesty in the matter; but unfortunately sincerity and honesty are no guarantee of the genuineness of such phenomena. To place these "communications" before the Society as they have been placed now is practically to ask every member to decide as to their genuineness or otherwise—a matter respecting which very few are qualified to decide.

But it is not so much the actual occurrences which are now in question as the general principle. We have been through a similar crisis before, and have repudiated the principle. The Society—since it imposes no beliefs upon its members—cannot recognise "Masters' Orders"; and to introduce them into any official proceedings of the Society is a breach of privilege and an infringement of the constitution.

In the early days when the E.S. was formed it was first of all called the "Esoteric Section." But it was quickly seen that the principles and constitution of the Society would not permit of an Esoteric Section, and the name was changed by H. P. B. to that of the "Eastern School of Theosophy." Members might join the School in their individual capacity, but it has no official standing with the Theosophical Society.

It is perhaps, in one sense, opportune that Mrs. Besant has introduced these contentious matters at the present time, rather than later on; for had she not done so she would doubtless have been elected by an overwhelming majority. Every member of the Society knows and admits Mrs. Besant's personal character, and the value of her work. But methods and convictions which

are suitable for work in one direction may be quite the reverse when applied to administrative matters.

As it stands, the Society may still be saved from a recrudescence of principles and actions long since repudiated in connection with its official work and standing.

W. KINGSLAND.

We must shortly vote on Mrs. Besant's candidature for the Presidentship of the Theosophical Society. Much has been urged against that candidature, and the opposition to it seems to have been mainly evoked by (1) Mrs. Besant's article on "The Basis of the Theosophical Society," and (2) by the published "Conversation with the Mahâtâmâs."

(1) It was assumed that Mrs. Besant's article was intended to be applicable to a particular case, that of Mr. L. Perhaps there was fair excuse, if not good reason, for this, but the telegram to the Blavatsky Lodge has made it clear that it was an error. Reading the article without this unfortunate prepossession, it is evident that, accepting the *fait accompli*, and having, indeed, concurred in it, Mrs. Besant is considering the danger of a wrong application of the precedent. She warns us against a possible attempt at an inquisition into the moral character of members of the Society. A very timely warning, for there are plenty of people ready to say, "If Mr. L. must be expelled, so-and-so ought to be, because so-and-so is immoral." Mrs. Besant combats such specious reasoning, and wisely points out that if immorality, in itself, is to be considered a valid reason for expulsion, no line could be drawn, and we should be in the impracticable position of having to demand moral perfection as a condition of membership. She argues, however, that the Society "cannot abandon the power of expulsion," and devotes the second and third paragraphs to this point. Implicit in the article is the idea that it is a power to be rarely and then very wisely used. We do not amputate a limb because there is a sore on it, but only when its condition threatens the life of the body. In like manner we should not expel a brother because he is immoral, but only when his immorality threatens the corporate or spiritual life of the Society.

(2) Colonel Olcott has told us that his nomination of Mrs. Besant was made by the advice of certain Masters, and has described in detail their appearance and conversation. Perhaps he acted unwisely in publishing all this. Let us say so. Shall the Colonel's error of judgment decide us that Mrs. Besant is an unfit person to be President? Surely Mrs. Besant's fitness is a matter quite distinct from that. But, it is said, Mrs. Besant also published her experiences! Let us be just; did not the circumstances demand explanation on her part? Would silence have been respected or even understood? Again, it is said that she expressed the opinion that "the members in their vote, will decide the future fate of the Society," and whether it shall continue to be the true

servant of the Masters—and that is called a threat. It is no threat; it is an honest opinion. It is no more a threat than is—the opinion that the acceptance of the nomination means the “handing over of the Society to an irresponsible psychic tyranny.” Mrs. Besant has psychic powers, but, to those who know her, she certainly does not stand for psychism, nor does she stand for tyranny.

Let us look at the real question. Mrs. Besant stands on her merits. We know her honesty, her fairness, her good judgment, her chivalrous nature, her respect for the judgment of others. She is autocratic, forsooth! Every great soul is autocratic, but, as Ruskin says, what they insist on is an It (an idea), not an I. For a principle or a duty she will stand like adamant, but when she has found herself in the wrong, how bravely and unreservedly she has confessed it. Is she fit to be our President? Look at her record. Who has so called out the best in us? The splendid disinterestedness and intense spirituality of her nature have been a constant inspiration to us. And the Society—what does it owe to her? Figure it to yourself minus her work and influence. It shrinks sadly. If, in spite of all this, she is not fitted to be President, we shall do well to refuse her, but we shall act foolishly and basely if we reject her out of fear of what the world will think of circumstances attending her nomination, or if we refuse her *only* because we object to the *method* of her nomination. We owe her too much to make a scapegoat of her. Is she fit and worthy to be our President? That is the only question. May we answer it wisely.

ALFRED WILKINSON.

It is to be hoped that the members of the Theosophical Society will at the forthcoming Election refuse to confirm the attempt which is now being made to practically transform the organisation into a dogmatic body with a “faith” and an inspired canon in embryo. According to the Constitution of the Society no one is asked, on joining, what belief or disbelief he holds or does not hold in Masters or any particular Master. Probably most of us are agreed that on this and cognate subjects there is a good deal of both sound and unsound belief, and sectarian bodies claim to teach their members what they are to receive as true and what they are to reject as untrue in regard to such matters. This, however, is exactly what the Theosophical Society does not claim to do, and for any member to endeavour to convert messages he personally receives, or thinks he receives, from a high source, into authoritative spiritual orders to be obeyed as such by the members of the Society generally, is to act contrary to the spirit of our Constitution. The more prominent the member the more serious the blunder, as the weaker brethren usually find it easier to follow some leader rather than do their own thinking, and are ever ready to confuse faith with truth, loyalty to personalities with loyalty to principles.

It is possible that further consideration may

convince Mrs. Besant that the position she has taken up is hardly a defensible one and the situation may yet be saved by her withdrawing from that position. Failing this, the members will have themselves to thank if they elect Mrs. Besant to be President on the footing on which she has come forward, *viz.*, as a candidate of the Masters. For such an appointment would pin the Society as such to a definite “faith” and would necessitate a new name being given to the office filled by Mrs. Besant—mere “President” would be much too tame and certainly would not fit the case. Heretical members would then have to take their departure and any who lingered would soon be weeded out.

No one doubts Mrs. Besant’s sincerity and few doubt the existence of Masters of Wisdom. The discrimination, however, between actual communications from such Masters and the many varieties of psychic phenomena each claiming equal authority, is a very difficult task, and the members will do well if they adopt the rule which Mrs. Besant appears to follow for herself and resolve that only a Master’s command addressed to them personally will induce them to act on it and not communications addressed to other people. They may rest assured that no Master worthy of the name would ever expect them to do anything else.

GEO. L. SIMPSON,
President Edinburgh Lodge.

I see from the telegram published in your April number, that some appear to be under the impression that Mrs. Besant’s election to the office of President involves my “reinstatement” in the Society. May I venture to suggest that there must be two parties to such “reinstatement,” and that I, as one of them, shall never make any application for readmission? Voters, therefore, need not take me into account as a factor in the problem. I have no wish to belong to any organisation which treats its noblest leader with such ingratitude as is shown to Mrs. Besant in the April number of *The Theosophical Review*.

I have no doubt that those who make bitter personal attacks upon me think that they are doing God service. I shall make no reply to them, beyond stating that all imputations of hypocrisy and deception are absolutely false, and that, for the rest, what I did was done with good intent, however difficult it may be for those who do not understand to believe it.

The recent manifestations at Adyar were not the work of black magicians or “spooks,” as some seem to suppose. In saying this I know whereof I speak; those who are so clamorous on the other side (if they will forgive the home truth) are without experience in these matters.

C. W. LEADBEATER.

There seems to be so much misunderstanding, on all sides, of our position with regard to Mr. Leadbeater, that I must beg your kind permission

to make at least my own view clear. He was required to leave the Society *not* because he has done this or that, but because he refused to acknowledge that he was in fault, or to promise amendment. As his defenders have since made abundantly clear, his view was, that he was (in Mrs. Besant's phrase) too far above the accepted morality of his time and place to be judged by it. It is this attitude, not the fault in itself, which is to my mind (and I think to most minds) the unpardonable sin; and when Mrs. Besant in her article endorsed this view as being also her own I felt myself forced (and how painful a task it was no one will ever know) openly to protest against it. Whether, in point of fact, she meant him or no is of small importance. She laid it down that there *might* be souls who "rise so much above morality as to be unintelligible, and therefore hated and suspected" by the world. If she did not draw the conclusion, others have done. In the face of this claim it is useless to dilate on Mr. Leadbeater's great services to the cause. In writing, not long ago, to an old member of the Lotus Circle, I said that we were not forced to believe his *intentions* were evil, and that I hoped he would yet do much more good work for the Society. I meant what I said; we all know how valuable his labours have been, and many of us can speak (as I myself have often spoken) of how much we personally owe to him. I do not believe there is a single member of the Society (not even Mrs. Besant!) who would make the preposterous conditions of his restoration she has named—a public retraction, a two years' penance and a solemn vote of the whole Society! One thing we *must* have, and one only; let our President assure us that he has retracted his claim to be "above ordinary morality"; that he has expressed his sorrow (as privately as possible) for having made himself "hated and suspected" by his breach of its laws, and his resolution to do so no more; and I will be the first to hold out my hand to him as a beloved companion, without delay or reserve, and he shall never hear from me a word of the past. Is it beyond hope that the accession of a new President may be graced by this reconciliation? It is for him to speak; we wait anxiously for what shall enable us to take him to our hearts again.

That the Society would be satisfied with *less* than this; that (surely not under Mrs. Besant's guidance!) it will quietly acquiesce in the emancipation of its leader from "the accepted standard of morality," I am too hardened an optimist to admit.

ARTHUR A. WELLS.

In the midst of the questionings and discussions in which we find ourselves there is one word for which I would claim a hearing. I observe in some quarters a tendency to assume that the painful tale unfolded in the evidence which procured Mr. Leadbeater's resignation, is a final, though tardy, exposure of a character which had too long deceived the Theosophical Society. I can understand how one who never knew Mr.

