

Table of Contents

Editorial	1
Can the TS and TOS Help in Conflict Resolution?	3
TOS Healing Ritual	7
Animal Welfare Centre at Adyar	8
Getting the TOS Up and Running	9
TOS Web Sites	10
From Correspondence Received	11
Theosophy and the Ministry	14
What's going on in the TOS around the world?	17
Pause for Thought	28
Para Nuestros Miembros Y Amigos De Habla Española	29
Informe Consolidado en Resumen de Parte de las Actividades.	30
Un sentido de servicio iberoamericano con perspectiva global	32
El Perdón: Un Elevado Acto de Amor	33
Encuentro Sobre "El Bien Morir"	34
Ayuda Espiritual A Moribundos	35
TOS Directory	38



MRS RADHA BURNIER, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE, WHILE UNABLE TO WRITE TO EVERY ONE OF US INDIVIDUALLY, READS ALL REPORTS SENT TO HER AND IS DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE UNDERTAKINGS OF WORKERS IN THE FIELD. SHE SENDS LOVING GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FOR OUR SERVICE PROJECTS.

EDITORIAL

It's been ten years since I accepted the role of International Secretary of the Theosophical Order of Service. As a Young Theosophist, I would never have believed that in middle age I would find myself attached to a job. I would have been shocked at any apparent unwillingness to let others with fresh ideas and energy have a turn. I would probably have taken malicious delight in quoting the response of a past International TS President, Dr. George S. Arundale, to a member in one of the American Lodges, when she told him she had been branch president for 20 years: 'My commiserations, Madam', he said.

However, it's hard not to become attached to the role of secretary! Initially, I was amazed at the extent of the organised service of Theosophists. The existence of schools, orphanages, medical clinics, health and nutritional programmes, healing and peace groups, educational sponsorship systems and animal welfare campaigns seemed to have passed me by as a rank-and-file Theosophist. It was and is a great joy to meet the many unsung heroes and heroines involved in grass roots projects about which we hear relatively little at TS gatherings.

The role of International Secretary, while a pleasure, can also be

come 'armchair service'. After a couple of years in the job, I found myself too busy writing to scores of people *about* service – mainly theirs – to engage in hands-on projects myself. Deciding that things needed to be brought back to a balance, I became involved in green politics, anti-nuclear campaigning and animal welfare work in France where I live.

Actually all of us Theosophists are faced with the challenge of balancing four constants in our lives: study, meditation, self-improvement and service. Running like an underground river beneath all theosophical activity is the Wisdom Tradition. This Tradition provides us with a great ally in our undertakings. If someone were to ask about the importance of Theosophy in serving others, we would probably reply that it is the heart of our service. We might say that we are always trying to understand life and its complexities in the light of theosophical teachings.

Actually, whether we realise it or not, our underlying metaphysical assumptions influence our attitudes towards everything. We are constantly faced with decisions in our lives: which charities we're going to donate to each year and how much we will give to each, what kind of volunteer work to sign up for and

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President: Radha Burnier
International Secretary and Editor:
Diana Dunningham Chapotin



how much time we will give, whether to bring our aged parents to live with us, whether we should register as a conscientious objector when we're young, whether to adopt a child from an underprivileged family, whether to support the call for the forgiveness of the debt of developing countries or U.N. intervention in this or that war-torn country, or even what political party to vote for. We tend to make decisions like these, consciously or subconsciously, in the light of our philosophy of life. The quality of our service to others, the depth of our giving, is directly influ-

enced by our worldview. And the worldview of Theosophy sets giving in a very large context. Because Theosophy offers a vast perspective on life and a deep insight into our own natures, it can revolutionize our motive for the giving of ourselves to others. Theosophical principles can shed light on issues of public concern and on contemporary societal problems, if we explore the practical application of those principles.



I am saddened when a TS member says that there is no need for the TOS in the 'real' work of the Society and that there are other organisations to take care of charity. As members, we should perhaps

ask ourselves 'What is the main goal of the Theosophical Society?' No one disputes that popularising a knowledge of Theosophy is a major focus. Since actions speak more loudly than words, we need to ask ourselves what we are doing to really popularise Theosophy? The first object of the Society is to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity. This is essentially a spiritual task requiring inner transformation that comes about gradually through outer action. The TOS, with its emphasis on practical Theosophy, helps to balance the inner and the outer work. The principal role of the TOS, as I see it, is to help students of the perennial wisdom take that wisdom and make it a force for change in their own lives as well as in contemporary society.

Diana

SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL TOS CONFERENCE — January 1 & 2, 2005

THEME: WISE AND COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

The TOS in India, directed by Mr Mahendra P. Singhal, is organising a gathering for Indian regional workers and overseas TOS members at the international HQ of the TS at Adyar, Chennai, on the first two days of January 2005. If you are committed to the TOS, active in a local group or seriously interested in becoming involved, you are warmly invited. Why not come a week early and attend the international TS Convention at the end of December 2004 too?

Radha, our TOS International President, Diana, our International Secretary and Fernando, our Spanish Language Coordinator, plan to be present, as well as active TOS supporters from around the world such as Terezinha Franca Kind, National Director of the TOS in Brazil and Betty Bland, a TOS board member from the American Section. Please give this invitation some serious thought. For more information about the Conference, write to the international secretary whose address is on the first and last pages of this bulletin.

Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness and many of our people need it solely on these accounts.

Mark Twain, U.S. writer (1835-1910)

o o o

ANY SUGGESTIONS?

If you have any ideas for improving the TOS's performance, communication and outreach, we would be delighted to receive them. Just one question, though: are you free to stay around to help put the ideas into place?

Something we would particularly like aid with is in improving the circulation of *The Service Link*. The vast majority of TS members remain unaware of the Link's existence in spite of complimentary copies being sent systematically to all General Secretaries and Presidents. Any suggestions for improving circulation — and content too — would be most welcome.

CAN THE TS AND TOS HELP IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION?

