

On Theosophical Unity

From *ITC Magazine*, August 2012, pp. 5-8
Republished by %Theosophy in Slovenia+, October 2013

This effort requires PATIENCE: What we might need is the Paramita of Kshanti .
EXAMPLE: When you're dealing with an old computer [or an elderly Editor?] you get frustrated, as this one did, on attempting to open a Word doc, the Old Computer could only manage to open up one window at a time. Mistake of the Editor was attempting to bring up the Internet [to get a Theosophical quote] and so she sat there staring at a seemingly eternal hourglass icon. Google prevailed. So have those involved in the many efforts throughout the years to achieve a unity among theosophical groups. Time is required, and as the century rolls on, we find ourselves ever closer in mind and heart towards a deeper understanding of the teachings, how they apply to our lives, and finding likeminded friends with similar ideas, all along the way: Patience will prevail, even if slowly.

How to Achieve Unity: Returning to Google, Although the How-To Section Google did not give any results, our reflections on the subject would indicate some examples of Unity in Nature and in our more prosaic world: In Nature . We are all at perfect liberty to retain our own individuality and beliefs, concepts, and ideas. Unity in Diversity. This sounds like a contradiction, but it is similar to blades of grass, each one unique, but all are blades of grass; each snowflake is different but all are snowflakes. As a river flows continually nothing is ever the same for a moment, but a constant exchange of swirling atoms in the world of maya or illusion. Nothing, even our present concepts, are static. An example of Unity is that of the Handbag. Some of them have lots of dividers and sections, but it is still all one Handbag. In our physical bodies, in order for it to function, the liver has to do the work of the liver, the heart of the heart, and so on with all the organs of the body- and yet the body is greater than the sum of its parts. And if one organ is dysfunctional it affects all the other organs. Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature, whether or not we like it to be that way. William Q. Judge, in his address given at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893, expressed this in the title of his presentation: %Universal Brotherhood, a Fact in Nature.+

But is complete unity our goal? It is only by momentary separation that we may gain perspective. If we were all in complete Unity we would never experience our differences. That's one reason we have separation, our %fall into Matter.+Matter, then, does matter. We must accept non-conformity; however, all the variances in the theosophic groups do agree on the following:

Objects of the Theosophical Society
Universal Brotherhood as our foundation
Basic Teachings of Theosophy
Belief in the Masters

H.P. Blavatsky was the chosen spokesman of the Lodge.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue which documents the clear hope of us all for Theosophical Unity.

The Rugged Path Toward Theosophical Unity

Sally and James Colbert, Ph.D.

Maybe a whole manvantara of change may be required for any endeavor, involving cycles of creation, preservation, and destruction, followed by a new cycle of creation. Maybe the path toward unity is not smooth. It may require heroic efforts on the parts of those players who have vision and views and understand that during the journey, there are starts and stops and the battles may seem overwhelming. Perhaps there is really no failure, but the view that each failure is a success! As *The Voice of the Silence* says, Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success. Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.

The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple's soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they ever be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.

CHRONOLOGY OF THEOSOPHICAL UNITY

1907 - [Location Unknown]

Albert E.S. Smythe attempted to bring about rapprochement among various elements that had branched off. He found Theosophy through William Q. Judge en route while on a passenger liner to the United States.

According to the history provided by James Santucci (An Early Attempt at Fraternization, Keeping the Link Unbroken, Michael Gomes) it was after he had been expelled from the Point Loma Society he contacted G.R.S. Mead, Archibald Keightley, Charles Johnson and Annie Besant calling for an extension of greetings between the societies. To Smythe there were indications that these prominent figures were willing but agreement for this did not come forward from the other groups. Smythe later was a leader in establishing the Canadian Section of the Theosophical Society and became the first editor of the *Canadian Theosophist*.

1930 - Point Loma, California.

Gottfried de Purucker initiated the %Fraternization Movement.+G de P, as many called him, headed the Theosophical Society Point Loma. A tone was set for Theosophical unity which oriented the T.S. Point Loma (later T.S. Pasadena) ongoing efforts towards unification. From Emmett Small, quoting G de P, %Fraternization and Networking: Yesterday and Today+[Eclectic Theosophist] %Joint meetings have been held and arrangements for others made, members of one society have freely visited the meetings of the other, and the accumulated ice of years was beginning to thaw under the growing recognition of the fact that all Theosophists, no matter what their affiliation, are thereby brothers.+This tone continued through 1940, a break during World War II, and into the 1980s. %I have always deeply regretted the unfortunate impression made upon the public when Theosophists assume an unfriendly attitude towards each other, and I have never been able to understand why the half dozen different Theosophical Societies which exist in the United States should not live at least harmoniously in the same country as the various orthodox denominations [Annie Besant].+- %Our ideal will be ultimately to make our beloved T.S. the Theosophical Society of the World [G. de Purucker].+

1930 - Adyar, India and Point Loma, California.

On April 24, 1930, a letter was written to Dr. Annie Besant, President, The Theosophical Society (Adyar), asking for collaboration in the compilation of the forthcoming *Complete Works of H.P. Blavatsky*. Her endorsement was secured by Lars Eek, at the Theosophical Convention held in Geneva, Switzerland, June 28 - July 1, 1930, at which he presided. After a period of preliminary correspondence, constructive and fruitful literary teamwork was established with the officials at the Adyar Headquarters. The gracious permission of Dr. Annie Besant to utilize material in the Archives of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, and the wholehearted collaboration of C. Jinarâjadâsa, A. J. Hamerster, Mary K. Neff, N. Sri Ram, and others, extending over a number of years, have been factors of primary importance in the success of this entire effort. Boris de Zirkoff led the way to the *Complete Works* which later became the *Collected Writings of H.P. Blavatsky*.

1931 - Toronto, Canada.

%Fraternization Conferences+were held annually and sponsored by the Canadian Theosophical Society through starting in 1931 through 1946. The conferences were, for the most part, alternately held in the United States and Canada. Students from several Theosophical traditions were represented.

1950 - Ojai, California.

A group composed of Emmett Small (TS Point Loma), Henry Geiger (ULT), Victor Endersby, Boris de Zirkoff, and Geoffrey Barborka met at the Krotona site of TS Adyar. A quote from Victor Endersby from this time period (%Mission Prophetic,+Theosophical Notes), %There have been many successive upheavals in the work, each of which has served purposes: it has shaken out the faint hearted, the followers of personalities, the

devotees, conscious or unconscious, of the Personal God+idea, the cowards, and the self-serving ò +

1950 - Helsinki, Finland.

Theosophists Gathered in Fraternization. [Note of this meeting was recorded in several sites but without reviews].

1984 - Pasadena, California.

A letter from Geoffrey Farthing was sent to all the heads of the Theosophical Societies towards a unity conference. This was organized by Ken Small, Rick Nurrie, Eldon Tucker, Dara Eklund, and Jerry Ekins. Conference name, %The Theosophical Movement: Networking for Unity.+

1986 - Santa Monica, California.

Margaret Geiger, Gabe Blechman, Eileen Walker, (ULT) as well as students from the Pasadena TS, Adyar TS Canadian Section, and Point Loma Publications held a Networking conference.

