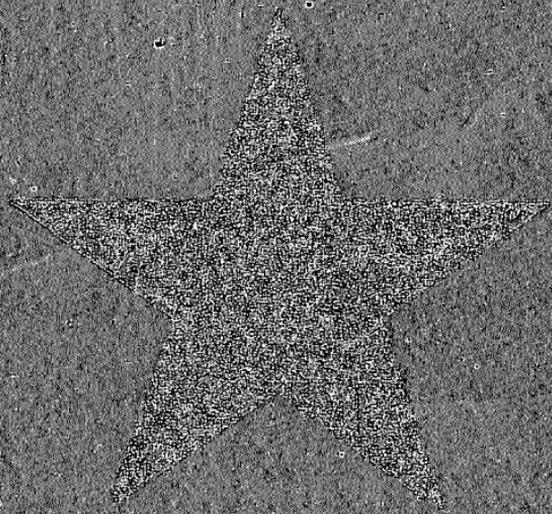


Edith Robertson

THE

HERALD OF THE STAR.

No. 2



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THE HERALD OF THE STAR

11th APRIL, 1912

CONTENTS		PAGE
A Momentous Incident	... C. W. LEADBEATER	33
An Historical Meeting	... MAJOR C. L. PEACOCKE	40
Devotion, Steadfastness, Gentleness	... WILLIAM H. KIRBY	51
How the Work Progresses...	THE GEN. SECRETARY	63

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THE THEOSOPHIST OFFICE
ADYAR, MADRAS, INDIA

THE
HERALD OF THE STAR

Official Organ of the Order of the Star in the East

VOL. I

11TH APRIL, 1912

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A MOMENTOUS INCIDENT¹

By C. W. LEADBEATER

THE great Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society is always an occasion of the greatest interest, but this year's gathering has been marked by an event which differentiates it from all that have gone before. The Convention itself, being held in Benares, was much smaller than

¹ From *The Lotus Journal* of February, 1912.

if it had been at the real Headquarters at Adyar; yet there was much high enthusiasm and much noble brotherly feeling, and the President's lectures were as glorious as ever. But the real distinguishing feature of this marvellous meeting was entirely unexpected, as I will proceed to explain.

A good many members have joined the Order of the Star in the East during the Convention, and somebody suggested (quite casually) that it would be a great pleasure to them if the Head of the Order would himself hand them their certificates of membership. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm, and other older members also asked to be allowed to return their certificates in order to receive them again directly from the Head. So a time was fixed (6 P.M. on December 28th) and we went down to the Indian Section Hall.

We thought of it merely as a formal little ceremony, and I even doubted whether the President would come, as she was tired after her lecture at four o'clock. Only Star

A MOMENTOUS INCIDENT

members were admitted, but the Hall was full; I suppose there were about four hundred people. Mostly they sat on the floor, but there was a line of benches round the walls, and a few chairs at the upper end. The President and I sat there, with Miss Arundale and Mizar and a few others, and the benches were occupied chiefly by European ladies. The arrangement was that the Head of the Order was to stand just in front of us with Mr. Telang (the National Representative for India) beside him. The members were to file past in a line, each handing his certificate to Mr. Telang, who read out his name, and then passed the paper to Alcyone, who returned it to its owner—apparently a simple programme; but *l'homme propose, et Dieu dispose*. The marshalling was carried out perfectly and the first two or three members took their papers with a bow and a smile, and passed back to their places.

All at once the Hall was filled with a tremendous power, which was so evidently

flowing through Alcyone that the next member fell at his feet, overwhelmed by this marvellous rush of force. I have never seen or felt anything in the least like it; it reminded one irresistibly of the rushing, mighty wind, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. The tension was enormous, and everyone in the room was most powerfully affected. It was exactly the kind of thing that we read about in the old scriptures, and think exaggerated; but here it was before us in the twentieth century.

After that each one prostrated himself as his turn came, many of them with tears pouring down their cheeks. The scene was indeed a memorable one, for the stream of devotees was remarkably representative in character. There were members from almost every country in Europe, from America and from all parts of India, and it was most striking and beautiful to see white and dark alike, Brahmanas and Buddhists, Parsis and Christians, haughty Rajput Princes and

A MOMENTOUS INCIDENT

gorgeously-apparelled merchants, grey-haired men and young children, all prostrating themselves in rapt devotion at Alcyone's feet. The blessing poured forth was so obvious that everyone present yearned to share in it, and those who had no certificates with them tore off their Star badges and handed them in, so that they also might receive something at his hands.

He stood all the time with perfect grace and self-possession, smiling gently upon them, and holding out his hands in benediction over each prostrate form in turn. I think the culmination of the strangely affecting scene was reached when our dear Mizar threw himself at his brother's feet, and the whole congregation burst into enthusiastic applause—I hardly know why, but somehow it seemed at the moment not at all irreverent, but entirely appropriate and natural.