Leadbeater and who, perhaps, based his judgment solely upon this evidence, might form such an opinion, but it is a view which raises more problems than it solves. I, too, have read all the evidence, but also I keep in mind my knowledge of the man; I was closely associated with him as a boy and as a young man from 1895 to 1902, not only at meetings but helping him in any ways I could, with his huge correspondence, etc., and I came to know a little and to love much, the great Master Soul who wears the form of C. W. Leadbeater, to whom so many turned for help in their difficulties, and did not turn in vain. This is the picture of him which is indelibly impressed on my memory and I think I do right to recall it in forming my judgment. I never heard from him a whisper of these views and practices against which an outcry has so rightly been raised; on the contrary his word and his influence were ever incentives to purity. I cannot reconcile this memory of mine with the picture revealed in the evidence, but I claim that I have more of the facts before me than those who never came into close touch with Mr. Leadbeater, and I make my statement with the sincere hope that it may be for some an item to add to the side of their scales in which they place the good. It is far easier to prove evil than good in such a case; the evil has revealed itself in a few definite cases which can be investigated, while the good has expressed itself through many years of innumerable gracious ways; but the tongue of good report should be given a hearing.

HERBERT WHYTE.

May I crave space for the following condensed comments on the matters now engaging the anxious attention of members of the Theosophical Society.

(1) I desire, first, to express my thankfulness for the nomination to the Presidential Office of Mrs. Besant, whose personal character, immense capacity for work, and whose touch with the great realities behind the veil, combine to render her candidature so eminently gratifying, and so welcome to many whose sentiments I do but voice.

(2) Secondly, may I suggest that those who doubt the authenticity of the recent Adyar communications would do well to study the note on the fifth of the sentences in *Light on the Path*, and compare it with the utterance in the "conversation."

(3) Thirdly, we do not yet know how much of all that is reported to have taken place at Adyar (beyond that already published in full) is corroborated by Mrs. Besant.

(4) The question before members is the ratification of the nomination. Other side-issues are not involved. If the original form of the nomination be made the subject of quibbling, that is no reason for voting against Mrs. Besant. It would be more logical to ease the mind by passing a resolution to the effect that the particular vote is independent of any "psychic orders." But Mrs. Besant has disclaimed the wielding of any "psychic tyranny" in the March *Theosophist*, telling people to vote according to their private judgment.

(5) It were cowardice on my part to allow the remarks attacking Mr. Leadbeater, which have appeared in the last issue of your magazine, to pass without protest. People seem oblivious, to all appearances, of the great occult truth, well known and well illustrated in history, that the occultist is defenceless against the attacks of his enemies and traducers, that he *may* not defend himself. There are hundreds in this country who have benefited considerably by Mr. Leadbeater's writings and personal help. I marvel that there are not more ready to stand up like men at the risk of personal defamation, in order to protest against the spirit of relentless persecution, the rancour, and the enmity which have recently been displayed, to say nothing of the utterly disgraceful insinuation of things quite unproven by the evidence recorded. The teachings of the New Testament and our boasted Theosophical principles of love and brotherhood and charity have alike been cast to the winds. One is often tempted to ponder whether the bitterness of accusation is not a more grievous offence in the impartial eyes of Justice than much that is complained of in the accused.

"Ingratitude is not one of Our Vices" said a Master in the early days of our Society: truly it is but scant gratitude—this persecution and hostility—that we now display towards one who devoted his life for no less than three-and-twenty years to loving and unselfish labour in the Society whose work he had so at heart. As one whose debt of gratitude for that work and the illumination and help it has brought will not readily be effaced, I write these things.

(6) The documental evidence, upon which the late President-Founder was advised to accept Mr. Leadbeater's resignation, is private matter and contains confidential documents. It opens with a promise of privacy, on the strength of which lengthy and important letters were extracted from Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater. I do not consider that letters so obtained ought ever to have been made public. It was scandalous that the said evidence should have been bandied about more or less indiscriminately by certain members. I protest against any further publicity being given to it as utterly opposed to all principles of rectitude and just dealing: and I desire to record that protest publicly.

JAMES I. WEDGWOOD.

I should not have troubled you to find space for any comment of mine on the situation arising out of the Presidential election had it not been for a letter of my dear old friend Herr Fricke, which appeared in the last number of THE VĀHAN, and also an extraordinary communication which has been issued from India bearing Mrs. Besant's signature. We all know the kindly heart of our Dutch colleague, and can respect him even when we think his judgment at fault, but in his letter he so obscures the points at issue that it is necessary they should be made clear. First it should be understood that it is no mere question of Mr.

Mead's *opinion* against the *testimony* of Mrs. Besant and our late President, as your correspondent seems to suggest, but of the right of every member of the Society to form a free judgment on the question before him. Mr. Fricke quotes with unqualified approval a statement of Mrs. Besant's "that the members in their vote will decide the future fate of the Society, whether it shall continue to be the servant of its true Founders, who stood behind H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott, or shall reject Them as its Masters and Guides." If Mrs. Besant's statement has any meaning it follows that we are not free as loyal members of the Society to vote against her, since by doing so we would reject the "Masters and Guides of the Society." Yet little more than a fortnight afterwards Mrs. Besant makes an almost opposite statement, appearing in *The Theosophical Review*, where she says, "Belief in the Masters is not incumbent on any member of the Society," and "those who believe in Them are not bound to believe in any particular manifestation asserted as genuine by others." It seems almost impossible to believe that both statements can have proceeded from the same individual. With the latter I am heartily in sympathy, with the former I am directly at issue. The Society as such knows no Masters of any description either in front of it or behind it. It has no Creed, holds no allegiance to anyone or anything except its Constitution and its motto. Those who believe it has, are allowing one statement of its aim and objects to go forth to the world and privately holding another. I do not, however, believe that this is the view of the majority, but if it should be the sooner the motto or the objects are changed the better for the good name of all concerned. I would have accepted willingly the simple nomination of Mrs. Besant, for, although I might have doubted the wisdom of imposing such a burden upon one already over-weighted, I should have had no doubt of her competency to fulfil the duties of the office. When, however, I am asked to accept Mrs. Besant as the nominee of the Adyar materialisations, I feel it my imperative duty to refuse assent and in doing so consider I am acting in the best interests of the Society as a creedless and free institution. With all due respect for Mr. Fricke, it requires "no first-hand knowledge of superphysical things" to pronounce an opinion on such psychic phenomena as those recorded to have taken place at Adyar; with ordinary powers of discrimination it is surely possible to determine their true worth. As they have tended to obscure instead of making clearer the situation they may safely be put on one side as valueless. To say this is not to doubt Mrs. Besant's good faith or her perfect honesty, it is simply to doubt her then powers of discrimination and the wisdom of her subsequent action.

Turning from things psychical to more physical happenings, I should like to offer a few remarks on some statements made by Mrs. Besant in a printed communication, addressed "To my Fellow-Members of the Theosophical Society," which appears to have been widely circulated. In this document the Executive Committee of the British Section

are severely and unfairly taken to task for the action they took in declining to accept the "appointment" made by their late President. The tone of Mrs. Besant's remarks is quite unworthy of her, and is unjustifiable as applied to colleagues who have served the Society for very many years, and who can have no other purpose to serve than their duty to the Society. They are described as "sticklers for verbal accuracy," as "rejecting with contumely the wish of the dying President," as "neither courteous nor accurate," as "excited," "bewildered," "alarmed," "under a wonderful *māya*," acting "cavalierly" and, *mirabile dictu*, having an "extreme sensitiveness of democratic spirit," and of being aroused to "democratic indignation."

I need hardly say that there is no real ground for such statements. The proceedings at the *Committee meetings* were quite calm and action only taken after due deliberation. Throughout the *Committee* have acted with a full sense of their responsibility, and Mr. Sinnett was at no time called upon, as stated, "to pour oil on the troubled waters," as the *British Executive* were in complete harmony with one another and with the *Acting President*. It should be clearly understood that the *British Executive* have not even considered the question of Mrs. Besant's fitness or otherwise for the post, nor did they pronounce on the genuineness or otherwise of the *Adyar phenomena*; that was no part of their duty, they were simply concerned with the matter before them, namely, the communications from their *President*. When the nomination was declared to be valid and instructions received from the *Acting President* to take the vote the incident so far as they were concerned was ended. They did neither more nor less than their plain duty, which was to see that the nomination and election were in accordance with the *Constitution*. It is altogether wrong to hold the *Executive* responsible for the letters of one or two of its members, which were written in an individual capacity like this communication, and express the writers' personal opinions only, certainly not those of the *Executive*. Mrs. Besant's contention that Colonel Olcott's communication of January 7th was not official cannot be sustained, for it was addressed to the *Secretary of the British Section*, a second copy addressed to "The *Theosophical Society*, its

Officers and Members," being also sent for publication in *THE VĀHAN*.

If further proof were needed that it were such, we have it in a communication from Mrs. Russak, who states that "when he (Col. Olcott) wrote the letter to Mrs. Besant, January 7th, 'appointing' her, he had no idea or intention of violating the constitution of the Society, for he calculated as to how long the voting was likely to take, and expressed the desire to live long enough to know the result. He issued his official letter of January 21st, in order, as he said, 'to hurry up the voting.'" What does not appear to have occurred in the mind of Col. Olcott is that no voting should have taken place until after his resignation or death. No one could know how long he was likely to live and it would have been wrong to take a vote until the necessity arose. This was an additional reason why the *British Executive* when the communication of January 21st came to hand, *after the death of the President*, decided to refer the whole of the communications to Mr. Sinnett, who had then become *Acting President*, in order that the proceedings might be "regularised." Far, therefore, from ignoring the communication of January 21st, it immediately dealt with it.

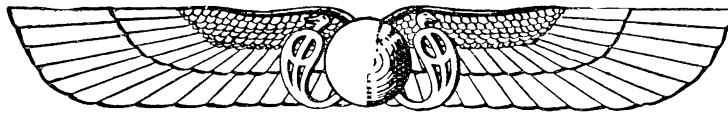
In conclusion, let me say how sincerely I regret that I am compelled to protest against the unfortunate proceedings. With many others, out of love and gratitude for her labours, I would have joyfully given Mrs. Besant my support if I could conscientiously have done so, as it is, I regretfully feel compelled to withhold it.

W. H. THOMAS.

The subscription to *THE VĀHAN* for those who are not members of the *British Section of the Theosophical Society* is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the *Theosophical Publishing Society*, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.

THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary.*

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

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LONDON, JUNE 1, 1907.

NO. 11.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

THE CONVENTION.

The business meeting of the Convention will be held in the Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., on Saturday, July 6th, at 2.30 p.m. The Agenda paper for this meeting and the Sectional Balance Sheet accompany this copy of THE VĀHAN.

In the evening of the same day, at 8, a reception of members will be held at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

On Sunday afternoon at 3.30 there will be a meeting of members at Essex Hall for discussion. The following questions have been submitted, and members are invited to speak upon them:

“Is it possible and desirable to further more systematically the Objects of the Society?”

“Is it desirable to form sections or groups of members who are specially interested in the study of such subjects as Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Art, Psychology, Psychic Research, etc.?”

