

# THEOSOPHICAL ORGANIZATION

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*Articles by William Q. Judge*

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## THE T.S. AND ITS BASIS

**A**S one of those who helped to form the Theosophical Society, I may claim to speak with personal knowledge of the facts, and having worked in its ranks ever since its first day, a few words respecting its basis and spirit will be of use. The society was founded in New York in 1875, the inaugural address of the president being delivered on the 17th of November. The preliminary meeting was held before that date, at the rooms of H. P. Blavatsky, in Irving Place, New York. [The minutes] read thus, in substance: "Mr. William Q. Judge took the chair, and calling the meeting to order, nominated Col. H. S. Olcott as permanent chairman, who, being elected, suggested Mr. Judge as secretary. The latter was elected as secretary." Formal organization was provided for, and the minute is signed by myself. In November the constitution was reported and the President's address delivered.

Although the objects of the society were then expressed more elaborately than now, they even then carried the same idea as now, and the basis and spirit of the organization were the same then as now. Its basis was intended to rest on equality, autonomy and toleration, its prime object being universal brotherhood, of which it was hoped the germ or nucleus might be formed. All members are on an equal footing, as is shown by its rule that caste, color, religion, creed, sex have no bearing on the question of membership in any way. The founders did not hold the idea that all men are equal in all things, but they did lay it down that in respect to membership they were and should be equal. This has ever been its law.

Autonomy as a principle put into practice meant that each branch

should govern itself so long as it did not contravene the law of the whole, but should be under the general federal jurisdiction of any section it might help to form or be formed in. Similarly each section is autonomous within its own borders, and cannot be interfered with so long as it does not violate the general law and is loyal to the whole. And as the whole cannot have a creed or dogma, no section is put under bonds in matters of belief.

Toleration can only really exist where brotherhood is admitted as a truth and a necessity. Hence its principle of toleration means that every member has the right to believe as he or she pleases in all matters of religion, philosophy, and the like, but must not try to force that belief on others, though not prevented from promulgating it. The Society as a body has no belief save in universal brotherhood, and from that it gets its strength. The moment it should declare a creed or dogma, that moment its strength would begin to leave it, for division would arise and sides would be taken. Hence, also, it includes in its ranks men of all religions: Brahmins, Buddhists, Christians, Mahommedans and every other variety, as they all know that the T.S. furnishes them a common ground on which to work. The bigoted dogmatist cannot feel moved to join the body, because its freedom is opposed to bigotry, and the member who is a Buddhist is just as good as the Christian or the Agnostic. Many times have persons asked that the society formulate some doctrines as authoritative, but that has always been refused, and, indeed, would be its deathknell.

Its three objects cover the whole field of research and the first is essential because without brotherliness and toleration no calm inquiry would be possible. The second calls for an investigation of the religions and philosophies of all men, and for demonstrating the importance of that study. Its importance lies in the fact that the religions and philosophies of man are his revelations made by his greater better self, or God within, to his lower self, and must be all studied if we are to arrive at the one fountain or basis from which they have arisen and in which they are based. Hence the scriptures of the Christian do not rule, nor likewise do those of the Brahmin or the Buddhist, even though the last be the older.

But some people think the Society is a Buddhist one or Hindu one. This is because as a fact the religions of the West have come from those of the East, and the great age, and the similarity of the older ones to the newer ones of the West, must soon be apparent. And further, it is inevitable that a large body of members must come to a general tacit agreement or belief which is prominent because of their great devotion and constant work. But no one has to believe with this body of persons on any point. Reincarnation, Karma, the sevenfold nature of man, and the doctrine of the Masters, may be rejected, and one may still be a good member so long as he or she believes in and tries to practice Universal Brotherhood.

The main underlying effort of the work of the members of the Society should be to furnish a real and philosophical basis for ethics, seeing that the ancient ethics re-promulgated by Jesus are not practised by the nations who profess them. In this respect the work of the Society in Christian lands is ever tending to bring forth a real Christianity, and not to oppose it. Opposition to mere dogma is not opposition to truth, and hence the Society is a builder up and not a mere destroyer of old beliefs. In other lands it has its distinct work also; as in India it will be to revive the old pure spiritual life now covered with much dogma, and among the Buddhists it will show men how to live by the ethics of Buddha, which, promulgated centuries before the birth of Jesus, are the same *ipsissima verba* as those of the latter.

Apart from all religious views, the philosophy put forth by members of the Society gives reasonable explanations of life, of man, and of nature; tends to remove superstition by showing what physical phenomena are, and why they occur, instead of denying them and thus leaving thousands without

any solution for that which they know does happen, but which is generally denied by science and the church. This philosophy, though old, meets all the facts and solves them, and shows how man may, if he will, reach to the power hinted at by all the great teachers of the world, offered by Jesus to his disciples but denied by the dogmatist of the West. And all this philosophy may be brought out in the ranks of

the organization, while at the same time the Society itself puts no seal of approval or disapproval thereupon. From this great freedom it has resulted in 19 years that the organization embraces the world, with members and branches in every nation, having the sympathy of those who think the mind of man should be free, and being hated only by those who prefer dogmatism and superstition to toleration and brotherly love.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

*The Astral Theosophist*

June, 1894

## A REMINISCENCE

THE interesting series of historical papers now running in the *Theosophist* entitled "Old Diary Leaves" by Col. Olcott naturally recalls to the mind various small events of the early years of the Theosophical Society, but nearly all the first members have disappeared from sight, some wholly uninterested in our work, others gone over to the other side of death. But some remain who do not concur in all the details written by Col. Olcott.

The origin of our seal is one of the things yet to be cleared up, and which will be at the proper time. The cut here shown is from the original electroplate made in 1874 or '75 or even earlier from a wood-cut produced at the same time. The wood-cut would have been used in this printing but that the impression might destroy it. Both, the plate and the wood-cut, have been many years quietly resting in a drawer. Very plainly this cut is substantially our seal. The omitted portion is the Egyptian cross in the centre. In place of that cross the letters "E. B." appear, and those letters mean "Elena Blavatsky," the initial E being aspirated. Above is the coronet of a Countess. Added within the circle are astrological and cabalistic signs referring to the owner who used it. That owner was H. P. Blavatsky. It has been used often by her for stamping letter paper, and a quantity of the same letter-paper she used is in the drawer with the wood-cut.



Who, then, is the person from whom came the idea of our seal? Is

it H.P.B. or some one else? If not H.P.B. how is it that she was using this design for her paper so many years ago? Several persons have claimed to be the founders of the Society, or designers of its seal, or first movers in its early years. A Philadelphia Doctor some years ago had the hardihood to write to the New York Headquarters saying that he was the one who designed our seal. Since then he has passed away. The plain unvarnished truth, which hurts no one save the man who denies it, is that H. P. Blavatsky was the head, front, bottom, top, outskirts, past and future of the Theosophical Society. We were all but pawns on the chessboard. What is the use of permitting vanity to influence us toward denying the facts?

No game, no battle, no diplomacy can go forward without agents, subordinates, generals, privates, but there is always a moving head without whom there would be no success. Not only was H. P. B. predominant with us in 1875, but she is yet. The very organization was suggested by her in a letter which will be published in facsimile if any one feels disposed to deny the foregoing assertion. She wrote that we ought to model our Society on the United States, which is a collection of sovereign bodies united in one aim.

In the “Diary Leaves” Col. Olcott says that it was proposed to make the Theosophical Society an extra-Masonic degree. The impossibility of this may be seen when we reflect that such a thing—out of the question in itself—would leave out H. P. B. But, you say, he refers to letters from William Q. Judge and Gen. Doubleday asking for the ritual. This is but one of the little errors that creep in after lapse of years. An examination of the correspondence shows that Brothers Judge and Doubleday wrote—often—that if there was to be a ritual for the initiation into the Theosophical Society, then it should be sent, or the whole initiation abandoned. And many members recollect how much was said *pro* and *con* about abolishing initiation and accompanying ritual altogether, until at last it so came about. Masonic degrees were not once talked of, unless Col. Olcott may have said he would have wished us to be affiliated with Masons. This item in the “Diary Leaves”\*, is clearly *lapsus calami*. In the same number of the “Leaves” there is a reference to G. H. Felt and a long

draft of a letter of his as to which Col. Olcott is not clear. This is easy to settle. This letter was drafted by William Q. Judge and copied out by Felt, and the person he speaks of in the letter as experimenting with is Brother Judge. These things I state advisedly and with permission. It was intended for use at a meeting of the T. S. in 1876, but instead of using that a paper was read by Bro. Judge embodying the facts and including many other records of different experiments.