When the last of that great company had made his reverence, Alcyone returned to his seat between us, and there were a

few minutes of silent rapture, of strange hushed awe and expectancy.

Then the President whispered to Alcyone to close the meeting, and he rose and held out his right hand over the heads of the audience, and said solemnly:

“May the blessing of the great Lord rest upon you for ever.”

And so we came down to the ordinary world again, and left the Hall, feeling that we had passed through one of the greatest experiences of our lives, and that indeed it had been good for us to be there, for that this had been for us none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven.

I have seen many things in occultism, but never on the physical plane such an outpouring of force as this, nor anything, which moved all present so profoundly. I suppose most of them *saw* nothing, but what they felt shook them to their very souls. It is not easy to express it in words, but the sense of a mighty living Presence was unmistakable and overpowering. The

A MOMENTOUS INCIDENT

occult side of the phenomenon was wonderfully beautiful, but too sacred for description. I wonder whether this is an earnest of what we may expect under the new dispensation—whether we may hope in the near future for many such mighty outpourings of spiritual force—many such glimpses of the glory of the higher worlds! So mote it be.

AN INVOCATION

O MASTER of the Great White Lodge,
Lord of the religions of the world,
Come down again to the earth that needs Thee,
And help the nations that are longing for Thy Presence.

Speak the Word of Peace,
Which shall make the peoples to cease from their
Speak the Word of Brotherhood, [quarrellings;
Which shall make the warring classes and castes know
themselves as one.

Come with the might of Thy Love;
Come in the splendour of Thy Power,
And save the world which is longing for Thy Coming,
THOU Who art the TEACHER alike of gods and men.

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

BY MAJOR C. L. PEACOCKE

As an ordinary man of the world, who has known life in many phases and in many climes, and who in the rough and tumble of existence has not been in any way psychic, I write for those of my fellow members who live in the practical work-a-day world; for sometimes a personal touch conveyed through the simple relation of his impressions by one of the crowd, who can but say: "Such have I seen, and thus have I heard," may assist others in the crowd to pay closer attention to the words of those who speak with the authority of knowledge, as distinct from mere belief however well founded it may be.

The memory of the hour of sunset on Thursday the 28th of December, 1911 must

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

ever remain indelibly graven on the hearts of all who were present in the hall of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society at Benares, where a meeting of members of the Order of the Star in the East had been convened for the prosaic purpose of enabling members to receive their certificates personally from the Head of the Order, who presided. Had there been in that hall an onlooker ignorant of the objects of the Order, he would have seen—at first a somewhat bizarre spectacle, and subsequently a scene inexplicable to him upon any hypothesis applicable to so large a number of sane and respectable people; for this was what met the eye:

Standing with shy dignity at one end of a small oblong hall was a Brahmana youth of sixteen summers, with refined, handsome features and eyes remarkable even in this land of beautiful eyes. Before him, mainly seated on the floor, was a motley crowd of some three hundred men and women of many nations and of many faiths.

One by one these people rose, advanced to the standing youth, received from him a slip of paper, saluted in eastern fashion, and then returned to their places; but scarcely had the proceedings commenced, when suddenly, as if those present were obeying a signalled command, almost all, upon approaching the youth, prostrated themselves at his feet, touching the ground with their foreheads.

What extraordinary spectacle had we here? Men and women from nearly every country in Europe, from America, Australia and New Zealand, and from all parts of India, paying to an Indian stripling the greatest known mark of homage. As a Parsi lady rises from her obeisance an English professor kneels, followed in succession by Hindu and Western ladies, young and old, by doctors, Civil Servants, university graduates, engineers, lawyers, British Army officers, merchants and bankers, by Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and Parsis, seemingly without rhyme or reason. That is

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

what the uninstructed observer would have seen.

What, however, did this most remarkable occurrence mean to us who were present, and what message does the record of it convey to you who were not present? There were we gathered together—members of an Order believing in the near Advent of the Lord, some calling Him by one name and others by another name, but each of us, whatever our religion, knowing that He is one and the same Lord, Whom all the world worships—there were we, I say, gathered at a hastily arranged meeting for the simple purpose of having our membership certificates handed to us by the Head of the Order; a quite matter-of-fact meeting with no sort of introductory address or speech, no ceremony, no ritual, nothing whatever to stir up the emotions. Suddenly, from somewhere, there surged through that little hall a mighty wave of spiritual energy, that changed the whole scene. The hall became a temple, the simple cere-

mony for which we had met became an act of dedication of the life to the service of the Coming Teacher: in a moment, as it were, we men and women, old and young, without a word being spoken, felt ourselves to be in the presence of something Holy, we knew not what, and in reverence we prostrated ourselves in body and in mind, crying inwardly: "Lord, Lord, I desire naught but to serve Thee." Never can anyone present forget that hour, wherein for most of us happened the greatest event in this life. May none fail in the glorious mission then entrusted to us, and may each of us so utilise the talents now placed in our hands, that the Lord, when He comes, may greet us with: "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Now, what had happened? For most certainly there was in that hall a 'something' utterly outside of the experience of

