

VIET-NAM 1959

The 7th Convention of the Theosophical Society in Viet-Nam was celebrated in a special manner on the 25th and 26th April 1959. More than 200 members and delegates from the provinces filled the headquarters and listened with enthusiasm to the greetings received from our President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, and the General Secretaries in other Sections. On the second day a symposium on "Spiritual Unity" took place in which delegates from nine different religions or sects participated. At the end all were in agreement to form a Spiritual Federation as soon as possible.

The following Theosophical and other events were celebrated: 17th November 1958—83rd Anniversary of Foundation of the Theosophical Society; 24th December 1958—Christmas, with a lecture on "The Compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ"; 8th May 1959—White Lotus Day; 22nd May 1959—Wesak.

It will be recalled that the programme of action outlined by the Council comprised three points: the practice of compassion within the Section and in society; the spreading of the Ancient Wisdom (Theosophy); and the attraction of new members. The results are as follows: From the beginning of October 1958, a programme of Theosophical teaching has been carefully elaborated and put into force, with the collaboration of Mr. Nguyen-van-Huan, Mme. Nguyen-thi-Hai, Mr. Nguyen-huu-Kiet, Mlle. Lou-thi-Dau, Mr. Nguyen-khanh-Phuoc and Mr. Vu-huy-Hien, with two lectures a week up to the time of the arrival in July 1959 of Mr. Geoffrey Hodson. It was intended to give members and sympathisers a deep knowledge of Theosophy and a solid basis for the practice of ethics. It also had the object of preparing the students for Mr. Hodson's

series of lectures, and was followed by a good number of members and sympathisers and readers of our Review.

The most marked result of this year's work was the support given by Mr. Geoffrey Hodson and Miss Sandra Chase to the Section's work during their three months' stay. Each week there were arranged two public lectures, two meetings for a course in Theosophy, and two meetings for questions and answers. By their vast knowledge and talent these two lecturers provided inestimable aid both to the public and to the members; the attendances were good and the audiences enthusiastic from the beginning of the visit until the end. It was noteworthy that members belonging to various religions came in numbers to the lectures and they invited Mr. Hodson to go and speak at their own headquarters. We wish to express here our deep gratitude to these two lecturers, Mr. Hodson and Miss Chase, for their untiring and disinterested work which gave such a marvellous impulse to the progress of the Vietnamese Section.

In addition to the wide spreading of the Theosophical teachings provided by public lectures at our Headquarters, at the headquarters of the Buddhist Association of South Viet-Nam, and at the municipal theatre in Saigon, by Mr. Hodson and Miss Chase, these lectures were also published in our official Section organ which is much appreciated by the intellectual public.

The Propaganda Committee, under the direction of Mme. Nguyen-thi-Hai, has since 1958 published for free distribution ten booklets, the five latest being: (in English translation of title) 1. *Theosophy Through the Ages*, by Mr. Nguyen-huu-Kiet; 2. *What is the Mission of the Theosophical Society? What has it*

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Accomplished in the 20th Century? by Mme. Nguyen-thi-Hai; 3. *The Testing of Prince Djeta* ("Thu Long"), by Mme. Nguyen-thi-Hai; 4. *Theosophy and the Theosophical Society*, by C. W. Leadbeater, (translated by Mme. Hai); 5. *First Principles of Theosophy*, by C. Jinarājadāsa, (translated by Mme. Hai). Of each of these 5,000 copies were printed. Following a study course on "The Universe and Man," Mme. Hai has published the first volume of *The Astral Body*, which is greatly appreciated by the public. As Director of the Committee for Propaganda and the Spreading of Theosophy she envisages a wide distribution of leaflets and the publication of basic Theosophical works.

Thanks to the new light given by Mr. Geoffrey Hodson and Miss Sandra Chase, regular attenders at our Theosophical courses and sympathisers have joined our Society. During this year we registered 189 new members (104 during the period of stay of our distinguished guests). It is also to be noted that 18 members returned to the Section after having absented themselves for some time or having lapsed. Two members have left us through death. Our net increase for the year was 175 members. We have faith in these new members knowing their interest in Theosophy, in our Society, and above all in their general knowledge of Theosophy acquired by long and patient study.

At the present time the Section has 14 Lodges, two of them newly founded: Lodge Bac-Nha formed on 1st November 1958 at Vinh-Long, and Lodge Go-Cong formed on 8th December 1958.

The three principal Lodges in the Capital: Saigon, Dung-Hanh and Phung-Su, Young Theosophists Group, have made contributions in connection with

the preliminary work required by the visit of Mr. Hodson and Miss Chase. Lodge Saigon has now a library of 700 volumes, the gift of Mr. Marti Pierre.

Lodge Chon-Ly, in the capital of Central Viet-Nam, Hué, works regularly, organizing commemorative festivals and taking part in social activities. Lodge An-Giang publishes a quarterly bulletin, of which 600 copies are printed. Lodge Kiem-Ai at Banco (Saigon) began the year well but lapsed into inactivity on account of the ill-health of its President. Lodge Long-Xuyen has been re-organized.

The General Secretary has visited Lodges in the provinces as follows: Vinh-Long, My-Tho, Go-Cong and Phuoc-Hai, the aim being to encourage the Lodges and members in their Theosophical work.

The Orphanage of the Theosophical Society in Viet-Nam now has 45 infants in its care. A delegation of six members from the American Welfare Association visited the Orphanage and is taking an interest in the work of our Society.

With reference to the results obtained by our Section it is to be observed that, strictly respecting freedom of thought and action, the Executive Committee offers opportunities, especially to new members, to become active members by (1) acquiring a good knowledge of Theosophy, and (2) practising compassion. In a spirit of perfect liberty, fraternity and understanding we have worked heart and soul to give out the teachings of love and wisdom. May the Theosophy which has helped us so much also help all beings: May the Elder Brothers continue to give us Their Blessing!

NGUYEN-THI-HAI,
General Secretary.