World peace is one of the principal concerns of people all over the world and yet the vast majority of us feel powerless to stop national leaders, international bullies and multi-national corporations making economic and political decisions that will lead sooner or later to war.

The TOS in the Philippines seems to have found ways for its members to contribute constructively to the reduction of violence in society. The Service Link interviews Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., one of its workers there.

The Service Link: One tends to associate the Philippines with Muslim unrest, coups d'état, hostage-taking and so on. However relatively safe it is to go there as a tourist, the fact remains that the Philippines is one of the countries where the most journalists are killed each year. It is hard to imagine what members can do to stop the fighting between Christian and Muslim groups, for example.

Vic: We are frequently asked what the Theosophical Society or the TOS can do to help stop hostilities in the southern island of Mindanao. We answer that the present violence is like an erupting volcano. A volcano eruption occurs because of heat and pressure building up deep in the earth. Deploying troops to quell violence and conflict is like trying to put a lid on a volcano. But is there anyone taking care of removing the heat build-up permanently?

The Service Link: We hear all the time about peace negotiations going on. Is that the main way to release the heat and pressure?

Vic: In 1996 a peace agreement was signed between the government and the largest armed Muslim group in Mindanao, the Moro National Liberation Front. This group agreed to give up its arms and be integrated into the government. In



Vicente Hao Chin, Jr.

fact its leader became the governor of a large new province. People were saying that peace had come to Mindanao at last. Within three years, however, this peace broke down and a series of worse armed conflicts broke out with the most shocking atrocities: kidnapping, terrorism, etc. Things are now no longer just a question of ethnic and religious difference. They include plain criminal acts.

The Service Link: So are you saying that accords and treaties are useless?

Vic: No, because three years of 'peace' at least saved hundreds or perhaps thousands of lives. But the treaty was just a lull in the storm. It was not the real solution. It did not address the underlying causes of tension. When children grow up being taught attitudes of prejudice and hostility towards either Muslims or Christians, treaties become just ceasefires, but the war goes on. And it goes on from generation to generation.

If we reflect upon the various social evils we are faced with in society — around the world and not just here in the Philippines — we will

find that they too can be viewed in terms of the build up of heat with almost predictable eruptions. Take juvenile delinquency, for example. We can deal with it as crime, which is a police matter, or we can go deeper into the causes which involve education, parenting and culture. If we consider pollution, we can try to deal with it by controlling emissions, but at the root of it are societal values of ever-increasing industrial production and uncontrolled consumption. Young minds are fed with unquestioned values about economic growth, higher production and sales, higher profits and higher GNP. There is hardly a single company planning for zero or negative growth. If we don't deal with these root problems, we will forever be engaged in fighting eruptions, whether in the form of inter-religious war, pollution, animal cruelty, malnutrition, human rights, ethnic violence or a thousand other social ills. I believe that the work of the TS and TOS is to address the heat build-up in the human psyche, starting with children when they are very young.

The Service Link: So how do we go about doing this?

Vic: By taking note of two things: the first is culture and the second is individual and collective maturity. The culture is the conditioning that affects the individual; at the same time, individual maturity is returned to or reflected back on the culture in terms of behaviour. The two are like a closed circuit influencing each other.

If we truly wish to help change things, we must break the cycle that allows the two to feed each other. In the long run, it's the only way. Solving the problem within the cycle is to go to the level of fire-fighting or putting a lid on eruptions

without resolving the causes.

This means a kind of education that will release individuals from the stranglehold of present culture and individual or collective self-centredness. This may be through schools whose teachers can see beyond current culture. An overwhelming percentage of today's schools are just perpetuating the present culture and individual immaturity. In a deep sense, many standard schools may be said to be doing harmful work by their unthinking transmission of the values predominant in commercial, divisive, sectarian or nationalistic culture. Instead of encouraging excellence and conveying uplifting values, they promote competitiveness; instead of modest and responsible use of resources, they indirectly foster consumerism; instead of integrity, they unwittingly promote cunning and convenience in making a living.

Today's teachers are the products of existing schools and hence

are often embodiments of the same culture and self-centredness. How do we cut through such a vicious circle? It is here that we see the essential role of the perennial philosophy or Theosophy in transforming the self-perpetuating model. Such

I would suggest the creation of curricula to promote what may be called transformative education. It is an education that goes beyond the values of the prevailing culture.

wisdom is not beholden to the current culture. It can cut through the closed circuit and bring about change from the outside and not from within.

The Service Link: So what does this

mean in real terms for teachers out in the field?

Vic: I would suggest the creation of curricula to promote what may be called transformative education. It is an education that goes beyond the values of the prevailing culture; it is one of preparation for global citizenship, recognition of universal values, sensitivity to the welfare of all, transcendence of narrow self-interest, nationalism and rivalry. It is a programme that translates such values into new behaviour and habits.

Such a programme does not necessarily mean putting up schools of our own, although that may well be the case, as we are now doing in the Philippines. It is a movement that develops effective methodologies for such transformative education, and promotes them among educators and parents.

We are not talking here of curricula for young people alone but of programmes for educators, parents, social workers, professionals, deci-



Golden Link Youth Camp for elected government youth officials in the Philippines

sion-makers — all interested adults, in fact.

In the past several years, teams of theosophists have been conducting in-depth seminars to combined Muslim and Christian groups that address two issues (among other things): core commonality in religion, and dealing with one's own anger and fears in relating to other people or other ethnic and religious communities. So far the response has been encouraging. Both Catholic and Muslim organisations are keen on continuing these workshops, organised and funded by them. We have organised several of these workshops in the past half year alone.

Transformative education is not something that can be introduced in a 'one-shot' way. Endless lectures and seminars given here and there from time to time to different audiences cannot make much of a dent in the social system. There needs to be sustained work with the same group. If transformative education is started with a certain school, for example, then that work must be continued in the same school for years at deepening levels. Our task is to awaken collective awareness and this awareness will naturally build future society.