Other flitting scenes will recur later. Some embrace the funeral of Baron de Palm and what led up to it, others the making of our early diplomas by hand, and so on. But however the facts may come out, it remains a fact that the T. S. stands or falls by H. P. Blavatsky. Give her up as an idea, withdraw from the path traced by her under orders, belittle her, and the organization will rot; but remember her and what she represented, and we triumph.

ONE OF THE STAFF

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ANSWER—Since the February article was written I have obtained proof positive that H. P. B. used the seal, as given in that article, upon her letter paper and envelopes as early as June, 1875. The Society was founded in November, 1875, so that she was using the symbol for four months before we adopted it. If the writer of the article “A Reminiscence” had known of this he might have gone further and positively asserted that her private symbol became our public corporate seal—another proof of the predominance of herself and her Masters in the Theosophical movement. The positive evidence secured during the month consists in old letters and envelopes of June and earlier in 1875, bearing the seal in colors, red, gold, and white. There lies before the writer a letter with its envelope, written by her from Philadelphia on June 10, 1875, each having the symbol precisely as printed in February PATH and from the same plate.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Path, February, 1893 March, 1893

## SUGGESTIONS TO BRANCHES

### FOUNDING OF BRANCHES

**T**HIS paper is to give newly-formed Branches some idea of the methods which experience has shown to be the best for the conduct of T.S. work; to make some suggestions as to the opening of Branches; and incidentally to warn against certain mistakes which are easily made.

The Theosophical Society was founded with well-defined objects; nevertheless, because of the tendency to Occultism inbred in the character of almost every one of its members, most of them sooner or later become students of that, and unless the original lines of work are adhered to strictly, few can escape the dangers and pitfalls surrounding the field of investigation of that science. The suggestions made herein are the result of many years of experience.

*First.* At the opening or inaugural meeting it is advisable that all the members and visitors present should grasp fully, and without any fear of misunderstanding, the objects and aim of the Theosophical body. For this purpose it is well to have some prominent member of the Society or well-known student present to address the meeting. But in order to avoid misconceptions as to who are and who are not members of the T.S.— so many pretenders being abroad at present— information and advice as to this should first be obtained from the General Secretary's office. If such a member cannot be present, then as a substitute this circular itself should be read and discussed.

*Second.* Many Branches newly-forming desire to have some kind of ceremony at the opening meeting; there is no objection to this, though no particular value is attached to it. But there is no ritual in the T.S., and none should be used at ordinary meetings, nor can anyone

be obliged to attend or take part in a ritual or ceremony as an obligation of membership.

*Third.* A good form or method of opening is as follows:

1. Whoever calls the meeting to order should read aloud the charter granted to the Branch and then the Constitution of the American Section. Whereupon he declares the meeting duly convened to elect officers.

2. The officers should then be elected, if they have not been elected at a preliminary meeting; if they have, then that election should be ratified by vote.

3. The following paper may then be read.

### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

While it is true that the Society was organized in November, 1875, at a meeting in New York at which Col. H. S. Olcott was made presiding officer under the chairmanship of William Q. Judge, and that thereafter Col. Olcott was made President for life with H. P. Blavatsky as Corresponding Secretary, it is also the fact that the impulse and direction for such beginning came, as is asserted by the three persons named, from a body of Adepts or perfected men who have come to be called in theosophical writings the Mahatmas, the Masters, Initiates, and the like. These, H. P. Blavatsky said, told her to have the Society begun on a broad and free platform and to help Col. Olcott and all others in doing it, to the end that a definite attempt might be made to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood through the means of which the truth as to Man and Nature might be discovered, and toward which latter end the said Masters promised their help in messages sent to H. P. Blavatsky. These general facts and assertions were always made from the beginning. But at the same time the Society has not and cannot as a body officially declare those beliefs, and no one is asked to assent to them, nor does dissent disqualify anyone from membership. All that is asked is adherence to Universal Brotherhood. So too, while H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, and many others firmly believe that the Society is the outer body which for this century represents the great Inner one composed of the Adepts of

whom H. P. Blavatsky spoke, members are not obliged to believe it nor debarred from membership or help because they do not believe it. But it is well for all members to know in the beginning what the founder said on the subject, and that she also said, claiming to speak for the Adepts, that once in every hundred years an attempt is made by them to bring to the world's attention the great and universal truths taught by all great world-religions in their beginnings, and that this Society represents the attempt made for this century.

By reading the last of the *Key to Theosophy*, written by H. P. Blavatsky, you will find on pages 304-307 what she says on the matter of the end and aim of the T.S., of its opportunity, and of what is needed. Certainly all that should be looked into by those who have joined the body in which she was so important a person at its founding.

Before pointing out what would lead to the failure of the real mission of the Society, it is necessary to advert to the fact that in consequence of the success of the T. S. movement a number of so-called occult societies have sprung into existence, all of them bad copies of the original, and our members should be warned against them. These spurious and misleading bodies and teachers have come up since the T. S. was founded, and a very large number of them take a part of what this Society has given out or portions of what has come out of the Eastern Occult methods and use them for their own ends. There could be no objection to promulgation of good ideas, even without any acknowledgement, provided they were correctly given. But there is a distinct objection to the presentation of a mangled and distorted portion of the information merely to back up some wild theories of their own, as many have done. Through most of them some one or other Theosophical doctrine has been partially expressed, the rest of their teaching being platitudes or unverifiable, unphilosophical matter, and the trusting student has frequently to pay large sums of money to get but a bad imitation of the teaching which is all given out in Theosophical literature free of charge. It is therefore necessary to point out definitely to all members that before hurrying away from the Theosophical Society to obtain what may seem to them spiritual food from "occult" bodies they should examine carefully the literature now

before the world to see if all that is or may be taught in these schools does not already exist in print, and if it be not merely a copy of that which has been said hundreds of times before.

The possibility of failure of the Theosophical Society lies in the following:

*Dogmatism.* That is, the definite statement by the Society as a body that this or that is an absolute teaching or doctrine of the Society. This has been the ruin of every organization of the kind so far formed, and this time it must be carefully guarded against. The Society was formed without distinction of creeds, and for any member to lay down the law to any other member or to any person as to what he should or should not accept as a belief of the T.S., is to commit a distinct breach of the contract he made on applying to join the ranks of the body. So too, members must not abuse their individual rights, asserting that belief in any doctrine or person is necessary in order to be a member or a Theosophist.

*Priesthood.* The possibility of forming a priesthood in a Society as free as this one may seem almost to have no existence. Nevertheless, so strongly is superstition grounded in the natures of the present race of men (although freer than their forefathers), and so weak is our race-character, that unless constantly freed from these tendencies and reminded of the necessity of leaning on our own Higher Selves for spiritual guidance, the danger is always present of priestcraft. This can be readily seen in the fact that not a new self-styled instructor turns up without his easily finding some pupils, and nearly every Hindu that visits our shores is run after by and often receives pledges, and also money, from persons who are too weak to think for themselves. This has to be guarded against.

*Materialism.* By this is meant a forgetfulness, on the part of the members, of their Spiritual Selves. Of course the study of the writings of agnostics and so-called materialists is invaluable in order that the Western ways of viewing life may be known, but it should be recollected that we too easily tend to be drawn away from a study of the causes of things—the spiritual side of Nature—to mere examination of their effects. And one risks losing much of his true

perceptive power, and perhaps more than he imagines, unless ever on the alert to avoid crystallization, or falling into ruts or grooves. That is a reason why the study of the ancient occult teaching is recommended.