1991 - Chicago, Illinois.

This conference was organized by Joe Pope of the United Lodge of Theosophists who is said to have an amazing ability to bring people together. The total attendance is estimated at 6,000 over several days. Included the Dalai Lama and Paramahansa Yogananda with %all Theosophical group.+People were there from all over the world.

1992 - San Diego, California.

This conference was recorded in *The High Country Theosophist* (July). Grace Knoche was the featured speaker. She portrayed Katherine Tingley making efforts toward peace and harmony. She also spoke informally of her personal reminiscences of Katherine Tingley as %Warrior for Peace.+

1993 - Chicago, IL.

World Parliament of Religions. Representatives from TS Pasadena, United Lodge of Theosophists, and Theosophical Society in America, jointly participated in the Parliament representing Theosophy, to overflow crowds.

1994 - Ojai, California.

James Perkins, past National President of the Adyar TS, Henry Geiger (ULT), Kirby van Mater (Pasadena TS), Emmett Small (Point Loma Publications), Ted Davy (Canadian Theosophist) and John Algeo. Conference theme: %Networking for Unity.+

1994 - Brookings, Oregon.

Willie Dade and many other students, initially from ULT began informal gatherings. This led to annual meetings which brought attendees from many other Theosophical traditions. In 2003 the meetings were held in Long Beach, CA, 2004 in San Diego, CA. 2005 in Santa Barbara, CA, 2006 in Julian, CA, 2007 Petaluma, CA.

1998 - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Secret Doctrine Symposium. Individuals from different groups were present including European Section of T.S., Theosophical Society in America, Theosophical Society Pasadena, United Lodge of Theosophists and unaffiliated students. Tibetan Buddhist monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery constructed a mandala sand painting during the conference.

2008 - Haverford, Pennsylvania. International Theosophy Conferences, Inc. began as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. In 2009 held in Los Angeles, CA in connection to the ULT Centennial; in 2010 held in The Hague, Netherlands at the Point Loma TS headquarters; 2011 in Julian, CA. International Theosophy Conferences is dedicated to intercommunication between all Theosophical traditions. Students from most traditions have attended the conferences.

The authors are the first to realize, the above is only a partial record of the multiple efforts towards a unity in the Theosophical world. There are some implications: The call for unity between theosophical traditions has been existent for over 100 years. Reviews following conferences were all strongly proclaimed %success.+

Fraternization or unity meetings have occurred in many places on the planet. Some have opposed this movement, but for the most part, key leaders from all traditions have willingly participated.

Many publications, magazines, and articles resulted following a conference. One student, just prior to our publication, after being told of these findings, said you have to ask at the end of the article why unity has not come about? It is our feeling that each and every one of us should take on this question. This is particularly true as we approach the Wheaton conference this next August. The Wheaton conference is truly historic. Think of this. ITC conferences have now been held at the headquarter locations of three different traditions . Los Angeles, CA (ULT), The Hague, Netherlands for the Theosophical Society . Point Loma, and now Wheaton Illinois, for Theosophical Society in America.

We feel the motivation as to why so many have participated is clear. Our first object is to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood. We really know these needs to start with us. Division is not unity. Most recognize too the lack of unity mitigates the power of Theosophical principles taking their place on the world stage. So what is holding us back? We will suggest a few answers:

1. There is the false belief that unity means one large Theosophical organization. We start to feel that somehow we will have to buy into writings or teachings of other traditions different from our own. We do not want to do this feeling that somehow we may have to give up something important in our own traditions. We contend unity does not mean this. It does mean that we can communicate with each other, try to understand each other, but unite at a higher level and, perhaps, become even stronger in our own traditions.

2. Unity can be painful. If we have become convinced that our tradition is doing it right and others are not, it is a kind of way to feel safe. In our reviews of the literature on this subject we found a number of articles expressing fear that other tradition may steal members away from them if they get together. It reminds one of the fears many parents have of not wanting their child to go off to college. Who knows what they may find there?

3. We have not found a common cause that we can all work towards. This probably has the greatest ring of truth. We can all get together and have a conference, but what do we do then? A common cause is needed that all can contribute to. There are important causes in the world which strongly need theosophical wisdom. For example, we have a student now working in the area of the trafficking of young woman into prostitution. As we understand, The Theosophical Order of Service has done outstanding work and it is an independent organization. Would this be an area we could unite behind and work through the TOS to help? The dignity of each individual on the path towards greater consciousness certainly applies to help for these young women. Are there other causes that we can support?

4. Can we, as a unity of all Theosophical traditions, reach out to other religious/spiritual organizations to promote greater harmony and compassion? It is our understanding that one of the reasons the Dalai Lama was hosted by the Theosophical Society recently is that theosophists do this. (The Theosophical Society in America hosted an event with the Dalai Lama on July 17-18, 2011 as part of their Summer National Gathering)
In conclusion, we find some successes and some failures in this path towards unity and brotherhood. We are all inter-dependent. Are any of these valiant efforts lost? As the Dalai Lama said,

As long as we live in this world we are bound to encounter problems. If, at such times, we lose hope and become discouraged, we diminish our ability to face difficulties. If, on the other hand, we remember that it is not just ourselves but everyone who has to undergo suffering, this more realistic perspective will increase our determination and capacity to overcome troubles. Indeed, with this attitude, each new obstacle can be seen as yet another valuable opportunity to improve our mind! It is because our own human existence is so dependent on the help of others that our need for love lies at the very foundation of our existence. Therefore we need a genuine sense of responsibility and a sincere concern for the welfare of others. We have to consider what we human beings really are. We are not like machine-made objects. If we are merely mechanical entities, then machines themselves could alleviate all of our sufferings and fulfill our needs.
(Compassion and the Individual, Tenzin Gyatso: The Fourteenth Dalai Lama)

HAS THEOSOPHY A FUTURE?

By Dr. H. N. Stokes

From a 1935 Fraternalization Convention held in Toronto, Canada

Mr. Smythe has suggested to me that I should write something about "The Future of Theosophy." First of all, has Theosophy a future? Are Theosophical principles to spread so as to influence the entire race, or are they to die out as so many philosophies and religions have done? We are told that a special effort is made once in each century to awaken humanity to the principles for which Theosophy is supposed to stand. That may be so but it should be perfectly obvious that this is a two-sided arrangement. No efforts of the Masters can be effective unless they meet with response and co-operation. And that co-operation can be given by everyone interested, and the moment to begin this is today, not some forty years hence. Have we not already enough to live by?

Please remember this. We Theosophists are a very small body as compared with the whole of humanity, even with that portion which belongs to what we call our civilization. Just think: the membership of the largest Theosophical society is about 30,000; possibly we may add another 10,000 for the other societies and the unattached Theosophists, say 40,000 in all. That represents but a few thousandths of one percent of the world's population. If this almost vanishing fraction is to bring about any future whatever for Theosophy it must stand together. It cannot afford to work as a collection of separate units ignoring or opposing each other, each maintaining that its views, being wholly right, all the others must be wrong and hence not quite fit to speak to on Theosophical matters. What would you think of an army which declined to fight as a unit because of some differences of opinion as to uniforms or weapons? What would you think of an army which should insist that their political differences made it impossible to stand together in the same trenches? There is a common cause, and all minor differences have to be forgotten in the fighting, no matter how much the individual soldiers may differ on politics, or on the best sort of boots. And what would the supreme command - in our case the Masters - think of such people?