The Service Link: Theosophists have been calling for spiritually-oriented education in public educational institutions for as long as the TS has existed. There's a big difference between giving lectures on theosophical doctrine to a polite and tolerant audience at the TS, and communicating several times a week with a class of noisy teenagers — or maintaining harmony in a combined group of Christians and Muslims in Mindanao! How easy is it to apply all this in reality?

Vic: A number of us in the Philippines have been devoting much of our time to this very activity over the past six or seven years. We have experimented with transformative education among adults, teenagers and children, with educators and lay people, with Theosophists and



Golden Link Youth campers

non-Theosophists.

The Service Link: How have you got on?

Vic: We have had to learn by trial and error but the outcome of our efforts has exceeded initial expectations. Numerous secondary and tertiary level schools, governmental agencies, NGOs, the staff of private companies and various religious groups have participated in our training seminars and have become interested in integrating such an approach with their own existing educational or training programmes.

The Service Link: You're not saying that your team of TS members is standing up in front of government and corporate employees and talking about Rounds and Races?!

Vic: No, not the theosophy of the rounds and races, but the theosophy of self-transformation. It is about our higher and lower nature, the different levels of consciousness, about impersonality, about love and relationships, about strengthening objective reasoning and awakening intuition, about self-mastery, dealing with push-button reactions, facing hidden fears, about core religious mysticism as opposed to external rituals

and dogmas, about meditation, about the concept of evolution beyond mere Darwinian survival of the fittest. It is couched in a way that is understandable not only to intellectuals but to the average person.

We have been conducting the self-transformation training, for example, in some of the depressed villages we have adopted, in conjunction with the regular health, nutrition and livelihood programmes. We have been nurturing groups of active citizens, particularly young people between 15 and 25 and the principal result has been the awakening of a genuine altruism. In one community, college students have been volunteering every Sunday for an extended period to help tutor up to 100 smaller children. When we take them on excursions to beaches, they are happy to clean up the rubbish left behind by other beachgoers. We have found that when our young people (called Golden Link youth) participate in games in their suburban communities, fighting no longer breaks out amongst the 'roughies'. This is a small but sure sign that something good is happening, both to the young people and in the communities.

The encouraging results of our pilot work with these communities have motivated us to establish a pilot school which will go up to high school level. The Golden Link School opened in 2002 and will be open up to fifth grade by 2005. We are adding two grade levels each year. The Golden Link School is the fourth school we have put up. In the last national convention of the TS in the Philippines, the members agreed to try to put up another school up to college level within the next ten years.

The Service Link: Goodness, this is all very encouraging and impressive.

Vic: Yes, we too are greatly encouraged. This kind of work will never attract headlines, however. The fruits of the work won't even be seen immediately. It is of little interest to many politicians, who are keen on 'impact' projects. I believe,

however, that going to the fundamentals of education based on spiritual principles and ethical values is the only long-term solution to the problems of humanity. What is important is that we begin now, where we are, no matter how small the effort is. The right seed planted now and nurtured well will not fail to yield the right fruit. It must be done with intensity over the long-term, though, and eventually of course on a very wide scale.

It has not been easy to train a large team of facilitators and lecturers in these fields. It involves not merely speaking skills and knowledge, but also integrating spiritual principles into our everyday behaviour and relationships. It requires recognising conditioning, ingrained negative habits, etc.

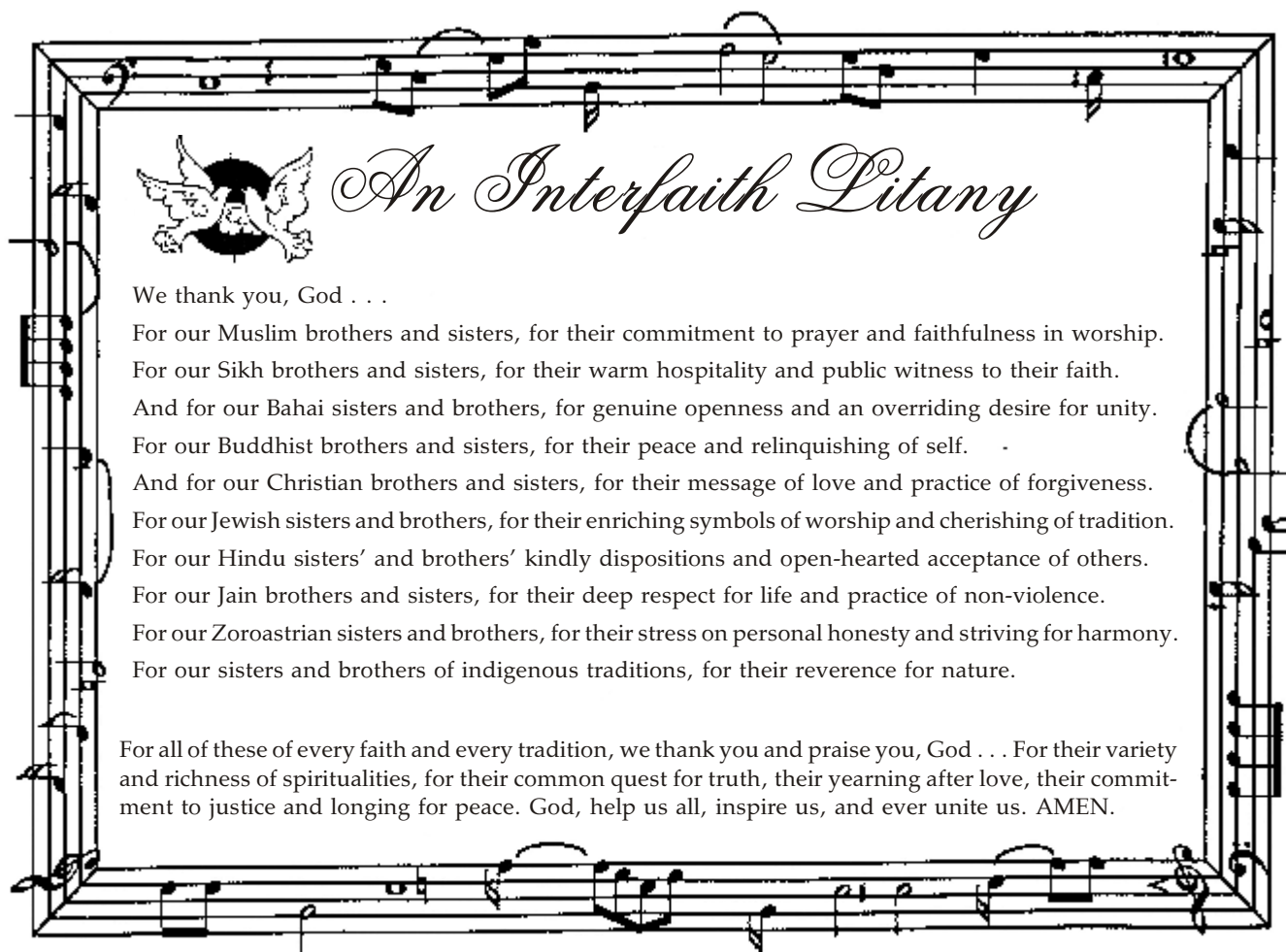
In the Philippines, we say to people, 'If you feel that what we are doing is truly worthwhile, we invite

