



THE THEOSOPHIST

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Editor: *Mrs Radha Burnier*

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Cover Picture: A butterfly in the Adyar garden – Dr T. P. Alaganantham

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Founded 17 November 1875

President: Mrs Radha Burnier

Vice-President: Mrs Linda Oliveira

Secretary: Mrs Kusum Satapathy

Treasurer: Miss Keshwar Dastur

Headquarters: ADYAR, CHENNAI (MADRAS) 600 020, INDIA

Secretary: secy.hq@ts-adyar.org

Treasury: ts_treasury@sify.com

Adyar Library and Research Centre: adyarlibrary@vsnl.net

Theosophical Publishing House: tphindia@gmail.com & tphindia@adyarbooks.com

Fax: (+91-44) 2490-1399

Editorial Office: editorialoffice@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.ts-adyar.org>

The Theosophical Society is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

Theosophy is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guide its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the Science of the Spirit, teaching man to know the Spirit as himself and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

Presidential Address

To the 135th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society
Adyar, 26 December 2010

It is a great privilege to welcome all of you to this 135th Convention of our Society. I hope you will enjoy Adyar, apart from benefiting from the Convention. It is a special occasion every year which enables us to meet together, and to exchange ideas and learn to be closer friends. Let us rise to pay our respects to those Great Beings who have been good enough to see that the Society started with their blessings.

May those who are the embodiments 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.

What did the Mahatmas intend when they promoted the founding of the Theosophical Society? We cannot know exactly what was in their minds, but we do know that they spoke about the need for the work. In fact they seemed to have regarded it as a ‘forlorn hope’, but worth putting energy into because it is fundamental for human progress. One of the Mahatmas wrote to Sinnett: ‘I will send you an essay showing why in Europe more than anywhere else, a Universal Brotherhood that is an association of “affinities” of strong, magnetic yet dissimilar forces and priorities, centred around one dominant idea, is necessary for successful achievements in occult sciences. What one will fail to do — the combined many will achieve.’

The purpose behind this is not to

abolish different or dissimilar activities, but to create a sense of unity, a common purpose. There are religions, cults, communities in which people are strongly united; so much so that they do not encourage differences of opinion. But the Theosophical Society was meant from the very beginning to bring together diverse elements, people of different races, or preferring a particular religion, speaking different languages, with various cultural and educational backgrounds, yet united by common ideals and aims. It is easy to feel sympathetic to people who agree with us, or agree with any opinion that a particular leader has. But that is not what Universal Brotherhood is intended to be. Dissimilarity must flourish, but there must be oneness, cooperation in working for the progress of humanity, and of all other

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creatures. We who pledge ourselves to the spirit of Universal Brotherhood must work to bring about that spirit in any part of the world where we are working, and then only we will be fulfilling the aim of the Theosophical Society.

From time to time differences become seemingly important, and people who are speaking about Universal Brotherhood do not feel that brotherhood even towards some fellow members, colleagues or workers is necessary. Is it possible for them to be friends, even if there are differences? Can we learn to feel that differences are not very important, and therefore remain without resentment or aggressive opposition to those who differ from us? Can we differ and yet come together as friends to find a common solution to world problems, which means agreeing to disagree, and continuing to work together? If such a spirit were in the Society it would become much stronger and develop the work it needs to do much better.

A second very important point is the question of authority. In Letter No.10 the Mahatmas speak about how authority in churches or church-like organizations makes abject slaves of people. This attitude makes for total incompatibility with the work of the Theosophical Society.

Some modern scientists agree with Theosophists that all of evolution works to develop more and more intelligence. Of course intelligence in the worldly sense, ordinary intelligence, is not meant, because there is such a thing as spiritual intelligence, which is understanding based

on the absolute unity of existence. When consciousness is at the level of unity it sees everything in a different light. The growth of intelligence is obstructed when people are encouraged or even forced to believe what they are told. Therefore, in the Theosophical Society we are not called upon to believe, but to examine everything freely for ourselves. HPB wrote that this attitude will bring about real understanding. But we must not lose this sense that we are one body of people sharing noble ideals. Perhaps, this teaching is both 'profound and practical'. Therefore as members of the Theosophical Society we must be careful not to be attached to superstitions, to fixed ideas, or to all that is demanded by our environment or to truth in a particular place. This means any idea, simply because it is part of the racial prejudice or religious thinking around us. To be inwardly free is the mark of a Theosophist.

So a Theosophist must understand that he must free himself of all that holds the mind back, and at the same time have a genuine desire to bring about the brotherhood of humanity and suitable institutions that will advance the world.

This is what is needed for the Theosophical Society to make itself known in the world, and to arrest the attention of the highest minds. It is not enough to have nice friendly relationships between all of us from different parts of the world, but one that is based on free thinking and the approach to questions of life. Only this will make humanity move forward.

In one of the letters from the Mahatmas

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to Sinnett it is said that human nature has not changed for millennia, because of prejudice and the general human tendency which makes people unwilling to alter their way of life. But members of the Theosophical Society must make this Society dynamic; not clinging to old patterns of thought. Though members belong to many religions even if they are not practising them, still the mind remains conditioned by old ideas and beliefs. Many members think that one of the Objects of the Society exists in order to bring people of different religions — Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, etc., together. This is only a partial truth, but in reality what the second Object of the Society tries to encourage is that Hindus should be true and not pseudo-Hindus; Christians should be really Christian, and not pretending to accept the teachings of Christ; and so on. If this Object is applied all superstitions and wrong thoughts would be eliminated from every religion, and people will become true Christians, Muslims, Hindus, etc. Unity will become a reality then, and all of them will be taught the same perennial truths, although some part of every religion will have to be discarded.

How many of us have the courage to free ourselves from the superstitions and wrong thoughts of our community and our religion? How many have the courage to realize that merely following authority does not lead to true religious consciousness. This is in fact the essence of one of the resolutions passed by the Society and printed in *The Theosophist*. We must be

seekers for the Truth and find out what is true. When we find out — although it may be what others have discovered — we will know it for certain and know this is the Truth. We have to concentrate our vital magnetic force against the hostile currents of prejudice and fanaticism. Those who know what union is, understand that truth is not an idea, but it comes from the ardent desire to know it for oneself. To be a true worker for the Theosophical cause, a true Theosophist, means rejecting all ideas which are pernicious, like a thought-made God.

HPB wrote that to be a Theosophist one may not necessarily recognize the existence of a special God or Deity. In fact this is a highly divisive idea, and gives the opportunity to some to exploit others. Rejecting such ideas can be profoundly religious if there is a recognition of the Divine Presence, that of living Nature which is everywhere.

We may say that if members are true to the Objects of the Society, the Theosophical Society would not be religious in a conventional sense, but truly religious because of a great sense of reverence and respect for everything in manifestation. That Presence is everywhere, it is needless to say. The Theosophical Society is meant to be an instrument for the upliftment of human consciousness which is imprisoned now by fear, superstition, old patterns of thought, and so on. The symbology of the *Bhagavadgītā* is the confrontation between old ways of thinking, conditioned by fellow men and women, culture, tradition, etc. It is a new

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way of thinking, to bring which an awakening has to come into being. This happens only when the mind has detached itself from old patterns and ideas. HPB tells us: 'He who abandons the old and trodden highway of routine and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought, Godward, he is a Theosophist.' He is an original thinker with an inspiration of his own. Our Society needs, not so much to enrol new members, but to be an important agent to new levels of thought, to humanity as a whole.

The solitary path is not the path of self-will, or a determination to abandon the old for the new made by the lower mind. It is the path to the sacred, the eternal, the imperishable, which may be called God. What the Theosophical Society needs is not merely to enrol new members, but to leaven the thought of humanity as a whole. Members of the Theosophical Society must be among pioneers in whatever field they are working. The Society will lose its importance and its energy, if the

members are satisfied with action at a pedestrian level. It is amazing to look back and to see what could be done by outstanding Theosophists like Col. Olcott. Not only was he able to achieve many things outwardly, but he kindled the nobility and thoughtfulness of thousands of people whom he addressed. It was a very real question for him to unite the world in every possible way by breaking down barriers of the mind, and holding up Universal Brotherhood. He was a man whom the Adepts said they could trust under all circumstances. Can we as members have something of those qualities, that spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of mankind at every level?

What one person cannot do, many can, as the Master says. Together, jointly, we can bring about changes in the world that mean real progress. For that to happen our feelings must be right, and we must cooperate and work together for the common ideal of humanity's progress and perfection.

* * *

The special Theosophical event of the year was the tenth World Congress; such Congresses are held from time to time in some part of the world. This time it was held in the city of Rome, Italy, and was attended by more than five hundred persons. The main theme of the Congress was 'Universal Brotherhood without Any Distinction — the Road to Awareness'. The Congress had been very well organized by the Italian Section, with

the Vice-President, Mrs Linda Oliveira, keeping in touch and making suggestions. There were thirty-nine countries represented, the largest contingent being from Italy. But there were also members from other areas besides Europe, and all met in a spirit of friendship. The whole atmosphere of the Congress was harmonious, and the speakers, and other programmes, were very good. There is a comprehensive account with many photos on the website.