“What are the best methods for the formation and working of such groups?”

On Sunday evening at 7 p.m. a public meeting will be held in the same hall. The speakers and subjects will be announced in the programme of the Convention.

All delegates (except Presidents of Branches present in person) and proxies should bring their credentials in writing. Branches are reminded that they may send one delegate (in addition to the President or his representative) for each twenty-five members. The President alone represents a Lodge of less than twenty-five members. Unattached members may vote on any resolution, the votes being given in person or in writing to the General Secretary. Every fifty votes so recorded count as one vote at the Convention.

All Branch Secretaries should send in a correct list of their members, with addresses, and the Reports of their Branches, at least ten days before the Convention.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE BRITISH SECTION.

Members are reminded that the financial year of the Section ended on April 30th, and that subscriptions for the year 1907-8 are now due.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

NOTICE.

Several foreign money orders have been received without any information as to the senders. Enquiries having failed to trace them this notice is inserted in the hope that the members who sent them may see it and communicate with me.

The orders and dates are as follows:

5s. from Russia, issued at Kleff (? Kieff), received January 7th, 1907.

£3 3s. 5d. from Russia, issued at Saratow, received February 18th, 1907.

10s. from Switzerland, issued at St. Gallen, received April 12th, 1907.

10s. from Russia, issued at St. Petersburg, received May 13th, 1907.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE CASE OF MR. JINARĀJADĀSA.

The General Council of the Theosophical Society have issued in pamphlet form the recent proceedings in connection with the cancelling of Mr. Jinarājādāsa's membership by the late President-Founder on charges laid before him and the Committee of the American Section by some members of that Section. Mrs. Besant, after an examination of the evidence submitted, appealed to the President to reconsider his decision on the ground that injustice had been done, and Colonel Olcott, after agreeing that his decision had been wrong, laid the matter before the General Council for their consideration, at an adjourned meeting held at Adyar on January 2nd, 1907. Present at the meeting: Mrs. Besant in the chair, as President's Deputy, Sir S. Subramania Iyer, Dr. English, Babu Upendranath Basu and Mr. Keightley.

After reading the President's letter and Mrs. Besant's letter to the President, laying the appeal before him and discussing the matter at length, the President was requested to obtain the opinion of the General Secretaries of the Sections, and then to reconsider his decision in conjunction with the members of the Council, at an adjourned meeting.

The President in a letter to the General Secretaries, dated January 3rd, 1907, submitted the following questions:

1. Shall the judgment be annulled simply, so that matters return to their former position before the plaint?
2. Shall the judgment be annulled merely on the question of procedure, and a new trial be ordered?

The whole case, with all votes received, was brought up at the adjourned meeting of the General Council of the Theosophical Society held at Adyar on April 4th, 1907. The Vice-President and Messrs. Keightley and Davidson did not send votes on the matter; all the General Secretaries sent their votes in writing, except the General Secretary for Cuba, who had sent his proxy to Mrs. Besant, with full discretion to vote.

On the first question in the letter of the President-Founder:

YES, 16. NO, 2.

On the second question:

NO, 17. YES, 1.

The vote of the General Secretary for America is registered as "No" in both cases, because in his letter he says that he would thus vote, were it not that he denied the competency of the Council to sit as an Appellate Court on a decision of the President-Founder, and that he therefore refused to vote: "The decision in this matter belonging to him alone, and subject alone to his reversal or modification." M. Blech expressed the opinion that it was for the American Section to move, if it wished. His answer is therefore recorded above as "No," but it might be read as "Yes" on the first clause of the question and "No" on the second:

On these data the General Council passed the following resolutions:

Resolved: That in accordance with the opinion of the late President-Founder and the almost unanimous opinion of the General Council.

(i.) That the previous decision in the case of Mr. Jinarājādāsa be annulled, and that he is therefore reinstated as a member of the Society.

(ii.) That it is unnecessary to institute any further proceedings against him.

It was further *Resolved:*

(i.) That the above Resolutions be communicated to Mr. Jinarājādāsa.

(ii.) That the proceedings in this case be published in pamphlet form and sent to the Vice-President, and to all the members of the Council, and to all Secretaries of Branches.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE SECOND EUROPEAN CONGRESS.

The Theosophical Society is now in possession of the Transactions of its second European Congress, and in spite of a lengthy but probably unavoidable delay in its appearance, the second volume is deserving of all the commendation which its elder sister so justly merited. It is impossible to speak too highly of the editorial skill of which everything in this book gives evidence; arrangements of classification, indexing, and reference indications are alike excellent, and bear the stamp of no ordinary equipment and care. The Editor and his assistants are indeed to be congratulated on the production of a first-class piece of work, and the Theosophical Society on a trophy of thoughtful and catholic studies. That out of forty-one contributions a certain proportion should be of a somewhat ephemeral nature is, perhaps, unavoidable in a volume that contains so wide a range of subjects. Viewed as a whole, however, the more erudite and philosophical aspects of study are well represented, and we look hopefully for a future series in which the ephemeral will give place entirely to research work on matters of permanent interest.

The language of the Transactions is English and French, a departure from the Polyglot character of the former volume which will probably tell advantageously on the general circulation of the present work. Of the five Parts into which this volume is divided Part IV. is the most important. We have here the Departmental papers which formed the chief feature of the first series of Transactions, and which are grouped under seven headings: Brotherhood; Comparative Religions; Mysticism, Folk Lore, etc.; Philosophy; Science, including Borderland Sciences; Art; Administration, Propaganda, Methods of Work, etc.; Occultism. A special feature of the present volume is the printing of the addresses delivered to the Congress by members of kindred societies and movements whose thought is not necessarily in complete agreement with that of the Society, and in this courteous act a decided

step has been taken in the direction of our First Object. We trust that such co-operation from our kindred without the Pale will form an indispensable part of future Conferences, more especially as the four papers contributed to this Department are among the most interesting in the volume.

To come to the work in detail: in Part II., which includes the Secretary's Report, and the Opening, Closing, and Presidential Addresses, we are glad to have in print the admirable summary, by the President of the Congress, Mrs. Besant, of the work accomplished, under Theosophical influence, throughout the various departments of human activity—religion, education, science, philosophy, art. Following her, and speaking from the standpoint of the mystic, Mr. Mead tells in burning words how the consummation of the true Theosophic Ideal appeared to Plotinus and to Hermes, who in their day revealed the same "Yoga of daring," which is Theosophy, the "beginning of the knowledge of God."

Part III. is devoted to Representatives of Kindred Societies. In "Christian Doctrine as seen by the Mystic," Rev. Dr. Cobb shows the power of the "scholastic of the heart" to transform and vivify the dry bones of orthodoxy by emphasising its really permanent factors; all variant forms, whether Catholic or Protestant, being but "temporary devices to bring down the truths of Spirit to the level of ordinary intelligence." In "Francis Bacon and the New Atlantis," Mr. Harold Bayley makes the interesting though debatable suggestion that the Rosicrucians were due, as a Society, to Bacon's initiative. Certainly tradition places them, and their Adept Founder, Christian Rosenkreuz, at least as early as 1460, and gives them an unbroken descent from the Egyptian Mysteries. But we suppose that the man who is now being made responsible for the greater part of the literature of his day is also the author of *Fama Fraternalitatis*, and the inventor of the two hundred years' previous history of the Mystical Order of which he is the real founder! or will Mr. Bayley relieve his hero of *that* forgery?

In the "Philosophy of Spiritualism," Mr. Wake Cook pleads for a fair recognition of the wonderful trance writings of Andrew Jackson Davis; and Mr. Edward Spencer brings an interesting Department to a close by a well-written and exhaustive study of "Gilds, Old and New."

Part III. contains the Departmental Papers, of which Department A (Brotherhood) includes three: "Droit et Devoir," an almost too condensed study by M. Courmes, who endeavours to apply his conception of Duty as "la déférence effective à la loi divine d'évolution" to every department of human life; "Essai sur L'Égalité," wherein M. Revel distinguishes between true Equality which is the Divine Self, and Inequality which is the result of the Self expressed through Its vehicles; and "One of the Uses of Altruism," a slight but suggestive paper by Mr. Edgar Loam.

In Department B (Comparative Religion, Mysticism, Folk-lore, etc.) we notice a fine and unusually lucid "Note sur les Gunas," by G.

Chevrier, in which the correspondence of Tamas, Rajas and Satva with the Three Outpourings is well worked out.

Purnendu Narayana Sinha relates the attempts of different teachers to reconcile the extreme positions of Sankara and Madhva, and find in the Tatvamasi, "That Thou Art," the complement of Pranava, and the great factor in the spiritual life of the Universe. A. Von Ulrich writes learnedly of the "Mythology of the Germans," and unearths many hidden allusions to Rounds and Races in Saga and Song. L. M. Browne has some interesting Notes on "British Mystics."

Department C is philosophical, and contains several important articles. Chief among them we must notice A. W.'s abstruse attempt to elucidate the mysteries of Consciousness by "Analogical Diagrams." To those who habitually conceive of Consciousness in terms of vibration, this clever paper will say much, and we are personally grateful for the suggestion that Arûpa Consciousness arises when two waves coincide so closely as to be mutually inappreciable. (A reference to the diagram is needed to follow the idea.) Since absolute identity and absolute opposition alike preclude mutual recognition, consciousness will be the result of vibrations which exhibit only a certain community of possible directions of movement. But after A. W. has left us awed and reeling, we still find wits to ask the age-old question: what is the mystery that *initiates* the ripples on the pond—to quote his illustration? We are somewhat confused as to whether the wavelets are consciousness, or the accompaniment of consciousness; or whether they are the cause or product of consciousness. For the basal statement that "Form and Consciousness are but functions of the same motion, viewed either objectively or subjectively," is open to grave contention. The most that Science can demonstrate is that motion is the antecedent and accompaniment of a Mystery whose cause is in itself; and the diagram has yet to be drawn that will show the mystic passage of vibration into perception, and higher. It is difficult, therefore, to think of consciousness as a "function" of something that is not akin to its own nature. Nevertheless we thank A. W. for a brilliant effort to unravel the Mystery. This Department includes also a valuable paper by Dr. Steiner on the "Occult basis of Goethe's works"; and a careful study of "Instinct et Conscience," by Pierre E. Bernard.