Look on this convention and other fraternization conventions as primarily a means of getting the several Theosophical sects to understand each other and to work together+

But that is precisely the condition we have in the Theosophical Movement today. This pitifully small army is divided into several clans or societies, each claiming to have the same object, but each so anxious over differences on minor points that they not only will not co-operate, but often antagonize each other. The situation may well be called scandalous. Elsewhere I have had occasion to refer frequently to what appears to be an increasing tendency in some societies to represent to their members and the world at large that they alone constitute THE Theosophical Society, THE Theosophical Movement. In some cases this has gone to the extent not only of ignoring or denying the existence of a Theosophical Movement without their own limits, but even so far as issuing printed warnings, and charging officials of other societies with being a sort of transcendental robber trying to get into the sheepfold by climbing in instead of entering by the door. I am not giving names; their own words speak for them. From what one

reads in official documents it would seem that some societies are almost in a state of panic over spies and propagandists from other Theosophical societies. All of you may not be aware of this, but it is an actual fact. It is most pitiful. I understand that the executives of each society have a certain responsibility, occupy a position where they are expected and should devote most of their efforts to the particular instrument for which they are responsible. But that affords no reason for acting as if they are afraid that they may lose some present or prospective members by acting in a friendly manner towards others. If members of other societies are less enlightened than their own they should welcome the opportunity of giving them more light. If, on the contrary, they are more enlightened, they should be glad to have their own members learn from them.

I look on this series of fraternization conventions, at present hardly beyond the embryo stage, as far more important than any of the other Theosophical conventions being held this year or at any other time. It is by far the most important because it is the nucleus of a movement, to secure co-operation in essentials, leaving it to those who choose to do so, to argue over minor differences. Do not forget the words of the Master K.H. (*Mahatma Letters*, page 231), speaking of the Jesuits: "They work for the greater power and glory (!) of their Order; we - for the power and final glory of individuals, of isolated units, of humanity in general, and we are content, nay forced - to leave our order and its chiefs entirely in the shade."

As regards the proceedings of such a convention, while I have no comment to make on the reading of general Theosophical papers, which is perhaps essential, it must be remembered that such papers can be presented in any lodge or society at any time. The first and foremost object is to bring together associates of different societies and to give them the chance to get acquainted. "Oh, but that is turning the convention into a social affair, a sort of picnic," somebody may say. I reply that it is and should be first of all a social affair, because it gives the members of each society attending the opportunity to discover, as I have had to discover, that those of other organizations than their own are just as intelligent, just, as well-meaning as themselves, and that the essence of their Theosophy is just as good as their own, even if they may differ on matters of policy, theories of successorship, or certain other doctrinal points. Consequently I look on this convention and other fraternization conventions as primarily a means of getting the several Theosophical sects to understand each other and to work together for a common cause, not as a time or place for general Theosophical discussions. It is quite possible that the attendance may be small, perhaps even smaller than last year. That is no reason for thinking that another convention will not be worth the trouble. There is nothing worthwhile which is not worth the trouble, and another convention should be held even if no more than fifty attend.

There is much being spoken and written on the subject of Brotherhood, in elaborating reasons why even though all admit the theory of Universal Brotherhood, that is something quite different from fraternization, that while we may concede that members of other societies are theoretically our brothers, practically we don't need to speak to them, or work with them, or recognize them in any way, and that the idea of fraternization is a useless dream, an impracticable ideal. I must say that all of these discussions, when really sincere and not intended to make an excuse for neglecting our

duty, remind me of nothing so much as a squid trying to hide itself by ejecting a volley of ink. All such discussions are unpractical and an evasion of the real issue. There are people aplenty who always see the reasons why something cannot be done and who are as proud as peacocks over their ability to find such reasons. Far fewer are those who believe it can be done, even though it may require some experimenting and failure at first. It is on these latter that the future of Theosophy depends.

I believe that Theosophical societies can co-operate and I have yet to hear any one sound reason why they cannot. Of course there must be some common ground. The Secret Doctrine of H.P.B. has been suggested. If it cannot be that, then let it be her Key to Theosophy; if not that, then The Voice of the Silence, or Light on the Path, or the Bhagavad Gita. The first step is getting acquainted. This series of conventions offers that opportunity to the few who can attend. But it can be done everywhere, in every town where two or more societies have lodges. Efforts to hold joint meetings at times should be encouraged, but even where this is rejected by one or the other society, occasional visits to the meetings of other societies, not for purposes of propaganda, but for good fellowship, are sure to lead to closer relations in the long run. Many, to be sure, have a mortal dread of being rebuffed. It might happen at times, has happened, but it is a poor sort of martyr for his cause, who would hold back of such a triviality.

May we add that it is absolutely essential that no fraternization convention should permit the uses of methods, forms or ceremonials peculiar to one particular society. It is necessary to avoid everything which might give the impression that the convention is controlled by one particular organization. The sounding of gongs, prayers or invocations, meditations, quotations from the special literature of any one society should be avoided. This precaution has not always been observed in the past and has given rise to suspicions - probably unfounded - that the convention was being run by a particular society in its own interests. This, of course, is not saying that when conventions are held in cities where one society has a preponderance of members and a better hall, such society may perforce have to do the greater part of the details, but in any event, committees should be as representative of the leading societies as possible, names and associations being given.

So finally, I earnestly hope that those who have the decision as to a future fraternization convention will not be discouraged, that they will remember that great movements may have small beginnings and be long in growing, and that it is absolutely necessary to keep the lamp of Brotherhood burning, no matter how low the flame may sink at times, if Theosophy is to have a future.

The Necessity of Fraternization

By Herman C. Vermeulen

From a 1998 Edition of *Theosophy World*

[This letter, dated July 7, 1986, appeared in the December 1986 issue of the Theosophical Network Newsletter. Its editor, Rick Nurrie-Stearns, says that Vermeulen was "... recently chosen as the Leader of the Theosophical Society (Point-Loma/Covina) ... Since what he writes deals with the possibilities and principles of the overall networking effort, these selected extracts should be of general theosophical interest."]

The necessity of fraternization and cooperation is of course not a matter of discussion. The needs in the world are too great to doubt about that. Therefore we are very glad of your initiative, and you can count on our support.

Firstly · perhaps superfluously · I want to give you my opinion on the motives of any fraternization-effort. Theosophy learns that the first and only motive can be: to serve mankind by promulgating Theosophy in a better, more effective way than we do now. If on the other hand the groups, then (and we have seen it time and time again) all sorts of concessions are made, especially as to Theosophical principles. And although in such cases Theosophical groups come to a certain cooperation, the message they bring is crippled, so in fact that effort is a failure.

We both know of the obstacles that hindered co-operation during the past 100 years. To understand each other, let's analyze these obstacles. Roughly divided, there are two kinds, which we may call spiritual obstacles and emotional obstacles.

