

# The Fifty-sixth Anniversary of the Theosophical Society

ADYAR, 24-29 DECEMBER, 1931

THE Annual Convention of the Society was held at Adyar from December 24th to December 29th, 1931, and was attended by about 540 delegates. The Sections in India, Burma, Ceylon, America, England, Wales, Scotland, South Africa, Switzerland, Holland, Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were represented by their nationals. At the opening of Convention it was not expected that Dr. Besant, the President, would be strong enough to be present, so the Vice-President, Mr. A. P. Warrington, had been requested to give the annual address to the Society. At the last moment, however, Dr. Besant determined to appear, so she descended in the lift, and sat in a chair, while Mr. Warrington gave the following Vice-Presidential Address. At its close, to the amazement and delight of all, Dr. Besant rose and addressed the gathering in a clear, powerful voice. The two addresses are printed below in the order in which they were given.<sup>1</sup>

## THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BRETHREN:

Our President, who has graced these meetings with her presence for so many years of brilliant and illuminating

<sup>1</sup> The President's Address is omitted, as it appeared in THE THEOSOPHIST for February.

service, unfortunately is not physically able to be actively with us to-day. My regret for this is very deep, and I am sure yours is also. But can we not hope that her indisposition is only temporary; that it is caused by duties of a weightier nature in those realms where the larger part of her splendid nature functions, and that ere we meet here again she will be restored to health for further activity in this world, that is ill-prepared to spare one so superbly fitted to bring to it the enlightened services it so gravely needs? At all events I am sure this will be the prayer of those of us whose hearts are sincerely devoted to the welfare of humanity in general and of our Society in particular.

Under the Constitution of our Society the duties of the President, when he or she is absent, fall upon the Vice-President. And so it becomes my duty to open this Convention and to lay before you a statement of the activities of the Society during the year which has just closed.

But before submitting to you the details of the reports of the National Societies, which have been condensed and assembled for me by our very efficient and faithful Recording Secretary, and which I shall presently ask him to read to you, I should like to bring into my brief remarks the influence of the President by drawing your attention to the inspiring ideals she expressed at the Convention of last year, for they are even more fitting to-day than they were when she uttered them.

It may be, there are a few who will remember what she said then, but I doubt that there are many; for memory in our crowded lives often proves to be but a poor servant, and fails us when we most need it. All the greater need therefore that we be reminded occasionally of the best our ideals require of us in the daily life—always lest we forget.

In her address she made clear the inalienable right that each has to embrace the opportunity we now have of bringing

the Elder Brothers into our daily lives. "Each can judge for himself," she said, "how far he cares to come nearer to Them, with all the implications that go with that approach; whether he is willing to accept those implications, to make the changes demanded by them, and thus to learn gradually how to co-operate with the Elder Brothers in our world." She adds: "There are few subjects more fascinating, more attractive; but it is also necessary that we should realize the truth of that which I just quoted from one of them—'You must come out of your world into ours'."

Then she mentions the special relation that two of the Masters have with the Theosophical Society, the Society that was in reality founded by Them as a special instrument in the service of Humanity and has been under Their observation and influence substantially ever since. And what is the nature of the service which Beings so exalted expect of their servers in this Society? Their answer is quoted by the President with her own strong emphasis: "The so-called small services in daily life count as much with us as the so-called greater services"; and she reminds us of the wisdom of this attitude toward service, counselling that it is the little things of life that help us to form the *habit of service*, which could never come about if we waited for the larger opportunities which only come rarely.

The final remarks of the President had reference to what is, in the humble opinion of your present speaker, a fact of the most vital importance to the Society, namely, the fact that Adyar was the place "chosen by the Masters for the Centre, to which they sent her (H. P. B.) that she might live there for some time and create there an atmosphere which would make it easy for it to receive Their influence, or any spiritual influence that was sent". She declares that "there is a direct communication between Adyar and Shamballa" of the White Island of old, and that here it was intended that sojourners

might receive real help in the spiritual life. Then she declares that our duty to the Centre is unfortunately not being fulfilled, as has been hinted by none less than the two Masters most concerned. Therefore she, as President of our Society, most earnestly appealed to us for help with the Adyar Centre. Do read again her address and see how you can help to make Adyar the "Flaming Centre" of influence it is intended to be, not alone for the immediate neighbourhood, not even solely for India, but indeed for the whole world of Theosophy, and even beyond into all the functions of our modern civilization—a magnificent consummation which can be attained if we will, by right will and by right work.

After calling for the practice of more Brotherhood in our lives, even towards our younger brethren of the animal kingdom, our President closed her impressive address by reminding us of what many of us believe to be very true, that "the best preacher and the best machinery for spreading Theosophy is by leading the Theosophical Life".

These reminders, friends, were not given merely as ethical guidance for the individual but, coming to us, as they did, from the President at an annual meeting of the Society, they have all the force which usually pertains to an executive declaration of corporate policy.

Then, let us remember that the existence of the Perfected Men must ever be an inevitable fact of evolution; that it was at the instance of two of these that the Society was founded; that it is by Them that it has been nurtured and sustained from within, and that, if it shall ever reach its high goal in the future, it will be because it has been vivified and inspired by Them, far more than because it has been wisely and efficiently conducted by us down here. Says the President: "It is a personal matter for each to decide. But I would ask you to remember that on Their help and on Their

blessing, and on our working along lines They laid down, the life of our Society really depends."

This was the attitude held by H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott, and it has been that ever since of every vital and inspired worker in the Movement, whether leader or otherwise.

But let us not forget, in our intense realization of the importance of this viewpoint, that it is an attitude that has to come to one from within, and never can be imposed from without; for the doors of the Society stand wide open to receive those who, while believing in Brotherhood, nevertheless have no belief in Masters as facts as well as ideals. Even those who do so believe are left free in forming, each for himself, his own conceptions as to these great Beings, and what his personal relations to Them may be.