*Non-Cosmopolitanism.* Many of the attempts made in past centuries have failed because they were kept confined to the minority, or to some particular race, or to some selected stratum of society. As far as possible, the work done by each Branch should extend all over the city or locality in which it is placed; the members not failing to recollect the existence of the law in Nature of compensation,—the more help that is given to the race necessitating a greater help in return from Nature.

These are the main causes of possible failure in the Society as a whole and in the Branches as parts. And now another warning:

In the true Spiritual Philosophy there has always been one fixed and unchanging law with regard to spiritual teaching: that it cannot be bought or sold. Hence if any member hears of a society or of a person giving occult instruction for *money* first to be paid, let him be sure that it is “of the earth, earthy.” He will not be aided by it in the long run, but only led astray; and he will form Karmic bonds to it which it may take years for him to sever. Many members who failed to take benefit by this warning, given out when the Society was first established and repeated at intervals ever since, have found by experience its truth. Besides that, it seems only just and right that members should first help the T.S. before they spend money on self-styled occult guides who wish to be paid.

The Theosophical Society is formed on such a basis that each member can think as he chooses, yet maintain a willingness to learn from and to help others. In it all members are helped to learn, and will receive what aid can be given them through its ranks, and through older members, and through the information periodically given out by the Great Order of which it is a part. Like a great mother, the Spirit of the T.S. constantly keeps watch over the members, her children, permitting them to take what they can from every source of learning, spiritual and otherwise, silently instructing them in the best methods by which to help their fellowmen, but ever watchful lest they should

go too far along some of the innumerable side-paths that lead off from that most dangerous and difficult of roads, the road of the Study of the Self.

#### WORK OF THE BRANCH

A Branch should never be formed consisting of those who have not read Theosophical literature. Hence if a Branch happens to be composed of those who have not so studied, then its first few months of existence ought to be used in private meetings for reading and study, so that members may have an acquaintance with Theosophy sufficient to enable them later to help others along that line. But where the Branch is the result of previous study and investigation, then it ought to hold open meetings to which all enquirers may come.

*Publicity* should not be avoided, once open meetings are started. If Theosophy has benefitted its members, the first of its objects demands that those benefits shall be extended to all accessible persons.

*Discussion and argument* by strangers are not a wise thing; they ought to be allowed to put questions on the subjects of the meeting, but those should be answered by members then or at the next meeting after consideration. No encouragement should be given to those who often come to ventilate their own views rather than to learn what the Branch is doing.

*Lectures by non-members*, no matter who, ought not to be allowed. If they are, it is certain the Branch will not get on, because the genius and spirit of this movement is to make each member a worker and thinker for himself. It is becoming now the habit of those outsiders who have ends of their own to serve to ask Branches to allow them to speak before them. Each one of these has a different personal aim, and none of them cares at all for the T.S. but only wishes to use it as a means for securing an audience. When it is proposed to a branch to have such speakers, it will be wise to first write to the General Secretary, who nearly always can give valuable information about these persons. At the present time sundry persons, some Americans, some Hindus and other foreigners, have been going around the T.S. offering to lecture to Branches for fees or for the



expectation of subsequent payment. They should all in the most kindly spirit be avoided. Only a strong and large Branch can afford to let such a stranger occasionally appear before it. Our first duty is to the Branch, so that it, out of its own material, may grow to a healthy state and a right degree of Theosophical intelligence. And members ought to remember that the writing of articles in popular magazines taking up Oriental subjects constitutes no passport to a Branch. If such people are really interested in the T.S. they will join it and work for it freely, as all true workers do.

*Some ways for work are:* (1) Reading of papers on Theosophical topics and discussion of the same at meetings. In this all should take part by asking questions and by having ready some matter taken from the mass of Theosophical books which bear on the subject at hand. (2) Reading of selections from T.S. books and magazines, followed by discussion or interspersed with questions and discussion as the reading proceeds (3) Regular reading and discussion by the whole class of some good Theosophical work. (4) Formation of classes to be held on a night or a time different from the regular open evening, which shall study systematically the best books on the subject. (5) Formation of committees of one or more persons for circulation of tracts, circulars, and other means for propaganda among the people at large. (6) Helping other Branches by attending their meetings and giving lectures, reading papers, or otherwise taking part in their work. This can be done by any Branch that is well advanced, and often by a new one of exceptional ability. (7) Holding on Sunday or any other selected night an open free lecture to be given by one member for the benefit of inquirers and to be well prepared; it will be as effective through a written paper as by means of *extempore* speech. (8) Preparation of a syllabus or list of subjects to be considered for a month or longer, and for the carrying out of which members pledge themselves.

Large Branches such as those in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, and other places have added to their work committees for looking after the welfare of members who really need help and for extending help to needy people in the locality. And Sunday afternoon

meetings for the young have been also started under the name of Lotus Circles, which have done a great deal of good. Information about these can be obtained from the League at New York and at other cities. We should not confine ourselves wholly to metaphysics, but try also to arouse the hearts of all our members.

#### COURSE OF READING SUGGESTED

The following is offered as a good order to take in the reading of books: *Ocean of Theosophy*, *Modern Theosophy*, *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Theosophical Manuals* Nos. 1 to 3, *Key to Theosophy*, *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Letters that have helped Me*, *Voice of the Silence*.

The following are for deeper study: *Secret Doctrine*, *Magic White and Blacky Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms*, and many others.

As there are a number of books of all sorts put forth outside of the T.S. as truly Theosophical while they are not so in fact, it will be well for Branches to write to the General Secretary, who will always be glad to reply to all questions relating to Theosophical work. One of such books deserves special mention because of its audacity. It is the *Hidden Way across the Threshold*, compiled by one Dr. Street, who also offers to have classes for teaching occultism. The book is a clear steal from our literature. When it was published it was pointed out in public that the first page was a deliberate taking of the first article of the first number of the *Path* of 1886 with but small change needed in the insertion of one or two words used to connect mutilated sentences. The body of the book steals pages from H. P. Blavatsky's works, and also from other issues of the *Path* and various publications. Yet it was put forth as the inspiration of spirits or Adepts. This will illustrate what may be found in other directions.

Again, certain persons who cannot be accused of fraud are flooding the Branches with circulars offering to teach the science of the soul and Yoga and psychic law for so much per course. This is all misleading, and will only take from the T.S. the funds it ought to have. Members have gone into such classes in the vain hope of getting wonderful knowledge. All that is given is merely matter taken from books published by individual members and by oriental publishers. It

is often garbled and will do harm, for Yoga cannot thus be properly taught. The warning has often been given that many of the practices do result in altering the system of the person, but the ignorance on the subject does not show at the same time the counteracting processes which are not known; it is well known that many have been ruined in health by it. In one place the teacher kept the members breathing through the nose until some of them became stupefied, while he told them nothing of the dangers nor the counteractions. And as some Hindus now in America are making the same offers, it is well for members to know that in India it is common knowledge that these Hatha Yoga practices are not to be indulged in until many years have been devoted to philosophy and discipline, and that many more years are required to get even the right rudiments of the practice. If the members wish to aid the enemies of Truth in the attempt to throw discredit on Theosophy which will surely come from continuing that which will after a while put the whole movement in a ridiculous position, they will encourage these things, otherwise they will not give any countenance to them.

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Branch Paper No. 8 has important suggestions regarding Branch work. That paper is already in possession of the Branches.<sup>1</sup>

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

*General Secretary*

## UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

SOME confusion has at times arisen in the minds of Branch officers and members on the point of admitting persons to the T. S. It has been asked, Why, if we hold to Universal Brotherhood, should we refuse to admit those to whom there is objection? The answer seems to be the same as one would give if the question related to admitting all persons to one's family or house. Indeed, the relation of Branches to the T.S. is much like that of the family to the State. Every individual not positively criminal has the right to citizenship, and may, subject to the statutes; take part in civic affairs, express his convictions as to public policy, join in meetings of citizens for discussion or new movements, and everywhere be regarded as on a par with his fellows. But this gives him no right to entrance into any family, and a claim that his citizenship entitled him to cross whatever threshold he liked and establish himself as a member of the domestic circle would be laughed at. Every one would say that families had a right to their privacy and to select their associates, and that if they saw fit to exclude any person from their home, there was no canon of justice or proper feeling which should constrain them to do otherwise. It was wholly for them to say who was congenial, acceptable, welcome.

