

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I warmly welcome all the delegates to this Convention of our Society. It is important to come together, and meet each other informally in the right spirit. This is an occasion to strengthen bonds between members, discover more deeply truths we have only glimpsed earlier.

Madame Blavatsky said that at Adyar we can be nearer to the Great Ones. Many of our leading members pointed in that direction, and the Adyar Convention has a spiritual atmosphere. When people participate by making themselves a channel, the right atmosphere of spiritual vibrancy can be felt. It depends on us.

## **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

To the 137th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society  
Adyar, 26 December 2012

Dear Brethren, I am happy to present this report, which gives a very brief idea of the extent to which the work of the Society has been carried on during the past year. But before I do so I would like to welcome all of you to this 137th Annual Convention which, like the others held up to now, has been a large gathering. To gather, not only to the same extent an outline of work done, but also more importantly the higher influences which come from above, is of great importance. A Convention held in the right spirit, can create an atmosphere which is blessed, and influences many people not only in the gatherings, but outside them. We can thus be a part of the teachings of the Great Ones, and become the channel of their powerful influence.

**May those who are the embodiment of Love Immortal bless with their help and guidance this Society, founded to be a channel for their work. May They inspire it with their Wisdom, strengthen it with their Power, and energize it with their Activity.**

I am happy to open this 137th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society.

The Convention is an occasion for all of us to give our thoughts to what the Society must do to carry out its work in the intended way. Up to now it has been working at making the world happier, perhaps a little better than it was before. If we look back we can see that the Society has accomplished much, particularly in the West. It has taken part in changing many peoples' views and thus taken a step forward in the necessary direction. It has had its own place in changing the attitudes of people in general — from blind obedience to religious leaders of various communities to free examination of how we think and what we think. This process is not over by any means. Man, especially the modern, enquiring man, has understood life from a scientific point of view and must perhaps cast a necessary look to see whether he can accomplish what is intended for human beings in the evolutionary way.

The human being must look at the whole of life, and only then may he perceive the path that humanity has to tread. We have indeed looked at life from a sharper, more advanced view. But the various sciences which are contributing to the most up-to-date outlook do not even try to meet each other to arrive at a comprehensive view. The most striking part of the scientific advance is that at present the scientific outlook makes it possible to go to war with weapons so advanced that they may achieve much, but also destroy what they cannot replace.

Other kinds of life have existed and still exist in the world, but it has not made the human being wiser to know about them. Most people think they know, but what they know is all at the same level. They do not know the direction in which humans should move, the objectives they need to incorporate, and also, the purpose and beauty which are an intrinsic part of the marvel that is life. In fact, man does not realize that he is part of one great creation, an undivided whole.

The result of the present-day attitude, with all the advancements in knowledge both theoretical and practical, is to make man believe that he is the master at the top of all that exists. The many forms of Nature and the creatures in it, as well as the role they can play in taking nature forward, is lost or misinterpreted, or even put to an end. The number of creatures lost is very large and cannot be replaced. But man does not know what he really destroys, whether it is a form of life which will lead to advancement or not. It is sane and important to find out what is really necessary to have a good future. Much depends on what we are and what we do now. The majority of people do not see the need for thinking about the future for humanity, or the future of the planet. They behave more or less as if it has come to a stop in the direction of the future. But the fact is that what we do now makes a great deal of difference to what happens to us in the future.

The quality of life, what we have in mind about humanity's development and the development of all the creatures

that exist now is going to have a great effect. But we go on as if what we care for should be present only and that too what we can see of the present. But that is not so.

Even if we think we can see, there is a great difference between man as he is now and as he will be in the future. The great teachers of the world were those who behaved wisely even when others did not; and not those who could see that it was not the right action, but at the same time, felt compelled to repeat these actions and, gave back only what they saw and not something higher, more spiritual and true.

The well-known story of Angulimala illustrates this. After he talked with the Buddha, he was no longer influenced by the attitude of a would-be killer. His attitude transformed from that of a killer to a good man, and grew into greater goodness. This is the response of those who have gone forward spiritually. And so the higher grows to become spiritual and in turn changes those who do not behave as he does, since he goes the way of the pure and intelligent.