In looking over the reports of the various General Secretaries of the Society, it appears, as you will see, that there has been a substantial reduction in membership in practically every Section. For the most part the financial depression is given as the reason. But we have passed through financial depressions in different countries many times before without finding so great an effect even locally; and so, it is important for us to study more carefully than ever before the causes of our present conditions. In this, self-criticism cannot do us any harm, and we must see above all things that in the Society we have a ready willingness to meet the new thoughts of the world on their own ground, and to consider them in the light of what knowledge we may have and in a way that will not cause the world to mistake Theosophy for a creed, and the Theosophical Society for the organized exponent of a creed, but will help rather in the realization that we are a band of Servers searching for truth and more truth, and not a body bound by the limitations which a creed invariably entails. We are bound together by a common ideal, not by a common belief, save the single

belief in Brotherhood, and as such the Society should be known to the world.

## SUMMARY OF THE YEAR'S WORK

### LODGES AND FELLOWS

The number of Charters granted from the commencement of the Society to the end of 1930 was 2,799. In 1931, 34 new Charters were granted, raising the number to 2,833. 2,199 diplomas to new members were issued during the year. The statistics for the present year show that we now have 1,426 Lodges and 36,115 members. Comparing these figures with those of last year, which were 1,490 Lodges and 39,311 members, we find a net loss of 64 Lodges and 3,196 members. Once more, various reasons for the decline are put before us by the General Secretaries of the National Societies; among them financial depression is frequently mentioned.

The numbers of Lodges and members in the various Sections of the Society are as follows :

No.	National Societies	No. of Lodges	No. of Members	New Members added during the year.	Remarks
1	T.S. in The United States	209	5,657	596	
2	" England	150	4,224	257	
3	" India	291	4,728	144	
4	" Australia	31	1,499	49	
5	" Sweden	35	728	33	
6	" New Zealand	19	971	37	
7	" Netherlands	50	2,422	102	
8	" France	79	3,175	218	
9	" Italy	31	501	28	
10	" Germany	32	444	—	
11	" Cuba	20	275	41	
12	" Hungary	16	399	33	
13	" Finland	23	648	17	
	Carried forward	986	25,671	1,555	

No	National Societies	No. of Lodges	No. of Members	New Members added during the year	Remarks
14	Brought forward ...	986	25,671	1,555	
	T.S. in Russian T. S. outside				
15	Russia ...	12	215	18	
16	Czechoslovakia ...	7	86	—	
17	South Africa ...	10	209	—	
18	Scotland ...	29	558	15	
19	Switzerland ...	13	260	12	
20	Belgium ...	12	405	27	
21	Netherlands-Indies ...	30	2,090	—	
22	Burma ...	10	298	6	
23	Austria ...	8	540	66	
24	Norway ...	9	209	3	
	Egypt (See Federation, below)	—	—	—	
25	Denmark ...	11	430	28	
26	Ireland ...	8	128	9	
27	Mexico ...	20	329	39	
28	Canada ...	16	397	23	
29	Argentina ...	21	343	15	
30	Chile ...	14	181	—	
31	Brazil ...	15	379	36	
32	Bulgaria ...	8	111	3	
33	Iceland ...	5	276	1	
34	Spain ...	21	401	52	
35	Portugal ...	10	177	42	
36	Wales ...	20	333	14	
37	Poland ...	10	232	9	
38	Uruguay ...	7	92	27	
39	Porto Rico ...	17	179	—	
40	Rumania ...	10	199	—	
41	Jugoslavia ...	12	183	23	
42	Ceylon ...	8	121	19	
43	Greece ...	9	140	23	
44	Central America ...	14	140	37	
45	Central South Africa ...	9	206	16	
46	Paraguay (See Federation, below)	—	—	—	
47	Peru ...	7	87	—	
	Canadian Theosophical Federation ...	10	177	—	
	Federation of the Lodges of the T.S. in Egypt ...	2	39	—	
	Federation of the Lodges of the T.S. in Paraguay ...	6	72	—	
	Others ...	10	173	1	
Grand Total ...		1,426	36,115	2,119	

\* No Report. Last year's figures are given in the columns.

## NEWS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES

*U. S. of America:* The new General Secretary, Mr. Sidney Cook, who has taken the place so ably filled for many years by Mr. Rogers, who is now devoting himself to the lecture field, reports a year of great activity. In addition to many lectures given by Mr. Rogers, Miss Clara Codd, Mr. Geoffrey Hodson and others, propaganda activities are shown in the sale of 16,000 books and 12,000 pamphlets. The Convention and Summer School were once more a great success. A new system of classified memberships, equal in their privileges, but giving to wealthier members the opportunity of a membership classification which involves more liberal contribution, has been put into force, and has brought in additional funds. The General Secretary remarks that the reduction in membership appears to be now abating, there being a net loss of only 340 members. The number of Lodges remains as before at 209.

*England:* The report for England shows a reduction of 364 in membership, the total being now 4,224, and the number of Lodges is now 150—one more than the figure given to us last year. The General Secretary explains that the decline is due mainly to the financial crisis through which the whole world is passing, which deprives many people of the means, time and energy required for anything more than the daily needs of themselves and their families. There is, however, a steadying down throughout the Section. Members are "carrying on," and seem to have decided that many problems can only be solved with the passing of time or the gaining of more knowledge and wisdom. The combining of the Annual Convention with the European Congress presided over by Bishop Arundale brought many brethren to England. Classes and special meetings are being held at Headquarters, and the Headquarters Library has a marked increase in the number of subscribers. "One Day Campaigns" were continued—in April



with "Karma, Bondage or Freedom," and in November with "The Evolution of Man". Two thousand books prepared for the next campaign have already been sold. Study Weekends are also very popular and useful.