Just so in Branches of the T. S. every sincere and reputable person is free to join the Society, and as a member of it to enjoy all the privileges belonging to membership. He can attend all meetings of Theosophists as such, join in petition to the constitutional authorities, use his diploma for purpose of identification, claim the documents due to F.T.S., and, in general, have full possession of every right

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<sup>1</sup> This Paper Was printed in Pamphlet No. 4-Eds.

conferred by our rules. But this does not empower him to demand admission to private meetings of a Branch, much less to election to its membership; nor can there be any ground of complaint if its existing members decline to elect him.

This will be clearer if we consider the nature and purpose of a Branch. It is a union of a group of members having a common ground of interest in Theosophic study or work, a certain general conception of desired methods, and a more or less intellectual or social or personal sympathy. The basis must of course be Theosophy, but the local superstructure takes shape and color from the quality of those who plan its erection. Now it is the continued harmony of the constituents which is to determine both its endurance and its activity. If an applicant for Branch membership is known to have views as to its policy which are in marked contrast to those prevalent within it, or to be offensive in manner, of ill-repute in the community, quarrelsome, heady, flighty, certain to excite discord inside or to compromise the Society outside, there is no possible reason why he should be accepted. To admit him would do him no good, for he is not in harmony with the rest of the organization, and would simply be introducing an element of discord certain to eventuate in ill feeling, contention, a check to work, and possible disintegration. One factious or indiscreet Branch member may paralyze a Branch. Nor is his exclusion an injury. He has no claim to entrance, and consequently no grievance at denial; and he is altogether at liberty to join the Society as member-at-large, to assist its operations, and to study its literature. He can be a citizen of the commonwealth without being a member of a particular household in it.

More than this. Where a Branch is aware that a person is sure to cause trouble or to act as a stumbling-block to other and worthy men and women, it is its *duty* to prevent that catastrophe. Sentiment should not be a bar to justice. To protect the Society and to secure peace to existing workers is of more importance than the self-love of a single individual. Indeed, if he resents the expression of the Branch's preference in the case, he shows that he has not that respect for others' rights, judgments, and feelings which is essential to any true

Theosophist, and is destitute of the elementary qualifications for close union in Branch life. His very pique justifies the Branch action and affirms it.

Of course it cannot be said that no sacrifice of personal desires or preference is ever to be made by Branch members in elections. That would be queer Theosophy. It may very well happen that a person somewhat distasteful in ways may yet give promise of a valuable future, and a sincere member may, and should, concede personal considerations to a larger good. But this is a different case from that radical unfitness which cannot be smoothed over by tolerance or by phrases, and which demands the blackball for protection.

To recapitulate. We believe in unity, but at the same time we know that it is not possible for all to live intimately with each other because of various differences existing among individuals as to race, manners, and style of mind as well as of nature. Brotherhood does not require that we shall take into our home the vicious, even though we are working for their reformation; nor that we should bring into our own circle those whose manners and development are vastly different from our own. And just as it is in our private life as human beings, so it is in the Theosophical Society.

We have no right to deny to any one the right to be alive and one of the human family, and neither have we the right to deny to any one the right to belong to the Society so long as the applicant is not a criminal unreformed. But in the Society the Branch represents the family, and it has a right to draw a line or make limit, and to say who shall and who shall not belong to that family. Hence each Branch has to decide upon whom it will admit. If some apply who are sure to bring trouble to the Branch or who are of a nature that will not permit free and harmonious work with the others, the Branch has the right from all points of view not to admit to the Branch roll. This very question was once raised very needlessly in a place where there were many colored people and where a sentiment existed against their associating intimately with whites. It was settled by deciding that if colored people desired a Branch of their own they could have it and would be helped by the other. Brotherhood does not demand that

elements wholly dissimilar must be violently mixed. Neither party would be comfortable in such circumstances. They can work apart for the common aim.

But the rules provide for cases where applicants wish to enter the T.S., as any Branch President may admit the applicant as a member-at-large if willing to endorse his character in general. In such an event the transaction is between the president, the applicant, and the office of the General Secretary. It does not concern the Branch at all.

And so the union of right feeling and sound reason will usually solve duty when uncertainty occurs, and the Branches be secured the largest proportion of good material, with a minimum of risk to harmony, effectiveness, and continuing life.

W. Q. J.

*Path*, July, 1894

## THEOSOPHICAL OBJECTS

**T**HE Theosophical Society has been in existence since November, 1875, having been then founded in New York with the following objects: *First*.—To form the nucleus of a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY, without distinction of race, creed, caste, or color.

*Second*.—To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences, and demonstrate the importance of that study.

*Third*.—To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

The Society appeals for support and encouragement to all who truly love their fellow-men and desire the eradication of the evils caused by the barriers raised by race, creed or color, which have so long impeded human progress; to all scholars, to all sincere lovers of TRUTH, *wheresoever it may be found*, and to all philosophers, alike in the East and in the West; and lastly, to all who aspire to higher and better things than the mere pleasures and interests of a worldly life, and are prepared to make the sacrifices by which alone a knowledge of them can be attained.

The Society represents no particular creed, is entirely un-sectarian, and includes professors of all faiths. No person's religious beliefs are interfered with, and all that is exacted from each member is the same toleration of the views of others which he desires them to exhibit towards his own.

**NOTE**.—This information apparently was drawn up in June, 1893, and circulated by William Q. Judge as General Secretary of the American Section of the Theosophical Society

The Society, as a body, eschews politics and all subjects outside its declared sphere of work, the rules stringently forbidding members to compromise its strict neutrality in these matters.

As a condition precedent to membership, belief in and adherence to the first of the above named objects is required; as to the other two, members may pursue them or not, as they see fit. The act of joining the Society, therefore, carries with it no obligation whatever to profess belief in either the practicability of presently realizing the brotherhood of mankind, or in the superior value of Aryan over modern science, or the existence of occult powers latent in man. It implies only intellectual sympathy in the attempt to disseminate tolerant and brotherly feelings, to discover as much truth as can be uncovered by diligent study and careful experimentation, and to essay the formation of a nucleus of a universal brotherhood.

The promoters of the Society's objects do not declare that in our time there can be established on earth a living brotherhood of peoples and governments. Nor do they expect or desire to sweep away at one blow the various distinctions which now exist in society and government. They believe that, in the natural order of things, with the progress of enlightenment, whatever is an obstacle and encumbrance to the development of human knowledge and happiness will pass away, as the morning mist before the sun.

What the Society hopes and means to achieve is, the bringing together a large body of the most reasonable and best educated persons of all extent races and religious groups, all of whom shall accept and put into practice the theory that, by mutual help and a generous tolerance of each other's preconceptions, mankind may be benefitted largely and the chances for discovering hidden truth greatly improved.

The Society sows the seed, leaving it to germinate in the fulness of time, for the benefit of future generations. It represents all creeds and every branch of science, for it believes that science and true religion should be one; it is the opponent of bigotry, no matter where, and the foe of vice, together with whatever tends towards its propagation. At the same time/a man whose past has been bad cannot be refused admittance, if he has a sincere desire to improve himself

while he endeavors to benefit mankind. Nor in its members does it look for saint-like perfection, insisting only that each shall, as nearly as he can, live up to his best ideal.

The last of the three objects of the Society appeals to many persons, but not to the greater number. There are both exoteric and esoteric activities, or circles, or groups, at work in the Society, and some persons are desirous of seeking, that they may obtain, psychic powers. The rules for such pursuits are laid down with minuteness in the ancient Hindu books, to which all seekers are referred. No sacred teacher can be supplied to aspirants, nor messages sent to or conveyed from the Adepts. Those who are thus seeking for powers should know that within themselves lies the key to unlock the door; that the very first step toward the place where that key may be found is the acquirement, in truth, of the feeling of universal brotherhood, and that the selfish desire to obtain psychic powers is a bar to such attainment.

