

Fraternization News

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NOTES AND NEWS



Sadhu Singh Dhami

The great Buffalo convention is over! Marked by deep enthusiasm, sincere friendliness and an earnest aspiration to further the cause of Theosophy, it will ever be remembered by those fortunate enough to attend. For this part of the world, Fraternization consolidated itself. Inspired, Theosophical students saw a vision of a bright Theosophical future.

Among the students there gathered the intuition was general that the convention was pervaded by a spiritual force. Some were convinced of the presence of the Masters.

Mr. and Mrs. Marks

Tributes to Mr. Robert Marks, who organized the convention, were heard on every side. The amount of devoted work which went into making it a success is known only to the committee, and they know he well deserved the praise bestowed upon him. Nor must we forget Mrs. Marks, who was, to use an outmoded but expressive word, a Theosophical "helpmeet". No effort of this nature depends entirely for success upon a few. Everyone contributed something and the achievement, therefore, belongs to all.

Dual Meetings

The dual meetings were an experiment, and were more successful than might have been anticipated. Varying opinions were expressed. Some students said they should never be tried again, others declared they should be permanent features. On the whole, we believe, people liked the change, for it enabled ten highly interesting addresses to be given instead of five.

Report of Convention

All who attended the convention should send for the July issue of *The Canadian Theosophist*, which contains a very full report, nineteen pages long, and a list of all who registered. Address the editor, Mr. A. E. S. Smythe, 33 Forest Avenue, Hamilton, Ont. The price is 10 cents per copy (coin, not stamps) or \$1 a year. This issue will be in demand.

Illustrations

We propose, where we can do so without added cost, to brighten the *News* with illustrations. The "mat," as printers call it, of Sadhu Singh Dhami falling into our hands, we are glad to reproduce on this page the photograph of one of the speakers at the Saturday night symposium.

What do you think of the slogan, A Million for Theosophy?

An American Appraisal

From the early Saturday morning registration until the last meeting on Sunday evening in the ballroom at the Hotel Lafayette, Buffalo, the convention was particularly outstanding because of the earnest desire of each of those present to learn more about the views of the others and to give them the same thoughtful consideration which he would naturally like to have shown to his own. The natural and inevitable result of this was as helpful a gathering as could be desired even by Theosophists.

Spirit of Giving

We all know that there is no result without a cause, and the cause of this fine sharing of thought for mutual benefit can only be found in the keen interest and truly Theosophical desire of all those present to give rather than to get. The gathering was inevitable because of the spirit of giving; of sharing what we had.

Before attempting to give a few of the high spots, I cannot refrain from mentioning the fact that the secret of the success of the convention was given full opportunity to express itself without let or hindrance because of the perfect machine built by Mr. Marks for the actual handling of the details. While the perfectly oiled machine runs without noise, and turns out its product more or less unnoticed, we might well keep in mind that without it a fine convention might close after confused toil to little purpose.

Beautiful Programs

The beautiful programs give the story only in part, for in addition, even the table sittings for the Civic Welcome Luncheon were thought out and little place cards told you where to go.

I think that Mr. and Mrs. Marks must know that their work and that of their committee was well done and greatly appreciated by all the students. It should be known.

The opening address of the chairman, Mr. Cecil Williams, struck the keynote of the convention so well and was so packed with helpful suggestions, that it is hoped that it will be mimeographed and sent to all who registered, to help them carry back to their respective Lodges the *tone* which so beautifully expressed our hopes, our desires and our determined strivings. It just had to be a worth while convention.

High Standard

Mr. Hughes, of Hamilton, who has this important place to fill at our 1937 gathering in his city, has a high standard set for him. Incidentally, his selection is in line with the policy of those who have built the students' gatherings and activities up, i.e., that as far as is possible there shall be a drafting each year of new men and women to carry on. It is thought that this will bring new ideas and give an added impetus to the work. The advice and active support of the more experienced men such as Mr. Smythe and Mr. Clapp will always be available, while Mr. Williams and Mr. Marks will have to steer the less experienced newcomers.

OLIVER J. SCHOONMAKER.

A Canadian On Convention

The 1936 Convention has passed into history, and has proved itself worthy of no mean place in the annals of the Theosophical Movement.

As an organized gathering of Theosophical Students it was very nearly perfect, everything moved smoothly and efficiently, as on well oiled wheels. A sense of fellowship and kindly feeling was constantly in evidence, and the intellectual standard of the various papers and addresses was on a uniformly high plane.

All these things stand to the credit of the organizing committee who had so ably played their part, to the speakers who prepared and presented the many excellent talks, and to the members as a whole who took part in the discussions, or simply contributed their mental and emotional support.

