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THE THEOSOPHIST

Edited by C. JINARĀJADĀSA

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE
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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY was formed at New York, November 17, 1875, and incorporated at Madras, April 3, 1905. It is an absolutely unsectarian body of seekers after Truth, striving to serve humanity on spiritual lines, and therefore endeavouring to check materialism and revive the religious tendency. Its three declared Objects are:

FIRST.— To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

SECOND.—To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.

THIRD.— To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

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 above 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 to 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. Every one 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.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 23, 1924

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the civilized world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject.

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FREEDOM OF THE SOCIETY

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society on December 30, 1950

The Theosophical Society, while co-operating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such co-operation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title The Theosophical Society.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.

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Society. Our great leader, H.P.B., foresaw what difficulties she and her colleague, H. S. Olcott, and those who joined them, would have to face. She saw equally how, all difficulties surmounted, the end would be crowned with triumph. This vision of hers is pictorially and graphically illustrated on the first page of the Scrapbooks which she started, to paste cuttings of all that appeared in newspapers about the Society. I have reproduced in colour the first page of her Scrapbook No. I. H.P.B.'s pictorial setting reads:

"Ante and Post Natal History of the Theosophical Society and the Tribulations, Mortifications and TRIUMPHS of its Fellows."

I am in touch with large numbers of members of the Society throughout the world, who write to me periodically. In nearly every case they express their deep gratitude to the Theosophical teachings. They say that but for these teachings they hardly know in what manner they could endure the troubles of life. For many of us, particularly after our youth has passed, life is more a harassment than an enjoyment. The problem then is how to face our Karma so that we may not completely succumb under its stress. It is here that Theosophy gives to the individual an element of courage which he has not been able to find in the cult of his religion, whether Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, or any other. It is this supreme element of courage that is characteristic of the great ideas of Theosophy, when they are incorporated into a man's inmost consciousness.

But this incorporation does not take place merely by reading Theosophical books. The identification with the truths of Theosophy is only possible when a member works with others, as in a Lodge. The ideal Lodge is not concentrated on the individual salvation of its members, but is always busy planning to understand the various



REPRODUCTION OF THE FIRST PAGE OF
H.P.B.'S SCRAPBOOK NO. I

Reduced to two thirds of the original.



departments of the Wisdom of Theosophy, in order to pass on that knowledge to others. It is when there is a keen desire in the heart of a Theosophist to share his knowledge with others who have not that knowledge, that little by little the element of courage enters into his life. This has happened in the case of thousands of Theosophists, who therefore feel an immense gratitude not only to Theosophy, but to the Society, to which in many cases they have given more than half their lives.

Another high tribute to the effectiveness of the work of the Theosophical Society is that so many other groups, not calling themselves Theosophists, have accepted the main ideas of Theosophy and are disseminating them. Reincarnation, which was once specifically a Theosophical idea and discussed only in Lodges of the Society, is now such a popular theme that even cartoonists, novelists and cinema producers are taking it up. The law of Karma is also being slowly incorporated into the world's thought. Of course, the idea of astral bodies occurs continually, especially as a humorous idea in light literature. Perhaps the most amusing of these incorporations of Theosophical terms appeared in a cartoon in an American humorous weekly forty years ago. A husband, who has been having a night out, returns late at night and his angry wife asks, "John, have you been drinking again?" The drunken husband replies, with hiccups, "Certainly not, m' dear. My astral self is merely enjoying a mental joyride." Of course, novelists get our Theosophical ideas not merely mixed up, but so misunderstood as to make a travesty of them. But at any rate, little by little the ideas are permeating the world's mental atmosphere.

From the beginning of the Society, the most violent opponent of Theosophy has been the Roman Catholic Church. H.P.B. foresaw the obstacle of this Church, as

also of other churches and what they stood for, in dominating human thought and suppressing the real freedom of investigation into the realms of the Spirit. In her denunciations she made a distinction between Christianity and what she termed "Churchianity". It is this latter which had already bound shackles on the minds of western nations.