*India:* The General Secretary for India reports much more decision and steadiness than in the previous year, even when despairing factors have come in. The machinery of the constitution has worked without much creaking during the year. Bombay and its suburban Lodges were constituted into a new autonomous Federation. No Federation shows increase of membership, and the total membership has decreased from 5,518 to 4,728, the chief decline being in Lodge membership, the unattached membership having fallen only from 370 to 340. Much of the loss is attributed to preoccupation with political uncertainty and financial depression, and the fall in new admissions is similarly explained. The rules applying to lapse of membership have been strictly enforced. The number of active Lodges has declined from 324 to 291.

The General Secretary considers that the real test of the work of the Lodges is in their usefulness to their surroundings and the country, and by this test the core of the work is quite sound and bears promise of a new life. It continues to leaven the world's thought as it did before, and so really very much has been achieved during the year. Attempts are being made to reorganize the Youth Federation, though the General Secretary is not yet very hopeful about this branch of the work. Propaganda has been carried on vigorously in a field too great to permit of special mention, and a large number of magazines in different languages continue to spread the knowledge widely among the people. The Indian Bookshop, owned by the Section, notwithstanding financial depression, has done much better this year, and has shown a very fair profit.

The Society, remarks the General Secretary, is at the parting of the ways, but, he asks, need there be any agreement

between the old and the new teachings? The new is making its way not only in the Society but also in the outside world, and yet there is room in the Section for all points of view, especially as it continues to affirm the attitude of Freedom in all matters and to inculcate self-reliance and sympathy. His plea is once more for welcoming into the Section the teaching that the leaders of the Society first called the world's attention to; if all teaching is welcome in the Society, then the Teacher must be made welcome too, and so there should be no loss of breadth. He concludes with the aspiration "May the day come soon when our Society makes itself the willing channel of the new forces now being released in the world".

*Australia:* The General Secretary reports great economic difficulties, which have caused every Lodge to reduce its expenditure. The Broadcasting Station continues its good work, and is paying its way and showing a profit, some of which will go to the Section. The statistics show 1,499 members and 31 Lodges. The Convention was held in Melbourne, and what were called "Support Conventions" were held at the same time in other cities, for those who were not able to make the long journey to Melbourne. The Headquarters has been removed to The Manor, at Mosman. The "Advance Australia News Service" continues, and is much appreciated by many editors, who are accepting at least 200 columns per month.

*Sweden:* The number of members in Sweden has decreased a little, but the General Secretary reports that the Section has gained in consolidation and inner strength. The membership is now 728. The Summer School held at Stockholm, which was directed by Mr. E. Bolt of Edinburgh, was attended by 100 members, of whom about 10 came from Norway.

*New Zealand:* The General Secretary reports with regret that the membership of the Section has now fallen below 1,000, the total being 971. The Sectional magazine continues to be sent free to all members in good standing. Pamphlets on

*What is the Theosophical Society?*, *The Hidden Side of Lodge Meetings*, and *A Message from an Elder Brother* are sent free to all new members. The Vasanta Farm has now been purchased from the Section by Mr. Colin Macdonald, who has looked after it so well for over 19 years. The Vasanta Garden School continues its good work, and receives appreciative reports.

*Holland*: The report from Holland shows the admission of 102 new members, and the dropping of 322. It is remarked that although there is a fall in numbers there are signs of renewed enthusiasm in the Section, the fall having been due largely to causes in the previous year and at the beginning of the current year. The Publishing House continues its activities and there is in preparation a very cheap edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, which is to be brought out with the help of a fund raised in memory of Mr. W. B. Fricke. The book will be sold for only 6 guilders. The two Magazines *De Theosofische Beweging* and *Theosophia* have now been combined into one.

*France*: The General Secretary reports that 5 new Lodges have been chartered and 5 have become dormant, which leaves the number at 79, as before. 218 new members have joined and 416 have dropped away, leaving a total of 3,175. The Headquarters has continued its lectures and other activities and there have also been visiting lecturers, including the General Secretary of the T.S. in Holland, Dr. J. J. van der Leeuw, the General Secretary of the T.S. in Germany, Dr. M. Verweyen, and Dr. G. S. Arundale.

*Italy*: The General Secretary reports that though it was impossible to have public lectures during this year, the Lodges have been meeting regularly. The magazines *Il Loto* and *Gnosis* have continued, and the Publishing House has reprinted *Light on the Path* and *The Perfume of Egypt*. The new Italian Penal Code was issued on July 1st, and therefore the

Society has had to apply for permission from the Italian Government to go on with its work, and it is hoped that this will soon be obtained. The membership is now 501, as compared with 563 last year, and the number of Lodges has increased to 31.

*Germany*: The report from Germany shows that the General Secretary, Professor Verweyen, has been doing much to introduce Theosophy into educated circles, in which for the most part it has been much misunderstood. The membership is not great, being only 444, but the General Secretary thinks that the tendency for members to resign on account of the teachings of Mr. Krishnamurti, and also the unfavourable circumstances of the present time, is now coming to an end. Efforts have been made to come into harmonious contact with other Theosophical Societies, with varying success.

*Cuba*: The T. S. in Cuba reports a year of great difficulty, due to moral depression and financial troubles, notwithstanding steady work in the Society. The number of members is slightly more than last year; the number of transfers, resignations and deaths of members totals 22, but 41 new members were admitted. Dr. Villaverde, the General Secretary, anticipates steady work in the future, as the members are devoted, and determined to stand fast to their post.

*Hungary*: The General Secretary for Hungary reports lack of interest and enthusiasm, and difficulties on account of the financial situation, but the membership shows a reduction of only 13 as compared with last year. Members' meetings and question and answer meetings continued regularly, and there are also propaganda meetings on Sundays. The "Pentecoste" Lodge has been very active in publishing, having printed no less than 14 books and pamphlets on its own printing machine, as well as the quarterly magazine.