you to join hands with us in the TOS. Let us do this work together.'

The Service Link: What about members overseas, though, Vic? Can they come to the Philippines to learn how to facilitate conflict resolution workshops for religious communities or to try out the self-transformation programmes?

Vic: Of course they can; they'd be most welcome. It's also possible for us to send trainers out into the field. We've already done this. The training of facilitators has been conducted in Bangladesh, India and Australia. Self-training seminars have been organised in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. This year we're collaborating with TS members on the spot in Malaysia. It's an honour for us to work with our fellow Theosophists, wherever they may be.

C C C



An Interfaith Litany

We thank you, God . . .

For our Muslim brothers and sisters, for their commitment to prayer and faithfulness in worship.
 For our Sikh brothers and sisters, for their warm hospitality and public witness to their faith.
 And for our Bahai sisters and brothers, for genuine openness and an overriding desire for unity.
 For our Buddhist brothers and sisters, for their peace and relinquishing of self.
 And for our Christian brothers and sisters, for their message of love and practice of forgiveness.
 For our Jewish sisters and brothers, for their enriching symbols of worship and cherishing of tradition.
 For our Hindu sisters' and brothers' kindly dispositions and open-hearted acceptance of others.
 For our Jain brothers and sisters, for their deep respect for life and practice of non-violence.
 For our Zoroastrian sisters and brothers, for their stress on personal honesty and striving for harmony.
 For our sisters and brothers of indigenous traditions, for their reverence for nature.

For all of these of every faith and every tradition, we thank you and praise you, God . . . For their variety and richness of spiritualities, for their common quest for truth, their yearning after love, their commitment to justice and longing for peace. God, help us all, inspire us, and ever unite us. AMEN.

TOS *Healing Ritual*



One of the most widespread and popular of our TOS activities is the healing ritual. Groups perform it regularly in many countries.

Some principles of healing, the ritual and instructions are outlined in a blue booklet that can be obtained gratis from the TOS in the Philippines: 1 Iba Street, Quezon City, 1114 Metro Manila; e-mail: theophil@info.com.ph

The method is based on the invocation of higher forces to pour healing energy into those who give their names for help. To the right is one of the central invocations used, as it is to be found in its original version in Geoffrey Hodson's book *The Brotherhood of Angels and of Men*. The illustration on the front cover of this issue of *The Service Link*, entitled 'The Angel of the Pointing Hand', comes from the same book. To start a TOS healing group, write to the International Secretary (see address on page 1).

O O O

Coordinated by TS Presidential Agent, Derry McGrath (left), a group within the TS branch in Limerick, Ireland has started to perform the TOS healing ritual. The Krotona Institute of Theosophy in Ojai, California kindly donated the chalice.



HEALING ANGELS

Hail, devas of the healing art!
Come to our aid.
Pour forth your healing life
Into (person's name).
Let every cell be charged anew
With vital force.
To every nerve give peace.
Let tortured sense be soothed.
May the rising tide of life
Set every limb aglow,
As, by your healing power,
Both soul and body are restored.

Leave here (or there) an angel watcher,
To comfort and protect,
Till health returns or life departs,
To ward away all ill,
And hasten the returning strength,
Or lead to peace when life is done.

Hail, devas of the Healing Art!
Come to our aid,
And share with us the labours of this earth,
That God may be set free in all.

PONDERABLES by Alan Harris

*To find eternity, lift up the minute.
Free choice is everywhere; freedom from consequences is nowhere.*

Reversals for the body are rehearsals for the spirit.

Our deepest wound may heal to become our greatest strength.

At the end of a day, is there one less day in your life or one more day in your life?

There is joy ahead but much work. There is work ahead but much joy.



Any idea how many animals are treated per year at the animal shelter at our International HQ? Over ten thousand — almost all free of charge. What about the number of staff members? There are eight, including three veterinarians. How long has Adyar been engaged in animal welfare work? Since the early 1900s, when members treated injured animals, mangy dogs and so on, and conducted vigorous and successful campaigns to stop animal sacrifices in temples in neighbouring areas. When, in 1964, a member of the English Section, Mrs Dora Crockford, made a donation for animal welfare, it was used to build a dispensary in Besant Gardens to look after sick animals. Many thousands of animals have benefited since.

What's the latest news? An airy and well-equipped operating theatre was opened in September 2003.