I have narrated elsewhere how again and again during my two tours in the countries of Latin America, in Brazil and the Spanish-speaking countries in 1928-1929 and in 1938-39, the Catholic Church in each place that I visited tried to oppose my Theosophical lectures. Again and again the priests would warn their congregations not to attend my lectures. The most violent instance of this was in 1929 at Lima, the capital of Peru. After I had given four public lectures in Spanish in a theatre, on the morning of the fifth and last lecture the Archbishop of Lima issued a notice in all the newspapers, denouncing my lectures and threatening to excommunicate all who might attend them. As a result, the theatre was packed that night, and after the lecture I was taken in procession to my hotel. But what is noteworthy is the reason given by the Archbishop for his denunciation. He pointed out that I had been saying that "Each man is to himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life," but that the Lord Jesus Christ had said that He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Little wonder that ten years after this incident, when I asked Peru for a visa for a second visit, it was refused.

It is obvious that if Theosophical teachings were to be accepted by all, there would be no need anywhere for priests, bishops and church hierarchies, not only in Christianity but in every religion. Such a recognition of the individual's right to work out his own salvation cuts the ground from underneath all vested interests of religion.

The good Archbishop saw the immense damage I was doing in asserting to his flock the freedom of the individual. In the domain of spiritual growth, ceremonies, prayers, sacraments, etc., all appear as minor matters for an individual, for inspiration if he selects them, but not essential or necessary in order to find the direct road to the Spirit. This, of course, has been the teaching given by the Adept Brotherhood. It is from the Theosophical manual *Light on the Path* that I quoted the phrase, "Each man is to himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

An outstanding instance of what the Roman Catholic hierarchy is doing to oppose the Society's work is given in a report from one of our South American Sections. I refrain from mentioning the name of the Section, lest the persecution already present may become more violent. The following is what the report says:

"As I report to you on the year's work, our Section has now 11 active Lodges, but 14 have ceased to exist. The declaration of siege and the consequences of the restriction of rights given to the citizens by the Constitution, and the laws that have been enacted, have reacted on all liberal institutions, philosophical or religious, prohibiting all private or public meetings, and limiting the free expression of thought in the press and over the radio, both of which are now controlled by the national government.

"Undoubtedly the interposition of the Roman Catholic clergy is a militant political action which has produced abnormalities in our national life. The President of one of our Lodges was assaulted, in consequence of which he suffered fracture of a foot, which has necessitated his being kept in hospital for a year. He is cured but has not yet been able to return home.

"The terror, behind which stands the Catholic Church, has extended even to recognized liberal newspapers. They will not even publish notices of Theosophical meetings, lest the military take some disciplinary action against the papers. But we have faith in the Divine Laws which direct all life, and that these abnormalities will eventually come to an end."

This report is only one instance of the pressure brought by the Roman Catholic clergy wherever possible in political life. Though this pressure handicaps our Movement, on the other hand it is a public admission by the Catholic hierarchy that the liberalizing ideas of Theosophy are gradually gaining effectiveness in the mentality of the world.

I must here very briefly summarize the work done during the year by the National Societies. They have all been active in propaganda. The full report of each Section will be published later and sent to the General Council. I need here only mention that the membership is 32,535, with 1,320 Lodges. During the year, as in past years, there have been both increases and decreases in membership in the Sections. A certain number who join the Society lose interest afterwards and do not continue paying their annual dues. These may seem to have dropped out of the Society; but it is here interesting to recall what H.P.B. said, that if a person becomes a member *even for one day*, there is a karmic benefit for him in future lives. The largest number of lapsed memberships is in India. The number who have to be considered as no longer members is 696 this year, and this large figure is an indication of the very difficult economical situation in the country. To many in India

even the spending of four annas (4d., 5 cents) is quite a problem. But in spite of the loss from lapsed memberships the Indian Section is still the largest in the world, with 7,133 members.