*Finland*: Finland has kept up its usual activity. During this year of financial difficulty there have been well-attended

fortnightly lectures at the Headquarters, and special lectures and entertainments on the memorial days of the Society and public holidays. There was a Summer School for one week, which was attended by 40 members, and the General Secretary has also visited many of the Lodges. The Magazine *Teosofi* continues, but the subscription has fallen from 1,100 to 800. A special feature of the year's work has been the coming into closer contact with other Theosophical Societies. The General Secretary mentions that although the Point Loma and the Rosicrucian Societies joined with us in the celebrations of the Centenary of H.P.B., such emotional contacts do not indicate the establishment of permanent co-operation. The membership is now 648, which shows a reduction of 32, and the number of Lodges is 23, the same as last year.

*Russian T. S. outside Russia:* The General Secretary reports that there are now 215 members in good standing. 18 members were admitted, 10 resigned, 1 died and 106 lapsed. Of the members, 208 are within the 12 Lodges and 17 are non-attached. The Annual Convention was held in London; 5 delegates came from a distance. The chief items were a discussion of the vital problems of the present time and a public lecture in Russian by Dr. Kamensky. The monthly review *Vestnik* (Messenger) has appeared regularly, notwithstanding the financial difficulties, as also the typewritten bulletin. *Esoteric Christianity*, by Dr. Besant, has been published in Russian. Many of the Lodges are active in social work, and largely along artistic lines; thus, for example, the Lodge "Alkenost" in Paris, brings comfort to many suffering people in hospitals, by means of concerts, etc. Wherever possible, the members are trying to strengthen and inspire various centres of public work.

*Czechoslovakia:* The General Secretary reports that very little interest is taken in Theosophy in Czechoslovakia, because of the influence of Krishnaji's teaching, which has

taken deep root. The Society is co-operating with the movement called "New People," who are "very near to Theosophy" and have a magazine with a circulation of 100,000 copies. The membership is now 86.

*South Africa:* The General Secretary in South Africa reports a reduction of members to 209, but remarks that these diminished numbers do not imply a reduction in enthusiasm. There is a tendency to "close up the ranks" and work harder than ever to carry the message of the Divine Wisdom to our fellow-men. The work in this Section is particularly difficult on account of the great distances between the Lodges, but the magazine *Theosophy in South Africa* is a unifying instrument.

*Scotland:* Scotland has now 558 members, as compared with 612 in the previous year. There are 29 Lodges. The first part of the year was given to intensive study in the Lodges rather than to propaganda. Later, Mrs. Powell and Mr. Groves gave a series of lectures. The Section is now twenty-one years old. Although there is decrease in membership, the General Secretary reports very keen interest among the members, and also among the public who are attracted to the lectures.

*Switzerland* reports a very active year and an unusual atmosphere of brotherhood at the Annual Convention, at which nearly all the Lodges were represented. The General Secretary says that Geneva has been "ploughed with Theosophy," and she thinks that there are very many more Theosophists outside the Society than within it. 12 members have joined during the year, mostly in Lausanne, on account of Dr. de Henseler's weekly lectures there. 10 members resigned, 2 died, 100 became dormant; so there are now 260 members, of whom 170 have paid their dues. The number of Lodges is 13. Though small in number, the members are active in many ways, in different associations.

*Belgium*: Belgium shows 405 members this year, there being a net loss of 76. This loss was due chiefly to a crisis in one of the Lodges, from which the retiring President drew away a large number of members. The public lectures, some of them by distinguished non-Theosophists, have drawn very attentive audiences. Every lecture has a musical introduction which is much appreciated. *The Theosophical Bulletin* now appears every three months.

*Dutch East Indies*: (No report.)

*Burma*: The report from Burma speaks of very unsettled conditions in the country, due to rebellion, economic distress, and political agitation. In consequence of this there were only six admissions during the year, and the present strength, including 111 honorary Bhikku members, is 298. The number of Lodges remains as before. Meetings, lectures and concerts have been held regularly. The B.E.T. Schools continue to do their good work, with about 500 pupils. The deficit in the Boys' High School is made up by public contributions and that of the Girls' School by the donations of a few of the Rangoon Theosophists.

*Austria*: The T.S. in Austria reports a good year's work. For eight months lectures were held every Monday and Tuesday in the Headquarters, and there were also weekend instruction classes. The Society of Friends lent their hall twice a month for public lectures. The Art Lodge specialized in the development of a choir of good voices. The Order of Service and the World University Association have been active. The year was marked by a number of distinguished visitors, especially by the public lecture of Mr. Krishna-murti, which drew many friends from the surrounding countries.

*Norway*: The report from Norway tells of improved conditions. We have passed, says the General Secretary, from the stage of study to the stage of life. A visit of Mr. Bolt from

Edinburgh played a great part "in giving back to us our faith and hope for Theosophy in Norway". The number of members is now 209.

*Denmark:* Denmark reports the continuance of full and successful activities in the Lodges—well attended members, meetings, study groups and also public lectures. Mr. Bolt of Edinburgh gave about 20 lectures and conducted the Summer School. Many of the most ardent members are also members of the Liberal Catholic Church, and many are deeply interested in the work of Krishnaji, and there is brotherly co-operation and tolerant consideration among all. There has been a slight drop in membership, from 450 to 430.

*Ireland:* The General Secretary for Ireland reports that the number of members in good standing is now 128. No Lodges have been formed and none dissolved, and the Magazine *Theosophy in Ireland* continues to be published quarterly with Mr. T. Kennedy as editor.

*Mexico:* The General Secretary reports a membership of 329—a small increase, and also very much activity, apparently quite out of proportion to the number of members. There was no special series of public lectures this year, but the meetings on special days attracted large audiences. On these occasions Fraternity and Art were the most prominent features. Propaganda of the teachings of Krishnaji has been carried on every Sunday at Headquarters. Señora Consuelo R. de Aldag, a Mexican lady who is a lecturer of the United States Section, visited her own country for two months and did some very good work. The publication department showed considerable activity. The Sectional magazine of 40 pages appears every two months and is sent free to every member, to many foreign Spanish-speaking Lodges, to the 30 Governors of the interior and to the public Libraries. There is also a monthly paper containing lectures by Krishnaji and Dr. Besant, which is widely distributed.