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

nearly everyone present, and there was no physical cause for such an extraordinary demonstration. Grey-haired men and women do not bow themselves before a boy in his teens; Englishmen, university graduates, do not kneel to a lad preparing for matriculation; the haughty man in a white skin does not humble himself to one in a skin of another colour; and, I am sure, no British subaltern (to say nothing of officers of higher rank) would prostrate himself before an Indian youth: yet all of these things seemingly took place. Can it be that there was in the hall a PRESENCE, felt though unseen, and that it was to Him, recognised by the inner man, that the outer man was forced by the inner to make obeisance? We can but guess, for those who could tell are silent upon a subject they hold too sacred for conversation in the market place. Yet is such guessing, daring though it be, not so wild as might appear, if we consider the definite object for which we are banded together in this Order. Before

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

the world, the scoffing world, we, with sure and certain voice, are proclaiming ourselves to be Heralds announcing the near Advent of the Lord, to whom we daily turn our thoughts in reverence and in worship; and, since we believe that He is coming, surely it cannot be foolish to also believe that sometimes He spares a tender glance for those whose ears are listening for His approaching footsteps, and who are busy preparing His way, and that now and then He tells us, in a manner that we cannot mistake, that what we look for is indeed true, and that we may go on our way rejoicing. Is it presumptuous to believe that He may, from time to time, pour strength into the hearts of those who are His declared servants? Ah, surely not! He knows our weakness: He knows what a task we have undertaken, a task utterly beyond our unaided strength, for He remembers how men met Him when last He came among them. Let us not, then, marvel when such help is given, thinking it too

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

good to be true: we live at a wonderful time, and we must cease to deem *any* happening too wonderful; for what event can be more glorious than that for which we look and for which we are preparing the world.

India is commencing to play once more an important rôle on the world's stage, and history will have much to record for the month of December 1911. As in the past so in the future there will stand out prominently in last year's records two names already laden with great memories, in the one case of imperial splendour, representing the physical governance of men, and in the other case of humble devotion to God, representing man's spiritual guidance; for at Delhi, with all the pomp, and glitter, and circumstance of an Emperor's Court, was performed an act, which cemented to the crown of the Great World Empire, for as long as it shall endure, the brightest of its many jewels—India; while shortly afterwards at Benares, in silence, in humbleness, and

almost in secret, another act took place, that affects not only the Empire, but all the nations of the earth.

At Delhi a host of people, the wealthy, the titled, and the renowned, gathered from all quarters of the globe to take part in the ceremony where the great Indian Princes entered, one by one, the presence of their Emperor to make obeisance to him, and thereby before all men declare to their loyalty: at Benares a small band of people, likewise gathered together from all quarters of the globe, but mostly poor, and humble, and unknown, met to dedicate themselves to the service of Him before Whom earth's Emperors must bow, and, passing one by one, made obeisance to the Lord of Lords, feeling in their hearts, with a joy not to be described, the gracious benediction of an unseen Presence.

Do you say that I write too boldly, that I am making too much importance of an obscure little gathering in a house at Benares, and that it is absurd to even men-

AN HISTORICAL MEETING

tion it in the same breath with the world-renowned gathering at Delhi? Then I would reply, that you do not yet *really* believe in the object of the Order to which you belong; for, if you did, you would admit that no human tongue could exaggerate the importance of the Advent that we proclaim, that such an event will be of more value to humanity than a thousand Durbars, and, consequently, that the meeting I have described, the first representative meeting of those who are the heralds of His Coming, must, by the very nature of what we stand for, be one that may fitly claim to be of historical importance.

Oh! realise, all of you, that we are living right at the birth of one of the great epochs of human evolution, and never, henceforth, think any event too wonderful to be true, when it be concerned with the preparations in the outer world for the happening of the wonder of wonders, nor deem as of small importance any part of the work of our Order, which we have

dedicated to His service: for in proportion as we, its members, realise the grandeur of the work entrusted to the Order, will be its efficacy in a world which can only accept us upon our own valuation.

This interesting note comes to us from Italy:

A Roman Catholic priest recently gave a lecture in a hall belonging to the Church of San Gaetano, (Via Tornabuoni) Florence, the subject of which was the life of Saint Hildegarde. At the end, after reading some of her letters to popes, priests and kings, he pleaded for the dignity of the Mystics, and after speaking of 'Astral light' and of noting Mrs. Besant and Maeterlinck, he ended by saying "who knows that some great Spirit of the sort may not be about to appear now, even in our time? Some look for and expect it, and—who knows—let us be ready."