At the same time, however, there are many devoted members in various countries who have acquired some information as to ways and means of investigation, and who are so bound up in the work that they consider it their sacred duty to help all inquirers, and, as far as possible, to put all Theosophists who ask them on the same road they themselves are trying to tread.

## THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND REFORMS

### A CONVERSATION

**Z**EALOUS THEOSOPHIST. Don't you think the Theosophical Society ought to take some definite stand on the questions of reform?

*Constitutional Theosophist.* What put that into your head? Are you a Nationalist or a Single Taxer?

*Z.T.* I was reading that "Chat on the Roof" in February *Theosophist*, where one of the chatters says: "I believe the T.S. must sooner or later adopt a definite attitude toward this question of reform," and although he speaks in reference to Hindu social problems, still it is just as important here as there, while the circumstances are different. The "chat" did not in any way settle the point, but left it all up in the clouds of talk. But we ought to do something.

*C.T.* Evidently the conversation published is an expression of a desire to get a prominent Theosophist like Mrs. Besant to throw herself on the side of some social question there, forgetting that it is not one or two persons who make up our movement and that our Constitution rules in such matters and not persons. If you mean that the Society should as an organization take "a definite stand" such as seems called for in that "chat," I cannot agree with you.

*Z.T.* Do you mean that you are opposed to social or other reforms?

*C.T.* No, I do not. Whatever reforms are needed—and there are many—they should be taken up by individuals or the State, but that is a very different thing from asking the Theosophical Society to adopt a definite attitude either way. It has been proposed that the T.S.

should formally approve of hypnotic suggestion as a means of curing drunkenness, lying, and stealing. Why not have us go in for that as well as social reforms? Those vices have a great deal to do with social difficulties.

*Z.T.* Well, why not? Take definite corporate action, and then members will have something tangible to talk of and to work for.

*C.T.* A few members, you mean; the rest would leave the Society. Divisions would arise and sides be taken. But the proposal is contrary to our Constitution, it is against the very reason for our existence, it nullifies our organic law, it is contrary to the spirit of the Society. The Constitution wisely prohibits the adoption of such definite attitudes. This applies to every doctrine, to all schemes, save the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, the one idea on which men of all religions will agree. Other doctrines and plans have supporters and opponents; they have no majority; but Universal Brotherhood has a constant and growing majority of supporters. One would have supposed that this "Chat on the Roof" of the building where was reposing the recently revised Constitution of the T.S., certified and published, should have led to some of the chatters advertent to this fundamental point before the conversation was printed. That revision puts the matter in strong terms, thus:

The society does not interfere with caste rules or other social observances, nor with politics, and any such interference in its name is a breach of the Constitution.

And immediate expulsion is the penalty fixed for violation of this rule.

*Z.T.* Then you place social questions and reforms under the same ban as religious doctrines and creeds, in so far as definite corporate action by the T.S. goes?

*C.T.* Most certainly. Why, man, reflect a moment. Is it not true that H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott, and William Q. Judge have always since 1875 proclaimed their personal belief in the Mahatmas or Masters as facts and ideals?

*Z.T.* Yes, they have; and of course had a perfect right to do so, as they never said it was a T.S. belief.

*C.T.* Well, have they not persistently said that this belief, regarded by many as vital, has no place in our Constitution and cannot be—must not be—erected into a T.S. dogma either directly or inferentially? It stands precisely with social reforms so far as “definite attitude” is concerned. But, curiously enough, there are those who loudly object to the expression of personal beliefs by such as have firm ones regarding Mahatmas, while at the same time the objectors would heedlessly violate the Constitution by having us adopt some definite attitude toward a passing question of social reform.

*Z.T.* I think I begin to see that in zealotry for getting into the gaze of the world I had almost forgotten that we are a free Society, wholly unattached, founded on toleration, neutrally situated between all contentions, and drawing our support from men considered as souls and not from any sectarian or separatist feeling. That must be why you did not encourage or discourage nationalism, but opposed the endorsement of it by the T.S.

*C.T.* Precisely. Had we endorsed that social movement, where should we be now? Opposed by every man and woman who is not a nationalist. But at the same time recollect that many members of the T.S. were prominent in the starting of that movement when it began in Boston. Similarly with questions in India. Were the T.S. involved with widow-remarriage, it would be violently opposed by a large body of men who found their opposition to such marriages on the religious books of the land. We might as well be asked to endorse and support Moslemism against purely theological Hinduism. A good man can live under any form of government or social order. What we should strive to do is to increase that toleration for every one which alone will open up men’s minds to the truth.

*Z.T.* Do you know of any striking instance in our history to illustrate these points?

*C.T.* Yes. In the Indian Headquarters once, while H.P.B. was there, a prominent Hindu asked her to get the opinion of her Masters on a question relating to widow-remarriage or that of child-marriage. The opinion was authoritatively refused, although there was an opportunity to enlist many prominent Hindus interested in the question. Had the

distinct opinion been given, we should now have to be fighting for it or against it as a dogma. Happily we are free, and supporters and opponents alike of both sides are yet in our ranks.

*Z.T.* But what definitely is the proper function and attitude of the T.S. in and to social and other reforms?

*C.T.* Its attitude should be neutral as to any form or method, but not neutral as to the general doctrines of justice and Universal Brotherhood. The latter doctrine supports all applications of justice; it is sufficiently declared in the Constitution; there is no need for further declarations. The function of the T.S. is to give its members aspiration to high ideals; to furnish a free, tolerant platform where all men may assemble if they wish. The bigot—social or theological—who asserts that no one else is right violates in himself the principle of toleration, and has no place on our platform because his nature is intolerant; hence he will either leave the T.S. if he cannot ruin it, or he will be gradually altered by the silent but powerful influence of the toleration, even for his bigotry, which surrounds him in our ranks. Toleration, then, is our watchword, for it is one effect and one expression of brotherhood; that will bring unity in diversity, and with diverse elements held in one bond our strength would be invincible.

*Path*, April, 1894

## WHY THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IS POOR

**A** VERY great difference is to be observed between the condition of the treasury of our society, especially of the East Indian section, and that of almost any religious sect in either Europe or America. Enormous salaries are paid to celebrated ministers of the Methodist, Unitarian, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches; millions of dollars are donated for keeping up the expensive missionary establishments that convert nobody in India, while their home secretaries accumulate property out of the savings from the compensation paid for doing the Lord's work at home, while the work of the Theosophical Society is carried on by a few who have but small means. And that the churches have funds is no proof that they are in the right, nor are we shown to be wrong because we have little wealth, or because those in the world who have it do not offer means to us. If we argue strictly on the lines laid down by Jesus, the founder of Christianity, then the conclusion is inevitable that the churches are not doing his work, for, poor himself, he commanded his disciples and apostles to go with no money in their purses and to take no thought for the morrow.

The reason for our poverty is not far to seek. It lies in this, that we offer no dogmatic creed, and, instead of leading men by definite statements of what exactly they must believe, we try to make them stand upon their feet and exercise their reason unawed by superstitious theories. Long ago the leaders of the society could have filled its coffers to overflowing, had they chosen to pander to weak and wealthy persons who will pay for the privilege of being led by the nose. Even in the United States, if we had set up a new Buddhist Church, many members would have come into its folds and plenty of

money filled the Treasury. But such a policy should never find lodgment in the minds of our members. There is a curse attendant upon money. Very few are born with the ability to accumulate wealth who at the same time have not a love for it or a large estimate of its power, for the Karma that gives them the ability carries with it the other qualities generally found in wealthy men, impelling them to require something in return for expenditure; in the churches, the return they receive is a measurable assurance of happiness after death.

So it is found that the Theosophical Society is poor in money, but rich in effort, and we can safely say that no movement of the past few centuries has ever made without money such strides in fourteen years as ours.