As to the spiritual ones: The question whether groups diverge from the fundamental Theosophical principles as defined by the Masters and H.P. B. any co-operation is possible or impossible. And this is particularly true for the initiator(s) of such a co-operation. From my last letter you know the attitude of our Society towards this point and the emphasis we lay on it. An attitude which, I think is logical and acceptable for every Theosophist. So, frankly speaking, I expect that this never has to be an insurmountable obstacle for co-operation. It must be possible for all groups to come to real understanding, based on these fundamental principles. After which a practical co-operation will follow as a natural consequence. In that case, problems from the past can be talked about and recognized, and lessons can be drawn from them, which will contribute to an even better cooperation. Now the second kind of obstacles: the emotional ones. Your concern in your letter mainly deals with the greatest emotional obstacle in the Theosophical Movement, described in your sentence: "Each group has its own separate succession of leaders, and each one of these groups or members believe their leader to be in the true succession of leaders". As to the first part of this sentence: Yes, each group has indeed its own separate succession of leaders. That is an inevitable, undeniable historical fact · whether or not those leaders call themselves so. Denying this fact is denying the hierarchical structure of the universe. Read what G. de P. writes about leadership in his 15th General Letter.

That No Theosophical group or individual has the right to impose his personal (approving or disapproving) ideas on leadership upon the other groups +

G. de P.'s words speak for themselves. If you make a serious effort to inventory all groups and to build up a clear picture of their interrelation, then the historical background of each group is normal, unemotional, useful information, and it is a normal thing to mention it in your Network.

What then is the emotional trouble? It is found in the second part of your sentence: "... and each one of these groups or members believes their own leader to be in the true succession of leaders". Not the mentioning their own leader as leader is wrong, but to claim that leader to be the one, exclusive, only, true leader, is wrong. That gross, un-theosophical form of separateness is a menace, an attack on the right existence of other groups. These other groups usually return this attack in the same personal way, and so the vicious circle of personal animosity and irritation and mutual suspicion is created, which has determined the atmosphere within the Theosophical Movement during the past 100 years, and still determines it.

The question now is, Rick how you intend to overcome this emotional obstacle. Several fraternization-efforts taught me this: the only truly subtle approach is a cautious but open and honest approach. When you start your effort, omitting the valuable information of the historical backgrounds of the groups out of consideration for any personal irritation, you give people the impression that there is some worth in their feelings of animosity. You can never get around this obstacle by not mentioning things. For then it is still there and will come out the first moment you start with the practical realization of your plans. You will only postpone your failure to a later moment.

The only way to overcome this obstacle is for 100% Impersonal attitude: by not allowing these personal irritations to enter your Network at all. By making clear to all beforehand, that No Theosophical group or individual has the right to impose his personal (approving or disapproving) ideas on leadership upon the other groups, and that any group's judgement of other groups can only be based on the way these groups respect the leader. Then you build up an atmosphere where every group can feel itself secure against any open or hidden aggression of others, and can feel your Network as a safe place to share in.

My sincere opinion is that nobody has to recognize any particular leader if he does not want to. There must be perfect freedom as to this. And further: that no leader, president, etc., of any group has the right to derive any authority from his position, or from the historical background of his position. Let's never forget that the Great Lodge always has served Humanity through more than one channel; and it is up to them to choose the best channels for their work. So it is the work we do, the extent to which we are a useful instrument for the Lodge, which shows who are the true leaders. I think I am clear enough.

It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the meta-physical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and; who loves Truth, Goodness and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer is a Theosophist. But it is quite another matter to put oneself upon the path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the right discrimination of good from evil; a path which also leads a man to that power through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting his finger.

On Fraternization

By A. Trevor Barker

From Theosophical University Press Online Edition

In regard now to our relationship with other Theosophical organizations, we are glad to be able to record that the work of breaking down inter-organizational hatred, suspicion and prejudice continues to go forward. We are not working so much for unification of organizations, but towards a unification of thought and life based upon a genuine and brotherly sympathy and tolerance for all who in their different ways are earnestly and sincerely seeking for the light of Theosophia. There is no virtue or holiness in isolating ourselves behind the high walls of the particular Theosophical organization to which we may choose individually to belong. As a matter of fact, there are few experiences so satisfying to the mind and heart of a militant Theosophist as to be able to compare notes in regard to methods, objectives and teaching; in other words to share his Theosophic experience impersonally with friendly groups of members of other organizations and affiliations. It is well worth the effort occasionally to go out of one's way to meet some Theosophist whose views, as expressed in his writings, one may cordially detest or disagree with, because so frequently one finds deep down the same aspiration towards truth, and a desire to give what he has in service to those willing to receive it; and all this not because we, any of us, have any ax to grind, but simply because we like to meet our Brother Theosophists and see whether perchance we may render a service, and on occasion receive one in return. All without exception who sincerely strive to make Theosophy a living spiritual force in their lives, must discover much that is beautiful and true within themselves which they long to share with others that they too may benefit. Truth has no earmark or label; the same light lighteth all men into the world. Organizations are of value just in so far as they serve to lead men individually towards the truth. No one of them probably is indispensable to mankind as a whole, but all are useful in proportion to the truth that is in them. It should be recognised that in this coming together of members of different affiliations there must and should be reciprocity: a certain open-minded generosity of spirit, and that straight-forwardness of purpose which in itself evokes confidence and commands respect. We desire to see it recognised by members of all Theosophical affiliations that it is first and foremost un-Theosophical

to treat Brother Theosophists with less decency and gentlemanly courtesy than the standard set among civilized communities in general. We do not hesitate to say that unless the spirit of narrow, sectarian fanaticism and exclusiveness is uprooted once and for all in the different units which so largely compose the modern Theosophical movement, then Those who stand behind the veil and watch, will write Finis to all present Theosophical efforts, as an experiment which had noble beginnings, but which ended in spiritual bankruptcy and failure.

There is no virtue or holiness in isolating ourselves behind the high walls of the particular Theosophical organization to which we may choose individually to belong.

And now may all our F. T. S. everywhere look within their own hearts to the light they will inevitably find there, and resolve in this first month of the New Year that each member will make of himself an energetic center for our Masters' work, so that he may come to recognise and feel their holy presence within himself, and thus be the means of spreading everywhere the Spirit of Wisdom, Nobility and Peace.

Further Notes on Fraternization

Broaden instead of narrowing your sympathies; try to identify yourself with your fellows, rather than to contract your circle of affinity. · Mahatma K. H.

The great and all-important aim in any effort for fraternization is to bring about mutual confidence, and we do not hesitate to declare that this can never be brought about if either party seeks under the cover of fraternization to secure a material advantage · and by "material advantage" we mean specifically an endeavor to increase our respective memberships by capturing the members of the other Society, or by any other kind of political gerrymandering. Any kind of jockeying for position is un-theosophical, and therefore obviously contrary to the spirit of fraternization, which after all is only the militant aspect of Brotherhood. Having said this much let us go further, and state exactly how we have been able to do successful fraternization work with our brothers of the Phoenix Lodge.