The two most important contents of Department D are "L'Espace: L'Hyperspace et son Experience," by Prof. Desaint, and "Notes on the Fourth Dimension," by W. J. L. The latter paper is perhaps the most important in the Series, and for the mathematically-minded will be a veritable mine of wealth, its value being enhanced by a number of detachable plates illustrating fourth dimensional solids, which may be cut out and formed into models. Both contributions are sound on the philosophic point that abstract space, of any number of dimensions, has no reality by itself, space being merely one of the forms of consciousness; and consciousness implying subject and

object, space without these two correlatives has no existence. M. Dessaint states that "quand on parle des dimensions de l'espace, on ne vise donc que des caractéristiques de la matière dans l'espace." This writer draws an interesting distinction between space and matter, space standing to him for the *unity* of consciousness, and corresponding with the will-aspect of Self, while matter signifies the *multiplicity* of possible states, and corresponds with the intelligence-aspect.

This Department also includes two thoughtful and clearly written papers, "The Scientific Principles underlying Reincarnation and Karma," by Mr. Worsdell; and "Vibratory Capacity, the Key to Personality," by C. H. H. Franklin. The first-named article we should like to see expanded into a separate publication; it is singularly lucid, and useful as a presentation of the subject from the scientific point of view. Personally we cannot share Mr. Worsdell's *absolute* confidence that "the great processes of involution and evolution in the three worlds will be governed by the *same identical fundamental principles or laws*." Were this something more than a high probability, he would have established his doctrine up to the hilt. But we can imagine our friend the enemy refusing to affirm positively that the third law of motion, "to be true as a law at all," *must* be operative in conditions other than, and dissimilar to, those in which the law is observed to act. However, so long as a high probability is not regarded as if it were a certainty, Mr. Worsdell's contribution ought to prove of considerable value. A well-written article, "In Defence of Spiritualism," by Miss Russell, a suggestive paper on Astrology, by Mr. Leo, and an outline of a promised work on Atlantis and Lemuria, by Percy Lund, complete this Department.

The contents of Departments E and F are of a slighter nature. They take us into the regions of Art and Work respectively. In the "Artistic Inspiration" Mr. Montague Fordham has some wise words on our responsibilities towards the Artist as a channel of inspiration. Miss Lloyd treats ably of the "Modern Symbolist Movement"; A. W. Waddington, in "Guilds Visible and Invisible," pleads "not for a new Guild-system, but a new Guild-soul." Edward Maryon writes of "Music and the Theosophical Society," holding that "Music should represent the metaphysical to the physical." Mme. André-Gedalge offers wise suggestions as to the method of cultivating "avec conscience ce don divin, et de l'appliquer autant et aussi souvent que possible à la culture du Bien." C. Jinarâjadâsa writes of "Art as a factor in the soul's evolution," affirming of Music that it "makes us feel our immortality."

In the Department devoted to Methods of Work, the most significant papers are by Mrs. Hooper and Mrs. Lauder, who touch respectively on the "Relation of the Theosophical Society to the Theosophical Movement"; and on the "Education of Children, Physical, Moral, Intellectual, and Religious." Both papers will repay thoughtful reading. Short contributions by Katherine Weller, Juliette Decoix, W. Wybergh, J. B. McGovern,

and F. T. S. (the latter's paper an appropriate and happy little tribute to H. P. B.) close this Department.

Under the heading of Occultism is a single contribution by Mrs. Besant on the "Conditions of Occult Research," which those who had the pleasure of hearing delivered will be glad now to have in print.

A Table giving the pronunciation of Sanscrit words, and a full Index, bring this interesting volume to a close.

C. E. W.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to May 20th: F. M. M. R., £1; J. M., 6s.; E. A. B., £6; M. C., 10s.; E. M., £1 2s.; M. A. N., £1; A. H., £1 1s.; H., £5; C. B. J., £6. Total, £21 19s.

Lectures by Mrs. Besant.

Mrs. Besant will deliver three lectures in June at the Small Queen's Hall, Langham Place, W., on Sunday evenings, at 7. The dates are June 16th, 23rd, and 30th, but the subjects of the lectures are not yet announced. A syllabus will be available in due course and may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, where applications for tickets should also be sent. Tickets, 2s. and 1s.

Northern Federation.

POSTPONEMENT OF CONFERENCE.

In order to enable Mrs. Besant to fulfil other engagements, the next Conference of the Northern Federation will be held on June 8th, in the Theosophical Hall, Harrogate, instead of on June 1st, as previously announced. Members from a distance desiring help in finding suitable accommodation may apply to the Secretary.

M. BROUGHTON HEAD,
The Ridings, *Hon. Secretary.*
Springfield Avenue, Harrogate.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: June 3rd, *Hebrew Literature*, Miss Whittaker; June 10th, *Resurrection*, Dr. Goodchild; June 17th,; June 24th, *Christianity and Socialism*, B. Conrad. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland

Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *The Growth of the Soul*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The Arts Club, 19, West Street, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m., at 4, Unity Street. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, ISIS LODGE. Information from the President, M. Armand Rombauts, 23, Rue du Pépin, Brussels. Secretary, Mme. Fernande Staes, 165, Bd. Militaire, Ixelles, Brussels.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street, on Thursdays, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, at above address.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended during the summer. Library open on Mondays, 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings from October to April. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings at the house of Mr. J. Huxtable, 2, Brockman Road. Information from this address.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.; June 2nd,

Theosophy and Literature ("Faust"), R. A. Coulthard; June 9th, . . . , Mrs. Besant; June 16th, *Religions of the World*, E. E. Marsden; June 23rd, *Atonement*, Hodgson Smith; June 30th, *Light in Dark Places*, Mrs. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *Elements of Theosophy* and Sir Oliver Lodge's *Substance of Faith*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, Beech Croft, Newland Park, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquitt Street, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquitt Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Central Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. 28, Albemarle Street, W., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: June 6th, Question meeting; June 13th, *Thomas Traherne*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; June 20th, Election of Delegates; June 27th, *Tasks for the Theosophical Society*, A. R. Orage.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Sundays, at 7 p.m., at the Assembly Rooms, Middle Lane. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: June 3rd, *The Value of Theosophy*, A. Ellerbeck; June 10th and 24th, Study Class; June 17th, *Some Views of Theosophy*, H. A. Broadhurst.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. Meetings suspended till the autumn.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from Albert Haddock, 176, Fort Road, Bermondsey, S.E.

LONDON, LOTUS CIRCLE. Meetings for children are held on Sundays at 3 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. All children are welcome.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 25, Compton Road, Highbury, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and lectures on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.: June 5th, *Theosophy and Religion*, Rev. A. Baker.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W., on Fridays, at 8 p.m.: June 7th and 21st, Study of *Some Problems of Life*; June 14th, *Animal Instinct and Human Knowledge*, W. C. Worsdell. Information from the Secretary at the above address.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 26, Victoria Street, Man-

chester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. "At Home" for enquirers on Fridays, at 4 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and monthly on Fridays. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *A Study in Consciousness*; 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 53, Peverell Park Road.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in the month, at 7.30 p.m.; study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, "Henley," Roberts Road, Hill.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton. June 2nd, *Theosophy and Dogmatism*, L. Stanley Jast; June 16th, *Man and his Bodies*, A. H. Barley; June 23rd, *Man's Relation to the lower Kingdoms of Nature*, J. I. Wedgwood; June 30th, *The Great Awakening*, C. Reinheimer.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 1, West Parade. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate. Information from J. E. Reid, 9, First Avenue, York.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

The Scrutinising Committee.

The Executive Committee has decided that its London members should be responsible for the

counting and scrutinising of the votes given on the nomination of Mrs. Besant as President. The members of the Scrutinising Committee are Mr. Cattnach, Mr. Glass, Mr. Mead, Miss Spink, and Miss Ward.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

To the Editor of THE VÂHAN.

It is not my intention to enter into any controversy with Mrs. Besant or even to correct the various misstatements of fact contained in her letter; but in justice to her as well as myself, there is one thing I feel bound to say.

It was with great surprise that I found Mrs. Besant regarded my letter about the Adyar phenomena as an attack on her personal honour. After carefully re-reading it I can find nothing that seems reasonably to warrant such a construction, and I am quite sure that nothing was further from my mind than any such intention.

Fraternally yours,
BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

I learn that my recent letter resigning from the Executive of the British Section has appeared in *The Theosophist* with certain (doubtless unintentionally) misleading comments as to its cause. I do not know how the letter reached *The Theosophist*; I sent a copy to Mrs. Besant in her private capacity, because I desired her to know of my action at first hand; because of my love for her, and the help she has given me in the past. I had already told Mrs. Besant that I voted with my colleagues in passing their recent resolutions; one does not vote for resolutions of which one disapproves. With the resolutions passed I was in active agreement.

My colleagues know the causes of my lack of confidence in the policy and methods of the Theosophical Society, so does Mrs. Besant herself.

I feel it is but fair to say that my lack of confidence in the wisdom of its official policy includes a lack of confidence in the policy of the President-elect.

Yours faithfully,
I. HOOPER.

Among the many letters that have been written on the question of the Presidency, there are but one or two that treat the subject from an impersonal standpoint. Many writers are bitter and angry, some with Mrs. Besant, others with those who are opposing her. To all these opinions I have nothing to say, for each member has the right to his opinion. I am only concerned with the problem for myself. (1) My first impression, on receiving the communications from our late President, was that they were most probable; seeing that throughout his life he had had such communications at critical moments; but, they made such a change in the opinions that he had

expressed to me in October, 1906, that (2) my second impression was that the hypothesis of his mental condition being weakened by illness seemed also very probable, combined with the wording of his notice. For all who knew the late President knew how very careful he was in protecting the "Constitution" of the Society he so loved. Still on the other hand—his appeal (on thinking it over) was more that of a Father to his children, longing to see everything settled before he left them. This feeling would account for his wishing to see the voting for his choice finished before he left; this feeling, alone, could account for a proceeding which is not in the "Constitution," *i.e.*, the election of a President during the life of the President-Founder.

(3) I, now, accept the later statements made by various witnesses, *i.e.*, that the late President-Founder *was* in a normal mental condition. These testimonies have only come, gradually, to my knowledge owing to the distances by which we are all separated. My most sorrowful perplexity has been in the *difference* of opinion between those who are most advanced, those who have first-hand knowledge as to the *sources* of any manifestations. This is a difficulty that naturally would not present itself to the newer members, who only know (and rightly love and reverence) Annie Besant. But some of us know others, who are highly advanced, and love and reverence *them also*, and I can imagine no sorer trial than to see those we love and respect standing thus in opposition to each other—it brings home to the heart what Arjuna suffered as nothing else could do. Yet religious history is full of such strifes, and even among the Apostles there was difference of opinion.