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The Indian Section has a membership of 12,597, the largest by far in the Theosophical Society. There were a number of interesting programmes and various activities at the Section Headquarters at Varanasi. An important occasion was the conference on 'Peace and Conflict' which was held at the Headquarters in Varanasi. The South Indian Conference and the Study Camps in different parts of the Section all helped to strengthen the work. The national lecturers travelled to different places and besides them, there were others who did similar work in this area. The *Indian Theosophist* brought out a special issue for the centenary of the publication of *At the Feet of the Master*. The Indian Section has some large problems concerning property; one of them is that the city of Varanasi proposes to take part of the peripheral area of the compound to widen a road.

The Theosophical Society has suspended its activities in Pakistan recently because the political conditions were most unfavourable.

The National President in Australia visited some of the Lodges in the Section, and Dr Edi Bilimoria, Education Coordinator, visited a number of places as did some other members who gave programmes in parts of the Section. The Education Unit has been preparing varied material to augment the work of the Lodges and Branches. Mr Colin Price toured the Section in March and visited a number of Lodges. The membership is about twelve hundred. The National Convention was held in Launceston,

Tasmania, and the theme was on the interesting subject of 'Divine Wisdom in Art, Science and Philosophy'.

In New Zealand, the National Convention was held at Napier with the theme 'After 2012, what Next?' An increased number of participants attended the School of Theosophy which was held at the Tauhara Centre. Prof. Ravi Ravindra presented a series of lectures on 'Science and Spirituality'. Many members have passed away including Mr Conrad Jamieson who lived at Adyar for several years.

The TS in the Philippines has been very active. Mr R. Doval-Santos was elected as General Secretary with Mr Victor Peñaranda as his immediate helper. The Guest Speaker at the Convention was former Chief Justice R. S. Passo.

Twenty-six delegates from the East and Central African Section attended the World Congress in Rome. The Nairobi Lodge has issued four-monthly programmes and is incorporating these in the Section magazine. The Nairobi Lodge has a rich collection of books in its library which is housed in part of the building that they own. Everything has gone on as usual. *Theosophy Explained* by Pavri was studied at Kitwe Lodge in Zambia and this resulted in an increase in the number of sympathizers. Mufulira Lodge is holding weekly programmes. Many of the Lodges in East and Central Africa do a lot of TOS work, and the Nairobi Lodge made a considerable donation as part of its programme.

In South Africa the National Convention was well attended and held

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at Durban. The theme was 'The Ocean of Theosophy'. The Germiston Lodge is constructing a new building, and programmes are going on well with an intensive course on basic Theosophy.

The membership of the West African Section has hardly changed. At Ghana, the Section celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary on 17 November 2010. Three members, Paul Kwakyi, John Boakye and Macford Attigah attended the World Congress in Rome. Copies of *The Theosophist* from Adyar are distributed to public libraries, universities, etc. The work in the Ivory Coast is beginning to show improvement after much political disturbance.

The English General Secretary has sent a report full of optimism. They are selling Tekels Park but will continue to have some programmes there. Their magazine *Insight* has been discontinued and articles will be put into another magazine called *Esoterica* which goes to many besides the Theosophical members. The Summer School was held in Liverpool, where the chief speaker, Mr David Roef, gave talks on the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, etc. The Section has undergone a good measure of self-renewal and a sense of purpose, we are told.

Both members and the public are attending meetings in Wales. Colwyn Bay Lodge has been revived after a break of about ten years. Mrs Maureen Atkinson visited the area.

In Scotland it was reported that they had a very encouraging year with an increase in the attendance at Lodge

meetings, and they intend to strengthen the vitality and visibility of the Lodges in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee.

The membership in Ireland is said to be growing steadily, and good work has been achieved. Belfast Lodge held regular weekly meetings and Phoenix Lodge in Dublin held monthly meetings. A number of enquirers and sympathizers are said to have attended the all-Ireland Convention, where Miss Mary Anderson's presence was much appreciated.

In Sweden the membership is small, with about one hundred and fifty members. Mr Curt Berg who was a strong pillar of the Society passed away during the year. This year they did not have a summer school, as some members attended the World Congress.

Norway does not have sufficient members to form a Section, but two Lodges have been holding meetings, and it is to be hoped that in the future new members will join and the Section be re-established.

The Icelandic Section is now under a new General Secretary, Ms Anna Valdimarsdottir, who says that there were fifty-one talks which were advertised in the main newspapers and open to the public. On Saturdays they open with a meditation followed by informal talks and refreshments. The Theosophical Society is publishing an Icelandic translation of *Seek Out the Way* and a book by Sigvaldi Hjalmarsson, *A Kind of Silence*. At its General Meeting, the Section decided on a new name which will be used within the country only.

The Finnish Section held public

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lectures in seventeen towns and regular Lodge meetings in twenty-two towns. Miss Mary Anderson was the chief guest at the Summer School. Two programmes were held at Kreivila, on 'Change your thoughts — you change your life'.

The Belgian Section has ninety-seven members in eight Lodges. Three Lodges have their programmes in the new headquarters building in Brussels, while the others function as usual. The Flemish branch in Ghent is very active as are the two in Antwerp. The Centenary of the Section will be held in June 2011 in the new headquarters building.

In France, the 111th Convention, on the theme 'Tradition and Revolution', was held. The building was renovated so that it is more useful. The magazine *Le Lotus Bleu* is sent to Belgium and other French-speaking countries.

There are ten Lodges and nine Study Centres in the Netherlands with a total membership of four hundred. The General Secretary says there is close cooperation between the Theosophical Society and the International Theosophical Centre. The publishing house, bookshop and library are open and available to the public.

In Germany, a new Lodge has been formed, which means there are seven Lodges. The Summer School had Miss Mary Anderson as Guest-speaker.

A new Lodge with twelve members has been formed in Ascona in Switzerland, where a seminar took place on Fraternity, Compassion and Liberation. The Lodge in German-Switzerland had to be dissolved.

Mr Theodoros Katsifis was again elected as General Secretary of Greece. During the year Mr Ricardo Lindemann gave an inspired lecture at the Ypatia Lodge. The magazine *Ilisos* was published regularly. A new study group named Procris was founded on the Island of Cephalonia. Kabeiros Lodge was chartered at Alexandropolis. An increase of forty-three new members added to the total membership, which is now two hundred and seventeen.

We already mentioned the Italian Section at the beginning of this report. A great deal of energy in the Section was spent in organizing the World Congress. The General Secretary, Mr Antonio Girardi, has been re-elected for a further three years. Book sales increased by 17%. Lists of new books and new issues are given in their magazine *Rivista Italiana di Teosofia*. The Theosophical Order of Service in this country has been successful in a variety of activities including making 'teddies' for children who have suffered tragedy.

The General Secretary of Spain gave some talks including speaking at Lodges in Portugal. The School of the Wisdom was held in August with Mr Martin Leiderman as guest speaker. The *Bhagavadgītā* and a book on *The Essentials of the Masters* by C. Jinarājādāsa were published.

The Theosophical Society in Hungary has a membership of forty-one, and has been trying to expand, although it is a difficult task in a country formerly under Communist rule. Three Lodges are active.

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Two of them have studied Theosophy. The Society has been able to publish translations of Powell's work on *The Solar System* and Annie Besant's *Esoteric Christianity*.

Mrs Breda Zagar has been elected as the new Regional Representative for Slovenia. At the school in Buda, *The Noble Eightfold Path* was studied by all the Lodges and a Winter School at Soncek was entirely dedicated to 'Working for Adyar'. The Lotus Lodge in Croatia has twenty-two members and six applicants. There is still only one Lodge in Croatia.

There are four Lodges and more than seventy members in the Ukraine. The keynote for study was 'Science and Spirituality'. In Kiev, about sixty persons from Russia and Ukraine took part in a conference. All the groups celebrated White Lotus Day, and several members attended the World Congress in Rome.

Although the membership in the American Section has fallen by approximately two hundred and fifty members, the National President, Mrs Betty Bland, reports 'a year of intense activity'. David Bruce was appointed as the new National Secretary, but will also be responsible for the educational work. The programmes for prisons have continued. In the audio-video department there are one hundred and thirty-five titles. The Olcott Memorial Library activities have gone on well.

There were several Summer Schools and some other programmes during the year in Argentina. *The Theosophist* in Spanish continues to be translated and is printed there. In addition to the fifteen

Lodges, the Section has an administrative connection with Lodge *Fraternidad*, Asuncion, in Paraguay, which holds weekly meetings. Regular meetings are also held at the Theosophical Centre at San Rafael.