First of all we have the same aim and a common purpose, viz: to unite in true fellowship in order to give to the world · if possible in a more vital way · the Great Message of our Masters through H. P. B. Thus we had the requisites laid down by William Q. Judge as a basis for union amongst Theosophists wherever they may be found: similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethics. Our respective Lodges follow somewhat different methods in their regular work, but we recognise in these differences of organization, nothing more important than the cut of the particular style of waistcoat that happens to suit our fancy. On fundamentals we always have been, and we hope always will be in the future united. There has never been even a suspicion of friction; but we have not sought that negative kind of quietude in our joint work which is usually described as being undisturbed by even a ripple! On the contrary we venture to think that our meetings together have been productive of waves of thought, of philosophical and they will have the necessary force to permeate the entire thought atmosphere not

only of all Theosophists in England but of all men without distinction of religion, race or creed.

What in the name of our Masters would be the use or purpose of trying to do Theosophical fraternization work upon a basis of theft and duplicity? We do not admit that we ever have done so, and we pledge ourselves to all and sundry that we will never do so in the future. When Lodges of the Point Loma T. S. approach Lodges of other Societies in order to hold joint meetings in celebration of White Lotus Day, or some other impersonal effort or occasion, they should be given credit for the integrity and sincerity of their purpose. Their sole aim is to demonstrate to the world, that Theosophists not only can but do meet together in spiritual Fellowship to forward the Cause of the Masters they serve. Let there be no mistake - successful fraternization work rests upon the basis of mutual confidence because rooted in Mutual integrity. There should be complete understanding: there must be no cause for apprehension; there must be agreement by the respective officials concerned beforehand, not only as to the details of the program of a meeting, but as to the speakers, and exactly how the meeting is to be conducted. The membership of both Lodges must know exactly where they stand, certain that they not only have nothing to fear but everything to gain by sharing the inspiration, which other workers in other spheres have brought to the problem of how to learn, of how to live and of how to give Theosophy to the world.

☞ similarity of aim, of aspiration, of purpose, of teaching, of ethics+

We repeat that on our side we seek no material advantage; we hold out the hand of friendship, of fellowship, of devotion to our Masters' Cause. We are willing to share what we have, and all that we have the right to share with all men everywhere, whether Theosophists or not. We believe that in a right understanding of the message of Theosophy lies hope for mankind. The healing power of that Message can never be given to the world with the force that it should have, if the public cannot help being made aware of constant internecine warfare within and between the Theosophical organizations. Only when such destructive forces are changed by fraternization, i. e., Fellowship, shall we be able to carry the flame of inspiration through the thought-life of every class and section of this great nation. We do not purpose to lay down the task until the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky are known and read and loved (as they already are, so we are credibly informed, by members of the Royal family) by all sections of the aristocracy; by members of the business community; and by the great toiling masses of the people - from the unemployed miner in South Wales and Durham to all who are seeking the Bread of Life. That is our program and such is our Faith.

The 1935 Toronto Convention on Fraternization

THE INTERNATIONAL FRATERNIZATION

From The Canadian Theosophist, June 15, 1935

The International Inter-Theosophical Fraternization Jubilee Convention to be held in Toronto on August 23, 24, and, 25 is beginning to take some form. The tendency to fight shy of it on the part of leading members of some if not all of the Theosophical Societies is a significant fact which only emphasizes the necessity of such a gathering. Of course we cannot impose Brotherhood on anyone who does not feel it and live it, just as one can bring a horse to the water but he cannot be compelled to drink.

But at least when people gather together they begin to see that others are not greatly different from themselves, and when they exchange views and realize that these are based on the same identical principles, the disposition to be amicable if not amiable, and to be reasonable if not concordant, will develop, and at least the public will see that the study of Theosophy does not incite the students to enmity.

It is to be borne in mind that the Convention is international and therefore involves the supervision and cooperation of the heads of the international bodies in the management. The first motion came from the General Executive of the T.S. in Canada and was supported by other Societies. At Niagara in 1933 and at Rochester in 1934 members of the Adyar, the Point Loma and the U.L.T. bodies met and the meetings were regarded as successful and interesting. This year the Toronto Theosophical Society invited the Convention to meet in the Theosophical Hall, and a joint committee of the Toronto Society and the General Executive was formed. Nothing definite has been done yet beyond fixing the date which is intended to give visitors the advantage of the cheap railway and other transportation rates in force during the Canadian National Exhibition.

At the General Executive meeting in June, the General Secretary submitted as a tentative suggestion a programme for the three days and this is open for consideration by the Committees of all the Theosophical bodies which may contemplate taking part in the Convention. Suggestions are invited from all and sundry and any new proposals or amendments will be welcomed. Also the names of possible speakers should be sent in to the General Secretary at 33 Forest Avenue, Hamilton, Ont.

The suggestions made are that the first day, Friday, be given over to Science in the light of Karma and with special reference to Sociology. Saturday should be devoted to Philosophy in the light of Reincarnation and History. Sunday would be taken up with Religion, with its main topic Brotherhood, and Philanthropy. The sessions should be held from 2 till 5 in the afternoon, leaving the mornings free for visitors to go to the Exhibition or otherwise enjoy themselves; and in the evenings at 8, Sunday at 7.15. There should be one main address at each session to take not more than one hour, with time in addition for questions and discussion. This would involve six main speakers. Short addresses of from ten to twenty minutes could be arranged for, and in discussion three to five minutes ought to be the limit for speakers.

In order that those not able to attend may take part to some extent in the Convention it is suggested that papers of from 1000 to 1500 words be invited from students on the topics listed, to be considered by the Committee of Management and read at the Convention in the absence of other material.

In a general way, although all meetings would be open to the public, it is suggested that the afternoon meetings be designed for students of Theosophy and the addresses in the evening meetings be prepared with a view to general public interest.

The following list of subjects is suggested as an indication of the range of interest likely to attract attention. Theosophical - Fraternization; How to reach a wider Public (Propaganda, Lectures, radio, etc.); Training of Speakers; Our Weak Lodges; The Future of the Movement; "Straight" Theosophy; Class Work; The Theosophical Jubilee For Public Interest - Theosophy and Philanthropy; Theosophy and Health (Medicine, Diet, Healing, etc.); Theosophy and Literature; Theosophy and Politics; Theosophy and Economics; Theosophy and the Churches; The Student and the Theosophical Life; The Value of Synthesis; Reincarnation and History; Theosophy and Nation-Building; A Religion for Youth.

It is hoped that Committees of Societies in the United States will meet and consider these proposals and send in their reports and suggestions regarding them as soon as possible. Any information required may be had from the General Secretary, as noted above.

Hotel Rates

Hotel rates vary from \$1 a night up to \$4 at the Royal York. Almost any purse can be accommodated. In private lodgings, of which there are a variety near the Hall on Isabella Street, the rates are usually from 75 cents a night upwards. Rates with breakfast are also available. The Committee will be able to furnish information to visitors about this matter.

(Ed. We found this tidbit and thought it interesting to include)

YESTERDAY AND TODAY, Part II

By W. Emmett Small

[From THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST, January 1985, pages 1-5.]