Bottom: Staff of the Animal Welfare Centre



Animal Welfare Centre at Adyar

In a message to Lorraine Christensen who recently forwarded a donation to the Centre on behalf of the TOS in Canada, our TOS International President Radha Burnier reported: 'Recently all the buildings in the Centre — dispensary, kennels etc. — were repaired and repainted while the theatre was being prepared, which meant making it as antiseptic as possible, providing a refrigerator, a shadowless operation lamp and other necessary equipment. The care includes not only surgery for injured animals but a programme of birth control. We shelter animals needing post-operative care until they are fit. We also have to look after puppies, kittens and even older animals that are

abandoned near the gate at Adyar or thrown in. It is of course not easy to find homes for these little creatures. There are a number of dogs and cats in our compound that are fed and cared for because they have no other home and have wandered in. We have started neutering them as well.'

Plans for the future? Radha continues, 'We hope to start an Outreach Programme. The Environmental Society of Madras donated a van, but it had to be thoroughly repaired and fixed with a refrigerator and other equipment. The veterinarian in charge will go in the van to villages where there are no veterinary facilities and treat animals in need of care. It may be possible to

cover five or six villages in day, two days a week. Of course the treatment is given free.'

How is all this work financed? By you. By us. That is to say by members of the TOS and TS around the world. Without our donations to the Animal Welfare Endowment Fund, the work would stop.

If you would like to contribute, donations marked for the Fund may be sent to: The Treasurer, Theosophical Society, CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA. Alternatively, you can ask the General Secretary/President if your Section would be willing to accept a local currency cheque and forward the money, along with the other donations, in one lump sum. Any help you can give will be greatly appreciated.





In the last ten years, there has been more than one attempt to start up the TOS within TS ranks in Canada and now it appears that new foundations are being firmly laid. The Service Link asked Lorraine Christensen, the new Correspondent, what motivated her to re-activate the TOS.

Lorraine: During my 30 years as a Theosophist, I have steadily grown to appreciate the importance of applying theosophical principles and ideals to every aspect of life. I have been inspired by the examples of our founders, and those who followed in their footsteps like Annie Besant and C. Jinarajadasa. Our history is abundantly illustrated with stories of Theosophists striving to better conditions in this world – in various fields such as science, the arts, medicine, education, the environment, animal welfare and social service.

Blavatsky's life was one of great service and sacrifice. In her classic *The Voice of the Silence* she wrote: 'To live to benefit mankind is the first step' (Fragment 1, v. 144). The very Masters who inspired the forming of our Society were altruistic in the highest sense. We are told that above all the

GETTING THE TOS UP AND RUNNING . . . at a steady gait!

Masters are philanthropists.

In Canada, our own Theosophical history provides many illustrations of the social action of members. For example, the first woman to practise medicine in Canada, Dr. Emily Stowe, was a founding member of the Toronto Theosophical Society. The great Canadian artist, Lawren Harris, was a very active and dedicated Theosophist. He led the Group of Seven artists who were amongst the first to portray a distinctive Canadian art, depicting the ruggedness and spaciousness of the landscape, and its mystic connection to the north. John (Kootenai) Brown, environmentalist, founder and first superintendent of Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta, joined the TS as early as 1898.

The Service Link: How did you go about getting the TOS started again?

Lorraine: First I talked with our regional TS representative about the idea. Then I looked for records of what had been done in the recent past. Having familiarised myself briefly with what was available, I wrote to the International Secretary for information on current doings of the TOS around the world. I scanned past issues of *The Service Link* to get an idea of what is going on and how things appear to function. Then I set about creating an operating system. Through discussion with other interested members, seven areas of service were identified for members to consider: Administration, Animal Welfare, Culture (Education and the Arts), Environment, Healing, Peace, and Social Service. We decided right

from the outset that we would move at a slow and steady pace, keeping our plans realistic . . . and joyful!

I drafted an introductory leaflet about the work of the TOS to distribute at the annual convention of the Canadian Theosophical Association in August 2003 and wrote for spare copies of the current issue of *The Service Link* to hand out at the same time. I gave a talk there on the work of the TOS. Those motivated to join in shared their ideas.

The first national project decided upon is one that carries over from earlier TOS activity in this country — namely that of promoting animal welfare. In this regard we were able to raise enough money this year to send a donation to the Animal Welfare Endowment Fund at Adyar.

As Canada is a vast country with a population scattered across great distances, written communication is an important part of our outreach. Under Administration, we have therefore started a bi-annual newsletter. We have also written a report on our fledgling TOS efforts for our national magazine, *The Light Bearer*. We hope to continue using both these organs to make our work known.

We decided that membership would be open to all who are willing to make a donation of any amount. We are also encouraging fellow Theosophists across the country to consider making memorial donations on behalf of deceased members. Two memorial donations were received this year.

The Service Link: All the best, Lorraine. We look forward to a progress report next year.

G G G



Theosophical Order of Service in Australia

Web address: <http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/theohbt/tos.htm>

The TOS is a world-wide organisation committed to improving the material and spiritual condition of humanity. It also has a compassionate and constructive approach in dealings with animals and the environment.

Sydney branch

Web address: <http://www.matra.com.au/~hpb/tos.htm>

Formed by Annie Besant in 1908, the TOS provides opportunities for members of the Theosophical Society and others to help reduce suffering. Its approach is broad and it welcomes members from diverse backgrounds. The activities of the TOS in Sydney cover fund-raising for a wide range of welfare groups, campaigning on particular issues, healing/therapy groups and supporting other organisations with similar aims.

Brisbane branch:

Web address: http://home.iprimus.com.au/btheos/brisb_tos.htm

TOS activities include taking an active part in a variety of local service activities, writing to international bodies and governments about human rights issues (in association with Amnesty International), and donating to various causes. Members of the Brisbane TOS group are working, either individually or collectively, on a range of projects associated with community service, health, education, the environment, animal welfare and

TOS WEB SITES

world peace. The TOS provides opportunities for members not only to work together but also to enjoy each other's company and friendship.