At whatever conclusion one arrives, it must inevitably give pain to some loved fellow-worker, to some of these with whom our ties were knitted in the days of H. P. B. For this reason I have kept silent, while trying to solve my own most painful problem, reading most carefully all that has come to hand, but avoiding discussions which I think often only obscure the working of the mind. But now—with all the latest and fullest evidence before me—I feel it would not be honest to remain silent any longer. In the Section of which I am a member, the voting papers were among the first issued, on the President-Founder's first notice. But as my difficulty was based on the uniting of two offices which had hitherto been kept most carefully apart by the President-Founder and H. P. B., I did not vote. For I would not vote *against* one to whom I am linked by ties of deepest gratitude and love, but I could not vote *for* her until I felt *sure* of the basis on which the change was made. These reasons I made known to the Executive Committee, suggesting that it was wiser not to hurry the voting on the first notice, and giving my reasons for delay. I feared that complications might arise from the two offices (*i.e.*, the Presidency and the Headship of the E.S.) being held by the same person. No one but Annie Besant could be Head of the E.S., for it is to her that nearly all turn who are in sorrow, or in difficulty; and the help that she has given with unflinching love and tenderness is known only to

those who have thus gone to her in troubled times.

The Presidency could be held by another, but *no other* could take her place in the E.S. This was my reason for abstention. But later details have changed my position, and I must add that the lack of kindness in the opposition, which has marked some of the letters, has made me feel that the "Forces" guiding Mrs. Besant are of a more loving and charitable kind than those which are opposing her. Having no powers of seeing myself, I can but judge by the evidences which present themselves.

"By their *fruits* ye shall know them," said the Great Master Jesus: and the lack of charity and tolerance shown to Annie Besant has been the chief factor in deciding my painful problem. This, combined with evidence given by some members at Adyar (whom I know, and for whom I have always had a great respect) with regard to the President-Founder's mental state, in addition to the moral reasons stated, have decided me to accept fully and entirely Annie Besant as the right President, with loving good-will, ready to help her in any way that she may desire. With regard to the article which has caused so much consternation, would it not be wiser and more dignified to wait and discuss the points at issue with her? A magazine article is always but a limited expression of any writer's views, and a few words of explanation may change the terms that give a wrong impression. We have nothing to lose, and everything to gain, by patience, tolerance and frank discussion together, but not in print!

There is a standard of morality, which is often forgotten in the Theosophical Society by many members, but never by Annie Besant, and that is the morality of charity. Evil speaking and gossip are some of the vices most general, alas, in our Society, under the plea of showing up some other member's wrong-doing and purifying the Society. Channing once said: "I am not surprised at God's patience with sinners but I am surprised at His patience with His ill-natured saints."

No one has ever heard Annie Besant say an unkindly word of any living soul. Her charity is immense. No one could even imagine her going about gathering together the gossip of discharged servants. But some of her critics are not above doing that. Her psychic "messages" have never been directed against any other member, whereas "messages" by lower members have been used for condemnation of others, and aspersions of their characters.

"By their *fruits* ye shall know them," this is the only guide to those who have to watch the Great Forces at work in the Theosophical Movement, and who cannot verify for themselves the facts. It is by seeing the "fruits" of the recent manifestations at Adyar, and by waiting to compare carefully the fullest evidence on all sides, that I have come to the conclusion at which, with much pain, I have arrived. Pain, of necessity, for means a division (temporary only) from many I love and deeply respect. But I owe to Annie Besant, my dear co-worker of eighteen years (and

who has gone immeasurably beyond me) a debt of loving gratitude that would make, at this moment, silence a dishonesty on my part. For this reason, alone, I write these words.

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY.

In your last issue appears a statement by the Executive Committee intimating that Colonel Olcott's Official Notice of January 21st was invalid because "based" on an invalid notice. Even granting that his earlier notice of January 7th was an official one and irregular—a point which, at its best, seems doubtful—the contention of the Executive seems quite insufficiently grounded, for the second notice is a perfectly self-contained document. Rule 9 invests Colonel Olcott with the power of nominating his successor. The Colonel wrote: "As already notified to you, I have . . . nominated, as my successor, Annie Besant." He does not say whether the previous notification was official or not. If it be argued that it was unofficial or irregular, and therefore no official cognisance could be taken of it, that only knocks the preliminary clause of five words out of court, and the document remains a perfectly self-contained intimation that he has nominated Mrs. Besant as his successor, followed by an authoritative instruction to the General Secretary to take the votes. The notice is "based" on itself, not on the previous communication, and is a perfectly straightforward document. As to the desirability of immediate voting, I have nothing here to say. I merely wish to observe that I do not see why it should be considered necessary to endeavour to discredit a perfectly legal communication of the late President-founder, recognised as such, by the way, and acted upon by other Sections. Doubtless, if deemed advisable, the postponement of voting could have been accomplished otherwise.

One has been met by the objection that the voting could not legally take place till after the Colonel's death, but that idea is entirely refuted by Rules 9 and 11.

2. Apparently the said notice was received after the first meeting of the Executive, but before the pamphlet embodying their resolutions was circulated. Why was it suppressed? the pamphlet could well have been delayed, and if necessary supplemented. Was not this allowing a false statement of the case to go out to the Section?

3. In the April VĀHAN we were instructed to fill in and return voting papers "as early after receipt as possible." Why was not the legal period of voting specified on the slips attached to those papers? Why were some of them sent out considerably prior to May 1st? Votes recorded before May 1st were clearly invalid, as I have pointed out in a pamphlet I have sent round to the Lodges, and I have formally requested the re-taking of those votes. As matters turned out, only thirty or forty were received, but some hundreds of forms were sent out prematurely, and would have been filled in prematurely if people had followed the instructions given in the April VĀHAN. As explained in the said pamphlet, several of the voting papers reached members before Mrs.

Besant's circular letter, calculated to exercise an important influence on the direction of the vote, and as I had been entrusted with the dissemination of this, I felt it obligatory to take action.

4. Who are the persons appointed to act as scrutineers of the votes, and why have their names never been published for the approval of the members? I believe it to be the case that one is a member who has headed a vehement opposition to Mrs. Besant's candidature, and started the campaign with a pamphlet opposing her election as a menace to the Society. Why (as is the case in America) is there not on the same Sub-Committee any member who has as publicly and strongly supported Mrs. Besant in the present crisis? Of course, it would be absurd even to hint at the possibility of sharp practice. But the whole thing is altogether unbusinesslike, and sets, moreover, a shocking precedent. And if we are to be led to the extremity of a secret ballot, instead of plain, straightforward voting, surely the simple formality of publishing the names of the scrutineers might advantageously have been complied with? The outside public is well entitled to ask: "*Quis custodiet custodes*?"

Yours obediently,

May 10th, 1907. JAMES I. WEDGWOOD.
28, Albemarle Street, W.

The Committee of the Bath Lodge regrets the action taken by the late Executive Council of the British Section of the Theosophical Society with regard to the late Presidential Election on the grounds:

(1) That the Executive Council treated as illegal an absolutely constitutional nomination to the Presidency by the late President-founder of the Theosophical Society *re* the Presidential notice, dated Adyar, January 21st, 1907, such nomination and the procedure as to voting being in accordance with Rules 9 and 11 of the Theosophical Society.

(2) That the omission of the aforesaid Presidential notice from the March VĀHAN and from the document issued with that VĀHAN *re* the election by the Executive Committee was illegal, unfair, and misleading to the members of the British Section, who had a right to the information then withheld.

(Signed) ELISABETH SEVERS,

President of the Bath Lodge.

ERRATA.

In Mr. Whyte's letter in the May VĀHAN, p. 90, "great Master Soul" should have been "great-hearted soul," and in the same letter "of innumerable gracious ways" should have read "innumerable gracious ways."

The subscription to THE VĀHAN for those who are not members of the British Section of the Theosophical Society is 2s. 6d. per annum, post free. Single copies, 3d. each, may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W., to whom subscriptions should also be sent. No back numbers can be supplied.

THE VĀHAN



A VEHICLE FOR

THE INTERCHANGE OF THEOSOPHICAL OPINIONS AND NEWS.

ISSUED by direction and under the authority of the British Section of the Theosophical Society in Convention, for free distribution to all members paying full annual subscription. Members of branches will receive copies through their officers. The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statements contained herein unless set forth in an official document.—KATE SPINK, *General Secretary*.

All readers are cordially invited to send in questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon theosophical subjects. All communications should be written plainly and on one side of the paper only, and addressed to the editor, 28, Albemarle Street, London, W. For unsigned paragraphs the editor is personally responsible.

VOL. XVI.

LONDON, JULY 1, 1907.

NO. 12.

Edited by KATE SPINK.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

At the time of going to press the Acting President had not received the full returns from all Sections, but the results so far available make it certain that Mrs. Besant will be elected. The voting in this Section is 1189 for and 261 against. It is expected that the result of the election will be announced before the Convention.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

THE CONVENTION.

As already announced in the June VĀHAN the business meeting of the Convention and two meetings on Sunday will be held at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., and the remaining meetings will be at 28, Albemarle Street, W.

At the suggestion of a meeting of delegates to the Northern Federation the Executive Committee have decided to call an informal meeting of Presidents of Branches and delegates to the Convention to be held at 28, Albemarle Street, on Saturday, July 6th, at 11 a.m. This meeting will not, of course, be able to decide any matters to come before the Convention, but it is hoped that it may facilitate the business to be settled at the afternoon meeting.

The business meeting will be held at Essex Hall, at 2.30 p.m. The agenda paper was sent out with the June VĀHAN, but the following changes have been notified, and the attention of members is called to them.

A rider, suggested by Mr. Wedgwood, will be added to Miss Severs' vote of censure on the Ex-

ecutive Committee, and Mr. Wedgwood will second the vote of censure. The additional clause is: "(3) That the Executive Council gave publicity to certain documents connected with the resignation of Mr. C. W. Leadbeater from the Theosophical Society, of which part is of a specially confidential character, and part of highly doubtful authenticity."

Mr. Faulding will withdraw the resolution which stands in his name, proposing a new set of rules for the Section, and will substitute the following resolution:

"That articles 4, 5 and 6 in the proposed rules be added to the existing rules of the Section and that these new rules become immediately operative."

If this resolution is carried Mr. Faulding will move:

"That the *Executive Council* be, and they are hereby, instructed to consider the existing rules of this Section and bring up a report on same with their recommendations to the Convention of 1908. Such report to be printed in THE VĀHAN for May, 1908."

Mr. J. I. Wedgwood has been nominated as General Secretary.

With regard to the nominations of members of the Executive Committee, Mrs. Hooper has stated that she does not wish to stand for election, and Mr. W. Kingsland has been proposed in addition to the names already published.

On Saturday evening, at 8 p.m., a reception of members will be held at 28, Albemarle Street.