FRATERNIZATION AND NETWORKING: YESTERDAY AND TODAY, Part II

Comradeship, brotherhood, unity, union, combined efforts, and the sense of Theosophical solidarity, belong to the distinctive spirit of the new Theosophical Era into which we of the Theosophical Society are now entering. It is my earnest prayer that my beloved Comrades on the Path will understand, and in understanding will seize, the spirit and meaning of my words, rather than allow themselves to puzzle over the mere

phrases in which this my message is conveyed to them. Never before in the history of the Theosophical Movement has the world needed so greatly as it does today the work and combined efforts of the members of a genuine Theosophical brotherhood, without distinction of race, of caste, of creed, or of color; and last but not least, we should feel that no matter to what Theosophical Society we belong, if we the Theosophical Movement as such, and as contrasted with the various Theosophical Societies, is to succeed and do its best work, we must come together and work shoulder to shoulder.

At this time, words of careful warning from an impartial writer, Dr. H.N. Stokes, editor of THE O.E. LIBRARY CRITIC, Washington, D.C., are of note. In the issue of his little magazine for October 1930, he wrote: "I most heartily concur in Dr. de Purucker's attitude. For months past, there has been growing, almost spontaneously, a feeling of friendship, and a desire to cooperate between local bodies of the Adyar Theosophical Society and the Point Loma Theosophical Society in both America and Europe. The sleeping desire was there; else Dr. de Purucker's appeals could not have awakened it. Joint meetings have been held and arrangements for others made, members of one society have freely visited the meetings of the other, and the accumulated ice of years was beginning to thaw under the growing recognition of the fact that all theosophists, no matter what their affiliation, are thereby brothers. Each local group has acted as seemed to it best." - Emmett Small, quoting G de P, FRATERNIZATION AND NETWORKING: YESTERDAY AND TODAY, Part II, By W. Emmett Small, [From THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST, January 1985, pages 1-5.]

In THE THEOSOPHIST (October 1930), official international magazine of the Theosophical Society Adyar, of which Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society, was then Editor and Marie R. Hotchener, Coeditor, is a revealing article by Mrs. Hotchener titled "Theosophical Cooperation," reflective of the wave of real understanding sweeping the theosophical world then.

A few quotes:

Questions as to the present situation of the cooperation of all Theosophical Societies are coming to us from all directions, so I think it would be well to state something here in answer to them. So far as our Leaders are concerned, we have not heard anything from them in addition to what took place at the Geneva Congress, fully reported in the August and September numbers of this magazine.

The Hon. Peter Freeman, who was Chairman of the committee which reported to Dr. Besant and the Geneva Council, after preparing with Prof. Eek (a Point Loma member sent to the Congress to represent that Society) a Memorandum on the situation involved, says that he has already found that there are twenty-two independent Theosophical Societies in the world.

This was a great surprise to us, and caused feelings of shame and regret that the followers of the Inner Founders and their great Messenger, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, are so widely separated and at odds on some of the interpretations and the methods of dissemination of the previous and inspiring truths of the Ancient Wisdom which she

brought to us in Their name. No wonder Theosophy has suffered so many hindrances, especially from the world's point of view, with 22 Societies divided against themselves! One knows the great good that Theosophy has done, in spite of these internal dissensions and periodical crises; but how much greater good could have been done if there had been peace and unity of endeavor instead of dissensions to divert so much of its power!

As I look back over twenty-three years of service to the Adyar Society, and keeping in mental touch with several other independent Theosophical Societies, I can see clearly, as I synthesize the causes of our difficulties, that the majority of Theosophists in all the Societies have failed to heed the warning, so clearly, so fully, so emphatically stated by the Messenger of the White Lodge, that we should make the future of Theosophy safe by being so well grounded in its fundamentals of truth, its principles of brotherhood, and its spirit of divinity, that the inevitable vagaries and imperfections of personalities should not be allowed to react as obstacles to its future welfare.

The situation causing the present petty differences and difficulties amongst us was recently emphasized by Dr. de Purucker, Head of the Point Loma Society, in a letter to his members dated February 17, 1930. He made a strong appeal to all Theosophists to cooperate with that Society in an effort to bring peace and unity, to eliminate the unessential differences, and get together on the original principles of Theosophy, and thus form, at no distant future, one great Theosophical Society of the world ...

I sincerely believe that there was a Plan within his plan, even beyond and greater than any of those which he, perhaps, recognized as essential to the moment (though he may have done so) ... It is my personal opinion, for what it may be worth, that Dr. de Purucker (in spite of some of his sincere individual opinions, personal to his own Society) is now being used as an instrument for broadcasting that Plan to awaken Theosophists to the necessity for self-analysis and heart-searching in their relation to the ideals of Theosophy, and their part in the present unrest, doubt, criticisms, and disputes existing in all our Theosophical Societies, his not excepted. Hence his appeal to his members and to Theosophists everywhere to cease furthering the causes of separation and unrest. I quote from his letter which was sent to me last February and which determined help him in every way practical and possible:

Comradeship, brotherhood, unity, union, combined efforts, and the sense of Theosophical solidarity, belong to the distinctive spirit of the new Theosophical Era into which we of the Theosophical Society are now entering. It is my earnest prayer that my beloved Comrades on the Path will understand, and in understanding will seize, the spirit and meaning of my words, rather than allow themselves to puzzle over the mere phrases in which this my message is conveyed to them. Never before in the history of the Theosophical Movement has the world needed so greatly as it does today the work and combined efforts of the members of a genuine Theosophical brotherhood, without distinction of race, of caste, of creed, or of color; and last but not least, we should feel that no matter to what Theosophical Society we belong, if we the Theosophical Movement as such, and as contrasted with the various Theosophical Societies, is to succeed and do its best work, we must come together and work shoulder to shoulder.

I tell you in all seriousness and with all the solemnity that I can bring to bear, that personal opinions, personal differences, society-opinions, and society-differences, should not merely be laid aside, but should be dropped and forgotten, and that we should all work together for a common end. The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are with us -- with you, my beloved Comrades on the Path; and I address these words to you also, our brother-Theosophists belonging to other societies. I call upon you all to realize the imperative need of union as contrasted with disunion, of Theosophical good-fellowship and good feeling as contrasted with differing and, alas, sometimes antagonistic, personal views and opinions.

It is this statement of Dr. de Purucker's that overshadows all other statements in the appeal mentioned; everything else seems secondary ... It does not take a seer to see that the call is from the Great Ones -- not from Dr. de Purucker himself, alone.

At this time, words of careful warning from an impartial writer, Dr. H.N. Stokes, editor of THE O.E. LIBRARY CRITIC, Washington, magazine for October 1930, he wrote:

I most heartily concur in Dr. de Purucker's attitude. For months past, there has been growing, almost spontaneously, a feeling of friendship, and a desire to cooperate between local bodies of the Adyar Theosophical Society and the Point Loma Theosophical Society in both America and Europe. The sleeping desire was there, else Dr. de Purucker's appeals could not have awakened it. Joint meetings have been held and arrangements for others made, members of one society have freely visited the meetings of the other, and the accumulated ice of years was beginning to thaw under the growing recognition of the fact that all theosophists, no matter what their affiliation, are thereby brothers. Each local group has acted as seemed to it best.