Theosophical Order of Service Philippines

Web address: <http://www.theosophy.ph/tos.htm>

Email address: theophil@info.com.ph

The Theosophical Order of Service in the Philippines has undertaken a comprehensive programme for the upliftment of the less fortunate people in society through the following programmes:

Intensive rehabilitation for severely malnourished children, vocational training for their parents, educational sponsorship and the running of schools, establishment of co-operatives, leadership training, values education with teenagers, healing, etc. Anyone interested in volunteering in the above service programmes is welcome to contact us.

Theosophical Order of Service Spain and South America

Web address: www.otshispania.org

TOS Spanish language coordinator, Fernando Pérez Martin, and Raul Dorado Basso continue to develop this site for Hispanic and Portuguese members. The site is beautifully illustrated and contains news and information on themes such as social service, animal welfare, world peace, music and the arts, healing and good citizenship. A new illustrated section on the role of the devas in healing and serving the planet will be added in the course of 2004.

Theosophical Order of Service USA

Web address: <http://www.theoservice.org>

The TOS offers a framework in which individuals may demonstrate practical and humanitarian action in a theosophical spirit, whether or not they are members of the Theosophical Society. We invite you especially to visit our new Discussion Forum, where we encourage people to

speak their minds about the big issues of the day, such as how to achieve peace; to raise awareness of ecology, extinction of species, and world-wide deforestation; animal welfare; a better sharing of nature's bounty; cooperation among nations, etc. and many more concerns. We request that postings be motivated by a desire to be constructive, and not personally defaming.

The TOS has the following departments: Healing, Ecology, Family, Music and the Arts, Social Welfare and Peace. The official journal of TOS in the USA is *For the Love of Life*, currently published three times per year and mailed to members. Two of our departments publish their own newsletters. Our address is: P.O. Box 41584 Tucson, AZ 85717-1584.

SUBSCRIPTION

Subscriptions to *The Service Link* may be addressed to The Service Link, Résidence Isabelle, 18 Avenue Berlioz, 93270 Sevrans, France, at an annual rate of US\$3.00 (postpaid). A free sample copy will be sent upon request. In the following countries, orders may be placed direct with national distributors:

Australia: Georgina Fode
TOS National Director
126-128 Russell Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000 (Aus.\$5)

Canada: Lorraine Christensen
27 Northmount Cr. N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2K 2V6

India: Mr M.P. Singhal
D. 7411 Vasant Kunji
New Delhi 110 030

Philippines: Mr Vicente Hao Chin, Jr.
Chairperson
Theosophical Order of Service
1 Iba St., Quezon City
1114 METRO MANILA

United Kingdom: Annette Coombs
Theosophical Order of Service
50 Gloucester Place
London W1H 8EA (£2)



From Correspondence Received

FROM: MAHENDRA SINGHAL, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE TOS IN INDIA (February 2004)

RE: OUR PRESIDENT'S VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Members of the TOS engaged in planetary peace work may like to know that we have just had our TOS International President here in Delhi for a two-day Global Convention on Peace and Non-Violence organised by the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti. The aim of these two committees is to preserve and promote the essentials of Gandhi's mission, thought and values. Twenty countries participated. It was inaugurated by our Prime Minister. Participants at the Convention were encouraged to return home and organise a Gandhi Centre for peace and service in as many places as possible. Mrs Burnier delivered the valedictory address on the last day. She said that for true peace and non-violence to exist there has to be peace and non-violence in the depths of our hearts. Outer action is not sufficient, she said. We have to learn the unity and love at the root of all. We need to develop a deep sense of tolerance and justice that will give rise to a respect for differences and diversity.

FROM: MRS FAREEDA AMIR, HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE TOS IN PAKISTAN (February 2004)

RE: KISHORE KUMAR

Information was shared in the last issue of The Service Link on the plight of Kishore Kumar, one of our young students here in Karachi whose education, up to Bachelor of Commerce level, was sponsored by Vicki Jerome of New Zealand.

Kishore is unable to walk as a result of polio. Upon reading his story, two readers kindly sent donations toward medical treatment. Here is an update on the use made of this money.

Thanks to the financial help received, we were able to refer Kishore to one of the leading orthopedic surgeons in Karachi. After examining him, the doctor said that his case had been neglected for far too long. Poverty had prevented his family from attending to his affliction when he was a child. However, the doctor had him put into special shoes and braces, and also ordered extensive physiotherapy sessions for several weeks. Unfortunately, the final diagnosis is that his back is too weak and badly damaged to support his weight and he is unable to walk even with the support of the braces. The only alternative for him is to get a wheel chair, but the environment he lives in is not wheel chair friendly. There are no ramps, no lifts and no paved roads or sidewalks. We are in a quandary, and now think that the only way to help is to get Kishore a job, and then he can use the wheel chair at his work place. We have tried to find a job for him and spoken to many people without any success so far, though in the meantime he is doing a little tutoring at home. One of the two donations made — US\$350 — was a very great help in getting him the best treatment available. The money converted into Pakistan Rupees Rs. 20,265/- and we spent just over that amount on his consultation fees, x-rays, blood test and physiotherapy. Without this help all that would not have been possible.

The second donation of approx.



Kishore is carried everywhere by his brother as his community is not wheelchair accessible.

US\$150 has been put carefully aside while we investigate the possibilities of surgery for another one of our students, Yasmeen, aged 12, who also had polio as a child. Her condition is not as bad as Kishore's as she can move about on her own, but she has a very bad limp. An initial examination has shown that her handicap would require several operations to be corrected. We are awaiting further advice from the doctors.... Whatever the outcome for Yasmeen, I cannot say how grateful we are for the generosity of these two donors. We become attached to the children we educate here in Pakistan and it is wonderful to be able to do what we can to ease their circumstances.

FROM: GEOFF HARROD, TOS BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA (January 2004)

RE: THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

I should like to know if TOS members have attended the Social Forums that have been spreading round the globe since the first World Forum in Porte Alegre, Brazil

in January 2001? Has the TOS been represented officially at any of them?