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS,
GENTLENESS

BY WILLIAM H. KIRBY

(*Concluded from p. 31*)

STEADFASTNESS

We come now to the second great quality required of us. Each will find in the exercise of devotion in all its many applications that if we would build up an edifice in our natures that will withstand storm and stress, attacks and opposition, fair and foul times and circumstances, our devotion will of necessity have to be founded on the rock of steadfastness.

A good idea of what this quality means is conveyed by Virgil's advice to Dante in the Fifth Canto of the *Purgatorio* :

Come after me, and to their babblings leave
The crowd. Be as a tower, that, firmly set,
Shakes not its top for any blast that blows.

The same quality of steady firmness and wise stability is conveyed in the verse of *The Bhagavad-Gita* :

Ever content, harmonious, with the self controlled, resolute, with mind (manah) and reason (buddhi) dedicated to Me, he, My devotee, is dear to Me.

Yet a further presentation of what is meant by steadfastness is afforded by the parable in the Christian Gospels, of the man who founded his house upon a rock that neither wind nor storm could shake, in contradistinction to him who had superficially laid the foundation on sand so that at the first storm of adversity he was unable to stand firm and was overthrown.

Steadfastness then is that earnestness and steady strength of purpose which is necessary to render the several species and manifestations of devotion effectual.

When whole-hearted loyalty and devotion to an ideal is given, it has, in order that it may become effective in the life, to be accompanied by the quality of unshakable

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS

purpose and unflinching determination to maintain and stand for all that is implied in that ideal. Without Steadfastness no ideal can be pursued with success, nor brought down to be of practical help to men.

To such of us as would be pioneers; to those who, feeling the truth in their hearts and minds of certain teachings, wish to proclaim them in the world of men; to those especially who, believing firmly in the Coming Advent of a World-Teacher, would do all in their power to prepare His ways and gather together, all the world over; those who are ripe for the message and are ready to welcome Him and to work for Him; to all such steadfastness is a quality of paramount necessity.

For not only firmness of purpose and dogged determination are required in the achievement of those inner and outer qualities which will purify and fit the man to become an instrument capable of use, a servant of his Lord, but also and especially that quality of firm resistance, implied in the

word steadfast, that balanced judgment and unruffled calm which will allow him to face impassively the many storms of intolerance, adverse criticism, abuse, persecution, slander, misconstruction, ingratitude, hypocrisy and misrepresentation which, arising possibly in the region of the careless and unthinking, are directed by enemies and break with violence on the heads of all who stand round or follow World-Saviours and World-Helpers.

It is when the strain comes, when difficulties arise, when public opinion, discredit, ridicule, shame, loss, danger have to be faced that principles and persuasions are put to the test and that the degree and strength of one's profession of devotion are gauged. Those who from the first have forgotten themselves, have given themselves freely and have genuinely tended and nurtured the seed of faith and devotion implanted deep in the recesses of their heart and in the soil of their natures, will *know* that the plant, which at His

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS

Coming will be expected to bear fruit, is steadily growing day by day and is too deeply rooted to fear aught from any storm. They are concerned only that it may be ready for His use. That is devotion; that is steadfastness.

Steadfastness then has in it the qualities of will, purpose, determination, perseverance, courage, endurance, steadiness, calm, balance, reliability, rectitude, faith, loyalty, tolerance, vigilance, and one-pointedness. To the steadfast comes that strong calm reliability that nothing can shake; that wide outlook on men and things that means a comprehension of nature and her laws, and a wise, patient, enduring faith that ever seeks in all circumstances and times the presence of the All-wise purpose, the All-good, and the All-beautiful.

GENTLENESS

Out of steadfast devotion grows the great quality of gentleness. It is inevitable. For

all that is involved in the highest conceptions of devotion and steadfastness will show forth in a hundred different forms of gentleness in the life.

One who has devoted, that is, has consecrated, his life to the steady pursuance of an ideal, who, moreover, is striving to prepare his mind and surroundings for so great a thought, so wondrous an event, as the coming of a World-Teacher, cannot but, to some extent, modify and render gentler and more noble his own nature and character, in dim reflection of that pre-eminent characteristic of all Sages and Saviours, namely gentleness.

So much is involved in that sweet quality of gentleness; for it is a virtue that can only belong to those who, through long struggles and many lives have at last allowed the inner divine nature, the higher Self, to break through and conquer and dominate the lower animal man.

It is that sum total of qualities that ennoble a man's whole being, and, apart

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS

from all written laws or codes of ethics, under all adverse circumstances and in the face of the most trying provocation, can make him obey, in thought, word and action, the finer inner impulses, the nobler intuitions of a *gentleman* in the highest and truest sense of the word.