And from this date it is likely that the society will be poorer than ever in India, for at the Convention held there last December, the Indian section resolved to abolish all fees in India, depending upon donations of money for its support there. It remains to be seen whether hereafter the Indian Section will be helped by members and sympathizers in the same way that other missionary bodies are assisted.

*Path, March, 1889*



## HOW THE SOCIETY IS RUN

### WHO PAYS?

A FEW facts may be useful to stimulate and interest by way of chronicle. The Theosophical Society entered on its sixteenth year in November, 1890. It was founded without cash, it has worked in every quarter of the world; by its efforts the thought of the day has been affected in both East and West, all in the face of ridicule, without capital, and with but small contributions in its first ten years. How, then, has it been run, and who pays? It has been run on faith, and the few have paid while the many have benefitted. Those few never begrudged the money, deeming it a duty to spend and be spent in a great and noble effort. But now that we have passed the fifteenth milestone and entered on the dawn preceding another important era in our history, it is surely time that more liberal contributions by those who have means should be made, and that those who can each spare a small sum, but hitherto have spent all on self or family, should donate that infinitesimal amount to enable the seed so care fully and painfully sown to be tended and made to yield a harvest.

Every member knows, or ought to know, that in the office of the General Secretary an enormous quantity of work is done. Not mere formal official work—for of that there is a minimum—but good, honest, painstaking work in attending to the needs of the whole body and of each and every member who indicates a want\* Tracts by the hundred thousand

sown over the land. Who paid? A few earnest men and women in money or work. Would our general treasury have permitted this?

Every month a carefully prepared copy of the *Forum* is sent each member, and a carefully written article to each Branch. The printing of these, some \$27 per month, was paid for by the treasury. Who paid for the labor, the intellect, the hire, the interest, the sympathy of the editor and assistants? No one but himself. And yet he, too, paid out largely in cash for the privilege of working in a noble cause. Every day occupied from nine o'clock to four in receiving, reading, and answering with care and theosophic interest the numerous letters from members and enquirers. Who paid? No one; it was free. When, then, did the *Forum* have the needful mental attention? At night, when the hard work of the day was over. For what profit? For no worldly profit, but at a loss of pleasures of the theatre, the music hall, the favorite study, while careless members in every corner almost hesitated to pay their dues.

Has the Society a complete record of its numerous members, of when and where admitted, and by whom endorsed? Yes, accurate in every particular. Who did it? The same persons in the same day's work. Who paid? No one, not even the treasury. And yet, indeed, some captious persons would even berate these unfortunate slaves of theosophy for an occasional whiff of the fragrant weed—their only dissipation. Thus the work goes on from day to day and week to week, no matter whether the members pay or not, and also in the face of many annoyances caused by the failure of Branch officials to read or follow the rules. But there is still other work done for the cause. Many persons talked with about theosophy, many articles written for the papers so that the name of theosophy may be made more widely known. When is that done, and why pays? In the evening, and it produces no pay.

Is pay desired, is it right to ask for it, is it the object of this to grumble at so much outlay? Not at all. But members ought to know these facts so that they may understand that a few persons in fact furnish the money for the very large expenses of the Society. This ought not to be so. One great reason why it should not be is that, when the necessary money is given by but a few, the resulting special karmic benefit flows to and follows after those few persons, whereas

if the whole Society gave the means, not only greater work would be done, but also to every member would be recorded in the great karmic ledger the credit for such acts.

And just now there are great opportunities arising. The American Section should have in its special pay a number of learned men—they are called pandits—in India for the purpose of sending translations to us for general use and the education of the people in respect to what has been and is being done in the great cause of philosophy in Eastern lands. The present state of the general treasury will not permit of this now, although the amount of money per month needed for the object is not very large. We have in India from the efforts of Col. Olcott a library which will one day be a great institution. We ought to have the staff of pandits there too, for the especial use of this Section. It remains to be seen whether we shall be able to accomplish this. There is no reason why we should not. Other societies are able to get the money for all sorts of purposes, such, for instance, as paying the salaries of useless missionaries to people who cannot be converted and are better unconverted. And we need also theosophical apostles.

Turn now to London. There we see that by the noble sacrifices of the few there is a headquarters, a real building, in which the work is carried on unceasingly. How could they ever have gotten a house if Mrs. Annie Besant had not given one to them, and how could they ever have produced the mass of literature given out by H. P. Blavatsky for our benefit if the Society had depended upon paid work for the procurement of it? See how much the English government and the colleges pay for the work of such men as Max Muller and others, which, although it is good work in its way and has been going on for many years, has made no sensible change in the people by its weak and wavering impact upon their minds. Yet in fifteen short years the efforts of H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, and others have made the entire world look with longing and respect and hope to the vast stores left to us by the ancient philosophers of the East. And all of this by the few for no pay and for no honor, and in the face of calumny and scorn from the world at large.

Is it not the duty of every member of the Society to now, if never

before, give what he can in time, money, and effort for the pushing on the work so well begun?

A few practical words. There is hardly a man or woman in the Society who is not able to spare in the course of the year at least five dollars. It may be saved by men in a hundred different ways, and by women in ways they know. The accumulation of these small sums would in the end be enough to carry on the various old plans so long in use, and forward others just formulated and to be made in the future. And such contributions given to a cause that has no dogma, no creed to enforce, no particular set of bishops and ministers to feed and pamper, would carry with them a force and energy great enough to make the name of theosophy known to every human being in the world, and at last to bring about the realization of the first object of the Society—the brotherhood of man—among men, which now sadly enough resides above, in the ideal, in the field of the stars.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

*Path, March, 1891*

## A SERVANT OF THE MASTERS

COL. HENRY S. OLCOTT

**A** PIONEER in a great movement, such as that represented by the Theosophical Society, should be known to the contemporary members of the organization, who ought in justice to have information of the work performed by that pioneer. This is especially the case in our Society, for, although it was started in the United States, Colonel Olcott very soon went to India, and there continued the work begun here. When he left this country there was but one Branch in America, and comparatively few members, but now theosophists are found in nearly every State of the Union. Few of them have had time and opportunity to become acquainted with the facts in respect to Colonel Olcott's connection with the movement, and it is for their information that this statement is especially intended. As his work in India has absorbed most of his time, it has necessarily followed that nearly all new members here were deprived of that attention from him which some of them would perhaps be pleased to receive, and, India being so far distant, he has remained for them almost a stranger. Were that effect of distance not rectified in some way, we might be in danger of taking the position temporarily assumed a few years ago by new members similarly situated in India, who, not concurring in his methods as an American, and feeling that they could perhaps suggest a line of action more suited to the English mind and habits, proposed to the Masters a radical change which would involve his retirement from his then prominent position. The reply from The Brothers is worthy of consideration from every thoughtful theosophist.

Having disposed of personal motives, let us analyze your terms for helping us to do public good. Broadly stated, these terms are—first, that an independent Anglo-Indian Theosophical Society shall be founded through your kind services, in the management of which our present representatives (Col. Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky) shall not have any voice.<sup>1</sup> . . . And supposing you were thus to come—as Madame B. did and Mr. O. will—, supposing you were to abandon all for the truth, to toil wearily for years up the hard, steep road, not daunted by obstacles, firm under every temptation; were to faithfully keep within your hearts the secrets entrusted to you as a trial; had worked with all your energies and unselfishly to spread the truth and provoke men to correct thinking and a correct life; would you consider it just, if, after all your efforts, we were to grant to Madame B. or Mr. O. as \*'outsiders'' the terms you now ask for yourselves? Of these two persons, one has already given three-fourths of a life, the other six years of manhood's prime, to us, and both will so labor to the close of their days; though ever working for their merited reward, yet never demanding it, nor murmuring when disappointed. Even though they respectively could accomplish far less than they do, would it not be a palpable injustice to ignore them in an important field of Theosophical effort? Ingratitude is not among our vices, nor do we imagine you would wish to advise it.<sup>2</sup>

What They wanted, and what the Society needs, is a man of intelligence who can and will work for a high and far Ideal regardless of all opposition, unconcerned as to his future reward. In Colonel Olcott such a man has been found, and by knowing what he has done we shall be able to give reasons for our esteem and loyalty.