The work throughout the world would proceed far more rapidly if we had more lecturers in each country. Those who have done that work in past years have either passed out of this incarnation or are too old for further lecturing. It is here that we are hoping that the Young Theosophists will take up the work of propaganda. But in order to succeed in giving the message of Theosophy to the public, the Young Theosophists need to study Theosophy, for if they are to work as lecturers they must have a good background of knowledge of the Theosophical philosophy.

The Theosophical work in all the countries behind the Iron Curtain has ceased. Even in Jugoslavia, which is outside that curtain, the difficulties have been great, and the Society has not received official permission to continue its work. The work has been closed completely in Hungary, the Lodge library at its headquarters taken away, and the rooms locked and sealed. Nevertheless, I know that in each country the old students still meet in their homes to continue their studies.

England and Scotland. Proceeding to the United States for the Section Convention, they also engaged in a long tour which included the principal cities of that country and five Lodges in Canada. Returning by the Pacific, Mr. and Mrs. Cook addressed the members in several cities in the Philippines and Malaya, including the capital cities of Manila and Kuala Lumpur.

This year the National Society of British East Africa gained great aid from a month's visit by Mr. N. Sri Ram. As the Lodges in that Section are scattered, he visited the various localities, and all the Lodges have expressed to me their gratitude for the help he has rendered.

I should like to mention here that I am nominating Mr. Sri Ram to receive the Subba Row Gold Medal for his contributions to Theosophy, and I feel sure that the General Council in the course of next year will endorse my nomination.

It was at the Golden Jubilee Convention of 1925 that we instituted a ceremony called the Prayers of the Religions, to mark the complete friendliness in attitude of Theosophists to all the religions of the world. This ceremony consisted in beginning each day of Convention with brief prayers, recited by representatives of all the great faiths, who are members of the Society and were present at Convention. Since then, at every International Convention, whether at Adyar or Banaras, the first function of the day has been the recitation of these Prayers, concluding with the most universal invocation possible, that composed by Dr. Besant:

O Hidden Life, vibrant in every atom ;
 O Hidden Light, shining in every creature ;
 O Hidden Love, embracing all in oneness ;
 May each, who feels himself as one with Thee,
 Know he is also one with every other.

Further, in India there is no Federation that meets without this opening ceremony of Universal Prayers. The prayers or praises recited on this occasion are published, so that all can procure copies.

The keynote of the unity of the religions, struck by us twenty-five years ago, has been listened to by other organizations, such as various Fellowships of Faiths, who also now begin their gatherings with a recitation of the many prayers of the religions.

Just before the Convention of 1925, the Hindu Temple built by Hindu Theosophists had just been completed, and the beautiful Buddhist Shrine was nearing completion. During that Convention Dr. Besant, as President, laid the foundation-stones of a Zoroastrian Shrine, a Christian Chapel, a Muhammadan Mosque and a Hebrew Synagogue. Except for the Hebrew Synagogue, all the buildings have been completed and are used, at least periodically, by members who belong to their faiths. We are waiting for money from Hebrew members of the Society, in order to complete the Hebrew Synagogue.

It was in 1925 also that we first displayed the flags of the 43 National Societies then in existence, with also flags

which each tree represented was placed at its roots. The first two trees planted in Founders' Avenue were naturally for H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott, and these were planted by Dr. Besant herself. Since 1925, 8 more National Societies have been born: Ceylon, Greece, Central America, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Colombia and British East Africa. During our present Convention we shall plant additional trees, with earth from these Sections. I look forward to the day when we shall have a National Society in Pakistan, the Malay Federation and Singapore, North Ireland, Japan, Ecuador and Indochina. Already these countries have Presidential Agents who are watching to create the number of Lodges necessary to receive a Charter as a National Society.

I want now to touch briefly upon some of the activities which have been developed by our leaders and others under the inspiration of the Theosophical ideals, during the three-quarters of a century since the Society's founding.