Gentleness was a dominant feature in the Lord Buddha's life. Jesus, as the Christ, lived and taught gentleness; and the greater the disciple the more this characteristic is revealed in him. We may surely expect then that once more it will be a prominent quality in the Lord that is to come.

For gentleness is the fruit of love and wisdom. Too often do the rude and harsh mistake gentleness for weakness, and think that the yielding has implied a victory for them. It often requires more courage, more endurance, more wisdom and more sacrifice to yield than to meet opposition by opposition.

"Hatred ceases not by hatred; hatred ceases by love," was the teaching of gentleness given us by the Lord Buddha.

“Love those that hate you, do good to those who despitefully use you and persecute you,” was one of the many teachings of gentleness by the Christ.

S’ri Krishna too in *The Bhagavad-Gita* teaches gentleness in the following words :

He who beareth no ill-will to any being, friendly and compassionate, without attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving.

The man of gentle ways, even when forced to yield to brute force, having wisdom, believes in the law and bides his time, knowing all will adjust itself. He is self-controlled, he is restrained ; his higher Self, his inner voice directs him ; the impulses of the body, of the passions, of the lower mind do not disturb him but are purified and transformed in the inner fire of loving kindness. He will use “speech causing no annoyance, truthful, pleasant and beneficial”.

Essentially, gentleness is the corollary to compassion. The man whose sympathy is wide and keen ; whose whole nature is

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS

warmed and illumined by the sunshine of love for all that lives, will, of necessity, reflect and irradiate some of that love in his every thought, word and action; and in rendering thoughtful service to all beings this will be characterised in one word as gentleness.

Gentleness, further, is the product of wisdom, which, in turn, is the fruit of experience. Repeated experience has taught us that all that makes for unity, for the realisation of the one life and the great purpose, is constructive, progresses, lives. Whereas all that implies separateness, apartness from the scheme, produces inevitably degeneration, decay, death.

Hence the wise learn to seek their little portion of work and the place they have to fill in the scheme of things; and in trying so to co-operate they learn to be willingly subservient, to readily fill *any* place where service is needed, sinking their individual ideas in the whole. "Be intent on My service; performing actions for My

sake thou shalt attain perfection," saith the Lord Krishna. They know that each *must* find his work and his level according to his capacities for help. They learn to realise the meaning of the words of the Christian Scriptures: "Whose service is perfect freedom," because no preference, no self-element is present, only the desire for opportunities of rendering help.

This is how gentleness grows into the character. For with this altruistic readiness to serve comes a calm spirit, a gentle nature, a contented temperament that is invariably courteous, a cheerful willingness to render service without recognition, to give help "hoping for nothing again". For as we read in *The Bhagavad-Gita*: "That given with a view to receiving in return, or looking for fruit again, or grudgingly, that alms is accounted of passion."

Such, briefly, appear to me some of the aspects of these three great qualities that we have promised to try to make "prominent characteristics in our daily life".

DEVOTION, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS

Each and everyone must, as I said in the beginning, dig deep into the heart of what is involved in the full meaning of the words devotion, steadfastness, and gentleness, only as he ponders thereon will ever newer and wider aspects present themselves to him and reveal their application to all the circumstances of his life. For the gold that can be got from these word-symbols can only have real value for such as have toiled often and deep to quarry it out.

Certain it is that on each one of us it falls as a duty to show forth something of these qualities in our daily lives if we are sincere in our desire to work among men for the Coming of a great Teacher. Certain it is that "by their fruits ye shall know them" now as two thousand years ago. The responsibility therefore is ours in this work of preparation for Him, not merely as to what we do, but especially, and all the time, as to what we are.

For once again "Shepherds watch their flocks by night" and, in the first tender

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

rays of dawn that have shone above the horizon, now look expectantly for the Coming of the Great Light that shall arise once again for men *Ex Oriente*—out of the East. Once again the 'Wise Men' are 'journeying' to gather round Him, to bring their 'rich gifts,' and to pay homage. It is for those who, having seen the Star that heralded His 'birth,' are gathering under its pure radiance to prepare for His welcome far and wide in the world, to draw near to Him in their hearts by serving Him with Devotion, by living for Him with Steadfastness, by proclaiming Him by their Gentleness.

WILLIAM H. KIRBY

HOW THE WORK PROGRESSES

By THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ORDER

It will be remembered that in the first number of THE HERALD OF THE STAR the Head of the Order expressed his desire that National Representatives should endeavour to send in quarterly reports of activities for the information of their fellow-members in other lands. In answer to this request, a few reports have already reached the General Secretary's Office; and it has been thought that a brief summary of these may prove interesting here, as showing how the movement is progressing in widely separated parts of the world.