*Canada*: The General Secretary for Canada expresses great satisfaction at the revival during the year of what he calls the Blavatsky tradition in the T. S. He gives his opinion that if Krishnaji had studied *The Secret Doctrine* as Madame Blavatsky proclaimed it, he would not have found the ideals she promulgated to be different in principle from his own. The Canadian Section has always been prominent in endeavours to bring about harmony among members of various Theosophical Societies, and notes with pleasure the fraternization meetings which have been held in many places in America and Europe, but expresses regret that in this movement some have not been content with co-operation but have tried to cause other members and organizations to change their folds. He also comments with satisfaction on the issues of *The Theosophist* for August and September—the Blavatsky Centenary numbers.

Statistically, Canada shows a good year, with a decrease of only 16 members in these hard times. There are now 397 members in good standing on the rolls. Lack of funds has prevented any extensive propaganda work, but *The Canadian Theosophist* has continued to be the chief propaganda activity.

*Argentina*: The General Secretary reports that the state of his Section is satisfactory and allows for optimism for the future. There has been a disagreement with the General Council of the Section on the part of some of the Branches, which have applied for direct affiliation to the Headquarters at Adyar. This matter is still under consideration. The statistics of the Section show a membership of 343 in 21 Lodges.

*Chile*: Chile reports a year of exceptional difficulties, and a small drop in membership—to 181. The Sectional magazine has been amalgamated with *El Teosofista Sud-Americano*. The General Secretary reports a reduction in the activities of the Lodges, but says that they are determined firmly to maintain the organization of the Society, and to preserve for coming generations the treasure represented by the Ancient Wisdom.

*Brazil:* The number of members is 379, being 87 less than last year, and there are 15 Lodges. There has been revivification of some Lodges, and an increase of general interest in Theosophical teachings, and propaganda has been done with the help of the daily press and radio as well as by oral lectures and teachings. Six pamphlets have been issued for propaganda purposes. It is much to be regretted that the project for a headquarters building has to be postponed, partly because of the present financial crisis and partly because half of the fund for construction of headquarters has been lost on account of the insolvency of the establishment in which it was deposited. The official magazine *O Teosopista* continues to be published regularly. The publicity section under the direction of Dr. Lourenço de Mattos Borges has three departments, dealing with pamphlets, press work and radio work respectively. Short articles are distributed weekly to all the newspapers of the various Brazilian States, and many talks have been broadcast through various radio stations in Rio de Janeiro.

In August a Blavatsky week was held in Rio de Janeiro, in which many orators and musicians took part. At the same time one of the biggest bookshops in the city lent their principal window for a display of Theosophical books and a large photograph of H. P. B. The General Secretary mentions that the members are studying with much attention the teachings of Mr. Krishnamurti, without seeing in them any incompatibility with Theosophical work.

*Bulgaria:* This year there has been considerable public activity of the T. S. in Bulgaria, notwithstanding the difficulties of the time. A long series of lectures was given by various members on a variety of Theosophical subjects, and the Lodge "Orpheus" has published in the Bulgarian language the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, and also *At the Feet of the Master*, though the magazine *Orpheus* is suspended for the

present. The present membership is 111, 78 of these being in 8 Lodges and the remaining 33 unattached.

*Iceland*: In Iceland we have a large number of members for such a small place, namely 276, but they are now condensed in only 5 Lodges. Most of the Lodges have had regular fortnightly meetings, with lectures and discussions, many having been on the subject of Krishnaji's teachings, which are a source of wide inspiration. Two radio talks were given on karma. The Magazine *Gangleri*, of which two issues have come out during the year, has about a thousand subscribers. Mr. E. C. Bolt of Edinburgh gave a series of lectures. The Section is co-operating with the Society known as the "Survival League," which is working to spread the knowledge of human survival after bodily death.

*Spain*: Notwithstanding great political disturbance in Spain, the year's work shows very good results, there being a net loss of only 2 members. The General Secretary is enthusiastic about the prospects of theosophical work under the new circumstances, and thinks that the theosophical philosophy may play an important part in the development of the Republic. In Madrid a new impulse has been set in motion with the formation of a "Theosophical Atheneum," which has attracted a number of members who are not Fellows of the Society. The Atheneum, the National Society and two Lodges have combined to rent fine premises, including a well decorated lecture hall, in the centre of the city, and there many lectures and concerts have been held with great success. Another interesting feature of the year's work is the formation of a Lodge in Palma, the capital of the beautiful island of Majorca.

*Portugal*: The General Secretary for Portugal speaks of a trying year, with internal dissensions, now happily nearly passed away, as well as external difficulties; but all the same the result of the year's work shows an increase of membership from 156 to 177. Some of the members who were making

important gifts towards the rent of the headquarters are not able to continue this, so there are especial difficulties in that direction. A small fund has been formed to establish a co-operative society for printing a bulletin and other theosophical literature.

*Wales:* The report covers the period from July 1st, 1930 to June 30th, 1931, and therefore includes the 9th Annual Convention of the T. S. in Wales, which was presided over by Bishop Leadbeater, and was attended also by other distinguished visitors. The membership returns show a decline of 29, which is less than 10 per cent. Mrs. Margaret Evans has left the Section £100, which is being used for propaganda work. As usual, the members in Wales are busy in a great number of social service movements.