With every best wish,

Geoff

RESPONSE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY

Would readers like to respond to Geoff's question? If anybody has participated in a Forum, we would be most interested to hear from you. All I can say for the present, Geoff, is that two TOS members in Brazil, Eliane Carmanim Lima and Soter Amantino, were deeply involved on an independent, volunteer basis in the organisation of the first three World Forums in Porto Alegre. Eliane encouraged overseas TOS members to fly there for the first of them, perhaps not so much to officially represent the TOS officially as simply to be part of the movement. I myself hesitated. It would have been costly and I was uncertain if the whole thing would be worthwhile.

What a mistake! Media coverage showed it to be an extremely interesting event and time has proved that the movement is far from a passing phenomenon. Regional Forums have since been held in Africa, Asia and Latin America. France and Italy have each had over a hundred local Forums.

The New York Times said recently, 'The Social Forum Movement is a beacon of hope and its influence is increasing.'

But what, in fact, is the Social Forum movement all about? One way of describing it is an attempt to install democracy at international level from the grassroots up. It is the pursuit of an alternative to the neo-liberal economic model being purveyed through the world. It is a

refusal to resolve conflict by invasion of other countries and a commitment to dialogue and consultation instead. It is a sustained effort to examine every sector of society from the standpoint of a united human family.

Just more fine words along the lines of the original League of Nations or its successor, the United Nations? The Second European Social Forum took place in Paris in November 2003, just a few stops down the train line from where I live. The goal of the French organisers was to get people to act together so that another Europe and another world might one day be possible. 'It is a question of building alternatives so that fundamental human rights prevail over financial and commercial interests', they said. Thinking of Eliane from Porte Alegre and her advice to participate, I took a look at the programme. There were so many lectures, debates and discussions on offer — dozens in each time slot and spread over three locations - that I found it almost impossible to choose. Topics ranged from participatory democracy, world trade, agriculture and human rights, to the environment, arts and culture, public services and education. Since everything seemed interesting, I signed up almost at random for a four hour slot on the issue of immigration and refugee rights. Being a migrant myself (from New Zealand to France, with a stop in the USA for nine years), I have developed an alert ear to the question. I was still a little sceptical about the Forum though, having a lurking suspicion that it might be a platform largely for the idealistic frothings of intellectual leftists sitting comfortably in book-lined studies. I wondered if it wasn't perhaps just a protest movement with no concrete proposals to offer based on real experience in the field.

Again, what a mistake! I found myself before a panel of eight speakers, each one involved on a daily basis with asylum seekers, persecuted minorities, migrant workers or de-

Geoff Harrod sends us the address of a Website he maintains called the **Australian Coalition for Economic Justice: www.acej.info**. (Postal Address: ACEJ, 245 Gladstone Road, Dutton Park, QLD 4102, Australia.) Here is its statement of purpose, an interesting reflection of the kinds of concerns explored at the World and Regional Social Forums:

PURPOSE: In a civilised society, power, both latent and expressed, is derived not from the barrel of a gun nor from the aggregation of assets but from the conscious, cumulative decisions of the informed community of citizens. The Australian Coalition for Economic Justice (ACEJ) is a network of organisations and individuals committed to Australian citizens regaining political and economic control over their destiny. Our purpose is to build a sustainable, equitable and just society. We are doing this by a process of discussion. We particularly focus on those forces such as economic fundamentalism and corporatisation and mechanisms such as ideology-driven deregulation and privatisation which aim to concentrate power and wealth and to reduce citizens to, at best, compliant consumers.

IF ANYONE ELSE HAS THE ADDRESS OF A FAVOURITE, SOCIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY ENGAGED, SERVICE-ORIENTED WEBSITE TO SHARE WITH US, PLEASE SEND DETAILS.

tention centre inmates. Each spoke with the wisdom of direct experience over many years and from a deep commitment. They demonstrated, through the hard facts and touching stories they shared, that there is a great difference between what is enshrined in international law concerning immigrant and refugee rights, such as the Geneva Convention, and its actual application.

This isn't the place to talk about the complex problems of immigration but I would like to share what I learned through the Forum as a whole: there are hundreds of thousands of people on this planet who are deeply and intelligently committed to planetary transformation and actively engaged in working for it. They are seekers of long term solu-

tions to world problems and are not head-in-the-clouds dreamers. They not only believe that a better world is possible but seem equipped to make a serious attempt to bring it about.

Individuals, representatives of non-governmental organisations, civil society, trade unions, parliamentarians and members of local authorities from 60 countries took part in the Second European Forum including large numbers of very well informed young people. Over 1,000 voluntary translators made the whole process possible. Fifty thousand people turned up! I was encouraged and moved by what I saw. Perhaps in next year's Service Link, we will be able to present a report on the World Social Forum

held in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) in mid-January 2004? In the meantime, those interested may check out its Website: <http://www.wsfindia.org>

Diana

The next European Social Forum will be held in London, November 2004 with the full support of Mayor, Ken Livingstone.

O O O

Our task is not to overthrow globalisation, it is to capture it and to use it as a vehicle for humanity's first global democratic revolution.

GEORGE MONBIOT
speaking at the European
Social Forum, Paris,
November 2003

d d d

For a large part of humanity, about the only substantial asset that a person owns is his or her ability to work.

AMARTYA SEN
Indian economist

F F F

Many of us have learned to dance the rumba, or the cha cha cha, to rock and roll and to twist and even to dance the waltz and foxtrot. But how many of us can dance, or have ever heard of the gombo sugu, the mangala, nyang'umumi, kiduo, or lele mama?

JULIUS NYERERE
Former President of Tanzania
(1922-1999)

R R R

There will be neither United Nations nor One World, unless we have united notions.