Colonel Olcott is a lawyer, and for several years practised law in the city of New York. It is a somewhat curious fact that very many of those well known in the theosophical field are lawyers. I might mention Subba Row and Sreenevasa Row, of Madras. The first is a prominent Hindu pleader; the other is Sub-Judge in Madras. Many Americans have met Mohini M. Chatterji, who was admitted to the Bar in Bengal. A prominent member in Poona, India, is Judge N. D. Khandalavalla, and all over India theosophists are to be found acting as lawyers or judges. In England, a former President of the London Lodge was a well known solicitor, and some of the earnest members there now are in the same profession. In America we of course have a great

<sup>1</sup> Occult World, p. 72 (4th Ed).

<sup>2</sup> id. p. 73, 74.

many members who are lawyers.

When I met Colonel Olcott in 1875, the Theosophical Society had not yet been formed. In October of that year a meeting was held in the apartment of H. P. Blavatsky at 46 Irving Place, New York, at which it was proposed to form a Society for the study of those subjects which have since engaged our attention. In a book now lying before me I have the original minutes of that meeting and of others following it, with the names of all present. So if there be persons anxious to claim the honor of being among the founders of the Society, it will be wise first to be sure that their names are in this book. Possibly such registration will some day be accounted an honor by all, as it now is by advanced minds.

At that first meeting I proposed Colonel Olcott as President of the Society, and was made temporary Secretary myself. A Committee appointed to select a name for the infant met several times after that at Olcott's office, 7 Beekman Street, New York, and decided upon the present name. The objects of the Society had been given to Col. Olcott by the Masters before that; they were adopted and have never been changed. Up to this time Olcott had been a well known Club man, and no one supposed that he would ever show such abnegation as he since has in respect to the things of this world. The wisdom of his selection as President has been vindicated by our history. The Society was unpopular from the outset, and had indeed so little money that all the first diplomas were engrossed by hand by one of the members in this city.

During the period between October, 1875, and November, 1878, Col. Olcott received many letters from the Masters on the subject of the Society, in which no promises were made that have not since been fulfilled. He worked steadily with the Society until 1878, and then, in December, went to India with H. P. Blavatsky. When they arrived there, full as many difficulties had to be met as in America, with the additional disadvantage, to Col. Olcott, of being upon strange ground, but they preserved against all opposition. Among such troubles were those caused by the English police, who for a time suspected H. P. Blavatsky to be a Russian spy, a mistake happily

remedied by orders from their superiors. In all I say here, it must not be forgotten that the part played by H. P. Blavatsky can never be rightly given to the world, because it would not be understood. Her service and efforts can never be estimated, but they may be glimpsed by intuitional natures.

In Bombay, in 1878, Col. Olcott hired a bungalow as temporary Headquarters. He had then no help and no acquaintance with Indian methods, but Madame Blavatsky and himself started the publication of the *Theosophist*, and Masters promised to give certain hints through its pages, a promise fulfilled by the publication of "Fragments of Occult Truth" (since embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism*) and other articles. A young Hindu gentleman, Damodar Mavalankar, soon came and cast in his lot with the Founders, to be later called to Thibet by his Master. In these early days enough troubles of all kinds were experienced to bend any ordinary man of soft metal, but Col. Olcott went straight onward, depending upon the help of Masters to enable him to overcome all obstacles. When the project of starting a real Headquarters took shape he removed to Madras, where he was helped by Iyaloo Naidoo (now of Hyderabad) and others in getting the present building at Adyar. Various Branches had\* been established and interest was gradually spreading, but nothing could be done anywhere without Col. Olcott, upon whom all the Hindu members had come to rely. This necessitated much travel on his part at a time when his office assistance only comprised Messrs. Damodar, Ananda, and Babajee. Damodar attended to a vast mass of correspondence and worked night and day, snatching his brief rest on skins spread upon the marble floor. Ananda, with similar devotion, gave up a clerkship under Government to work at the accounts and general routine, while Col. Olcott travelled North, South, East, and West, lecturing and stirring up the natives to the truths of ancient philosophy, and, in spite of severe and hurried journeys in a country where all our modern luxury of travel is unknown, his speeches are all excellent, and many of them are thrilling from their exquisite eloquence and diction. He also took complete charge of all Conventions, a step which always resulted

in greater unity. Going to Ceylon, he inaugurated a great movement there, and was received into the Buddhist Church by the High Priest, who authorized him to admit others also. He had previously been invested with the Brahminical thread by Brahmins in India, an honor by them considered as the highest possible mark of respect and friendship. The Ceylon movement prospered largely, and now has instituted Sunday Schools, a newspaper, and Headquarters of its own. Each year Col. Olcott makes a tour through India, working with indescribable energy, received everywhere with enthusiasm, lecturing to hundreds in crowded halls, opening schools and other reform societies for boys, and increasing the size and usefulness of Branches in all directions. When he conceived the idea of a grand Asiatic Library at Headquarters in Adyar, he pursued it so vigorously that it soon became a fact, and one of the highest importance. Many palm-leaf MSS. which would otherwise be lost will be preserved there, and many rare and often hitherto unknown books will be presented. The Library already numbers 460 volumes in Sanscrit (inclusive of MSS.), 263 volumes in other Indian languages, and about 2,000 volumes in Western languages, including the Classics and Hebrew. The very learned N. Bhashyacharya of Cuddapah has consented to become its Director and Professor. A Permanent Fund was also started by Col. Olcott with the object of providing sufficient income for the maintenance and repair of Headquarters, and, as this Fund is slowly growing, it is hoped that it may also pay the expenses of propaganda in time. Hitherto all excess of expenditure above the small sums received from dues and charters has been met by private means of the two Founders.

Envious minds may think that Col. Olcott, now known all over India and Ceylon as well as being a name of note in Western countries, knew that he should gain a greater fame and wider acquaintance by resigning all that most men esteem as most pleasant and valued in life, just at a time too when the tendency is to grow fast to the personal centre, and going to a far land, there to pass his days in unremitting and arduous labors for the good of humanity, for a sublime Ideal. This is seen to be wrong when we consider that he had

no certainty of success, nothing to go upon but promises made by Masters, who do not mix in public matters. Moreover, he had a wide acquaintance here, and all his American friends thought him foolish to go to a distant country on what they call "a wild goose chase," and an impracticable affair all round that "has no money in it." On the other hand, if they now say that he knew well what he was doing when he thus depended on promises made by the Adepts, there is no escape from the conclusion that those Adepts can be trusted, and on their part know the future and what is best for man. The faith of Col. Olcott himself in these great Beings has always remained unshaken, as his last act evinces. He has been several times urged by members to promulgate a creed to be accepted, but has always refused to go one step beyond the original lines and objects laid down by Masters, so that he has been thus greatly instrumental in producing an unsectarian and united Society devoted to spiritual things.

The following extract from a letter to the Simla Eclectic Theosophical Society from the Masters, on this subject, sustains him in his position:

It is time that Theosophy should enter the arena. The sons of Theosophists are more likely to become in their turn Theosophists than anything else. No messenger of Truth, no prophet, has ever achieved during his lifetime a complete triumph,—not even Buddha. The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner stone, the foundation, of the future religion of humanity. To achieve the proposed object, a greater, wider, and especially more benevolent intermingling of the high and the low, of the alpha and omega, of society was determined upon. The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations. This prospect may not smile to all alike. He is no theosophist who objects to the principle. . . . and it is we, the humble disciples of the perfect Lamas, who are expected to allow the Theosophical Society to drop its noblest title, "*The Brotherhood of Humanity*," to become a simple school of philosophy. Let us understand each other. He who does not feel competent enough to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. But there is hardly a theosophist in the whole society unable to effectually help it by correcting the erroneous impression of outsiders if not by actually propagating himself this idea.