*Poland:* The General Secretary writes that there is a large drop in membership this year, because it was decided to cross from the rolls a number of members who had taken no part in the Society for some time, paid no fees, and did not reply to any letters. At the same time, care was taken not to eliminate those whose lack of contact with the Society was likely to be only temporary or due to external circumstances. The membership is now 232, and the number of Lodges has fallen to 10. The Summer School was attended by 60 people, mostly non-members. The meditation and study classes were also well attended, again mostly by non-members. The Secretary remarks that she thinks the causes of weakening of interest in Theosophy are two—the conditions of economic, political and social life, and “our inability to present a broad and wise solution, based on the Ancient Wisdom, of many difficult questions of to-day in social and political life”.

*Uruguay:* The General Secretary for Uruguay reports that conditions in her country are very promising. Although some Lodges are becoming inactive and some members indifferent, still great renovation is going on. The 10 Lodges are described

as 7 active, 2 inactive and 1 dormant. 3 Lodges have been organized. In addition to the ordinary lectures, radio talks were given on three occasions by the General Secretary. One of the most important events of the year was the Second International Congress of the South American Theosophical Federation. The first number of the *South American Theosophist*, which replaces several sectional magazines, was brought out at the time of the Blavatsky Centenary.

*Porto Rico*: The membership in Porto Rico is now 179, as compared with 210 last year, on account of various reasons. The General Secretary writes that the Section has gone through a real "cyclone" and that in some of the Lodges only 4 or 5 members have paid their dues. 2 Lodges have ceased, and two more are on the point of disappearing. It was decided at the Annual Convention that if more than one member of a family belongs to the Society, they may pay at the rate of half the usual membership fee each. The Lodge at the capital of the Dominican Republic is reported to be full of life and enthusiasm, and doing good propaganda work in spite of the hard times.

*Roumania*: The work in Roumania is being carried on chiefly by the Lodges, acting independently of one another. There are eleven Lodges existing in eight different towns. The Vasanta Lodge in Chisinau, near the Russian boundary, is composed almost entirely of Russian members, and it is the most active Lodge. In the West there are two Lodges which have been the mainspring of the Anti-alcoholic Movement of their province, so that the International Order of Good Templars of that region has become the centre for the whole country. In the Capital, Bucharest, the activities are not so great, but regular lectures are now being given. The Sectional magazine is published monthly.

*Jugoslaviya*: The General Secretary reports that much enthusiasm and activity has been shown in the Section during

the year. 23 new members were admitted, 6 resigned and 1 left, so there is a net increase of 16, and a total of 180. The number of Lodges has been increased by 2. The two long visits of Miss Jean Glen-Walker were much appreciated. The lecture series organized by Mrs. V. Mayerhoffer had 35 lectures by 11 speakers. In all there were 327 meetings, 82 public lectures and 159 members' meetings. The mention of Theosophy is becoming more common in the Press. A Theosophical Publishing Trust was formed on August 11th, after the H. P. B. Centenary celebrations.

*Ceylon:* The General Secretary mentions that, in spite of the depression, the year's activities have created a more favourable attitude among the public and a more expanded conception of Theosophy. It is good to hear that the membership has been increasing. The year began with 106 and ended with 121, but it is mentioned that a large number of the members are in arrears with their dues, and that there are great financial difficulties in the Section. The most active Lodge is the Youth Lodge.

*Greece:* The report from Greece is not very encouraging this year. A new Lodge has been formed in Cyprus, and several other Lodges are quite active, but the membership has fallen to 140. The General Secretary explains this as due to two causes, namely, the economic conditions and the influence of Krishnaji's teachings. The publication of the quarterly magazine has been continued.

*Central America:* Central America reports serious difficulties on account of acute economic conditions. But there remain in all places nuclei of faithful and steady workers who "keep alight the fire of Theosophical idealism and constitute a well founded hope that when present handicaps disappear a bright development may take place". In the Republic of Colombia Theosophy is spreading very rapidly, and the General Secretary for Central America expects that an

autonomous Section will be established there before long. There are now 14 Lodges in this Section, and 189 members.

*Central South Africa*: The General Secretary in Central South Africa reports a useful year and a present membership of 206, with 9 Lodges. He describes this year as "An H. P. B. Year". The Section has used H. P. B.'s works in study classes, arranged for a number of addresses on H. P. B.'s life, and obtained publicity about her in the press. The annual H. P. B. lecture at Convention was given by Mrs. Ransom, who has also done a great deal of work especially in the Rand section, and has written a book entitled *Madame Blavatsky as Occultist*. Miss Norah Bennett, from Australia, is also helping in that Section. In Pretoria Miss Turner, the President, does much to bring the movement into touch with other social activities of many kinds. South Africa's biggest problem is the racial one, and the Section is therefore paying a good deal of attention to the development of justice and harmony in this respect.

*Peru*: (No report.)

#### UNSECTIONALIZED LODGES

*China*: We have no report from the Presidential Agent for China, as Mr. Manuk has been travelling abroad almost all this year. But the *Shanghai Lodge* Secretary reports that it has moved to better quarters during the year, and it did not suspend its activities during the months of July and August, as is usual. The Lodge has been considerably strengthened by a special propaganda effort made last February, so although 7 members resigned on account of leaving Shanghai there is a gain of one member. The Besant School for girls has done good work, with 500 students. The *Hong Kong Lodge* also reports removal to new premises. This Lodge has held 79 meetings, of which 26 were public lectures, and its proceedings are

published in *The South China Morning Post* and *The Canton Gazette*.

*Singapore*: The Secretary reports that the usual activities have been carried on and the economic depression has not affected the members at all. Slow but steady is still the watchword of this Lodge.

*Barbados*: The Barbados Lodge has lost 7 members during the year, and so is now reduced to 9. Fortnightly study classes are being carried on regularly.

*Japan*: The *Miroku Lodge* reports that fortnightly meetings have been held regularly during the year for the study and discussion of Theosophical works. Though the membership is small, it is reported that the members are now mostly Japanese and there is a sincere interest in the study of Theosophy. Difficulties of translation are still a handicap to a wider circulation of literature in Japan. Countess Ina Metaxa has returned to Greece, after presenting many books to the Lodge library.