One activity of the greatest importance is the Adyar Library, under the able direction of Dr. G. Srinivasa Murti. This institution was founded by Colonel Olcott in 1886, especially to collect rare manuscripts and preserve them from destruction. But the institution has developed beyond his dream, because since 1910 it has been publishing a series of works with Sanskrit texts and translations into English. The number of the latest publication is No. 76. If the Adyar Library had more funds, it could publish about eight new works a year. Authors are only too eager that their manuscripts should be published by the Adyar Library, which has now a great reputation among the Orientalist institutions of the world.

During the past twenty-five years and more, Theosophists in many lands have organized themselves to work in various activities. The most prominent is that for Education. It was

in 1880 that the President-Founder, Colonel Olcott, first organized Buddhist schools for Buddhist children in Ceylon. Soon after Dr. Besant arrived in India, she urged Indian members to start schools with the usual Government curricula, but adding religious instruction, and the management to be composed of Theosophists and others who sympathized. Many schools were established, the most famous of all these institutions being the Central Hindu High School with Dr. Arundale as Headmaster, to which was later added the well-known Central Hindu College, with him as Principal. Another school under Theosophical auspices, with nearly all the teachers devoted Theosophists, was started in Madras and located at Guindy, half a mile from our Headquarters. This school was later transferred to Rishi Valley, near Madanapalle, to work under the direction of Mr. J. Krishnamurti's followers. A Theosophical College had already been started at Madanapalle under the management of the Theosophical Educational Trust founded in 1913. Colonel Olcott started in 1894 the first school for Harijans, once called Panchamas. This school is named now Olcott Memorial School. The President of the Society in his personal capacity is President of the Trust and Chairman of the Board of the Olcott Memorial School. The Australian Section took under its wing the Morven Garden School, which however after some years had to close. The New Zealand Section organized a small school, which is still conducted by the Section.

In the meantime, in England a great school was started, the

overburdened with the longing for earthly or heavenly rewards. To "live in tune with the Infinite," to be one with the life-process in thought, feeling and action, to know the joy of creative living, surely is reward enough. The wonderful power of science and learning which has poured from Nature's treasure-chest can be turned from the destruction of war to the mightier tasks of peace, to the building of a world fairer and finer than any yet seen. Nothing holds us back but our own fears. All who serve the cause of truth—scientist, artist, soldier, mystic, or ordinary man who loves his neighbour—these can make the splendid vision a living reality, these are the people to inspire man to make the effort to save himself. Man must learn that he has within him the power to create or destroy, he must then recognize that love is the true spur to creative action. When a group, or nation, or continent, or world of individuals can learn to find within themselves that truth and love which are the very root of life, and then act in unison towards a fuller expression of life, each according to his character and abilities, there will no longer be any need to dream of a future Utopia, it will be a present reality.

B. C. KEMP

We must be in a state of perfect harmony and mutual friendliness in order to bring down into manifestation the forces which would otherwise remain and operate at levels beyond our reach.

N. SRI RAM

THEOSOPHY AND MODERN EXACT SCIENCE

By FRITZ KUNZ

I. Summary

A PROGRAMME for subsequent fulfilment is implied in the following pages. It derives from two essential characteristics of Theosophy, and two features of the history of our Society. It depends also upon the meaning of the phrases "modern exact science" and "natural law".

Present limitations of space require me to be brief. I hope compactness of expression will not be taken as dogmatism.

II. Theosophy

Theosophy is that systematic body of law which determines man's origin and constitution, and relates him to the rest of Nature in an intelligible universe. Herein one principle is fundamental: man and the entire phenomenal world arise periodically from the noumenal reality. Hence the essential doctrines pertain to this Source and its relation to the ephemeral worlds.

Considered as an individual consciousness, man is described in the literature as a unitary point-essence (Paramātmān) inhering in and partaking of the real (Parabrahman). The essence is expressed in the loftier