Lady Emily Lutyens reports from England a Membership Roll of 973, of which about 200 are not members of the T.S. Local Secretaries are gradually being appointed in big towns, and the National Section has now a Press Secretary in the person of Mr. Pigott, whose work consists in keeping himself informed, through a Press Cutting Agency, of any notices in the Press which refer to the purpose of the Order. (This work, it may incidentally be remarked, is one which might profitably be taken up in other countries; particularly as so much is being written nowadays which bears upon the general aims and ideals of the Order.) Weekly meetings for study and meditation have been arranged at Headquarters for London members, and four pamphlets have been published by the Section, i.e., *Mrs. Besant's Prophecy*, by the Rev. Dr. Horton; *The Coming Christ*, by the Rev. C. W. Scott-Moncrieff; *Signs of the Times*,

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

by Lady Emily Lutyens, and a very interesting sermon, preached in York Minster by Canon Austen, entitled 'Waiting for the Revelation'. Copies of Dr. Horton's pamphlet have been sent to 8,300 Non-Conformist Ministers; and at present about sixty answers have been received, and nine members have joined the Order. Lady Emily speaks highly of Miss Lowe's services as Acting Organising Secretary during the absence of Dr. Rocke in India.

Donna Margherita Ruspoli reports a total membership in Italy of 109 up to January 15, 1912. Local Representatives are being named in various cities, but it has hardly been possible, as yet, to commence, regularly organised work. The Italian Section has unanimously agreed to celebrate January 11th. each year as a day of special thanksgiving, and the first of these Annual Meetings were held last January in Genoa, Turin, Palermo and Bologna. The pamphlet on, *The Order of the Star in the East, its Outer and Inner Work*, is being translated into Italian; while Mrs. Kirby, the Organising Secretary, has designed a Postcard and a Christmas Card, which are likely to prove popular for propaganda work.

From Holland, Miss C. Dykgraaf reports that up to the middle of January, 300 members had been enrolled, each of whom has received a copy of the pamphlet on the Inner and Outer Work of the Order. She further states that, with great satisfaction of its members, the Order of the Round Table has been affiliated to the O. S. E. as had been previously done in England.

New Zealand maintains the same refreshing energy and enthusiasm which have distinguished this Section from the very inception of the Order. The Reports from the National Representative, Mr. D. W. M. Burn, have not only been more frequent than the bare requirements stated by the Head, but they are also

HOW THE WORK PROGRESSES

so full and detailed, that compression becomes a difficult task. The chief event reported is the first Conference of the O. S. E. held on January 2, 1912, at Auckland. There were present Mr. Burn, National Representative; Miss Christie, Organising Secretary, (Travelling); Mr. Young, Organising Secretary, North Island; and nine representatives of Local Centres, besides a large number of members. Reports were read from representatives of the following centres: Dunedin, Invercargill, Christchurch, Heathcote, Wellington, Wanganui, Hamilton, Auckland, Napier, and Gisborne; after which an interesting discussion ensued as to ways and means of carrying on the work, covering such topics as expenses, badges, literature depôts, circular letters to clergymen and prominent people, suitable activities for younger members of the Order, propaganda pamphlets, mutual consultation and sharing of experience among fellow-workers not only in New Zealand but in other countries, festivals which the Order should specially observe and how it should observe them—and so forth. In the evening of January 2nd, a General Assembly of the Order took place in the Town Hall, at which Mr. Burn and Miss Christie delivered stirring addresses to a large audience. The rest of Mr. Burn's report concerns the ordinary work of the Section. The general note is one of keen activity, foresight, and attention to detail. The New Zealand Section certainly deserves to be congratulated on the way in which it has set about its task. The membership is rapidly approaching 500, but the National Representative, with characteristic optimism hopes to have "500 of this Order alone in Wellington," and a corresponding increase in other places before next year.

The Organising Secretary for Norway, Mrs. E. J. Aston, reports the beginning of work in that country,

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

mainly through small meetings held in her own house at Bergen, as well as through a few other meetings held at Christiania during a visit to that city. Members seem to be coming in by ones and twos, fifteen altogether having joined in Bergen in four months. There are certain local difficulties, in connection with the T.S. which seem to stand somewhat in the way of more rapid and general work for the present; but we hope that steady work may succeed in overcoming many of these. Mrs. Aston asks whether all who wish to join the Order should be accepted. In connection with this question it is well that all workers for the Order should remember that there is only one condition of membership, and that is acceptance of the Declaration of Principles. Any one who accepts this declaration has a right to be a member, and *no other consideration can deny him, or her, that right.*