Now there comes a plan, sponsored by and apparently originated by Mrs. Besant, for getting together committees and a congress to discuss, decide and vote upon and dictate terms, ways and means of effecting brotherhood. As Dr. de Purucker implies, this is Impossible. The moment you begin with committees and votes, you introduce dictation, you introduce politics and log-rolling, and that which should have been spontaneous, an expression of brotherhood coming from the depths of the soul, becomes part of a parliamentary machine. It will not work; you cannot dictate brotherhood, or hand it down from some superior authority. It must grow as the flower grows, and the attempt to start a brotherhood machine will but kill the spirit of it. I am glad indeed that Dr. de Purucker has plainly put his foot on the plan, and one may see in his words the indication that, anxious as he is for brotherhood, it is not his intention to use means that in the end would be fatal ...

A General Letter, issued from Point Loma in February 1930, made the official proclamation of Fraternization. Later that year at a public meeting in the Temple at Point Loma on December 21, 1930, someone asked Dr. de Purucker: "Does the Theosophical Society with international Headquarters at Point Loma really claim to be the ONLY GENUINE Theosophical Society founded by H.P. Blavatsky as the Messenger of the Great White Lodge?+

To this, G. de P. answered: %No such preposterous claim has ever been made. We claim to be ONE of the important Theosophical life-streams, albeit a chief one, descending from the Envoy of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. Any other Theosophical Society whatsoever that teaches the original Theosophical doctrines and can claim its founding as an offshoot from the Society founded in 1875 by H.P. Blavatsky, we recognize as a genuine Theosophical Society. The degree of genuineness, my Brothers, we recognize to depend upon the greater or less fidelity to the original teachings of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace as set forth by H.P. Blavatsky, their envoy in our age.

%a I have offered my hand in brotherly sincerity, and I say to all others: Come, let us be brothers; here is my hand; let us work together; let us knit up again the torn fabric of the Theosophical Movement, and become at one and at peace...+

G. de P. regime was a brief thirteen years. Before its end, he evidently had come to realize that such a daring concept as unification of all Theosophical Societies was not something to accomplish overnight, or in a few years, though he contended it would assuredly come about some day. He seemed to accept the fact that, as Dr. Stokes expressed it, the idea to take practical form must grow as the flower grows. As said, the seed was sown. Careful counsel was also given. In a letter dated August 19, 1941, he wrote privately to officials of his own Society that should any distant reunion of all Theosophical Societies come about, it would have to come strictly in accordance with the policies and teachings of HPB and the Masters, as first proclaimed by her ... We in our Theosophical Society feel that the reasons for this are obvious, and we do not elaborate them for fear of hurting other Theosophists. The common Theosophical work in the world will be just as well served by the different Theosophical Societies following each its own path, but with cordial and fraternal relations amongst themselves, and especially SYMPATHY by us towards others of other societies of Theosophic bent or Theosophical Societies which are following or which return to the original policies, teachings, and procedures of the Masters and HPB. Nevertheless, our attitude towards all Theosophists of whatever Society is cordial, genial, and with a sincere desire to be fraternal within the limits of the principles above stated.

Dr. de Purucker very evidently had two clear and distinct duties to perform: to teach, and to work for unity among all the dismembered Theosophical Societies. He did both, and the record is there for all to see. To teach: to give added strong impulse to that ORIGINAL Theosophy from the Masters of Wisdom as brought by HPB, then fading or in some theosophical ranks almost unknown. To network or to fraternize this is a concept almost shocking to Theosophists of that era of half a century ago.

We close this incomplete review with a thought that carries its own appropriate wisdom. About six months before the Point Loma Headquarters moved to Covina, at one of the last meetings of the year 1941, a question was asked of G. de P. whether the time was now right (as had been promised some years earlier) to devote an evening to questions about his predecessor Katherine Tingley. He answered: %Well, I understand the devotion in the heart of this querent ... But I have come to the conclusion that no useful end or

objective could be served, and furthermore it would concentrate the attention of our students too much on one single teacher; or to put it otherwise, too much on a person as contrasted with the Work itself.+

Youth says, "Forget the past. We live in the today. Let us concentrate on what is right here." That has obvious merit, but it is incomplete. Is there nothing to learn from history? Need past mistakes inevitably be repeated? Knowledge of history CAN be helpful. Knowledge of men's hearts and minds in their experience directed especially to those among our readers not yet old in years though eager to work for Theosophy and its realization in a practical brotherhood. We wish them well. Let us keep in mind, however, that in all theosophical work balance is needed as well as strength. Let theirs be a wise balance guiding and directing their efforts. They face -- we all face -- an upward cycle of opportunity in this last quarter of a century when humanity receives added inflow of spiritual vitality despite the powerful activity of opposing forces. Each year, too, starts with the smaller cycle between Christmas and Easter when, HPB reminds us,

The astral life of the earth is young and strong ... Those who form their wishes now will have added strength to fulfill them consistently.

She adds,

In a garden of sunflowers every flower turns towards the light. Why not so with us? The theosophical tide is rising. The current is strong. As 1985 is born, may we turn toward the light in the great garden of Theosophy with increasing vision!

What Next?

By Alan E. Donant

From *Sunrise* magazine, October/November 1993; copyright © 1993

Theosophical University Press. We thought the question, "What Next?" applies to our conferences too.

This was written after Alan and others attended the 1993 Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

When the Theosophical Society was founded in New York City in 1875, few realized the force of its ideas or the long lasting momentum it would inaugurate. Proclaiming the message of universal brotherhood, the Society published works that encouraged the study of the world's religions, ancient mythologies, science, and philosophy. By 1893 the message of religious unity was beginning to be heard. The organizers of the World Columbian Exhibition in Chicago agreed that the religions of the world ought to have a part. Though dominated by Christians, other faiths were admitted. Ironically, there was opposition to theosophists at first, but their message was impelling. At their own Congress they attracted audiences of some 3,000-4,000 people.

The spirit of the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions inspired the formation of several interfaith organizations, among them The International Association for Religious Freedom (1900), The World Congress of Faiths (1936), and The Temple of

Understanding (1960) (1). The 1893 Parliament was significant because of the era in which it was held and the long period preceding it without any such attempt. Subsequent international gatherings have tried to bring understanding among the people of all faith communities avoiding, for the most part, theological or philosophical discussions on religious differences. They focused upon encouraging cooperation by bringing people together to reduce suspicion, competition, and prejudice.

In small events are found the seeds of inner revolution. The effort has now come full circle, and this last Parliament accomplished what could not be done in 1893: a broad representation of the global religious communities meeting as equals. Yet, even though over forty interfaith meetings have been held internationally since 1893, overt religious intolerance and bigotry are on the rise. The last 100 years have been a violent period for which the world's religions bear partial responsibility. As Professor Hans Kung has suggested, the world will not have peace as long as religions are waging war upon one another. Parliaments and interfaith dialogues are measures of our inner progress, not stimulators of it, and they acknowledge the failure of people to actualize the basis of all religions · unconditional love.