Every one of us has a duty to see more widely and more accurately, to become aware of the difference between the best and the others. In fact, most of the spiritual men who have helped other human beings were those who always did the right action by watching and seeing the difference between the worldly and the spiritual.

We have to work in the direction of greater spirituality. Therefore the advice given to us is to not return anything but the good and the true. The person who

does not know learns more than anyone in the world, by seeing. While making progress there can be differences. For instance, a person who does not return evil for good, is not doing as well as the person who does not ever do evil, but progresses by doing good in a better way, in every way. And so to others of what they can believe and do.

This is the way the world has slowly improved. But humanity has now entered a stage where what was known by acting again and again in the same way and learning slowly is necessary. The person who knows what is right acts accordingly whatever others may do. The life of Giardano Bruno, who is reputed to have been Annie Besant in a previous incarnation, was illustrative of this. It is said that truly religious people in the past sometimes put up with great hardship because they knew that they did not act wrongly. The good always shows what is correct and true, not what other people regard as impossible.

If we know in advance what we have to do, then the way becomes clear. Everybody finds this out sooner or later, but we do not wish to postpone our arrival at the entrance to the path, and so we try to understand the whole process. In an ordinary situation we know what the end is, and that helps to differentiate between what is right or wrong. The same is true of every part of the way when we know where we are going. Even though we may make mistakes, we can correct them without delay; otherwise we just go round and round. That is the big difference between the people who go round the hill slowly, and

not go straight up: that of knowing where the top is. So it is important to know what the path is really. Is it going round or going straight up?

In Theosophy we are sure the way is going straight up and not wandering around without knowing whether we are going directly or not. Each person is following the other, right or wrong. But a little wrong movement can be corrected either by oneself or by the Teacher who gives the direction in a gentle way. The Theosophical Society has been founded partly to help people who are willing to receive it and partly to indicate whether one is going right or wrong. Of course there will be people who, to make themselves prominent, show us the wrong method. This is still helpful if we know how to take help. The path is strange because everything can help or hinder according to how one interprets it. It may be varied, but the direction cannot because it does not come from the human mind.

The real Teacher is, like so many other things, a person who is pointing towards the way or away from it. It depends on our interpretation, which can be right or completely wrong. There

was a man who trod the way for a long time but somehow the feeling that he knew better than the person he had to help began to grow without his realizing it, and one day he had a fall. We must carefully avoid such a thing happening.

So we must watch carefully all the time that we do not take wrong guidance. Watchfulness is therefore fundamental.

The whole world has to change from the present condition to a new one at a different level. The TS has to provide part of the leadership that is necessary for this to happen and so we have a great responsibility and whether we fulfill it or not depends on the amount of enthusiasm and careful management put into the work of the Society. This does not refer particularly to the Section or Lodge which we are concerned with, but with the Society as a whole. To have the courage to take the work in areas which will make it of importance in the life of the entire earth. From mineral to human beings, all have to travel to a state of perfection and we must aid this process by the quality of our whole life and the help we give to the elements of a lower order.



## **SOCIAL WELFARE CENTRE AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE**

The Social Welfare Centre is located to the left as you exit the Main Gate of the TS compound. It provides free day care to about 100 children in the age group of 2-5. The children are well looked after, provided with nutritious meals

and health care, and guided in physical, linguistic, intellectual, personal and social development.

The Vocational Training Centre is situated in the beautiful environment of Damodar Gardens on Besant Avenue.

It provides a year-long free diploma course to about twenty women in weaving, different aspects of tailoring for women and children, embroidery, etc. The women are enabled to find jobs or become self-employed. The scope of vocational training is being expanded to cover other areas.

The Social Welfare Centre and the Vocational Training Centre for Women have displayed their products for sale at the stall near the Enquiry Office, which was opened this morning by the International President, Mrs Radha Burnier.

The products include greeting cards, wire baskets, woven and tailored personal and household items.

A joint exhibition of teaching aids and students' work will be held from 27 to 30 December 2012 at the Social Welfare Centre. A cultural programme will take place for delegates to the Convention at 1.30 p.m. on 27 December; certificates will be awarded at this function to students of the Vocational Training Centre. Transport will be provided for delegates; please enquire at the Enquiry Office.