In South Africa things have not reached the stage of regular Reports (as Mr. H. Robins has only just been nominated Organising Secretary by the Head); but a letter has been received from Mr. A. Tranmer of Dalton, Natal, Editor of *The Seeker*, containing certain suggestions as to the systematic collection of information, relative to the purposes of the Order. Mr. Tranmer proposes to collect material bearing on the belief in the coming of a great Teacher, from as many contemporary sources as possible and to gather together all the indications, whether in past history or in present day conditions, which seem to point to such an event in the near future. When this has been done, he proposes to publish the results in his paper, *The Seeker*, and to print off pamphlets for distribution through South Africa. As to the method of obtaining the required information, he suggests that the work should be subdivided into departments, each of which

HOW THE WORK PROGRESSES

might be put into the hands of a few members, who would then specialise upon their particular subdivision. This seems to be an admirable suggestion and one which, if carried out with any thoroughness, would be useful not merely to South Africa, but to the Order as a whole. In fact, it would seem for many reasons, to be a task which should be taken up by the Order, as such, using whatever special knowledge in various directions may be available within its ranks, a task to which all the National Sections might contribute: the results being subsequently given to the world as an official publication of the Order. Were this piece of work, then, to be definitely launched, Mr. Tranmer and his assistants in South Africa would be doing splendid service if they were to set the example by collecting and contributing their share of the preliminary researches and allowing them, along with others of a similar nature, to be published by the Order officially, as soon as the material could be got into shape.

From Burma our brothers Moungh Thain Moungh (National Representative) and Mr. M. Subramania Iyer (Organising Secretary) send a satisfactory account of the beginnings of the work; though, as things there are only just starting, it is only natural that such points as Entrance Certificates, Badges, etc., should first require attention. The pamphlet on the Work of the Order is being given free to each candidate on admission, and the regular official leaflets have already been printed by the Section. Mr. Subramania Iyer has done such admirable work in the past for Theosophy, the Sons of India, and other movements, that we may confidently expect him to rise to the great opportunity now opening before him in connection with the Order of the Star in the East.

India, as most of our readers are aware, has been given two Headquarters, in order that, in that country

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

of huge distances, the work may be more readily and conveniently carried on. Prof. P. K. Telang, M.A., of the Central Hindu College, Benares, is the National Representative for the whole country; but each of the two Centres referred to has its own Organising Secretary, Rai Iqbal Narain Gurtu filling this position at Benares with the able assistance of Mr. Shiva Rao, while Don Fabrizio Ruspoli has undertaken the work at Adyar, aided by Major C. L. Peacocke.

At the commencement of this year the Head of the Order made the additional appointment of Dr. V. S. Trilokekar, L.M. & S., as District Secretary for Bombay, owing to the large number of members in that city.

In connection with the work of the Benares Circle, Mr. Gurtu reports a membership up to date of 852. By the time that the present number of THE HERALD reaches its readers, however, the membership should have gone up considerably, as applications continue to come in at the rate of about ten or twelve a day. Three pamphlets have been printed—Mr. Scott-Moncrieff's, Dr. Horton's, and my own—and it has been decided to commence the work of issuing these in vernacular translations, Hindi being the first language in the series. The most active centres of the Order at present seem to be Benares, Bombay, Karachi, Ahmedabad, Chapra, Hyderabad (Sind), Gaya, Rishra and Bhavnagar.

Benares itself has recently had the inestimable privilege of welcoming the Head as well as the Protector of the Order in its midst; and this, as was only to be expected, has been an enormous inspiration to all the workers in that centre, bringing home to them the realities of which the Order is but the reflection, and linking them more closely, for a while, to the Powers behind the veil. Many will have read in *The Theosophist* of the wonderful

HOW THE WORK PROGRESSES

meeting of December 28th, at which the Head of the Order distributed certificates to the newly joined members. That meeting alone was a consecration of the work for all who were there. The account of it by the Protector in *The Theosophist* will surely be an inspiration to many in other parts of the world as well.

No report of activities at Benares would be complete without a tribute to the wonderful work being carried on there by our brother G. S. Arundale, the Private Secretary to the Head. It would perhaps be difficult to convey to anyone outside that centre an idea of the perpetual inspiration, encouragement and strength which Mr. Arundale has become to the surroundings in which he moves. Such a swift unfolding of inner power as has been visible in him during the past two years is not often witnessed, and those who are privileged to live and work with him cannot but see in him one of the great forces of the future. At the present moment he is on the eve of his departure for Europe, in order to join Mrs. Besant and the Head of the Order for the few months of the College Vacation; and he carries with him the love and devotion of all at the Benares centre, together with the hope that he will return in July even better equipped for the great work which he has taken in hand.