A Spiritual Something

But something higher than all these seemed to brood over the proceedings—a spiritual something that steered the discussions clear of all petty controversy and held them naturally to the consideration of the fundamental concepts that all students of Theosophy hold in common. Surely the entity that is the “North American Theosophical Students’ Convention” is learning to express itself in its higher aspects; but again this was only possible through a better and finer form, so, as always in manifestation, the two, Spirit and Matter, Life and Form, are inseparable.

To mention outstanding features from the standpoint of public appeal the highlight was undoubtedly the Saturday evening Symposium. The Rev. R. H. Thomas’ masterly discussion of the Life side and the Form side of Christianity, with his appeal to Theosophists in this so-called Christian land to make their influence felt in revivifying the Churches; R. C. Bingham’s virile exposition of some phases of Buddhism, the philosophy of “the All Enlightened One,” who wept with all his brother’s tears”; and the cultured and beautifully phrased presentation of the fundamentals of the Vedanta philosophy, and their application to life, by our good friend Sadhu Singh Dharni—all created an impression long to live in memory, three facets of the jewel of Truth ably reflected by three able reflectors.

Presentation of Theosophy

From the angle of the mission of the Theosophical worker the most striking feature of the convention was the ubiquity in discussion of the question of how best to present Theosophy to the world at large. There were exponents of both the esoteric and the exoteric viewpoint, and glimpses of a middle path, at once transcending and synthesizing these extremes on the basis that “These truths, which are as great as life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.” It was heartening to hear this topic so frequently and so earnestly discussed. A. Lloyd Boddy’s excellent paper on “The Necessity for Propaganda in the Theosophical Movement” formed a focus for it at Sunday afternoon’s open meeting.

Peace Resolution

At this same session a resolution was proposed urging all students gathered at the convention, in the face of the gathering war clouds over the world, to support actively the various movements for peace and international good-will in their home communities. The writer, who also pre-

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To Every Reader

The support given *Fraternization News* has been most encouraging. Up to the date of the Convention donations from good Theosophical friends paid all out-of-pocket expenses, and the convention unanimously voted for the continuance of the magazine. Members were asked to support it by subscribing 50 cents per annum (not in stamps), which is approximately the cost for one person. Donations over and above that sum to assist free circulation will be welcomed by the committee and acknowledged in the *News*.

It is hoped that the *News* may be more extensively circulated and lend support to Fraternization outside North America. Judging by the enthusiasm displayed in the past, this is no idle dream.

Than Theosophy no cause is more lofty, more noble and can produce such enduring beneficent effects. It is the hope of the world; and those who contribute to extending its influence, as in Fraternization, are setting in motion forces which will return one day—multiplied, who knows, by what number—to aid them on the Journey of Return.

The following donations to Fraternization News are acknowledged with many thanks: Mr. F. J. McCandless, Buffalo, N.Y., \$5; Miss Mayme-Lee Ogden, Rochester, N.Y., \$1; Mrs. George M. Gray, Cincinnati, Ohio, \$1.

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sented this motion, is firmly convinced that Theosophists, as representatives of the Movement, should take a more prominent stand on this most vital issue, and incidentally by this means give the Theosophical ideas on the matter wider publicity among the type of people working for peace. The resolution was ably spoken to by R. C. Bingham, Dr. Alvin B. Kuhn, Sadhu Singh Dhami and L. Cunningham of St. Catharines, and carried unanimously.

Many expressions of regret were heard from those who had to start the homeward journey early, at having to miss hearing G. Rupert Lesch. One of the highlights of the proceedings at Ontario Lodge is Mr. Lesch's annual visit with us—he is unfailingly the source of high inspiration.

Let us close these random notes on the 1936 Convention with the thought that it has set a very high standard for next year's meeting at Hamilton, a thought that should be a spur to ever more strenuous effort on the part of all concerned.

E. B. DUSTEN.

Fraternization News is the organ of no society, but represents the desire of Theosophical Students, belonging to any Theosophical Society, or to none, to give expression to the teaching on Universal Brotherhood. The subscription price is 50 cents per annum (NOT in stamps), but donations are solicited to make free circulation possible. Such contributions will be acknowledged in its pages. Officers elected for one year at the Buffalo International Theosophical Students' Convention, June 27-28, 1936, are: Cecil Williams, 49 East 7th Street, Hamilton, Ont., chairman and editor; O. J. Schoonmaker, 30 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Mass.; Robert A. Hughes, 78 Tom Street, Hamilton, Ont., convention organizer. E. B. Dustan, 218 Albert Avenue, Toronto, Ont., and Mrs. Kathleen Marks, 875 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto, Ont., were elected to assist Mr. Hughes. Readers are asked to forward to the editor all items of news or comment bearing on Theosophical Fraternization. The 1937 convention will be held in Hamilton, Ont.