ō let us work together toward a common goal · the practical realization of the greater Truth · and in gaining new insight into universal truths we will also discover a new applied ethic for humanity.

While the estimated attendance at the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions (some 7,500 people) seems large, it is small compared to the multimillions of religious proclaimants who do not share the sentiments of harmony and equality among religions. (2) The singular lack of initial interest by the global media also gives a more realistic perspective on the status of global spirituality. Still, any recognition of our failure as religious aspirants to live up to the Golden Rule · treating others as we wish they would treat us · is an important step. It confirms the hope t someday humility, tolerance, respect, and the greater message of love will surface from the depths of human consciousness and become daily expressions. But how do we get there from here?

The question "What Next?" was on the hearts and minds of those who attended the 1993 Parliament. Fortunately, the direction of interfaith cooperation has not been toward one world religion since human beings do not gain information in the same manner; we rarely have like experiences even while attending the same events. Why, then, would anyone feel that the infinite and inconceivable could be reached through one approach? At the same time, the interfaith movement would benefit by recognizing that the world's spiritual traditions derive their doctrines from one universal source. Evidence is strong that a common language of the sacred does exist. As Joseph Campbell came to realize, there is only one world mythology expressed in many ways by many cultures.

The inauguration of a new Alexandrian Library by the Egyptian Government and UNESCO (projected for 1995) (3), points to a historic precedent set by Ammonius Saccas in the third century of our era. Let us disagree where we must, but plumb the symbology existing in each long-standing religion for the fragments of the universal mystery language. With the door to wisdom opened, the vision partially glimpsed, one

would stand in reverence before the marvelous and mysterious workings of the divine, and the unity that binds not only human to human but our natural world to the cosmic order. The wisdom of the ages, recorded in the spiritual symbology of mankind, holds that images from the mind of the Unknowable are impressed upon the infinite spaces of space. It is this divine consciousness that expresses itself as the laws of nature and the manifested universes.

Utilizing our different ways of understanding, let us work together toward a common goal · the practical realization of the greater Truth · and in gaining new insight into universal truths we will also discover a new applied ethic for humanity. As evidenced by our world condition the attempt by any one religion to do so alone has failed. Eventually, while continuing to work for the spirit of universalism in our daily lives, we may be able to come together by the thousands in silence sharing that which has no words and, successfully doing so, emerging not only rejuvenated but adding to the inner quality of earth and humanity. Must we always demand that something outward be produced?

Events such as the recent Parliament of the World's Religions, and the other interfaith and ecumenical meetings, represent the warming of the waters of human understanding toward a realization of universal brotherhood. Each meeting, large or small, is like a bubble in a container of water. In this case the heat is the fire of brotherhood that has begun to warm us all. Despite global turmoil, the full rolling boil cannot be too far away, from an evolutionary standpoint, unless we choose to turn off the flame.

TO ALL OPEN-MINDED THEOSOPHISTS

By Robert Crosbie

From *The Friendly Philosopher*, 409-11

When the Messengers departed from this scene, all that was left here was the Message (exoteric and esoteric), and its students of more or less proficiency in the assimilation of that Message.

With the altruistic example of the Messengers and the inspiration of the Message, *the Theosophical Society should have been able to stand alone and united.*

Unfortunately, history tells another story; disintegration began at once, and still goes on, and a grand opportunity to impress the world with the spirit and life of the Message has been lost, through neglect of the essentials and pursuit of non-essentials.

The First Object· the most important of all· the others being subsidiary· has been lost sight of in its direct bearing upon all the changes and differences that have occurred. To form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions what ever+was, and is,

the key to the situation. Let me quote a few sentences from H. P. B.'s last message to the American Theosophists in April, 1891:

The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us, as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; *divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one*; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood. * * * After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart: **BE THEOSOPHISTS, WORK FOR THEOSOPHY.**

These were prophetic words - but the warning was not taken.

It now remains for those who are able to take the words that express the never-dormant wish of her heart as the key-note of the present and future: **Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy, and get together on that kind of a basis; for these are the essentials.**

The unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is **SIMILARITY OF AIM, PURPOSE, AND TEACHING**. The acceptance of this principle by all Theosophists would at once remove all barriers. A beginning must be made by those *whose minds have become plastic by the buffetings of experience*. An agreement between such is necessary; an assembling together in this spirit.

To give this spirit expression requires a declaration, and a name by which those making the declaration may be known.

To call it The Theosophical Society would be to take the name now in use by at least two opposing organizations. To even call it a Society has the color of an organization - one of many, and would act as a barrier. The phrase used by one of the Messengers is significant, and avoids all conflict with organizations, being capable of including all without detriment to any. That phrase is:

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

Members of any organization or unattached, old and new students, could belong to it without disturbing their affiliations, for the sole condition necessary would be the acceptance of the principle of *similarity of aim, purpose, and teaching*. The binding spiritual force of this principle of brotherhood needs no such adventitious aids as Constitution or By-Laws - or Officers to administer them. With it as basis for union, no possible cause for differences could arise; no room is found here for leader or authority, for dogma or superstition, and yet - as there are stores of knowledge left for all - the right spirit must bring forth from those who never fail all necessary assistance. The door seems open for those who would, but cannot see a way. Any considerable number,

living, thinking, acting, upon this basis, must form a spiritual focus, from which all things are possible.

Local Lodges could be formed using the name and promulgating the basis of union, recognizing Theosophists as such, regardless of organization; open meetings; public work, keeping Theosophy and Brotherhood prominent; intercommunication between Lodges, free and frequent; comparing methods of work of local Lodges; mutual assistance; furtherance of the *Great Movement* in all directions possible; the motto: *Be Theosophists; work for Theosophy.*

THE WAY TO UNITE IS TO UNITE
· NOTHING PREVENTS IF THAT IS THE DESIRE.

A Common Purpose

By Sally and James Colbert, Ph.D.

The heroes, the writers, the leaders, and those that speak through their heart, have all participated in this *Rugged Path of Unity*. Please take some time with this magazine and let it seep inside. What does it really mean? Why have those who have followed this path done so much, tried so hard, and given so much of themselves?

Alan Donant's piece is entitled *What's Next?* Yes, what's next for us? Where do we go from here? We can have a conference but what action can we take with the power of unity?

We were sitting together, just thinking about this. The phone rang. It was Myrra Lee. She said she was organizing a conference in San Diego, California on *Trafficking* and we should come. This is where young girls are kidnapped and forced into prostitution. We learned they are made have as many as 30 sexual encounters a night. And, United States was number one in this infamous ranking. And, our county, San Diego, was number one in the United States. Don't misunderstand, this slavery is all over the world. After her phone call we heard from Jan Kind from Brazil. We told him about it. He said this is something ITC could give focus to with Theosophical Unity. He said he knew Diana Chapoten in Paris of the Theosophical Order of Service and he called her. She was very interested. What do we all think? Could this be a common cause Theosophists could put their hearts into? Sexual slavery of young women is the ultimate of the dark forces of separateness. Could our strength from Theosophical Unity help those so vulnerable?