Brazil has a membership of 747, but 1500 copies of their magazine are printed for circulation. Five regional secretaries have been appointed to stimulate the TS, and several videos were sent to each region. Emphasis is laid on relating study to practical living.

Mrs Isis Resende, from Brazil, gave a series of talks in Montevideo in December 2009. In March 2010 there was another series of talks on 'The Path of Vegetarianism'. Mrs Dolores Gago spoke on 'Ancient Wisdom — Modern Insight' in April and May.

The work continues in Venezuela, Colombia and Chile. In Colombia, meetings were held throughout the year and Theosophical books were studied. Chile reports that members have contributed towards the rebuilding of the Lodge after the earthquake. It was also reported that electronic publications were well received.

The work, including study courses, in Cuba, continued with enthusiasm. The annual convention was held with the theme 'The Law of Unity and the Present Theosophical Society'. All the members of the Lodges have tried to maintain inner harmony. Some members attended the World Congress in Italy.

The General Secretary in Mexico organized a number of well-attended courses. Ms Isis Resende travelled with

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the General Secretary around the Section and held courses for the members and the public. A Wisdom School of Theosophy was conducted by Lissette Arroyo and was held in Morelos.

The work is going on as usual in Bolivia. In La Paz, programmes were carried on and they received a few visitors. The Lodge Teotl in El Salvador celebrated one hundred years since it was founded.

In Peru, eight public lectures were arranged during the year, and a course of Esoteric Philosophy was offered by Sister Edith Pomar. On Christmas Day, a big celebration was held which all the members enjoyed. The TOS collected medicines, clothes, etc., for old people. The Theosophical Society has won the first of a three-part judgement to get their land and have a good possibility of success later.

The work has gone on as usual in Costa Rica and very recently an application to charter a new Lodge was received. Mrs Maria Orlich reported that all the important Theosophical days were celebrated but there was a small decrease of three members.

In the Dominican Republic, Mr Terry Hunt gave lectures, and visited two places. There were about forty participants and many were not members. Mrs Nelda Samarel gave a public lecture on 'The Aura and Invisible Human Fields'.

The Singapore Lodge has three hundred and sixty-six members, an increase of twenty-two over last year. Singapore could easily become a Section, except for the fact that there is only one

Lodge in this small country. The International President visited Singapore on her way back from the World Congress in Rome and spoke on 'Future Work'.

The Nippon Lodge held monthly meetings at Tokyo with an average attendance of twelve. They studied H. P. Blavatsky's works, and also published some translations, the most recent being Irving Cooper's *Theosophy Simplified*. A bi-monthly Japanese *Theosophist* goes out, which is appreciated.

In Adyar, the Headquarters of the whole Society, there have been changes in the personnel. The present International Secretary, Mrs Kusum Satapathy, and her husband, Mr Chittaranjan Satapathy, are both helping with the work. Mrs K. Satapathy has been the International Secretary since the middle of last year. Mr Satapathy is looking after a good part of the Olcott Education Society which deals not only with the education of the poor, but with the education of us ourselves. Mr Ramkumar, an experienced electrical engineer, is now the head of the Maintenance Department.

The Olcott Education Society and its components are doing well, but we intend to start work of a different kind for those who do not necessarily take a university degree. We will start as soon as the Krishnamurti School finishes its work here in 2014, on the land owned by the Society. The new programme will take the form of education in various crafts and aspects of life, such as looking after sick people, which will be taught to girls, as well as crafts like good paper making and

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electrical and other useful skills for boys.

The Olcott Education Society has several units of which the biggest is the Olcott School, founded by the first President. It has around five hundred and twenty students. All get free education, breakfast, textbooks, two sets of uniforms, note-books, etc. The children and their parents come from poor backgrounds and they get advice and support. Computer literacy has started. Talks have begun on Theosophical concepts by Mr Harihara Raghavan. Forty-eight out of fifty-three students passed out; among them a young man, Naveen Kumar, scored 477 marks out of 500, and received a laptop computer and commendations.

The Social Welfare Centre runs day-care for about one hundred pre-school children, who receive free food, fruits, etc. The children learn colouring, alphabets, songs and dance. Dr Revathy visits the Centre regularly and gives guidance on health care.

The HPB Hostel is a free hostel where accommodation is provided for boys who come from troubled homes. During recent holidays the children undertook a plastic removal campaign in the Theosophical Society's compound.

The Animal Dispensary has been working since 2001, but there is a shortage of personnel at present, which we hope will be put right soon. More than nine thousand animals were treated for infections, fractures, etc. A number of dogs and cats were sterilized, and new homes were found for thirteen puppies and other animals.

The Scout Camping Centre has gone on well, but the buildings have to be repaired. There were a number of camps during the year, which meant that many boys and girls enjoyed the camping ground.

The Theosophical Publishing House had a good year, despite decreasing grants from the US, UK and Australia. Two new publications and several reprints were brought out. Manpower constraints continue to be a problem but a co-publishing alliance with some publishers has proved a success.

The Adyar Library has functioned well. It has as its new Director, Dr K. N. Neelakantan Elayath, who was Head of the Sanskrit Department of the University of Calicut, and has many publications to his credit. Publications and reprints were brought out during the year as usual and all other work went on normally despite shortage of personnel.

The Theosophical Order of Service organized a very successful fund-raising sale at the World Congress in Rome. A variety of programmes are carried out in many parts of the world. The making of 'teddies' for children suffering from tragedies has been a huge success. Ms Lorraine Christensen is coordinating a committee which has been set up to support United Nations projects. Mrs Nelda Samarel has distributed a booklet entitled *Helping the Dying*. Those who want to, can contact the directors in various countries, and Mrs Diana Dunningham.

Members must be aware that owing

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to political changes there are also other changes; for example, Pakistan is now out of our purview but the Ukraine with its four Lodges has to be regarded as part of the Society. We hope that one day the whole world can be included. The extent of the Society's teachings and influence has a role in this work. We are hopeful of

a change in the world's position. We are entering a new era in which we find many people's lives and ideas are changing, although there is much woe and confusion at present. During this century, let us hope that there will be a move to be truly Theosophical whether it is called by that name or not.

RADHA BURNIER

We may say that a plant grows up through the soil and into the air, through the material devices enfolded in its germ and seed. But it is equally true that the latent powers in the seed are drawn upwards by the enticement and nourishment of the sun. There is far more evolution by attraction from above than by propulsion from beneath. It is not sufficiently recognized that the evolution of creatures very largely depends upon their association with superiors. Domestic animals are uplifted by associaton with humans to a higher state of intelligence, a sense of right and wrong, and a degree of faithful affection, which are sometimes as good as human, though narrower in their scope. Even in animal societies where one species is often at war with another, it is frequently the case that the battle with a superior develops capacity and strength. Nature is full of creatures that have adapted to dangers from stronger species, such as the insects that are camouflaged to resemble plant parts. . . . It is a general rule throughout life that progress comes mainly through help from above.

Ernest Wood

In My Beginning is My End

MARY ANDERSON

‘IN my beginning is my end’ is a quotation from T. S. Eliot’s *East Coker*. (By the way, the motto of Mary Queen of Scots was ‘*In my end is my beginning*’.) You can perhaps guess from this title what I intend to say. The theme of the Congress is: ‘Universal Brotherhood — A Road to Awareness’. Equally, I maintain, we might say: ‘Awareness — A Road to Universal Brotherhood’!

Another and similar quotation, this time from T. S. Eliot’s *Little Gidding*, runs: ‘The end is where we start from’. So shall we start from the end, in other words reflect on awareness as the beginning and universal brotherhood without distinction as the end?

The beginning of any undertaking is usually recognized as being important. To quote the German poet Rilke: ‘There is magic in every new beginning’. A friend of mine told me that, as a teenager, when she was beginning a new phase in her life — perhaps going to university or starting a new job — her grandmother told her, ‘What is essential is to make a good beginning’. This advice had impressed her and she tried to follow it all her life.

Why might the beginning of any action

or any path one follows in life be important? Might it not involve our motive, the original reason for our action, the spirit in which we undertake anything? At the same time, it might indicate the direction in which we mean to proceed. If our goal is what we consider truly spiritual, but our motive, our whole attitude and therefore our starting point are selfish, we start off on the wrong foot and proceed in the direction of self-interest and not in a spiritual direction. On the other hand, if our motive is truly unselfish, philanthropic, spiritual, we shall follow the path that leads to love, philanthropy, universal brotherhood without distinction.

It was the Lord Buddha’s sympathetic awareness of human suffering, his solidarity with the whole of mankind that set him on the path leading to the alleviation of that suffering. And thus also, in *The Voice of the Silence*, the golden key to the first portal on the sevenfold path, analogous to the raft leading to the other shore, is *dāna*, ‘The key of charity and love immortal’.