In his loyalty and faith he has found a power which enables him to go on and on under immense strain, ill at times, often in utter

darkness as to the morrow's trials, but ever upheld by a self forgetful enthusiasm, ever devoted and forceful as only those men are who live out their inner convictions, who will throw aside all life seems to hold rather than renounce one of these beliefs, and who have based them upon the holy Cause of Universal Brotherhood and the existence of those Masters Who are sharers in the divine and eternal, Who live but for Humanity.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

*Path*, April, 1888

## THEOSOPHY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

**U**NDERLYING the Doctrines of Theosophy is one fundamental proposition, namely, "the essential Unity of all life and being." Manifestation of life is differentiation of this unity, the purpose of differentiation is evolution, and the destiny of evolution is the return of all manifestation into its source and original unity.

Of the manifestation of life there are two phases, poles, or aspects: the descent of Spirit into matter and the ascent of matter into spirit. The infinite variety of gradation in development between these two poles marks the degree of differentiation from the *Unity*, in its downward or upward course. This universal truth of the essential unity of all life and being throughout nature was the basis upon which the ideal undertaking was grounded of providing a vehicle for its dissemination; therefore the T. S. was founded for the purpose of establishing a practical working centre for the exposition of these doctrines, but foremost with the object of the amelioration of human affairs, to point out the identity of interest, the common source of origin, the relative position in life to the rest of nature, and the probable destiny of the human being in the grand scheme of evolution. Besides this primary purpose of thus forming the nucleus to a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, its other objects are to promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern Literatures, Religions, and Sciences, and to draw attention to and investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers of man.

**NOTE.**-A paper read before the Aryan T.S., New York, November 4, 1890.

Theosophy is not a new invention but the essential underlying truth of all philosophies; it is a body of doctrine in philosophy, science, and ethics, principally derived from the *Eastern archaic sacred Theories*, which were worked out by a brotherhood of devotees and initiates who used every method of scientific investigation known to us, as well as their own highly developed practises of observation, experiment, concentration, and meditation to reach the truth. They traced all phenomena by every possible means from their significance to their source, and by comparison of their independent searches and observations recorded their conclusions and accepted such results only as could stand the test of applicability and verification from every point and in every conceivable direction.

This slowly accumulating body of facts furnished the basis for these great universal doctrines, and the psychic development of these devotees and students gave them great power over nature and insight into the mystic side of the universe and man.

These doctrines were handed down from generation to generation since time immemorial, and were guarded by the most sacredly pledged disciples, who had devoted their whole lives to the development of their psychic and spiritual faculties. The reason why these doctrines had been so strenuously guarded from the profane and unripe is because the possession of their knowledge gives great power for use or abuse. It embraces the science of the finer forces in nature, their relation and correspondences in themselves, and the knowledge of their uses and application for the benefit or destruction of humanity.

Although this transcendental knowledge was accessible at all times to those who were ripe and who felt the craving for it strong enough to make the unremitting sacrifice, it would be acquired only by those whose supreme intensity of excitement and enthusiasm made it possible in those times to incur the self-denial and renunciation of worldly concerns necessary to initiation. Nor is it any different now, and never will be, except that portions of the doctrine are given out from time to time, such as may be safely trusted to an advancing age, because to penetrate into the mystery of nature requires a state of the greatest purity and perfection, and this final perfection is not a gift

to be expected from without, but is to be worked for by those who desire it.

It is often queried why this grand philosophy has existed for so long a time and yet so little of it has reached our all-conquering civilization.

This is due to the fact that our civilization has mainly occupied itself with material and intellectual progress, refusing to even recognize the superior faculties of intuition and man's capability of spiritual culture. These higher faculties have been allowed to remain dormant during the race for material aggrandizement and personal recognition.

Though it was hoped that the mystery of life and the power over nature could be obtained in our time by mere intellectual development, very little indeed has been accomplished, but instead we find ourselves—as a result of misdirected energies—in the abyss of modern materialism.

The abolition alone of these tendencies, and the *insight* into the inability to find the secret into the mystery of the all-pervading and unerring law of nature by physical means,—the abolition and destruction of these tendencies is the bridge over which alone we may arrive at the enlightened shore of transcendental wisdom.

At this present restless stage of discontent and the fruitless search for peace, the T. S. appeared with truly altruistic motives, reminding the perplexed age of the mistaken course it had taken in its illusion of separateness and in its denial of man's better nature.

It is the aim of the T. S. to bring to the notice of those who are inclined to admit the spiritual nature of man and his progressive evolution, that on another plane of existence, a plane which partakes of a wider field of consciousness and which lies within the capability of development in every individual, that on that higher plane there is a spiritual unity, a universal brotherhood of mankind, and on that plane of being there is no separateness from homogeneous existence; and further that no permanent progress is possible through fostering the illusion of separateness, and that man's true duty at all times and in all circumstances is the love of his kind and the preservation of

harmony around him. It is with the endeavor to learn something concerning our position in life and our spiritual relation to each other that we come together weekly, some of us daily, to exchange our observations and experiences.

It is premised that man is the product of an advanced stage of evolution, which is demonstrated by his possession of the more developed faculties of perception and consciousness compared with other organisms, his capability of analysis of physical nature, his inherent sense of moral duty, and his aspirations to know his relative position in cosmic evolution.

The spiritual unity of mankind is the basis of our moral life. Regard, consideration, love, kindness are qualities which are exhibited and practiced intuitively during the greatest part of daily life; the voice of conscience which meddles in every thought and act is indicative of a brotherhood founded upon the sympathy of man for man, which is a fundamental fact of *human nature*.

When we observe the great intelligence and justice with which the minutest object in nature is governed, we can draw inference by analogy and apply to the human being. The same conditions prevail; the great universality of government, embracing all and moving all with inexorable certainty in obedience to one law and design, the *interdependence* of everything, suggest the unity of all.

Unity of life and being means brotherhood of all the units which make up that unity of life and being, and it is the conscious realization of this unity, the universal, all-pervading principle of brotherhood, that lends a basis and meaning to the phenomena of life and existence.

Besides, the degree of relative brotherhood of mankind to itself must be closer than to anything else, because humanity is composed of one kind of units (more or less), and in the same stage or degree of development, at least as compared to other kingdoms in nature.

This essential unity of all being, however, becomes only realizable in the ratio in which consciousness on a higher plane is awakened, and this superior consciousness regards our present conception of all separateness apart from the whole as an illusion, because there it is

no separation in reality; it only appears so to us on our present plane of consciousness. Therefore this tenet, although it is a fact in nature, is not so easily demonstrable on physical lines, because the problem itself transcends perception on this lower physical plane; in other words, it cannot be seen or heard, felt, smelt, or tasted, nor sensed with any physical instrument; still it is a fact which is at once plausible by conceding to the human being spiritual life at all, and perfectly realizable to those who have penetrated beyond the veil which surrounds gross matter.

Although the consciousness beyond the veil of matter may be very limited for us at present, cultivation of the mystic side of our nature will open vistas undreamed of, and widen our consciousness.

For instance, the investigation of the significance of our consciousness during the dream state and that in dreamless sleep. Our ideal life is derived from the state of dreamless sleep. During that time of the entire oblivion of our self-consciousness we are quite on another plane.

Intelligent and persistent scrutiny and searching into the dreamless sleep will soon reveal, first, the fact that it is a state of great purity, entirely uninfluenced by good or bad actions which we may have performed during the day; and second, that we receive ideal impulses during our daily life which come to our perception quite unawares and are, as we think, perfectly natural, but which are in reality reflections in the physical brain from the dreamless sleep.

Man leads a dual life even in the working state. In every thought and deed is a dual aspect. The first and most pressing

one in our day is that which concerns our personality, the second how it affects our relations with the world at large. ‘

The process itself is so automaton-like that it eludes notice, but to these two aspects all our activities are subjected.

If the predilections of the personality predominate, there-suit will be correspondingly selfish; if, on the other hand, the ideal aspect is duly regarded, the act will be corresponding to and means better intuition. This latter is the ideal side of man’s dual life, a state of



higher consciousness, the exploration of which will greatly expand the conception of the part man is playing in the drama of life, and that “*Ideal Unity*” or “*Universal brotherhood of mankind*” is a “*fact*” and the notion of separateness of humanity is an illusion.

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