## **OLCOTT MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL**

The Olcott Memorial High School is the educational arm of the Theosophical Society and provides free education, school uniforms, educational material and nutritious meals to approximately 500 underprivileged boys and girls. It was established in 1894 by Col. H. S. Olcott for the upliftment of the socially and economically disadvantaged through education, and has grown into a school of high repute. School facilities such as the Library and the Science Lab have kept pace with changing educational demands. Special features of the school include an English Language Lab, a Maths Lab, primary and middle school resource rooms with educational games, and counselling facilities.

Along with academics, the students also gain vocational training. This year as many as 115 students of the School received the IAYP Silver Awards (under the scheme of International awards for Young People, also called the Duke of

Edinburgh Awards) at a special function organized by the British Council. The alumni includes a variety of successful people such as high-level government officials, computer professionals, engineers, office workers, teachers, skilled electricians, carpenters, masons, local small-scale entrepreneurs, shopkeepers, and sales personnel in retail outlets. All the 39 students of 10th standard have cleared the SSLC Board exam this year and have taken up further studies. A few old students are aiding the School with monetary contributions and mentoring children leaving the school in preparation for a livelihood. The school emphasizes value education and good citizenship apart from excellence in academics, sports and crafts. The senior girls' kabaddi team has won at the zonal level and the junior boys' handball team won at the district level.

The school's stall, near the Enquiry Office, was opened today by the

President, Mrs Radha Burnier. On sale are tailoring materials such as jute and cotton bags and readymade garments with embroidery work; needle work such as pillow and sofa back covers, table mats and handkerchiefs; hand-crafts such as artificial jewellery, wall hangings, dolls, etc. Apart from these, cookery items and

eatable items such as pickles, biscuits, juices and freshly-made eggless cakes are also available. The children will be presenting a cultural programme on Thursday, 29 December, from 1.30 to 3.00 p.m. at the school's open house. Transport will be arranged; please enquire at the Enquiry Office for details.

## **ADYAR LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE**

The Adyar Library and Research Centre founded by Colonel H.S. Olcott on 28 December 1886 is now the best-preserved service-oriented Library in India, and well known for its academic excellence in its publications. Its aim is to promote understanding among the peoples of the world through knowledge of the higher aspects of their respective cultures. Through this, one can create respect and love for one's own philosophy, religion and culture, as well as that of others.

It was Dr Schrader from Germany who introduced critical research methods in the Library. Many great scholars and lovers of Sanskrit and ancient wisdom from Universities in India and abroad have worked in (and for) the Adyar Library as Directors and honorary Professors. These include Dr Kunhan Raja, Sri V. Raghavan, Sri Krishnamacharya, Sri Subrahmanya Sastri, Sri E. R. Sreekrishna Sarma, Dr K. V. Sarma, Mr K. Kunjunni Raja, Dr A. G. Krishna Warriar, Sri R. Thangaswami Sarma, all of whom have worked tirelessly for the publications. There are now 125 books in Library Series, with *Studies in Indology* by Dr K.N. Neelakantan Elayath as the

125th new addition, as well as sixteen books on General series, and sixty-four books on Pamphlet series. The list of publications is given on the website [ts-adyar.org](http://ts-adyar.org). Some books of permanent interest include *Manameyodaya of Narayana Bhatta* by Kunhan Raja and Suryanarayana Sastri, *Vedantaparibhasa of Dharmaraja Adhvarin* by S. Suryanarayana Sastri, *The Philosophy of Visistadvaita* by P.N. Srinivasachari, *Indian Theories of Meaning* by K. Kunjunni Raja, *Bhamati Catuhsutri* by Kunhan Raja, *Mulamadhyamika Karika*, edited by Dr J.W. De Jong and revised by Christian Lindtner, *Madhyamakahrdaya of Bhavya*, edited by Christian Lindtner, *Sri Sankara* by Dr S. Sankaranarayanan, *Hathayoga Pradipika*, translated by Srinivasa Iyengar, and *The Number of Rasa-s* by V. Raghavan

Brahmavidya, the Adyar Library Bulletin, was started by Dr Kunhan Raja in 1936. It is being published annually since 1937, and presents studies on religion, philosophy and various aspects of Sanskrit and other oriental literatures, as well as editions of ancient texts and translations. Well-known Indologists throughout the world have contributed

research papers to special volumes 38, 39, 50, 51, 59, 60, 68-70.