*Canada*: *H. P. B. Lodge*. . The Secretary reports a membership of 12, 2 members having become inactive during the year. The study of Krishnaji's writings having proved very interesting and helpful, the Lodge proposes to continue this during the coming winter.

No reports from Egypt, Canadian Federation, Paraguay and Kuala Lumpur.

#### HEADQUARTERS' EVENTS

The President, Dr. Besant, has spent the whole year at Headquarters, since returning from the Benares Convention, where she gave the Presidential Address and one lecture in December, 1930. Unfortunately, her health has been far from good, especially since she had a fall down some steps early in the year. Under the advice of her faithful physician, Dr. G. Srinivasamurti, she has for the most part kept to her rooms,



but she has occasionally attended special meetings, such as those of the Adyar Day on February 17th, the White Lotus Day on May 8th, and the Blavatsky Centenary celebrations in August, and has also been present at a few garden parties under the big banyan tree in Blavatsky Gardens. Although very weak, she has not been suffering pain, and she has constantly been surrounded by loving friends. Throughout the year Mr. C. Jinarājadāsa has been her constant attendant and adviser, and Mr. N. Sri Ram has helped in the management of her financial affairs. Bishop Leadbeater has also been at hand, except when away from Adyar on lecturing tours. Latterly, the presence of Bishop and Mrs. Arundale has been a source of special happiness to her, and she has also much appreciated the visit which is being paid by two of her very old co-workers and friends—Rai Bahadur G. N. Chakravarti and Mr. Bertram Keightley. At the moment of writing there is no visible prospect of any great improvement in the President's health, but if it were possible for loving personal care and the good thoughts of thousands of people all over the world to work wonders, we should soon have her moving again amongst us in something of her old strength.

Mr. Jinarājadāsa has resided constantly at Adyar, and given a very large part of his time and energy to the supervision of the management of the Adyar Estate, an arduous and complicated undertaking, as it involves half a dozen departments—the fruit and flower gardens, the engineering department, the building and construction department, the dairy and laundry, and the household departments—of an estate in which there are nearly two hundred residents and over one hundred and fifty employees. He has also supervised *The Theosophist* as acting Editor, ably assisted by Baroness J. van Isselmuden.

The great event of the year at Adyar was the H.P.B. Centenary celebration, which was held on August 11th and

12th. There was a gathering of about 200 members at Adyar. The programme was very varied, and included the reading of appreciations of Madame Blavatsky's work coming from all parts of the world; readings from her books; personal reminiscences by members who had known H.P.B., including the President, Bishop Leadbeater, Rao Sahibs G. Soobbiah Chetty and T. Hari Rao, and Messrs. B. Ranga Reddy, N. P. Subramania Iyer, and C. Jinarājadāsa; a paper written by Mr. Bertram Keightley, dealing with the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*, and the interesting events of H.P.B.'s life in those days; a lantern lecture by Mr. Jinarājadāsa on the life and work of H.P.B.; a lecture on *The Secret Doctrine* by Mr. Ernest Wood; the inauguration of the Blavatsky Museum, and the exhibition of mementos of H.P.B. and other articles of historical interest to Theosophists, in addition to social gatherings and entertainments. Dr. Besant, though far from well, was able to be present on two occasions, one being that on which the personal reminiscences were given, when she too spoke of her first meeting with Madame Blavatsky and so made the occasion complete. At the same time, or on other convenient dates, Sections and Lodges all over the world also celebrated this Centenary of Madame Blavatsky's birth, with great devotion and appreciation of her lion-hearted character and her great work for the benefit of the world. *The Theosophist* also celebrated the occasion by bringing out two splendid editions for August and September, which contain most valuable and original publications in reference to H.P.B. and the early days of the Society.

The year has been notable also for a considerable response to the suggestions sent out from Headquarters that overtures of friendliness be made to those who are working for Theosophy in other organizations than our own. Similar appeals were sent out by Dr. G. de Purucker, the new leader of the Point Loma organization, to which also the responses have been

great. We have reports of fraternization of branches and members belonging to different organizations in various parts of the world, and also attempts to formulate a common ground on which all Theosophists could meet for the prosecution of their work and studies; but as these things are only in their beginnings it is too soon to predict what the outcome may be, although one rejoices in observing what has been achieved so far.

Apart from this, nothing especially eventful has occurred at Adyar during the year. Meetings have been conducted by Bishop Leadbeater, Bishop Arundale, Mr. Jinarajadāsa and Mr. Wood. The Theosophical Publishing House has issued several new books, including the *Convention Lectures of 1930* in one volume and also two of the same lectures in the form of pamphlets; *The Masters*, by C. Jinarajadāsa; *The Science of Brotherhood*, by Ernest Wood; the Fourth Series of *Old Diary Leaves 1887-1892*, by Col. Olcott; *Reminiscences of H. P. B.*, by Bertram Keightley; *Messages from the Unseen*, by the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater; *Karma-less-ness*, by C. Jinarajadāsa; *In Memory of Col. H. S. Olcott*, compiled by H. N. Agarwala; *Two Stories*, by H. P. Blavatsky, etc.