What has love to do with awareness? Let us consider little children. Have we observed a little child playing, absorbed

Ms Mary Anderson is a former international Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. Talk given at the World Congress, Rome, 2010.

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in a doll or a toy train? Is the child not happy and loving? I always remember the expression on the face of a little girl, sitting on the lap of a friend of mine, when she tasted a strawberry for the first time: the surprise, the wonder, the revelation on her features, her awareness. There is a movement in the TOS in England, called 'Teddies for Tragedy'. Volunteers knit teddy bears which are sent to sick children in Third World countries. I quote: 'Doctors who treat children in Third World countries have found that children who have their own teddy to cuddle in their cots get better quicker than those who don't have one. Each child keeps its own teddy and can take it home.'

Another example of awareness is the experience of the scholar or the scientist who has a problem to solve. He or she may puzzle over the problem, give it full attention, be aware of nothing else. This does not always result in the solution of the problem becoming clear. But after first of all concentrating and then turning aside, relaxing, perhaps going for a walk or going to sleep, the solution may present itself. Has the problem been handed over to the subconscious? Did rest and relaxation bring the solution to the surface? Did not the original awareness play an important part?

A similar example is the Zen monk struggling with his koan. A koan is an apparently nonsensical situation or statement into which the monk goes ever deeper, until a solution may be found which may not appear to be a solution at all! To take an example:

A young goose was put into a bottle the goose grew and could not be extracted from the bottle without the goose being harmed or the bottle being broken.

What is the solution?

The solution may be that the goose was never in the bottle in the first place. There is no need for a logical solution. What matters is that the monk has been deeply aware of the problem

But what is that awareness that might lead in the direction of *Universal Brotherhood without Distinction*? Might we say that it is spiritual awareness? What does 'spirituality' mean? Does it not have to do with the Oneness of all life? From the spiritual point of view there is only ONE. According to Mme Blavatsky, the first basic idea to which our mind should hold fast is '*The Fundamental Unity of All Existence*'; 'existence is ONE THING . . . There is (but) ONE BEING'.¹

And is this not the principle behind the Universal Brotherhood of humanity? 'Universal' means all-embracing, unlimited, unbounded.

But let us consider an example of spiritual awareness from one who had experienced it — Krishnamurti:

I had the first most extraordinary experience. There was a man mending the road; that man was myself; the pickaxe he held was myself; the very stone which he was breaking up was a part of me; the tender blade of grass was my very being, and the tree beside the man was myself.

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I almost could feel and think like the roadmaker, and I could feel the wind sighing through the tree, and the little ant on the blade of grass I could feel.

The birds, the dust, and the very noise were part of me. Just then there was a car passing by at some distance; I was the driver, the engine, and the tyres; as the car went further away from me, I was going away from myself. I was in everything, or rather everything was in me, inanimate and animate, the mountain, the worm, and all breathing things.²

And the conclusion:

I was supremely happy, for I had seen. Nothing could ever be the same. I have drunk at the clear and pure waters at the source of the fountain of life and my thirst was appeased. Never more could I be thirsty, never more could I be in utter darkness. I have seen the Light. I have touched compassion which heals all sorrow and suffering; it is not for myself, but for the world.³

What better expression of awareness and compassion, opening the door to Universal Brotherhood?

Universal Brotherhood is not an abstraction. People sometimes talk of Humanity as an abstract concept. Perhaps politicians often do. Here we may quote the wise words of William Blake:

He who would do good to others must do it in Minute Particulars. General Good is the plea of the scoundrel, the hypocrite, and the flatterer.⁴

But awareness from moment to moment should not and cannot be an abstraction. Nor should Universal Brotherhood be an abstraction for us, but should blossom from time to time in the circumstances of our daily life. Again Krishnamurti illustrated this point in an incident recorded in his biography by Pupul Jayakar. He was discussing with friends and he asked them how one could help a dying man who was afraid, perhaps afraid of what death held in store for him or afraid about how his loved ones would survive without his support. Some of those present suggested that this dying man, full of fear, should be told or reminded of reincarnation, of karma, etc.

But Krishnamurti rejected such suggestions. He said that he would hold the dying man's hand and tell him that he understood him, he understood his fear, he himself was also afraid.

It is incidents like this that illustrate awareness and also Brotherhood without distinction. We cannot shut anyone out of our awareness, just as we cannot shut anyone out of Universal Brotherhood.

Let us return to our title: 'In my end is my beginning'. Taking the end as the beginning, we might assume that they are in a way simultaneous. In other words, where there is true awareness, there is Universal Brotherhood. In true awareness we embrace without distinction everything that comes our way. In a sense, we are one with all other human beings, even with all other beings, and if we 'live' Universal Brotherhood, we are aware of all human beings and of all beings that come our way.

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Such awareness was constantly experienced by Krishnamurti. When he heard of the unexpected death of his brother Nityananda, he suffered agony for ten days. But he emerged from this state with the realization 'My brother and I are one'. Mar de Manziarly, meeting him on his return to Adyar, said that Krishnamurti's face was radiant. He was with his beloved brother all the time. This is awareness and it is Brotherhood.

Does not true awareness, as Krishnamurti experienced it, feeling himself one with every blade of grass, lead to the very heart of all things, all beings — in other words, to universal brotherhood without distinction? And Universal Brotherhood

without distinction implies awareness, that is, the experience of Universal Brotherhood.

The oneness of all life is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy, and certainly all true Theosophists subscribe to that teaching. But it should be not just an idea, a theory, an ideal, but an actual experience in our consciousness, an experience of awareness, of Oneness. Then it will express itself not only in our thoughts, but also in our feelings, our convictions and our actions.

Thus can we not say that Universal Brotherhood and awareness are inextricably linked and that Universal Brotherhood is a road to awareness, and awareness is a road to Universal Brotherhood? ✧

References

1. Bowen, Robert, *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*.
2. Lutyens, Mary, *The Years of Awakening*, p.158.
3. Idem., p. 159.
4. Quoted in *Human Ecology* (Dr Thomas Robertson), p. 370.

When a person responds to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were his own, he has attained the highest state of spiritual union.

Bhagavadgītā

Self-perception and Brotherly Action

MARCOS RESENDE

NO wonder that the first Object of our dear Theosophical Society is Universal Brotherhood without distinction. As one of the Elder Brothers said, Brotherhood is the only secure foundation for universal morality. Through it we can build a society based on higher principles. Why?

The human mind is naturally dual. By using the mind to speculate on everything, the human being generates division, which prevents the perception of the underlying unity of all things and of life as it is.

By thinking, man creates segmentations, not only in his own mind but in the world, in relationships, which gives rise to sides, groups, factions, parties, attractions, repulsions, etc. These divisions naturally generate different interests and therefore conflict, which could be endless as long as we individuals — each one of us — does not realize the division in our own consciousness.

Brotherhood, if understood in depth, can be an antidote against the tendency to generate mental divisions and therefore conflict.

The word ‘brotherhood’, which apparently has a meaning that is easy to understand, possesses an extraordinary content, much larger and deeper than it appears. At the superficial level one can say it means to establish gentle, kind and friendly relations. In many social settings people are friendly and civilized in appearance, but in their inner attitudes they are competing, thinking and speaking bad things about each other, envying and even antagonizing another.

Therefore we cannot see brotherhood only as a nice idea. We must penetrate its deepest meaning, which requires an understanding of life and ourselves.

Brotherhood requires not only civilized action, with sympathy and polite manners, but demands an inner attitude without divisions, sides, barriers or prejudices in our own minds. It implies goodwill, patience, balance and awareness of the unity in all our relationships.

Brotherhood is a natural expression of love which comes from the awareness of the underlying unity of all life.

Such unity is essentially internal. It does

Mr Marcos Resende is General Secretary of the Brazilian Section of the TS. Talk given at the World Congress, Rome, 2010.

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not mean that all should live under the same roof, in an external sense. This may not be possible for obvious reasons. This unity is in the undivided consciousness which operates in an integrated and cooperative manner, without imagining sides, because it sees things as they are, without division or barriers, whether conscious or not, in the screen of the mind.

To be effective, to be a reality and not just a word, brotherhood demands necessarily fraternal action, an open-minded and cooperative attitude, without distinctions of any kind. To make it real in our life it involves hard work, with ourselves and in our relationships, through self-knowledge.

Only through a deep and honest perception of ourselves, of our secret desires and idiosyncrasies, our mental and emotional content, will we be able to empty our minds in order to open ourselves to each other, acting in all relationships in a truly fraternal way. Whenever there is an egocentric tendency, and internal and external actions are based on 'me' and 'my', involving my ideas, my views, my job, etc, brotherhood will be just a notion, or even an utopia, but will not be a reality.