On Sunday afternoon, July 7th, at 3.30, there will be a meeting of members at Essex Hall for discussion. The following questions have been submitted, and members are invited to speak upon them:

"Is it possible and desirable to further more systematically the Objects of the Society?"

"Is it desirable to form sections or groups of

members who are specially interested in the study of such subjects as Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Art, Psychology, Psychic Research, etc.?"

"What are the best methods for the formation and working of such groups?"

On Sunday evening, at 7 p.m., a public meeting will be held in the same hall. The speakers and subjects are: Mr. Mead, "Some Mystery Sayings," and Mrs. Besant, "The Field of Work of the Theosophical Society."

Any Secretaries of Branches who may not yet have complied with the requirements as to Reports and lists of members are requested to do so without delay.

A programme of the Convention is sent to members with this copy of THE VĀHAN.

The Executive Committee's Report (formerly the General Secretary's Report), is also enclosed, in order that members may read it before the Convention, and it may then, if agreed, be taken as read at the meeting.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE BRITISH SECTION.

Members are reminded that the financial year of the Section ended on April 30th, and that subscriptions for the year 1907-8 are now due.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

CLOSING OF HEADQUARTERS IN AUGUST.

Members are notified that the rooms at 28, Albemarle Street will be closed for cleaning during August, reopening as usual on September 1st. The rooms will close from Wednesday evening, July 31st.

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTIONS.

The Executive Committee have arranged a series of three receptions for members to meet the newly-elected President of the Society, on the following dates:

Monday, July 8th, 4 to 6 p.m.; Thursday, July 11th, 4 to 6 p.m.; Monday, July 15th, 8 to 10 p.m. It is hoped that by giving three different dates the attendance on any one day may not be excessive. Members are requested to inform the Hon. Secretary, Social Committee, 28, Albemarle Street, as soon as possible, which day they wish to be present. If more than one day is convenient for them would they kindly mention that fact, so that the Secretary may be able to tell them which is the

less crowded day, and the attendance of members may thus be distributed fairly equally over the four occasions.

London members are asked if they will kindly arrange to attend one of the later receptions if possible, so as to leave more room on the 8th for country members who may be up in London at that time.

MRS. BESANT'S LECTURES.

Mrs. Besant will give a public lecture in the large Queen's Hall on Wednesday, July 10th, at 8 o'clock. The subject will be, "The Value of Theosophy in the World of Thought." A very great deal of disappointment has been caused to large numbers of people who have been unable to secure seats for the series of Sunday lectures which Mrs. Besant has given, and it is hoped that members will do their best to make this special lecture in the large hall widely known, so that the disappointment may be to some extent minimised. This lecture will mark the occasion of Mrs. Besant's election to the Presidency of the Theosophical Society. There will be no charge for admission, but a limited number of seats will be reserved at 5s. and 2s. 6d. in order to cover the cost of the hall and other expenses. Application for these and for admission tickets should be made at once to the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond Street, W.

Mrs. Besant is giving a course of four lectures on "Yoga," on Friday afternoons, at 5 o'clock, in the lecture-room, at 28, Albemarle Street, W. The first lecture was delivered on June 28th, the remaining ones being on July 5th, 12th and 19th. Admission will be by course ticket only. Tickets may be obtained from The Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 15s. for the four lectures. A detailed syllabus will be supplied with the tickets.

There are also two remaining lectures of the course of four given to the Blavatsky Lodge but open to all members of the Society. The meetings are held in Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., July 4th, "The Place of Masters in the Theosophical Society"; July 11th, "The Future of the Theosophical Society."

Members are admitted only by ticket, obtainable from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 1s. for the course.

THE MUNICH CONGRESS.

The Congress of the Federation of European Sections held at Munich in May was not only a most successful gathering, considered from all points of view, but one of peculiar interest; the membership numbered perhaps some five hundred, towards which the British Section contributed twenty-seven. Representatives of the French, Dutch, Scandinavian, Italian, and the newly formed Hungarian Sections were present. From India came Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Russak, Miss Appel

and Mr. and Miss Arundale; and one member hailed from America. Mr. Keightley and Mr. Mead, whose presence had at one time been expected, were both prevented from coming, the one remaining in India, the other in England. Officially present on behalf of the British Section were: Miss Spink, the General Secretary; Mr. Wedgwood, the Hon. Secretary of the Congress Committee; and Mr. Wallace.

Two circumstances combined to render the Congress an occasion of more than ordinary interest; the first was, of course, the appearance amongst us again of Mrs. Besant, but this time as our President-nominate, the other was the opportunity of making the acquaintance of Dr. Steiner and his band of co-workers, amidst their own surroundings. The arrangements of the Congress were in the hands of the German Committee, and were drawn up so as to provide for the meetings a characteristic environment, intended to express the spirit of the traditional mid-European occultism. In Dr. Steiner our Society possesses a worker of many-sided attainments, a hard thinker, well versed in philosophy, an authority on Goethe's works of no mean renown, an occultist, himself the possessor of psychic faculties—such is the able Secretary and leader of the German Section. Dr. Steiner is a specialist in Rosicrucian lore; and it was this branch of occultism which was put before us with such ability and force in his lectures, and in the decoration of the Congress hall. The room was draped all over in red, surrounded with shields and other decorative devices which represented great cosmological truths according to the Rosicrucian symbology. At the front of the hall stood the two pillars of the Masonic and Kabbalistic lore, and the Zodiacal signs adorned the platform. Much music, rendered according to the true German spirit, and some admirable recitations, regaled us; and the contemplation of some powerful sculpture by Dr. Ernst Wagner, one of the members, bewiled our scanty leisure moments. Nor, in sooth, should be omitted mention of an excellent vegetarian restaurant, opened by members of the Munich Lodge.

Dr. Steiner welcomed Mrs. Besant as President of Honour of the Congress, recalling her splendid work for the Society. What, above all else, he said, constituted her chief claim on our gratitude was the fact that to so many of us she had been the portal to the spiritual life. He next passed an eloquent testimony to the work of Col. Olcott, the Congress standing the while. Col. Olcott's service to the Society he had helped to found, would ever remain deep in our hearts. What had so crowned his labours with success was his devotion and enthusiasm, and his recognition of the Treasure of individual liberty.

Mrs. Besant delivered three addresses, all of which were profoundly impressive,—an opening address, and two lectures on "The Place of Phenomena in the Theosophical Society," and "The Relation of the Masters to the Theosophical Society." As these form the substance of the lectures given at the Northern Federation Conference, and now being given in London, no attempt

need here be made in the brief space available, to indicate the nature of their contents.

Two lectures were given by Dr. Steiner, each lasting for an hour and three-quarters, delivered with great force and rare eloquence. The first dealt with "The Initiation of the Rosicrucians." The seven stages of progress were symbolically expressed, he said, in St. John's Gospel, which was an initiation book, a picture of the spiritual life; and the Rosicrucian tradition was a Christian one. Taken in its entirety, the seven-fold initiatory scheme constituted a colossal moral lesson, which carried us up to the threshold of the spiritual world. The second lecture was entitled "Planetary and Human Evolution." Dr. Steiner dealt first with man's origin and aim, and the constitution of his nature, and pointed out that man was more evolved on the physical than on any other plane. Man's planetary evolution consisted in the unfolding of different stages of consciousness. Dr. Steiner treated his subject from the Rosicrucian standpoint, advancing the idea that the planet on which we evolved was but one and the same planet, in different states or conditions, known as the Saturn, Sun, and Moon state or influence in the past, the Earth state in the present, and the Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan states lying yet in advance. He spoke also of human conditions in Atlantis. Occultism was the supreme science, and he maintained that the dissemination of occult knowledge and occult research was the main purpose of the Theosophical Society, its first two objects being dependent on its third and most immediately important object.

Mr. Alan Leo read a paper on "Astrology and Personal Fate," taking Astrology along its esoteric side as dealing with influences and occult forces operating through the planetary bodies. The burden of the paper was a masterly discourse on the age-old problem of freewill and fate, showing how Esoteric Astrology illuminated the subject. Dr. Pascal contributed a well-reasoned paper on "Unity and Hierarchy." Herr Michael Bauer spoke on the Unity of Nature, and drew an analogical representation of human progress by a study of natural progress. Mr. Wedgwood followed with a paper on "The value of the Theosophical Society" from a synthetic standpoint. He maintained that the study of occultism was most valuable in that it displayed to us the Divine Purpose, and enabled us to become conscious co-operators with the Divine Will. Dealing, as occultism did, with cosmic processes, the study of it should tend to instil into us wide-mindedness.

Middle. Kamensky traced the stream of Theosophic thought in Russian literature, and referred to the vast stores of esoteric wisdom embedded in the rites and ceremonies of the Greek Church, and preserved amongst the hermits and monastic orders. Mr. Arvid Knös sounded a metaphysical note in his paper on "Absolute and Relative Truths." Frau Wolfram contributed an interesting paper on "The Occult Basis of the Siegfried Myth," pointing out its Atlantean origin, and its application as an allegory of the relations of the higher and lower self.

On the last day of the Congress the proceedings took the shape of a discussion on "The Necessity of supporting Occultism within the Theosophical Society." It developed into what was virtually an interesting discussion on the value of Spiritualism. Herr Agoston, of Budapest, started the ball rolling with a plea for the organised experimental investigation of psychic phenomena within the Theosophical Society. The following took part in the discussion: Messrs. Hubo, Deinhard, Unger, Bauer, Van Ginkel, Dezsö and Wedgwood, Miss Severs, and Frau Wolfram. Mrs. Dunglass spoke on "Fellowship with Christ," dealing with the New Theology, and there was a discussion on the Education of Children. Dr. Carl Unger, in addition, read a paper dealing with some of the philosophical aspects of Theosophical teachings.

In conclusion, mention must be made of one most interesting and enjoyable event—the performance of a mystery play by M. Eduard Schuré, entitled "The Sacred Drama of Eleusis," and translated from the French. The production and representation was undertaken entirely by amateur members, under the personal direction of Dr. Steiner, who worked out the scenic effects to the smallest detail. Musical interludes of an impressive character were written specially for the occasion by Herr Bernhard Stavenhagen. The performance, which was divided into a prologue and three acts, was greeted with prolonged applause, the dramatic power of Fraulein von Sivers, who took the part of Demeter, receiving special recognition. At the conclusion a telegram of thanks and congratulation was sent in the name of the Congress to M. Schuré, who is a personal friend of Dr. Steiner.

This rough sketch of a memorable gathering must suffice, for—one may say with St. John—were the many other doings of the Congress to be chronicled, even the whole of THE VĀHAN itself would not contain that which could be written. Two years hence the Congress is to meet at Budapest, as the honoured guest of the newly-formed Hungarian Section.

