

The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society

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In order to leave no room for equivocation, the members of the T. S. have to be reminded of the origin of the Society in 1875. Sent to the U.S. of America in 1873 for the purpose of organizing a group of workers on a psychic plane, two years later the writer received orders from her Master and Teacher to form the nucleus of a regular Society whose objects were broadly stated as follows:

1. Universal Brotherhood;
2. No distinction to be made by the member between races, creeds, or social positions, but every member had to be judged and dealt by on his personal merits;
3. To study the philosophies of the East -- those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings;
4. To oppose materialism and theological dogmatism in every possible way, by demonstrating the existence of occult forces unknown to science, in nature, and the presence of psychic and spiritual powers in man; trying, at the same time to enlarge the views of the Spiritualists by showing them that there are other, many other agencies at work in the production of phenomena besides the "Spirits" of the dead. Superstition had to be exposed and avoided; and occult forces, beneficent and maleficent -- ever surrounding us and manifesting their presence in various ways -- demonstrated to the best of our ability.

To make it clearer: --

(1) The Founders had to exercise all their influence to oppose selfishness of any kind, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members -- at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding; expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain -- moral or physical -- and even, in daily life.

(2) They had to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching dogmatic faith and fanaticism -- belief in the infallibility of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first. On the other

hand, as a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined) -- such a member incurred expulsion. The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

Belief in the Masters was never made an article of faith in the T.S. But for its Founders, the commands received from Them when it was established have ever been sacred. And this is what one of them wrote in a letter preserved to this day:

"Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical Ethics epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy must be made practical, and has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless discussion . . . It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life thoroughly impregnated with its spirit -- the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity and love. Its followers have to set the example of a firmly outlined and as firmly applied morality before they get the right to point out, even in a spirit of kindness, the absence of a like ethic Unity and singleness of purpose in other associations and individuals. As said before -- no Theosophist should blame a brother whether within or outside of the association, throw slur upon his actions or denounce him...lest he should himself lose the right of being considered a theosophist. Ever turn away your gaze from the imperfections of your neighbour and centre rather your attention upon your own shortcomings in order to correct them and become wiser... Show not the disparity between claim and action in another man but -- whether he be brother or neighbour -- rather help him in his arduous walk in life...The problem of true theosophy and its great mission is the working out of clear, unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties which would satisfy most and best the altruistic and right feeling in us; and the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life where they may be applied with most equitableness...Such is the common work in view for all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task and will require strenuous and persevering exertion, but it must lead you insensibly to progress and leave no room for any selfish aspirations outside the limits traced Do not indulge in unbrotherly comparisons between the task accomplished by yourself and the work left undone by your neighbour or brother, in the field of Theosophy, *as none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him . . .*

Meanwhile, peace and fraternal good-will to all.

H. P. BLAVATSKY,