From the Adyar Centre, Don Fabrizio Ruspoli reports that work was commenced in the middle of November, and since then 460 certificates have been issued. To each new member are sent: (1) Certificate of Admission; (2) card with Declaration of Principles; (3) list of Officers of the Order, (4) leaflet on the Order and its Principles by Mrs. Besant; (5) pamphlet on the Inner and Outer work of the Order; (6) symbolical postcard with list of publications recommended; (7) spare Application

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

Form. Of the above mentioned, Nos. 3, 4 and 6 were sent to each of the 324 Lodges of the Indian Section, T.S.; 500 copies of No. 4 were sent to Indian subscribers to *The Adyar Bulletin*; and 6,000 copies of Nos. 4 and 7 accompanied the December issue of *Theosophy in India*. Lectures on the objects of the Order were delivered by Major C. L. Peacocke in Poona, Bombay, Surat and Baroda; by Mr. T. Prime in Tanjore, Trichinopoli, Madura, Alleppey, Calicut, Palghat, Banglore City, Bangalore Cantonment and Mysore; by Baroness d'Asbeck in Pondicherry and by Mr. R. B. Clarke in Bangalore and Madanapalle.

I hope that the Representatives of other countries, besides those alluded to above, will send in their Reports before long, in order to enable us all to share in their progress, or their difficulties, as the case may be, and make us feel ourselves as we really are, all one Order throughout the world. If every National Representative would carry out literally the request of the Head and send in regular quarterly Reports, it might be possible, at the end of each year, either to publish these Reports in full, as a kind of annual volume, or at least a Digest of them, which would be most helpful to officers and workers of the Order in the different countries. The fuller, therefore, and more regular the Reports, the better; and this is a point which it is hoped all those responsible will take to heart.

It will perhaps not be unfitting to conclude this brief notice of activities by quoting a letter which I received the other day from the Pacific Coast of America; a letter which should have a striking interest for our members, as showing how the great work of preparation is already being carried on in many ways and in many places, seemingly independent on the physical plane, yet really all parts of one great cause and foreshadowing one common event.

HOW THE WORK PROGRESSES

"Your little pamphlet *The Order of the Star in the East*," writes my correspondent, "has just reached me, and I, as a member of a Sister Order established some twelve years ago for the same identical purpose, extend my hand toward you in welcome and in comradeship. From your little book I gather that in far away India you have not heard of *us* on the Pacific Coast of America. We are a John the Baptist movement, and for nine years I personally have as regularly as possible partaken of a holy feast and sacrament resembling the eucharistic Service of Christendom, but instead of being one of 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' it is 'In expectation of Me'. This part of our work is only partaken of by those who have undergone a sort of novitiate in the outer degree, which is a semi-public affair, where the advent of the Avatar, Messiah, the Prince of Peace, etc., is freely spoken of. Long ago we were told the date at which he was to be expected, but those who know this date rarely mention it, because they are, mostly at any rate, aware that with the Rulers of our planet circumstances alter intentions, and their activities are not regulated by *our* clocks, nor even entirely by the Zodiacal Clock, despite all the notions of Astrologers to the contrary. You speak of a few years; we expect that within two decades, if all goes well, is a nearer margin.

How much there is to be done in the short interval that is left! Truly do we feel glad every time we find another soul, or another society, that has sufficiently awakened from the plunge into the material to be able and willing to take up its share of the labour of preparation for the *great event*.

There are several Orders and Societies doing this work all over the world, but very few know why and wherefore they are labouring. The great Socialist movement is an unconscious but integral part of it

THE HERALD OF THE STAR

and so are the Trusts, and from them upwards to the Great Occult Hierarchy, the One and Only Order (of which all the so-called occult, hermetic, and theosophical organisations are the outer plane) there are many steps.

All these must be harmonised ; but such harmonisation owing to *human* pride, and to that last enemy of the devoted chela, *spiritual* pride, can hardly be until the Avatar Himself establishes it. In the meantime those of us who are above considerations of *our* Order, or *our* Society, as separate and distinct from *your* Order, or *your* Society, should initiate that harmony by clasping hands of brotherhood and co-operation. And in that sense I extend mine to *you*, trusting that your new Order of the Star in the East may bring many workers into the field of self-conscious labour toward the one immediate object, the Avatars advent."

Surely a wise and welcome letter, and one whose spirit every member of our Order of the Star in the East will reciprocate. We too, let us hope, are able to rise above considerations of '*our* Society' or '*your* Society,' and to extend the hand of greeting to every fellow-labourer in a common cause. I cannot, without first obtaining his permission, give the name of my correspondent or of the Society to which he belongs ; but I trust that ere long we may be able to draw closer, on the physical plane, the bonds which already unite these and many other such workers to ourselves on higher planes ; so that in the writer's words, all the work which is going on in scattered quarters of the earth and under many different names, may come to be recognised as one and 'harmonised' in the Service of the Lord.

Annie Besant: The Vasantā Press, Adyar, Madras.

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