Love, that comes naturally when there is real perception and true comprehension of the unity, does not coexist with the self, which is by nature a separative entity. As a consequence of this, real, genuine and effective brotherhood, which is a manifestation of love, cannot coexist with egocentrism. The psychological ego, like all structures of the personality, must

be strong not to itself but to better serve the higher nature, through the expression of love, wisdom and consequent fraternal action.

Through its first Object, our Society is firmly structured on the principle of Universal Brotherhood, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. All this seems to have been sufficiently well understood by those who have been involved in the Theosophical movement for some time. However, we still need to understand in depth the need for absence of personal distinction.

Even in the TS we often witness attitudes that are based on likes and dislikes, with personal motivation, whether these exist consciously or unconsciously. It is not uncommon to see members that leave a particular Lodge and go to another because they do not sympathize with certain brothers. Many times people refuse to cooperate because the one who is leading the work is a certain brother, instead of another. This is sometimes subtle and imperceptible. In other situations, it gives rise to conflicts that should not exist in an institution like ours.

It is not enough to talk about brotherhood. We should be fraternal both within and outside the TS and in all the circumstances of our life. To act fraternally we must perceive ourselves, our preferences, likes and dislikes, as well as the tendency to create divisions and mental barriers in our own consciousness. In this way all these can be put aside and not interfere in our actions.

The fraternal action which we need in

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all situations and circumstances will not exist if love is not flourishing from our deepest nature. And love will not come if we do not see all the accumulated 'garbage', the residue of unperceived emotions and thoughts, which can only be removed through careful observation of every subjective movement and its correlation with objective life.

There cannot be a division between spiritual life and material life. This is another game created by thought, which divides and polarizes everything. The material life is the spiritual life. If it is not, the spiritual life will be simply one more segment, a piece, a source of conflict in our divided and misunderstood lives.

Self-knowledge, which allows for self-perception, presupposes a permanent observation of ourselves, of life and relationships. Without this attitude we are slaves of unperceived behaviours, of ideas that do not have correspondence with the truth, and quite often, being unaware, we act in an unbrotherly way.

Using the word 'brotherhood' or even entertaining the idea that we must be fraternal does not make us necessarily brotherly. It is essential to have a fraternal attitude in all situations in life. This will come only if we perceive the self and its endless demands and needs. Whenever we want our view to prevail, and therefore to win a debate; when we speak bad things about anybody; when we fail to cooperate, due to personal antipathies; when we worship and covet power, inside or outside the TS, we are acting moved by the ego and therefore fail to be brotherly.

We cannot transform the world without transforming ourselves. In the same way, we cannot talk about brotherhood, if it is to be a reality and not just a word, without perceiving ourselves and without self-transformation.

Spiritual life is both within us and outside us. It involves internal harmonization which comes from the perception of the many facets of our own self and its natural abandonment. It also requires that relationships are not based on 'self', in other words, on personal interest. Only actions that do not arise from a motivation based on self-interest are true brotherly actions.

It is useless to think that we can change others, which usually happens. The existence of division and conflict must be perceived and understood by ourselves, in our own inner chamber that is our subjective world. Once the division is eliminated from our minds all problems are solved and brotherly action arises spontaneously and naturally in all our relationships.

Make no mistake; there is no spirituality which is unconnected with the awareness of ourselves and of relationships which are based on self-interest. Such perception, when it is present, transforms consciousness because it is an encounter with truth, with things as they are, both in their objective and subjective aspects.

No institution, not even the Theosophical Society, can lead anybody to truth or to brotherly relations. Each one has to do the work for himself, observing

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his needs, his mental and emotional patterns, his bundle of ideas about what he thinks is right or wrong, in short, all his personal content, so that his inner space can be emptied. From this space that is infinite a new action can arise, not based on self and its interests.

This is a task which is within our reach. It is not an idealized, utopian and impracticable form of spirituality. The truly brotherly action has its place in our life here and now, with all our thoughts and relationships.

Dying to the self means to be born to a life in which love, brotherly action and cooperation arise naturally. It also means to draw really closer to the centre of life which is the underlying unity of all things.

To be brotherly means to be aware of the little self and its endless demands, and to turn it into a simple cup to receive the divine life. Without being aware of it we are slaves of this self and of all its interests. Personal interests will not cease to exist because we need to live and move in this world, with responsibilities that are inherent to the individual. But these same personal interests will have their importance infinitely reduced so that the whole personal structure becomes something simple, one that can receive love and radiate it to all manifestations of life.

The personal and impersonal dimensions need to coexist harmoniously in every one of us. This will only be possible if we are aware that everything that is personal is limited. This perception changes the focus of our consciousness

and opens the space to that dimension where beneficial, benign energy, which is love, is always present. In this way we naturally put what is personal aside, and serve what is impersonal.

If we want our beloved TS to be a light in this world, which is so confused and conflicting, so full of horrors and suffering, we must do our work. If every Theosophist is aware of the real meaning of being brotherly, living in accordance with this understanding, many things will change in the world.

As one of those responsible for the foundation of our movement said, the value of a group of workers is not measured by the number of people but by their ardent sincerity. If we are not aware of ourselves, honestly and humbly; if we do not work hard and constantly on the observation of the self and of relationships based on self-interest, we will not be able to remove the countless obstacles that prevent us from being, here and now, a real and powerful nucleus of Universal Brotherhood.

If everyone does the work of self-knowledge that needs to be done; if each member is careful and persistent in the observation which, naturally, brings about the perception of ourselves and our relationships; if we die to personal interests, sacrificing them in a loving way, on behalf of higher concerns, of all mankind, we would merge into a single body. That would be increasingly effective for the use of the Holy Ones who guide the destinies of humanity, in their work of dissipating ignorance and suffering. ✧

Strengthening the Link

To Live in the Oneness of Life — with the Masters — in the Divine

HENRIETTE VAN DER HECHT

WHEN are we most at one with another human being?

When he awakens in us the highest states of consciousness in response to his expression of his own inner life; when he makes us experience wonder in the face of beauty, radiant love, profound peace, the intensification of the highest ideals and of the noblest virtues, the joy of illuminated awareness or of penetrating comprehension, and the enthusiasm of consecration, and when he brings us to commune with the Divine.

Though such sharing generally takes place through the medium either of verbal or artistic expression, there is also direct transmission of thought or of a noble or lofty state of mind.

The man who feels greatly his oneness with all beings communicates to others the mighty waves of Love-Wisdom that animate him, and, at the same time, imparts a wonderful sense of peace. As a result, these others also feel a oneness, an intimate unity with one another. Here it is not a linking which unites separate entities, but a shared awareness of the One Life. This occurs more intensely still when a soul which is conscious of its unity with

the Divine transmits directly to another, or others, an awareness of the Divine Presence. Then the same One Divine Fire indwells in each of us.

Thus, this union exists as a strong living link with the one who lifts us, whether individually or collectively, towards the higher regions of the soul and the spirit. It brings us to penetrate the domain of that unity which is called buddhic or 'christic', where we feel ourselves as one, united. This awareness of unity resides, indelible, in the background of consciousness. It can be awakened, when circumstances are conducive to an awakening, and bring living beings together.

The human being who feeds his soul on that which is the most beautiful, the noblest, the loftiest, raises his soul thereby towards the spiritual domain, and the impact on other souls of the vibrations emanating from him raises those souls to that same level, which is the level of unity, where union takes place. Those who study and strive to live Theosophy with the whole intensity of their being can bring to others, especially to their brethren of the Theosophical Society, this kind of inspiration in their search for the Divine.

Dr Henriette van der Hecht, a medical doctor, is a long-standing member of the TS in Belgium.

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Actually, these inspiring beings are, as a rule, disciples of the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, whether accepted disciples or disciples still on probation. As one of the Masters of the Wisdom writes in a letter to an aspiring disciple, it is only by raising one's thinking to the level of that of the Masters that contact with them is possible. This is an inner contact. By the purification of the heart and of the mind, by feelings of universal love, by habitually dealing with lofty verities and with beauty, the altruistic soul becomes able to receive inspiration from the Masters of the Wisdom, and to vibrate in unison with them, thus becoming more able to raise other souls towards the level of unity, by the love and the wisdom which emanates from them.

Here is what the mystical treatise, *The Voice of the Silence*, enjoins in this connection:

Seek not for thy Guru in those māyāvic regions. (29)

Seek for him who is to give thee birth in the Hall of Wisdom, the Hall which lies beyond, wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory. (32)

As Plato says, one must feed the wings of the soul with all that is good, beautiful and true, in order that they may carry us towards the heavenly realms.

Studying and putting into practice the book *Self-Culture* by our brother I. K. Taimni helps us to systematically raise our inner level; so also does meditation on the

deep thoughts of the great Sages who are gathered together in the mystical works *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path* and *At the Feet of the Master*. It is said in that last work:

You can help your brother through that which you have in common with him, and that is the Divine Life; learn how to arouse that in him, learn how to appeal to that in him.