JAMES I. WEDGWOOD.

THE MONTREAL LODGE.

The Secretary of the Montreal Lodge wishes to call the attention of any members who may go from this country to Canada to the meetings of the Lodge. The Lodge will be glad to receive any members and give them all information as to the Society in Canada. Meetings are held on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 468, St. Catherine Street West, Montreal, Quebec. The Secretary is Mr. T. W. Thomasson, P.O. Box 1,094, Montreal. Perhaps members who may go to Canada will note this address.

ACTIVITIES.

Donations to the General Fund.

The following donations have been received to June 20th: M. A., £2 2s.; A. A. P., £2 2s.;

W. C. W., 5s.; A. D., 9s.; F. G., £10; Theosophical Publishing Society (royalties on Mme. Blavatsky's works), £30 7s. 2d.; E. F., £4. Total, £49 5s. 2d.

Lecture List.

ANTWERP LODGE. Information from F. van Hallé, 300, Rue Provence (sud).

BATH LODGE. 2, Argyle Street, on Mondays, at 8 p.m.: July 1st, *Why I am a Socialist*, Miss Clara M. Codd; July 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th, *Resurrection*, Dr. Goodchild. Information from Miss Sweet, 36, Henrietta Street, Bath.

BIRMINGHAM LODGE. Room No. 4, Midland Institute, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Information from Mr. A. P. Wilkins, 157, High Street, Harborne, Birmingham.

BOURNEMOUTH LODGE. Gestingthorpe, King's Park Road, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., for members; for members and friends on the first and third Sundays, at 3.30 p.m.

BRADFORD LODGE. Wednesdays, at 7.45 p.m., study of *The Growth of the Soul*, at Bank Buildings, North Parade. Information from Miss Edith Tempest, 130, New Cross Street, West Bowling, Bradford.

BRIGHTON LODGE. The Arts Club, 19, West Street, on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Information from Dr. King, 54, Compton Avenue, and Mr. Lloyd, 5, St. James' Street.

BRISTOL LODGE. Meetings suspended till September. Information from Mr. Thomas Freeman, 10, Glentworth Road, Redland.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE ANGLO-BELGE. Meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month, at 8.15 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 19, Rue Forestière, Avenue Louise.

BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS LODGE. Information from A. Vanderstraeten, 19, Rue des Commerçants.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE CENTRALE BELGE. 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles. Study class, second, third and fourth Saturdays and second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Meetings on first Saturdays and first and third Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 21, Rue du Vallon.

BRUSSELS, BRANCHE DU LOTUS BLANC. Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., at 58, Chaussée d'Ixelles, for young members and friends. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 199, Avenue Albert, Uccle.

COVENTRY CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Information from Mrs. Nevill, 16, Warwick Row, Coventry.

DUBLIN LODGE. 34, Wicklow Street. Regular meetings suspended for the summer.

EDINBURGH LODGE. 130, George Street. Regular meetings suspended during the summer. Enquiries to Miss Drummond, 4, Learmonth Terrace.

EDINBURGH, EDINBURGH CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings from October to April. Information from Miss Pagan, 24, Newbattle Terrace.

EXETER LODGE. 19, Bedford Circus, on Fridays, at 8 p.m. For members only, first Wednesday in the month, at 2.45 p.m.; and on second and fourth Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.

FOLKESTONE CENTRE. Fortnightly meetings at the house of Mr. J. Huxtable, 2, Brockman Road. Information from this address.

GLASGOW LODGE. Religious Institution Rooms, 200, Buchanan Street. Enquiries to Mr. J. P. Allan, 5, West Regent Street, Glasgow.

GREENOCK CENTRE. Enquiries to Mr. John Ross, 19, Nelson Street West.

HARROGATE LODGE. Theosophical Hall, Beulah Street, on Sundays, at 6.30 p.m.: July 7th, *Renovation*, Baker Hudson; July 14th, *Why do we Live?* E. Wood; July 21st, *Gods in the Making*; July 28th, *Unity v. Division*, W. Bell. Lodge meetings on Fridays, at 7.30 p.m., at 12, East Parade, for the study of *Elements of Theosophy* and *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

HULL LODGE. Information from H. E. Nichol, Beech Croft, Newland Park, Hull.

LEEDS, LEEDS LODGE. Leeds Arts Club Rooms, 18, Park Lane, on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m.

LEEDS, LEEDS CENTRE. Information from Miss Kennedy, 38, Potternewton Lane, Leeds.

LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LIVERPOOL LODGE. Wednesdays, at 18, Colquitt Street, at 8 p.m. Information from the Secretary, 18, Colquitt Street.

LONDON, ADELPHI LODGE. Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., at 21, Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

LONDON, BATTERSEA LODGE. Meetings suspended for the summer. Enquiries to Mr. A. P. Cattnach, 27, Dault Road, Wandsworth Common.

LONDON, BLAVATSKY LODGE. Lectures by Mrs. Besant, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., on Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m.: July 4th, *The Place of Masters in the Theosophical Society*; July, 11th, *The Future of the Theosophical Society*. At 28, Albemarle Street, W., informal meetings at 8 p.m.: July 18th, *Poetry and Spiritual Life*, Miss Lilian Lloyd; July 25th, *The Will*, Miss C. E. Woods. Discussion is invited at the informal meetings.

LONDON, CROUCH END CENTRE. Information from Bertram G. Theobald, The Hawthorns, Hornsey Lane, N.

LONDON, CROYDON LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 18A, Katharine Street, Croydon. Information from Fred Horne, 4, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD LODGE. 9, Lyncroft Gardens, Finchley Road, N.W., on Mondays, at 8 p.m.

LONDON, HAMPSTEAD HEATH CENTRE. Meetings suspended till the autumn.

LONDON, LEWISHAM CENTRE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 7, Avenue Road, Lewisham. Information from Albert Haddock, 176, Fort Road, Bermondsey, S.E.

LONDON, LOTUS CIRCLE. Meetings for children on Sundays, at 3 p.m., at 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. All children are welcome.

LONDON, NORTH LONDON LODGE. Mondays, at 8.30 p.m., at 25, Compton Road, Highbury, N., for the study of *The Ancient Wisdom*, and lectures on Wednesdays, at 8.30 p.m.

LONDON, WEST LONDON LODGE. 8, Inverness Place, Queen's Road, W. Meetings suspended during July and August.

MANCHESTER, MANCHESTER CITY LODGE. 26, Victoria Street, Manchester. Lodge meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 p.m. Classes for study on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Sunday, July 21st, public lectures by Mrs. Besant, morning and evening. July 28th, 6.30 p.m.: E. Wood. Information from Miss Ker, Brook Lea, Mellor, Marple Bridge.

MANCHESTER, DIDSBURY LODGE. Spath Lodge, Spath Road, Didsbury. Information from the Hon. Secretary, at the above address.

MANCHESTER, SOUTH MANCHESTER LODGE. Palmerston Hall, Palmerston Street, Moss Side. Information from the Hon. Secretary, 180, Clifton Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester.

MARGATE CENTRE. Information from Mr. H. A. Vasse, 7, Connaught Road, Margate.

MERTHYR TYDVIL CENTRE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7.30 p.m., at Trevethick Hall.

MIDDLESBROUGH LODGE. Sundays, at 6.45 p.m., at 46, Linthorpe Road.

NOTTINGHAM LODGE. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., at 19, Park Row, study of *The Bhagavad Gita*; 3.30 p.m., a ladies' reading class, and on alternate Sundays, at 7 p.m., study class.

OXFORD CENTRE. Information from Mrs. Anderson, Fairacres House, Oxford.

PLYMOUTH LODGE. Fridays, at 8.30 p.m., and Sundays, at 6.30 p.m., at 10, Pentillie Road, Mutley. Meetings on Sundays and the first Friday in the month are open to the public. Enquiries to R. J. Ellis, 53, Peverell Park Road.

RIPON CENTRE. 2, Ashville, on Fridays, at 8 p.m., for the study of *The Path of Discipleship*. Information from John Monger, at above address.

SHEFFIELD LODGE. Bainbridge Buildings, New Surrey Street, on Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., study of *A Study in Consciousness*.

SOUTHAMPTON LODGE. 14, Hanover Buildings, Tuesdays, at 8.30 p.m. Enquirers' meeting first Sunday in the month, at 7.30 p.m.; study of *The Secret Doctrine* on Sundays, at 3.30 p.m. Enquiries to Mrs. Hollick, "Henley," Roberts Road, Hill.

SKIPTON CENTRE. Information from E. J. Dunn, Broughton, Skipton, Yorks.

SURBITON LODGE. Meetings on Sundays, at 7 p.m., at Felsted, Crane's Park, Surbiton.

TYNESIDE LODGE. Last Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m., at Lily House, Ocean View, Whitley Bay, and class for study on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 80, Saville Street, North Shields.

WAKEFIELD LODGE. Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., at 1, West Parade. Information from C. A. Brotherton, Craven House, Belle Vue, Wakefield.

YORK LODGE. Fridays, at 8 p.m., at the Theosophical Hall, High Ousegate. Information from J. E. Reid, 9, First Avenue, York.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROPOSED COUNCIL.

To the Editor of THE VAHAN.

Kindly permit me to draw the attention of members to the proposed Rule 4 in Mr. Faulding's

substituted Rules for the British Section. This is the only really important change proposed, and its importance may be overlooked since it merely appears as one of a series of rules. The principle of a standing General Council, consisting of Presidents of Lodges, or other selected persons, is of vital moment. Such a Council would keep all the Lodges in touch with the Central Executive; any serious question could be submitted to it in writing, and opinions thereon returned, also in writing; it could at any time be called together, if necessity arose. Moreover, its choice of officials—Executive Committee, General Secretary and Treasurer—would be more deliberate and careful than is possible in Convention. At present, any name for any office may be sprung on the Convention, without previous notice, and delegates must vote thereon on the spur of the moment. A General Council, with an Executive Committee, would give a better and more representative government to the Section than a Committee, Secretary and Treasurer elected as at present.

Difficulties may arise as to taking Lodges as units, in view of the fact that one Lodge may count seven members and another 500. This might be met by giving the President one vote for every fifty members, the limit of such votes being three. This would discourage the growth of a Lodge beyond 150, and when members increased beyond this maximum they would break off and form another Lodge, much to the benefit of all. A Lodge so large that its members never meet as a body, the members of which do not know each other, the business of which is carried on by a small minority, is not a Lodge in any real sense of the word, and it would be far better if it divided up into Lodges of reasonable size, in which corporate life would be possible. This policy was followed in the earlier days; the Blavatsky Lodge is the mother Lodge of most of the London Lodges, but it has become sterile of late years, and its family does not increase as it should do, while the great majority of its members are never seen in its Lodge-room. The General Council would prove a benefit if it indirectly prevented the growth of Lodges beyond a reasonable and useful size.