There have also been a large number of reprints. Among these special mention should be made of Volume 3 of *Talks on the Path of Occultism*, by Dr. Besant and the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater; *The Beginnings of the Sixth Root Race* (extracted from *Man: Whence, How and Whither*), by the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater; *Esoteric Writings and The Philosophy of Bhagavad-Gita*, by T. Subba Rao; translations of Upanishads, by Dr. Roer, and two very old books of Dr. Besant's, dealing with *The French Revolution*, and with the relations between *England, India and Afghanistan*. The Adyar pamphlets have been continued, with the regular number of 12 published in the year. Mr. Ernest Wood has also two new books artistically published by Ganesh & Co., Madras, entitled *The Occult*

*Training of the Hindus and The Song of Praise to the Dancing Shiva.*

As in former years, the thanks of the Society are due to the many earnest and capable workers who have looked after the various departments of the Headquarters' Estate. Mr. Schwarz returned in February and took up his old position in the Treasurer's office, much to the delight of everybody here, and the evidence of his work is once more to be seen in the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Zuurman has also returned, more recently, from his long vacation, and resumed his work in charge of the Electrical and Engineering departments. He has now just finished the arduous task of removing the first trilithon from its old position near the entrance, to a more commanding situation closer to Headquarters. The task has been most exacting, as the carved pillars and the lintel or cross bar weigh many tons each. It was necessary to move the trilithon because, with the coming of modern traffic, the curves of the old entrance drive, which was spanned by the trilithon, could no longer be retained. Many thanks are due to Mr. B. Ranga Reddy, who in his absence looked after Mr. Zuurman's work, in addition to his own heavy duties of supervising construction and repairs on the Estate. Mr. K. R. Jussawalla, in the garden department, has shown us a good year, as usual, and Mr. C. V. Shah, acting under him, has kept the ornamental gardens in very nice condition. Dr. P. C. Patel has come to reside at Adyar and to give his services as doctor for the Estate, for the benefit and convenience of residents and workers alike, and every morning his clinic presents a busy scene. He has also undertaken the medical inspection of the children of the Olcott Free Schools. Miss Whittam, Madame D'Amato, Miss Ware and Mr. C. Subbaramayya have ably conducted the household and catering departments; Mrs. Wood has managed the Stores maintained by the President for the

convenience principally of the employees, and Mr. Shah has seen to our needs in the matters of dairy and laundry.

The Adyar Library has been presided over by Mr. C. Jinarājadāsa, but the former Director, Dr. C. Kunhan Raja, has been our most valued adviser and organizer in all matters connected with the Library. Nothing has been done in the matter of the removal of the Library to the Blavatsky Gardens, to which Dr. Besant gave her assent last year, as it was felt by several of the Committee that at this period of world-wide financial depression the time is not quite appropriate for a special appeal for a large sum for the necessary new Adyar Library building; but to relieve the congestion of books to some extent, the former Star building, which we purchased from the Rishi Valley Trust, has been put to the use of the Library, and has been well equipped with steel shelves for the purpose.

The Olcott Free Schools have also continued their splendid work. At this Convention, which celebrates the Centenary of Col. Olcott's birth, in anticipation of next August 2nd, we may perhaps remind all well-wishers of the poorest class of people in India that here lies an opportunity for real help which has scarcely its equal anywhere else. Let us hope that there will be many new donations for the schools that were started by Col. Olcott and which he cherished until his death. Other valuable activities for the help of the surrounding villagers have been carried on, including the Baby Wellcome, conducted by Mrs. Bhagirathi Sri Ram, situated in our Estate, but with an opening on to an outside road, where an average of about 100 children every day receive cold or warm baths and often a little food and medical treatment, and where a nurse is kept to go about and assist in maternity cases in the surrounding villages. There is also a night school and a women's day school, carried on in the village from which most of the Estate employees come, and

managed by Mrs. Hilda Wood. All these things are dependent upon donations.

This year has also seen the establishment of a Panchayat of the workers on our Estate. It was preceded by a Trade Union, established by Mrs. Hilda Wood with the temporary approval of the Executive Committee, who welcomed the idea subject to the final decision of Dr. Besant on her return from Europe towards the end of 1930. After her return, and consultation on the subject, she decided that it would be better to have a Panchayat instead; so the Union was abolished, and the Panchayat consisting of about 15 elected members was established, and has been meeting occasionally since then.

The Olcott Schools, the Baby Welcome and the Night Schools are not official activities of the Society, but they are very welcome adjuncts to our work. There are also other activities, quite unofficial, but carried on by various groups of members in the Estate, which have been proceeding, some of them regularly and some with fluctuations. Among these may be mentioned the Hindu Puja, carried on by the Bhārata Samāj, in the Hindu temple, and the services of the Liberal Catholic Church, which also take place in their own church upon the Estate. The Bhārata Samāj conducted for some time a valuable little magazine *The Bhārata Dharma*, but that has now been transferred to some other organization. The Star activities carried on by the Rishi Valley Trust are no longer with us, having been removed to Madanapalle, the birthplace of Krishnaji. Other non-official activities: In the Theosophical Publishing House Mr. M. Subramania Iyer continues as Manager and Baroness J. van Isselmuden as Assistant Editor of *The Theosophist*, and in the Vasanta Press we rejoice to have still with us one of the very oldest residents of Adyar, Mr. A. K. Sitarama Shastri, who had a severe illness during the year, but happily recovered, to the joy of all of us.

Of the Theosophical activities going on in the world not under the direction of any National Society special mention should be made of the magazine, *World Theosophy* edited and published by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hotchener in Los Angeles, California. A cablegram states that during the past year over 2,700 copies each month were placed in the hands of members, non-members and public libraries all over the world, and that "it begins the new year enthusiastically consecrated to our cause". It would appear that the devotion and efficiency that is being put into this excellent magazine, intended largely for popular circulation, is meeting with gratifying success.

### VAISĀKH AND ASĀDH FULL MOONS

Vaisākh : May 20th, 5 hrs. 9 m. a.m.

Asādh : July 17th, 9 hrs. 6 m. p.m.

The times given are Greenwich mean time, and do not allow for "summer time".

For India, the times are, in standard time :

Vaisākh : May 20th, 10 hrs. 39 m. a.m.

Asādh : July 18th, 2 hrs. 36 m. a.m.

(Vaisākh and Asādh are the Hindi forms of the Sanskrit words Vaisākha and Asādhā, which in Sinhalese become Wesak and Asala.)