At the same time as there is an appeal to the divine Self in the other being, in help given in this way, there is communion in the Divine Unity. It is there that there is the strongest link, the deepest relationship. The constantly present aim in one's mind must be to live in the Divine Unity, hence those mystical teachings given unstintingly in *The Voice of the Silence*:

(216, 217) O disciple! Before [thou canst] meet thy Teacher face to face, thy Master light to light, thou . . . hast to learn to part the body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in Self.

(218) Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind.

(219) . . . but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.

(220) So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of

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one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother.

(For the Divine is the Supreme Master, the Instructor at the heart of our soul, as he is at the same time the source of our being, our Father and our Mother.)

(221) Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one, Ālaya, the Universal Soul. Live in that MASTER as Its rays in thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in It.

As more and more Theosophical aspirants become able to live in this way, the bond between them, between them and the Masters, and between them and the whole of humanity will become stronger and stronger.

To learn to live in Unity, and thus to live with the Masters, and to live in the Divine, is to develop the real link between the members of the Theosophical Society and all that exists. ✧

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity! . . .
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there the Lord has commanded the
blessing,
life for evermore.

Psalm 133

Practical Brotherhood in Everyday Life

DUSAN ZAGAR

THE Theosophical Society was founded as a Universal Brotherhood, which means that its members should live in their everyday life as true brothers, or at least *try* to do so.

The *Vishnu Purāna* says: ‘Knowing the Supreme to be *all* beings, the wise extend love to all creatures *undeviatingly*.’

To *extend love to all* — not only to those whom we like but also to those whom we do not.

The essential teaching is that there is only One Life and that all human beings and all other creatures are part of this Life; therefore we all are brothers and we should love one another.

But as we know, between being brotherly or talk about brotherliness, there is a very big difference. We should be earnest with this otherwise we will never really know the true meaning, or much better, the true *feeling* of brotherly love. Do we feel an elephant being our brother, or a distant star, a little frog, a footballer of the opposite team who has just scored a goal against our national team, a street sweeper or a cleaning lady at a department store?

Master KH said: ‘Around you are acquaintances, friends and associates — in, and outside, the TS . . . point them to the Light, lead them to the Path, teach them, be a missionary of love and charity, thus in helping others win your own salvation (Katherine A. Beechey, *Daily Meditations*, p. 4).

These words are essential and they express the highest type of brotherliness. We should understand them profoundly, deeply. We should explore them.

For to help our fellow-men to come to true knowledge as the Master said are real brotherly deeds. The only motive should be love.

Today the world as we all see it is in a very difficult condition: egotism, competition, money, greed, too much noise, haste, irritation, etc., are the rulers of the world along with computers. As Krishnamurti said: that’s all dirty water. Many false spiritual teachers, groups and movements are leading astray more and more people. True spirituality is almost forgotten. Everything is on a very superficial level. But there are also many who are really hungry and have compassion

Dr Dusan Zagar is the former Regional Representative of the TS in Slovenia, and a practising doctor.

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in their hearts and are concerned about the world.

The Master said: *point them to the Light*. This is our work, our duty. The Theosophical Society was founded to be the Light-bringer to the World. By the Light, it is meant the true knowledge of who we are, of the purpose of life, of the Laws of Nature, which we as human beings should obey, not blindly but intelligently, etc.

The Master also said: *lead them to the Path*. How can we lead others to the Path? What is true spirituality? First we should know for ourselves. To quote Annie Besant: 'It is a purified heart, and not the well-filled head that leads us to the Master's feet.'

If we do not understand these words,

then obviously we cannot act accordingly. But if we understood this, then the sign would be brotherly actions, a total change in our everyday behaviour; we would feel a great responsibility, a great duty to our fellow-men and other creatures. We ourselves would be changed, regenerated. Then one would *be a missionary of love and charity as the Master said*.

The Master's words, *point* them, *lead* them, *teach* them, *be* a missionary of love and charity, are all synonyms for deeds and not for theoretical talk. If we do all that then we are acting in a brotherly way, then we *are* brothers. Brotherhood is really something sacred. As we all know, it means harmony, respect, goodwill, compassion, impersonal love to all creatures without distinction. ✧

. . . he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground,
the waters, the plants, the heavens and how to come at these
enchantments — is the rich and royal man.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Preliminary Path

FELIX LAYTON

THE first half of *Light on the Path* describes a preliminary Way of self-purification and training for the path proper that ends when the aspirant stands at the portal of initiation. The outward aspects of initiation are described in *The Masters and the Path* and elsewhere as a glorious event in which the candidate is received into the Great White Brotherhood and in which he shows himself to possess, and to be able to use, certain occult powers. But the inner mystical experience in which the disciple enters the deep silence at the heart of his own being — the silence which draws forth the latent beauty of the fruits of his long struggle and in which he makes an unbreakable union with that silence — is enormously more significant to him than the outer actions.

The preliminary path is described as one of battle, when the lower nature is struggling unsuccessfully to attain happiness for itself. *Light on the Path* points out that the only way it can win this battle is by completely surrendering to the higher Self. When this happens, the period of storm ends in a wondrous inner calm, in which the flower of the soul opens and the pilgrim becomes aware of the

divine life at the heart of his own being.

When an aeroplane takes off on an overcast day it soon enters the clouds. A passenger then sees neither land nor sky but feels the plane shuddering and reeling as it pushes on through apparent chaos. Then suddenly it breaks through the cloud ceiling into bright sunlight. The passenger now has a clear view in all directions and enters a zone of calm and peace. This is a faint reflection of the journey on the preliminary path.

Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm; not till then . . . not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject to its higher Self, can the bloom open. Then will come a calm such as comes in a tropical country after the heavy rain, when Nature works so swiftly that one may see her action. Such a calm will come to the harassed spirit. And in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found. . . . it is the flower of the soul that has opened.

Does this mean that the preliminary path has been trodden to the end and that the traveller has entered a state of peace

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which nothing can disturb? It does and it does not. In the last paragraph of her autobiography Annie Besant gives her answer to this question. She had described her early years of storm and turmoil, her search for a meaning and purpose to life, her eventual discovery of Theosophy, her meeting with H. P. Blavatsky and her being accepted as one of her pupils. She writes:

And thus came I through storm to peace, not to the peace of an untroubled sea of outer life, which no strong soul can crave, but to an inner peace that outer troubles may not avail to ruffle — a peace which belongs to the eternal not to the transitory, to the depths not to the shallows of life.

The first paragraph of the second half of *Light on the Path* is deeply significant. Just as the last verse of the first half looked back over the whole preliminary path, so this looks forward along the path ahead to where the man will one day stand on the threshold of divinity.

Out of the silence that is peace a resonant voice shall arise. . . . And knowing this voice to be the silence itself thou wilt obey.

Here is a paradox: the silence speaks. It seems a fruitful line of thought to consider silence and sound — particularly controlled, directed sound such as that of a resonant voice — as the positive and negative or masculine and feminine aspects of a more fundamental reality or power. Comparing the turbulence of the earlier path with the silence, one sees in the former, wild displays of power —

wind, rain, lightning and thunder — but these are uncontrolled, disorganized and destructive. In the silence, however, great powers are present, poised, controlled and ready to be used. Thus it is only in the silence that follows the storm that the forces of man and nature can work together in harmony and produce such a beautiful object as the opened flower of the soul which links the man of the world to the spiritual man and to the unlimited possibilities of further spiritual growth. Therefore when the resonant voice, which is an aspect of the silence, speaks, the disciple automatically obeys because he *is* the silence.

Karma and Compassion

And what does the resonant voice say? ‘It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow.’ Pondering these words one is led to the rethinking and the discovery of a new understanding of karma and the nature of the Lords of Karma. These great ones are not merely impartial administrators of karmic justice but lords of compassion who shield humanity from the flood of adversity which would otherwise engulf and destroy it — the flood of karmic consequence rising from its early, ignorant, self-centred actions.

Such a rethinking shows that while, on the one hand, the traditional concept of karma with its cycle of sowing and reaping is valid, yet there is another glorious and almost opposite movement at work at the same time. Consider how it works in one life cycle. A baby is born weak and helpless. In order that it may live,

The Preliminary Path

someone, inspired by love, must give it food, protection and guidance. It can only receive and can give nothing in return. As it grows, it assumes more and more responsibility for its actions until, as a mature adult, in its turn it is ready to give food, protection, love and guidance to other new human lives. On the larger scale, the pilgrimage from primitive man to Adept passes through a similar cycle with each of us starting as helpless young human souls guided and protected by elder brothers from earlier races or life-waves. In particular, when, ignorant and wilful, we earn for ourselves an accumulation of painful destructive karma which could overwhelm us, it is those Lords of Karma, acting as loving parents, who, by a great act of sacrifice, absorb that unpleasant material and hold it in themselves until we reach a stage where we can handle and learn from it.

