

A Tribute To



Dr. Frank B. Robinson

Founder of Psychiana

By MARCUS BACH

of the State University of Iowa at the funeral service of Psychiana's founder in Moscow, Idaho, on October 22, 1948.

My dear friends:

We have met here in this memorial service to honor a man who has impressed himself upon the society of our time and whose influence has extended into remote corners of life everywhere in the world. There are among us here those who felt that we knew him somewhat intimately as a friend and we have joined with the members of his immediate family, not to mourn his death—for such would never be his wish—but, rather, to remember his presence and to quietly recall the philosophy and influence of his life and teaching. Although this intimate chapel is crowded to capacity, there is a considerably larger, unseen gathering of many people who, when the announcement of the earthly passing of Frank B. Robinson reaches them, will unrestrainedly mingle their thoughts and emotions with our own. There are many thousands in this larger group. They are to be found in many lands, in many walks of life, in many and varied circumstances and professions.

I cannot help but think of these men and women whom Dr. Robinson called the Psychiana family and whom, through twenty years of intensive correspondence, he addressed as "Dear Friend and Fellow Student." They are here with us in spirit and in remembrance. I see them as I met many of them during this past summer. I remember a real estate man in Southern California and recall how he told me that the man in Moscow, Idaho, had given him a philosophy to live by and had made his life meaningful. I am thinking of a woman in New Mexico who lives in humble surroundings, but who introduced me to two young children whom she had adopted and for whom she was providing. When I asked her how she did this, she said, "Faith in the Power of God. Dr. Robinson taught me to tap the great reservoir of the God-Law." I recall the man in Iowa who reported how in the moment of life's deepest despair he went out under the stars and "felt" the overpowering consciousness of the infinite and eternal presence of Almighty God. I remember the laborer in New York whose eyes burned with enthusiasm as he told me he had finally gotten hold of a working formula for his spiritual development. I remember the Kansas housewife—the Wisconsin business man—the Canadian farmer—the Nebraska minister—I remember many followers and students and friends of the Psychiana fellowship who have discovered directives for hope and faith—and who will now stand silently in grateful remembrance as they think of their teacher and guide.

It was my privilege to know Frank B. Robinson as well, perhaps, as anyone outside of his family knew him. And yet, there was always something

about him which could not be fathomed, there was ever a conviction which, despite all of his voluminous writings, seemed to make me feel that I had never begun to know or understand him. There was a certain reach and grasp of heart which could not be put into words nor defined through personal association. And, yet, I had a feeling that I came close to these deeper impulses a number of times through an intuitive perception of the God in whom he trusted and the bold and daring faith which he demonstrated. I felt I knew him when he sat at the organ console in his home and played the old gospel hymns he loved so much—sometimes when we talked together of the meaning of life and the utter incongruity of death—sometimes when he seemed transported by thoughts of what the consciousness of God as Law and God as Love could do for men. And once he confided to me this truth: "You know, I have had moments of such complete awareness of the presence of God that words cannot describe them and they cannot be maintained very long. But, if men would only seek these moments in the great silence, think what would happen to this old world."

There were always two major emphases in everything that Frank B. Robinson taught and practiced: (1) a personal consciousness of God's power in the individual life; (2) a call for world redemption in our highly materialistic and secularized age.

To promote these basic aims and to make them emphatic to a commercialized and fast-tempoed world, he wrote books, prepared hundreds of correspondence lessons, and turned out thousands of lines of copy. I did not always agree nor did I endorse the many viewpoints and the theology he expressed. We had a number of sharp differences. Often I was disturbed by his iconoclasm. But I can never deny that the vitality of his defense, the genius of his argumentation, the actual demonstrations of the power of his teaching, and the limitless conviction which fought for what he thought was right and truth were honest credentials of an inner light. Many people realized this. It is unfortunate that many more did not. Oftentimes a man must die before he is appreciated and understood and I have no doubt that with the passing of time he will be recognized as a great contemporary leader and interpreter of American faith in the idiom of the American way. He is already so recognized by thousands of his students.

I remember an evening in my home when a group of men—ministers, professors and other laymen—tested the armor of his faith. He was always ready, as you well know, to take a challenge and accept a dare. He was always craving excitement. Life for

him was never stagnant. On this night he defended his positions for three intense hours—insisting that religion should cut across denominational, theological and doctrinal barriers and lose (or find) itself in the consciousness of God. This was his message. Man has within himself the elements of the divine. Man is God's *elan vital*. God can be found completely and irrevocably in one's own life. Cosmic intelligence and force are continually standing by to fulfill man's needs. This was his way of saying that the "kingdom of God is within you." This was his appeal for a personal awareness of whatever endowed man with life.