The collections of the Library consist of about 18,000 manuscripts, containing about 45,000 works of palm leaf and paper, and approximately 300,000 printed volumes. The manuscripts are mostly from India and in Sanskrit. The printed books include old and rare Indological works as well as a fine collection of books on different religions and philosophies in Sanskrit, English, and various other languages, both eastern and western. There are also volumes of important Indological journals.

The Centre is functioning efficiently

under the able guidance of the International President of the Theosophical Society (and former Director of Adyar Library and Research Centre) Smt. Dr Radha Burnier, Dr K. N. Neelakantan Elayath, Director and Professor C. A. Shinde, Librarian.

We have received more than 1300 books from various sources in the form of gifts. Most of the books are from Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, New Delhi, TPH, Adyar and Wheaton.

During this year twenty-five scholars from various Universities, 516 Readers and 554 Borrowers have used the Library.



## **BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY**

The Chennai Centre of Beauty Without Cruelty (BWC) and the Animal Welfare Centre of the Theosophical Society have a stall displaying easy-to-read posters about the suffering and death inflicted upon animals by human beings. BWC is an international educational trust dedicated to the total abolition of abuse to animals. Anyone may become a member. For details, please enquire at the stall, between 10 a.m. to 12 noon. non-leather wallet, calendars and information pamphlets will be on sale. The President of the TS, Mrs Radha Burnier, inaugurated the stall this morning.

## **RESTAURANT**

The Convention Restaurant was opened on 23 December at 4 p.m. by the President, Mrs Radha Burnier. Bhojanasala closes its kitchen during the Convention and the staff move over to help out at Leadbeater Chambers where the dining hall is full at this time of the year. The Restaurant caters Indian snacks and meals using a coupon system. A mixed fare of Continental and mild Indian meals can be had by delegates to the Convention, at Leadbeater Chambers, by booking in advance.



# THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

## MISSION

Our mission is to disseminate Theosophical literature by increasing the number, availability and readership of the publications of the Theosophical Publishing House (TPH) and the Adyar Library and Research Centre.

We will work towards this mission by distributing more extensively both in-house publications as well as selected compatible publications of other reputable publishers and ensuring customer satisfaction, in conformity with the best international publishing practices and the ideals of — the Theosophical Society.

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The Theosophical Publishing House (TPH), Adyar, welcomes you to the 137th International Convention and to the sacred and serene 'ashrama' of Adyar.

TPH appeals to you to contribute your best to the cause of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society by buying its books, and subscribing to the journals published by TPH and the Adyar Library and Research Centre (ALRC). Theosophical publications and journals make a precious gift to your friends and relatives, spreading awareness about our great organization, that attempts to mould world thought towards universal brotherhood, harmony and peaceful coexistence.

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## OUR PRESTIGIOUS JOURNALS

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### *The Theosophist*

**A monthly journal for all serious students of Theosophy**

Started in 1879, with HPB as Editor, *The Theosophist* has continued without a break, linking each succeeding President and readers throughout the world. Articles in the journal represent the views and insights of leading Theosophists worldwide. The President's column 'On the Watch-Tower' draws attention to recent and important trends in the world from a Theosophical point of view.

### ***Adyar Newsletter* (Published Quarterly)**

*Adyar Newsletter* brings up-to-date news to members about the International Headquarters. You can keep in touch, wherever you are, with events, publications, programmes of the School of the Wisdom, the work of the departments, information about Adyar's wonderful trees and other aspects of Nature, personalities who visit or stay, educational activities and brotherhood in action through welfare work.

### ***Wake Up India* (Published Quarterly)**

The journal of the New Life for India Movement, a movement for Right Citizenship, Right Values and Right Means, focuses attention on current issues of social, environmental and ethical relevance and sensitizes the public on these matters.

### ***Theosophical Digest* (Published Quarterly)**

This magazine, published by the Theosophical Society in the Philippines, contains very interesting and illuminating articles with insights into the higher life, practical wisdom, and Eastern and Western philosophies. It is of interest to students of Theosophy as well as to the general public.

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*Either for yourself or as gift subscriptions to your friends and relatives. Subscriptions to our journals will be accepted at the TPH and at the Adyar Bookshop, and are much appreciated.*