ANNIE BESANT.

AN EXPLANATION.

I learn that in my recent letter there is an ambiguity of expression which may give a false impression as to which "Notice" I am referring to.

As a matter of fact I was referring to the first official notice of January 21st and *not* to the *Communication* of January 7th.

I used the term "First Notice" (which should have been clear enough) but omitted to add the date. I was not referring to the General "Communication" which had nothing to do with the voting question in itself.

My attention having been drawn to this, I shall

be glad if you will kindly print this, clearing up the point in question.

I regret, also, to see that by an unfortunate slip in the Italian translation, the word "*Irregolare*" has been inserted. I have not used the term in my English letter, and sincerely regret to see it in the translation.

Yours faithfully,

ISABEL COOPER-OAKLEY,
Member of Executive Committee, Italian Section.

MRS. BESANT AND THE INDIAN COUNCIL.

In the May number of THE VĀHAN a letter appeared over the signature of Major Lauder, endorsed by that of Mrs. Lauder, which seems to have been based to a great extent upon a misunderstanding about the way in which Mrs. Besant's name was left out of the list of the Indian Council for 1906. The reason that I happen to know anything about the matter is that I had heard, privately, a somewhat similar account of Mrs. Besant being "turned off" the Indian Council as showing enmity to her on the part of the General Secretary, and feeling sure there was a mistake, made enquiries as to what had actually occurred. The facts are as follows:

The list of Councillors to be proposed for the year 1906 was prepared by Babu Govinda Das and K. Narayan Swami Aiyer—not by Babu Upendranath Basu, who had nothing to do with it. The following were the reasons adduced by the two former for not proposing her name:

1. Because Mrs. Besant had for some years made it a principle not to accept any office in the Theosophical Society owing to her position in the E.S.

2. Because she accepted the Office at the Convention of 1904 only under very great pressure and expressly for one year only, as the General Secretary could not attend the meetings in 1904 and deputed Mrs. Besant to act for him.

3. Because many members of the Council, regarding Mrs. Besant as their Guru, felt very awkward in expressing their views freely in her presence, especially if those views happened not to agree with hers.

It would be hard indeed to find any unfriendly intent in this, even if it were not well known that Babu G. Das and K. Narayan Swami Aiyer are numbered among Mrs. Besant's friends.

BATRICE WEBB.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AND THE DIFFICULTIES OF GREAT TEACHERS.

Recent discussions raise certain questions of great importance, which have ever been uppermost in the mind of the writer; but which, she ventures to think, have not, hitherto, received sufficient attention from leaders and lecturers in the Theosophical Society. Do members, do students, *know* accurately the origins of their own society? Are they acquainted with the nature of H. P. B.'s

peculiar, personal, psychic experiences? Did not Colonel Olcott write *Old Diary Leaves* in order that knowledge of these and of Madame Blavatsky's character might be accessible to readers in the Library? Yet, after repeated enquiries, it seems that few members have perused these indispensable volumes. Why is this? What guarantee have members that the said phenomena were not a series of frauds, deceptions and illusions? The answer is, that the Theosophical Society, in its world-wide grand results speaks for itself and Founders. But why this obvious neglect of so necessary a study? Why does the late President-Founder's work remain unnoticed on the shelves? It bears the stamp of perfect sincerity on every page. Surely, if we take pains to make ourselves conversant with our actual beginnings; then, should fresh phenomena occur, we are likely to be in more favourable conditions for comparing these with what has gone before, and judging accordingly. Ignorance among units on a vital issue, even partial ignorance, must eventually prove dangerous to the whole.

Again, have we ever meditated seriously on the supreme difficulty to which all great spiritual teachers must come at last, with regard to questions of morality; not only when two duties conflict, such as the need of unstinted compassion for the sinner with stern condemnation of the sin, but when that particular point is reached where the delicate adjustment of a question of morals becomes paradoxical, and then, oh confusion, the latter-day teaching appears to contradict the former. This is only on the surface; the teaching is one, instructions and the parts will gradually fit themselves in. Then cometh a grievous time for some who are scared from the Fount of Wisdom. Have we ever pondered on the nature of those "hard sayings" which caused certain followers of the Master Jesus to turn back and walk with Him no more? The disciples who can win through a dangerous crisis, who can wait steadfastly for mists to disperse, and "the clear shining after rain" to appear—how blessed are they!

F. M. M. R.

THE BLAVATSKY LODGE AND THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

DEAR MADAM,

At the business meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge held on the 20th inst., Mr. A. J. Faulding publicly stated that the Lodge had on a recent occasion specifically made a claim on the services of the General Secretary in virtue of the fact that it contributes a sum of money to supplement the honorarium which the British Section is able to set aside for the salary of its chief official. I questioned this statement and called for particulars. I was met with the remark: "You had better not ask," and on further asking for a reply an answer was refused. I regret to be compelled to take this, the only means available, to insist publicly that Mr. Faulding should either justify his asser-

tion or withdraw it as publicly as it was made. An insinuation intended to attach a stigma at once upon the Blavatsky Lodge and the General Secretary cannot be passed over in silence. Such methods of discussing matters of policy are not recognised as legitimate in the society of honourable people.

I am, dear Madam,
Faithfully yours,
EDITH WARD.

DEAR MADAM,

I have perused the above letter and crave space for a reply. First I will correct some mis-statements. I did not refuse to justify my statements, on the contrary, I stated that I would do so if the Chairman wished, and I also said to Miss Ward (this of course she did not hear) that I would tell her after the meeting; she left the meeting before its close and I have not seen her since. As to my assertion, not an insinuation, being "intended to attach a stigma at once upon the Blavatsky Lodge and the General Secretary," I deny it absolutely. I have no power of divining intentions, as Miss Ward appears to have, but I can guess as to the reasons which have led her to intervene in this matter, and doubtless others will be led to the same conclusions. If Miss Ward had asked for information before rushing into print this letter would have been unnecessary. Now as to the facts: At a recent meeting of the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge (at which I could not be present) a resolution was passed, without notice, calling upon the General Secretary to insert a notice in THE VĀHAN to the effect that the evidence in the X case was open for the inspection of any and all members of the Theosophical Society. This resolution was passed at a time when the President Elect was believed to favour X's readmission to the Society; it was calculated to have the effect of diverting votes from the President Elect. No other Lodge of the Society could have ventured to make so extraordinary a claim on the General Secretary, and the inference is clear that the Blavatsky Lodge Council did so with the full knowledge that, as it paid a portion of the General Secretary's salary, they were entitled to demand attention to their extraordinary requests. The majority of those present at the business meeting voted that the present payment to the General Secretary should be made direct; my contention was that when we had a surplus we should give the sum of £50 to the British Section funds and not "ear-mark" it in any way. This would put the General Secretary in a position of independence so far as the Lodge is concerned. I very strongly hold that no Lodge should pay, or partly pay, any official. The vote in the old form was carried by twenty-two votes to eighteen out of a total membership which approaches 500!!! If the same General Secretary is reappointed the payment will be made to her by the Lodge direct.

ALFRED J. FAULDING.

June 22nd, 1907.

The resolution referred to by Mr. Faulding was passed by the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge on March 6th, and a formal notification of the fact and a copy of the resolution were sent me by the Secretary. The request was brought up in due course before the Executive Committee at its meeting on March 16th, when the following resolution was passed: "That the suggested invitation be not printed in THE VĀHAN."

KATE SPINK,
General Secretary.

DEAR MADAM,

The resolution which Mr. Faulding refers to was passed by the Council of the Blavatsky Lodge on March 6th, 1907, at a time when there was a widely-spread impression that efforts would be made to re-instate X. in the Society. The Council therefore thought the step referred to in the resolution would be desirable, in order that members should be enabled to see the evidence and judge it for themselves. This was their sole object in the action they took. The Council were in no way going beyond their rights in making such a request if they thought fit so to do. In addressing the General Secretary they took the course usually pursued, it being of course taken for granted that she would lay the question before the Executive Council, with whom alone the decision rested. This was done. The General Secretary was not, therefore, personally responsible in the matter, and every member of the Blavatsky Council knew this. Although the above facts show the groundlessness of Mr. Faulding's accusations, the Council wish publicly to express their regret that the General Secretary should have been exposed to such an insinuation.

I am, dear Madam,
Yours faithfully,
F. EARDLEY-WILMOT,
Hon. Sec. Blavatsky Lodge.

ENQUIRER.

QUESTION 323.

B. L.—Granting the interpenetration of planes, why should the divine intellect be represented (Man Visible and Invisible) as approaching the Aura from above and not from all directions? Does this help to prove the fact that the "higher" planes extend further from the physical earth than the others and that "inspiration from above" is not altogether a relative and metaphorical term?

P. H.—"Above" and "below" are purely metaphorical terms. The Divine Intellect does not "approach" either from above or from below—nor yet from any "direction," or all "directions." The Divine Intellect is *there*. The only

question is: What of that Intellect is manifest to us?

S. G. P.—One reason for representing it thus seems to be that the centre through which consciousness usually works is in the head. And any force that vitalises it must impinge on that centre.

A. H. W.—The writer believes that the idea of representing the Divine Intellect as approaching from above, is due to two reasons: one being the tendency to imagine the planes as one above the other in layers, the other being that the head end of the human aura is uppermost as a man stands. In reality the Divine Intellect approaches the physical brain from the heart centre, where the "chain" of "permanent atoms" forms the focus of each body in turn.

When the physical brain is harmonised with the "atomic radiation" proceeding from the permanent physical atom, the power of the Divine Intellect can reproduce itself by harmonic vibration in the physical brain, and consequently in the waking consciousness of the individual.

That Divine Power extends beyond the illuminated brain, into the upper part of the Aura, where it can be seen by clairvoyance as "a crown of glory."

This reproduction in the physical brain of the thought of the Divine Man is called "The memory of the heart," simply because the permanent atoms which carry every vibration of the Universe are located in the physical heart. When those vibrations are reproduced in a physical brain which has been tuned up to the requisite pitch, then "practical omniscience" is attained.

The term "inspiration from above," probably dates from the time when the earth was supposed to be flat, surrounded by a river and then by lofty mountains, these supporting "heaven" like a vast ceiling from which hung the stars. On the top of this firmament the Gods lived, and showered down blessings, thunder-bolts and what not; occasionally descending through openings and returning by ladders. It would seem wisest to regard the term as distinctly metaphorical.

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All communications for "Activities" must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the month at latest. Secretaries of Branches are particularly requested to note this.