As we grow stronger, small amounts of this unpleasant karma are released on us until, finally, at the moment of initiation, the flower of the soul opens and the new disciple needs no more parental protection. Having received and reaped wonderful gifts of sacrifice and love, now,

in his turn, he goes forth, unladen, to sow for the benefit of younger souls. Thus he does begin 'to lift a little of the heavy karma of the world; [and to give his aid] to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory'. He enters upon a partnership which brings indeed terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great and ever-increasing joy.

As he joins in this wonderful work he is charged to let the Power of the Silence sweep through his nature.

Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest be not thou the warrior.

Look for the Warrior and let him fight in thee.

In a comment on this the teacher who wrote many of these beautiful verses says:

He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee and become thy Warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.

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**Unless the mind be trained to selflessness and infinite compassion,
one is apt to fall into the error of seeking liberation for self alone.**

Gampopa

The Laws of a Master and Righteous Perception

L. C. SRIVASTAVA

IN a letter to A. P. Sinnett, Master KH mentioned: 'Learn first our laws and educate your Perception, dear Brother. Control your involuntary powers and develop in the right direction your will and you will become a teacher instead of learner.' We shall try to find out the essence of this statement.

This laborious work has been made easy by the untiring labour of Katherine A. Beechey for *Daily Meditations*. In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, in Letter No.137 by the same Master KH, the striking statement is made: 'We recognize but one law in the Universe, the law of harmony, of perfect equilibrium.' The two words harmony and equilibrium, may refer to perfect equanimity. Discord is imparted in nature outwardly, but there is an inner attunement in the universe. As Master KH says: 'Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy, and there is a mutual correlation between a star and a man.'

The Upanishad-s say that there is one universal life pervading everywhere, and

in the human being it is in the ethereal cavity of the heart. It is the centre of the universe everywhere, without a circumference. *Sarvam khalvidam Brahman*, was acknowledged by Śri Śankarāchārya.

The Mahatma said: 'Educate your perception'. This is not ordinary seeing, but is a technical term used by Buddha. It is the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom. It was used by the Buddha during his first sermon at Sarnath (Varanasi) when he spoke of right perception (*Sammā Dithhi*). This is perceiving by penetrating eyes into the very root of the object, through comprehensive inquiry and real understanding, not merely casting an eye and making up an idea according to previous notions, which becomes the conditioned mind. To educate perception gradually by discriminating the real from the unreal and experiencing every new object as different, is emphasized by KH.

According to Theosophy, mind is an instrument which coordinates the higher and lower self, for instance Ego and personality. This mind is the cause of

Mr L. C. Srivastava has been a member of the Theosophical Society for more than thirty years and was President of the Kashi Tattwa Sabha (Theosophical Lodge) in Varanasi.

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both bondage and liberation. If the mind is replete with the dross of astral and physical sensations it becomes the cause of bondage, but if with Buddha or pure consciousness, then Ātman is approached.

Mind turns inwards only when discrimination can be made between the real and the unreal, and non-attachment from the physical, astral and lower self is possible. Further the mind is strengthened by six aspects of moral conduct in daily life as *At the Feet of the Master* suggests. 'Universal Love' then appears in the heart. Selflessness and non-attachment lead to the state of fearlessness, which produces freedom from all bondage.

When the mind is totally free, Universal Love fills the mind, and it dissolves in Buddhi where supreme energy resides. The supreme energy is latent there, and sustains one always. The Mahatma suggests developing will in the right direction, because strong will creates sympathy, and even attracts Adepts whose laws are antagonistic to their mixing with the uninitiated. A teacher is needed now to point out the right path, and he can be approached only by the strong will and sympathy of a qualified candidate.

A certain amount of power is active in the body from the physiological point of view, which is not controlled by the mind. It acts automatically like the beating of the heart, respiratory system, and circulation of blood. Another type of involuntary action is going on, which physiologists and psychologists called 'Reflex Action'.

One keeps watch, and therefore prevents negative thoughts before they appear in word and action. For example, the hand goes on scratching a spot on the body even during sleep, but involuntary power control means to be always conscious. Therefore, keep watch on every action and event, so that your conditioned mind may be free.

This conscious alertness is so important that the Buddha emphasized it in his eightfold path as *Sammā Sati*, which means right alertness. Control over involuntary powers is possible only when the *sādhaka*, the hearer or novice, is alert with full consciousness of any action by a voluntary mind.

This practice of continuous alertness is called *Satipatthāna* in the teaching of the Lord Buddha (in *Mahā Satipatthāna Sutta*) which was given by him to his disciples. Control over involuntary powers enables the will power to be in the right direction. Then the goal can be achieved, which is the last point which leads to Nirvāna. The novice who steps into the further state of an Arhat and enters the White Brotherhood, then has the right to initiate and teach a *chela*.

In this way, step by step, a novice advances and learns the laws of the Mahatmas, educating his perception. Control over his involuntary power and his will is developed in the right direction. Then he may one day get the fruits of Arhatship. This is the real brotherhood for which the Theosophical Society was formed. ❖

Natural Law and Individualization

G. MURALIDHAR

NATURE rules the universe. Theosophy holds that outer observable phenomena derive from inner purposes that are not directly measurable or observable; whatever contemporary science hypothesizes about the origin of the universe and life, the universe is here and life appeared somehow in it.

In fact, Natural law is nothing but science. Natural law concerns itself with trying to explain the 'how' of those realities; Theosophy is concerned with the 'why'.

Three hypotheses about the nature of the universe and the origin of life have been seriously considered: First, everything is the result of chance, a 'fortuitous concurrence of atoms'; that is, the universe is an anarchy without organization, and human life is an accident. Second, the universe is the product of inexorable natural law, with no options and no free will, with only the appearance of choice or random events because the results of natural law (including living beings) can be so complex that they look chaotic. Third, the universe is a precisely ordered organization, created by an ultimate intelligence operating according to

well-defined laws, in which living beings have free will to make choices because they are expressions of that same ultimate intelligence, which we call divine. The hypothesis of a universe combining law and choice, on the other hand, provides a sound basis for a productive and satisfying life. Law implies order and choice implies purpose.¹

Plato (Aristotle's teacher) taught that the universe or forms of things are self-existent and not dependent upon the particulars or even changing objects of the senses. Hence, unlike Aristotle, Plato spoke about existence of 'uninstantiated universals'. (Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, observed that no universals exist separated from individual objects, i.e., they are 'instantiated universals'). In other words, Plato believed in the existence of universal ideas, which he said, have an independent existence of their own and may or may not be reflected.²

We can take a hypothetical example of goodness. The ideal and idea of 'goodness' exists in its own right, even if it is not exhibited by people. Suppose, we find that in order to justify a certain proposition X, we give reason Y, but the

Mr G. Muralidhar is a member of Olcott Theosophical Lodge, Machilipatnam, India.

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validity of Y in turn may be proved by giving reason Z. To justify Z, we have to give yet another reason P, and so on.³

In Section 14 of *The Secret Doctrine*, under the title 'Gods, Monads and Atoms', Blavatsky says: 'Every Atom becomes a visible complex unit (a molecule), and once attracted into the sphere of terrestrial activity, the Monadic Essence, passing through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, becomes man.'⁴ Again on the same page: 'God, Monad, and Atom are the correspondences of Spirit, Mind and Body in man.'⁴

In the Theosophical view, matter or Monad is not just the physical stuff we see, but comes in gradations that interpenetrate. Though we often call these various grades of matter monad, they are not in layers. They may also be thought of as 'fields of force' or 'dimensions of reality'. The various states of matter are coexisting energies. The circling process of these units goes on for seven complete Rounds of the whole seven planetary centres of consciousness, and when the seven are ended as much perfection as possible in the immense period occupied will have been attained. This chain or mass of 'globes' will die in their turn to give birth to still another series.

Each one of the globes is used by evolutionary Law for the development of seven races, and of senses, faculties and powers appropriate to that state of matter; the experience of the whole seven globes or planes being needed to make perfect development. Hence we have the Rounds and Races. The Round is the

circling of the seven centres of planetary consciousness; the Race, the racial development on one of these seven. There are seven races for each globe or plane, but the total of forty-nine only makes up seven great Races.⁵

The inner Ego or Monad, which re-incarnates, taking on body after body, storing up the impressions of life after life, gaining experience and adding it to the divine Ego, suffering and enjoying through an immense period of years, is the fifth principle *manas* — not united to *buddhi*. This is permanent individuality which gives to every man the feeling of being himself and not some other.

Like a water spout, the individuality is produced by the upward reaching of the lower life and the downward reaching of the divine life in response. The process of individualization, by which a separate incarnating entity comes into existence, marks a transition from the relatively simple collective consciousness of the animal kingdom to full self-consciousness and the formation of the human soul or individuality. And although that individualized human soul can never regress to the animal kingdom it is still a far cry from the full freedom that is its ultimate destination.