He defended himself with equal success in his belief that "the unseen forces of God can be manifested in such a manner that the whole world will be remade under a divine imperative." To realize this he once sought to assemble, you may recall, 100,000,000 men in a spiritual crusade. This was his appeal for world redemption. It was an ambitious and grandiose idea. His ideas were always world-inclusive and never apologized for greatness. In his pronouncements, unorthodox in the manner of promotion, iconoclastic in the way he sought to short-cut through to the great "God-Law", Frank B. Robinson was a modern prophet and like a prophet—modern or ancient—he suffered ridicule and defamation many times. But he also enjoyed the friendship of those who found a faith through him and the undying love of those whom he lifted from despair and defeat to hope and victory.

One day he spoke to my class at the university. The nearly two hundred students were stirred by his strength and bearing, his straight-from-the-shoulder convictions, the hint of an inner compassion and his unselfish willingness to give them of his time and his experience without attempting to lure them from the faith which was already theirs by heritage and tradition. Following his visit a number of students met regularly for a time in a sincere effort to develop personal techniques for their spiritual lives. They used many of his affirmations and seemed to have caught the contagion of his triumphant spirit.

Besides having this influence abroad, he was unusually active and interested in the civic life of the town which he publicized throughout the world. Moscow, Idaho, was and shall always be, synonymous with Psychiana. He was instrumental in establishing a Youth Center and he was the donor of a city park. His career actually began in Moscow and his rise to prominence is part of Moscow's history. The extensive work which he began will continue uninterrupted, unchanged, with the same intensity and scope with which he directed it. He had new Psy-

chiana material in preparation. He had the vision and foresight to entrust the movement to his son, Alfred, when he first realized that his personal leadership would some day be halted. He never claimed for himself earthly immortality or the perpetuation of his physical self. He did believe, however, that some day man would come into such complete realization of the Power and Presence of God that death would be overcome. No doubt the Psychiana Religion will continue to teach this as it will the many other principles to which its founder devoted his life. Such has been the history and practice of many contemporary religious movements in America. Psychiana will enlist the continuing loyalty of its members and will carry on with renewed vigor as a tribute to the man who gave the movement birth.

For it is only the inadequacy of language that causes us to speak of Dr. Robinson in the past tense. As for his influence, he is not gone. He lives on in the work which he has begun and in the lives of those whom he has helped. He lives on in the literature of the Psychiana studies. As for his vision and hope, they continue in the lives of his family: Mrs. Robinson, whose loyalty and consecration went into her husband's work; and Alfred and Florence who figured so frequently in the illustrations used in the Psychiana material. As for his presence, it is here now in the hearts of all of us. It is only the inadequacy of language that causes us to speak of Dr. Robinson in the past tense.

He will be remembered as one radiant with energy and eagerness and enthusiasm. Those who knew him will remember the grip of his hand and the way he had of disarming one of one's own scepticism about the efficacy of faith. He will be recalled as a man who encountered all of the vicissitudes of life and emerged with a philosophy which, he felt, would work as well for all men as it had worked for him.

May the power of God in which he trusted and which he proclaimed boldly to a troubled world and to distraught individuals, abide in your hearts as a perpetual memorial to his life and teachings.

Perhaps if he were to speak to us now he would use the words with which he closed a series of teachings when he said, "I leave you now with the future held by you in your own hands. Where you go and what you do depends entirely upon you. Here is the great Realm of God. Here exists Spiritual Power enough to make you an overwhelming victor through life. Here, in this great Realm, exists a wisdom far superior to any man-made wisdom, for this wisdom is God. Here, in this Realm, exists a peace far deeper

than any man-made peace can be, for this peace is God. Here, in this great Realm and in your own hands, lies an infinite love far greater than any man-made love can be, for this great love is God. . . . I have put into your hands the key that unlocks the door, if any key be needed, and am going to leave you with the knowledge you possess, which knowledge is more than sufficient to bring into play all the cosmic powers of the great Godhead, no matter what your circumstances may be and no matter what of life's gifts you desire. Standing behind you and over

you, and all around you, and under you for your protection and benefit, is the great Power of the God-Law. . . . I should like to talk to you about this great Realm for one solid month, or for a year; but that, of course, is impossible, so I am leaving you now and wishing for you the courage and the confidence necessary to take this great God-Power with you wherever you go and to use it for the manifestation of whatever it is you need. . . . Our little journey together has come to a close and may God ever bless you and keep you until we meet again. . . . ”