The entry into the human kingdom is a great step forward in responsibility on the evolutionary journey. The individual gradually climbs, slowly and painfully, step by step, learning one lesson after another in the school of life. Intelligence dawns under the stimulation of desire, strengthened by the memory of its

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gratification. Gradually, we learn that we live in a world of natural laws, experiencing pleasure when those natural laws are obeyed and pain when they are disregarded. Great Teachers, who are as far beyond us in evolution as we are beyond the higher animals, also come from age to age to aid us in our evolution

and to help us distinguish between right and wrong, i.e. between what is wise because it flows with the stream of evolution and what is unwise because it is not in that flow, but contrary to it. They do that in part by presenting us with the fundamental principles of the Wisdom Tradition, which we call Theosophy.⁶ ✧

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Those who have riches and honours in this world are reaping the fruits of seeds which they planted in their previous life. Those who do not give alms during their present life will be extremely poor in the future. Do riches and honour come by shrewdness? Are the slow-witted all poor? Poverty may come as the result of too much shrewdness.

Hakuin

Books of Interest

REFLECTIONS ON AN AGELESS WISDOM by Joy Mills, Quest Books, Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, IL, USA, 2010.

As a former student and colleague of Joy Mills it is a pleasure to review her latest publication, which many may consider to be her single most significant contribution to the corpus of Theosophical literature.

Reflections on an Ageless Wisdom, subtitled 'A Commentary on *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*', is a product of the best part of a lifetime of study on these letters by the author. Within its 580 pages we are led into another world, the world of the Mahatmas who were behind the formation of the Theosophical Society, and their teachings, which are at once ageless and ever new.

If one reads this book solely in order to obtain answers to various facets of the Letters then there will be some measure of disappointment, because a very real spirit of enquiry is evident. The author has mastered the art of questioning exceedingly well after her many years of teaching theosophical students. Strategically placed questions force one to stop and pause, bringing relevant aspects of the book into our era, here and now. They challenge us personally to think about the implications of some statements in *The Mahatma Letters* and how they might apply directly to us today.

A useful example is her treatment of the subject of duty. After a quotation from the Mahatma KH, she mentions HPB's insightful comment on Theosophy as the 'quintessence of duty', also referring to Dr Besant's mention of the Law of Duty in *The Laws of the Higher Life*. We then read of the Mahatma KH pointing out to Sinnett how 'through the performance of "small plain duties" we eventually "rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity"'. At this point Joy Mills challenges the reader: 'The question naturally arises: Just what is our duty? More specifically, what is *my* duty? . . . Does my responsibility lie first to my family, to friends, to associates, or to the work I have taken on, to some cause to which I have given myself?' But we are further encouraged to probe more deeply within when she takes up the Mahatma KH's reference to the performance of duty under the guidance of a well-developed intuition. Therefore, she asserts, only as we develop the intuitive faculty can we really know what is our duty. Some challenging dimensions are consequently revealed about what may seem to be an ordinary subject.

Notwithstanding the many questions posed in the book, Joy Mills also brings her scholarly skills and perceptions based on years of study to her writing, along with a very real passion for the *Letters*. In addition, when one progresses through the

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book some fascinating aspects of the history of the TS during the period 1881–1885, when the letters were received, reveal themselves. Thus various elements combine to ignite the enthusiasm of the reader.

An eclectic set of references is provided throughout the text which may be used for further research by the student. To give one example, a number of most

useful references are provided for those interested in finding out more about the enigmatic Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

Completed with a five page bibliography and a useful index, *Reflections on an Ageless Wisdom* is a unique work, highly recommended as a ready companion for the student of *The Mahatma Letters*, and will repay repeated study.

LINDA OLIVEIRA

Once separated from the common influences of Society, *nothing* draws us to any outsider save his evolving spirituality. He may be a Bacon or an Aristotle in knowledge, and still not even make his current felt a feather's weight by us, if his power is confined to the *Manas*. The supreme energy resides in the *Buddhi*; latent — when wedded to *Ātman* alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of 'Manas' and when none of the dross of the latter commingles with that pure essence to weigh it down by its finite nature. *Manas*, pure and simple, is of a lower degree, and of the earth earthly: and so your greatest men count but as nonentities in the arena where greatness is measured by the standard of spiritual development.

The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett,
Letter No. 111

Theosophical Work around the World

Bangladesh

The Chittagong Lodge in Bangladesh held a seminar on 'Universal Brotherhood — A Reality' on 24 September 2010 at the auditorium of Bangladesh Chemist Society. Dr Abu Bakar, Professor of Philosophy, Chittagong University, was the Guest Speaker. Chittagong Lodge holds monthly meetings in which members discuss important subjects on Theosophy and are inspired by them. Steps are taken to attract new members.

The School of the Wisdom

The general theme of the October–December 2010 session of the School of the Wisdom at Adyar was 'The Urgency of Transformation'. Swami Chidananda, Director of the Rajghat Education Centre, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Varanasi, spoke on 'Transformation: Vedānta Perspectives' from 1 to 12 November 2010. He said that the non-dual teachings of this system give us a vision of oneness of the universe. Prof. P. Krishna, well-known international lecturer who is in charge of the Krishnamurti Study Centre in Varanasi, spoke on 'The Urgency of Transformation' from 15 to 26 November. One of the questions explored by him was 'How can the human consciousness come upon wisdom?' Prof. R. C. Tampi, Director of the School of the Wisdom and

former National Lecturer of the Indian Section of the TS, spoke on 'Transformation in the Teachings of N. Sri Ram' from 29 November to 10 December 2010. This course focused on the study of selections from N. Sri Ram's writings on the nature and scope of human transformation. From 5 January to 9 February 2011, Dr Ravi Ravindra will conduct a course on 'Inquiry into the Nature of the Self in the Upanishad-s'.

India

The Kerala Theosophical Federation and Anantha Lodge held a one-day Study Camp on *The Key to Theosophy* in Trivandrum on 17 November 2010. Nearly forty members were in attendance. Talks given during the event included 'The Fundamental Teachings of Theosophy', 'Practical Theosophy' and 'The Theosophical Mahatmas'. Participants discussed in different groups the subject 'How do you expect members to help the Society?' The consensus was that the work of the TS should reach out more and more to the public in order to disseminate Theosophy. Padma Shri Prof. K. Sugatha Kumari, a well-known Malayalam poetess, was the chief guest at a public meeting held in the afternoon and released a poetic version of *At the Feet of the Master* in that language. ✧

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY

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1895	Australia	... Dr Dara Tatray	... 4th fl., 484 Kent St., Sydney, NSW 2000	... <i>Theosophy in Australia</i>	tshq@austheos.org.au
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1888	England	... Mr Eric McGough	... 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA	... <i>Insight</i>	office@theosoc.org.uk
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1899	France	... Ms Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu	... 4 Square Rapp, 75007 Paris	... <i>Le Lotus Bleu</i>	trankimdieu@sfr.fr
1902	Germany	... Mrs Manuela Kaulich	... Hauptstr. 39, 93138 Lappersdorf	... <i>Adyar</i>	theosophie-adyar@gmx.de
1928	Greece	... Mr Theodoros Katsifis	... 25 Voukourestiou St., 106 71-Athens	... <i>Ilisos</i>	info@theosophicalsociety.gr
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1921	Iceland	... Ms Anna Valdimarsdóttir	... PO Box 1257 Ingólfsstraeti 22, 121 Reykjavik	... <i>Gangleri</i>	ts@gudspekifelagid.is
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1933	Philippines, The	... Mr Rosel Doval-Santos	... Corner P. Florentino and Iba Streets, Quezon City, Manila	... <i>The Philippine Theosophist</i>	philtheos@gmail.com
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1910	Scotland *	... Mr Stuart Trotter	... 28 Great King Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6QH	... <i>Circles</i>	stuarttrotter@hotmail.com
1889	Singapore ▲	... Mr Chong Sanne	... 540 Sims Avenue, No 03-04 Sims Avenue Centre, Singapore 387603	... <i>Newsletter</i>	sanne@singaporelodge.org
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1910	Switzerland †	... Mrs Eliane Gaillard	... 17 Chemin de la Côte, CH -1282 Dardagny, Genève	... <i>The Lotus</i>	egaillard@bluewin.ch
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1886	USA	... Mrs Betty Bland	... PO Box 270, Wheaton, IL 60187-0270	... <i>The Quest</i>	admin@theosophical.org
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1922	Wales *	... Ms Julie Cunningham	... Tan y fron, Red Wharf Bay, Penrtaeth Angelsey, Gwynedd LL75 8HJ UK	... <i>Insight</i>	j.cunningham@yahoo.co.uk

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