SIRSIRKUMAR GHOSE

INTERNET GLEANING

For those who haven't seen it, here is a thought-provoking item that has been doing the rounds on the Internet for the past few years:

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following:

There would be:

57 Asians

21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere, both north and south

8 Africans

52 would be female

48 would be male

70 would be non-white

70 would be non-Christian

89 would be heterosexual

11 would be homosexual

6 people would possess 59% of the world's wealth and all 6 would be from the United States

80 would live in substandard housing

70 would be unable to read

50 would suffer from malnutrition

1 would be near death; one would be near birth

1 (yes, only 1) would have a college education

1 would own a computer

Theosophy and the Ministry

How do Theosophists apply theosophical teachings in their jobs? In a past issue of *The Service Link*, a TS member talked about how his theosophical convictions help him in his work as a staff training officer in the New Zealand prison system. Then a Spanish professor of neurology answered the question, 'Does Theosophy have any application when you deal with your patients?' In the last issue, Barbara Bradley Hebert of Covington, Louisiana in the United States explored a similar question in relation to her job as a high school counsellor.



Father Kevin Tingay

This time we 'chat' with the Reverend Kevin Tingay, Priest in Charge of a cluster of villages in the Diocese of Bath and Wells in England and Bishop's Advisor on Interfaith Matters. He joined the TS in 1965 before entering the Anglican Church, at first participating actively in TS life as a member of Kensington and Camberley Lodges, and since then only as far as his numerous Church tasks have allowed.

The Service Link: Not many Anglican priests are members of the TS, are they?

The Reverend Kevin Tingay: Not as far as I know, certainly in the UK. For many, Theosophy would be viewed as a rather strange and suspect movement. Much that was written about it in the past was fairly negative, as were some Theosophical writings about Christianity and the Church. Within the liberal wing of the Anglican Church there are many clergy and laity who would agree with the objects of the TS, however.

The Service Link: It would perhaps not be terribly appropriate to refer to your role in the Church as a 'job'. More of a vocation, really?

Father Kevin: The Church of England provides me with a job, or rather several jobs in fact. The vari-

ety of work a Church minister is called upon to do is quite surprising. Underlying all the roles, though, is certainly what Christians (and others) would describe as a 'vocation' or 'calling'. That is a sense that there is a higher power that is the source of all life, and that human beings have the capacity to relate to that power. Within the complexities of that relationship there can be a recognition of how individuals' gifts and talents can be put to creative use.

The Service Link: You apparently became a Theosophist before engaging in your theological studies. Were you raised a Theosophist then?

Fr. Kevin: I was born during the Second World War. My mother, herself brought up in the Church of England, converted to the Roman Catholic Church while she was carrying me. I thus have the distinction of having been conceived as an Anglican but born and baptised as a Roman Catholic! I went to Catholic schools from the age of 4½ to 16, when I left school disenchanted by both the education system and the Christian faith. By the age of 18, I was avidly reading books on other faiths and spiritual traditions. On a visit into central London one day, I

discovered the TS Bookshop, then in Great Russell Street opposite the British Museum, and from there I went to the TS itself. Through joining the Society, I came into contact with a prominent Theosophical family, the Leslie-Smiths, and became lifelong friends with them. They had a great influence on me because they expressed Theosophical ideals in the openness of their lives. They included me and many others in their own quest. I was struck by the way they did not assume that because I was young and at that time ill read in theosophical and other spiritual writings that I was of less value than the older and undoubtedly wiser members of the group. I have met Theosophists, and of course Christians and members of other traditions, who are experts in the books, and who achieve power and influence, but find it difficult to apply the ancient wisdom in loving relationships. I am happy to say that many of the most spiritually significant relationships I have been given in my life have come through TS connections. A great number of these close friends, such as Leslie and Madeleine Leslie-Smith, have now passed from this realm, but something significant in our relationship remains alive.

The Service Link: How did you move into membership of the Anglican Church?

Fr. Kevin: From the age of 21, I was employed in a variety of jobs in bookselling and publishing and in my spare time I studied both Theosophy and theology, eventually gaining a BA in Religious Studies with English and fulfilling the requirements of the General Ordination Examination of the Anglican Church.

The Church provides a relatively liberal structure in which I can not only minister to others but also find spiritual succour. The most won-

derful and consistent inspiration for me is in the celebration of the Mass or Holy Communion week by week and year by year. It never loses its potency. If I go to the altar, as I sometimes do, feeling angry, depressed or doubtful, I am certain to leave it knowing that I have again touched something of the Divine, and have been fed by that power and love. That, of course, is what it is for, but I am always thankful for the gift of being called to fulfil that aspect of the priestly duty.

I have had rich opportunities to serve not just the Church but also the community as a whole. Not all Theosophists will know the tasks required in the different roles of a minister — deacon, priest, rector, dean, for example — and we don't need to go into the details here but the fact is that the Church is a wonderful base from which to reach out to people in need, just as the Theosophical Society is.

The Service Link: What special qualities would you say are required of someone in the community whose mission is to reach out and touch people?

Fr. Kevin: The qualities or gifts of individuals vary greatly. Some of the most 'spiritual' service can taken the form of simple common sense practical aid for someone. A pastor may give greater spiritual help by making sure that an elderly person's physical needs are met than by preaching a sermon across a sickbed! For me, the key thing is a sense that there is a greater, spiritual dimension which 'contains' our own physical and mental being and the earthly communities we inhabit. By having a firm spiritual basis in our own life, something of real importance (albeit intangible to both giver and receiver) is communicated, whatever service one is rendering.

There's nothing fancy or sophisticated about service as a pastor. It takes the same form of patience, gentleness and tolerance in small things that anyone else's does. A wise priest once said to me that in



every parish or church there is a particularly difficult person. They seem to have the knack of rubbing people up the wrong way or getting on the nerves of others. It behoves the parish priest to remember that every human is made in the image of God (in TS terms is a divine spark). In the case of the difficult person, that image or spark is just very cunningly concealed! It is definitely there somewhere and striving to remember that makes a difference in your relationship with the difficult person. Very often they detect that your reaction to them is different. They may try to make themselves even more objectionable; often they mellow amazingly. Jesus told us to love our enemies, and it is very difficult to do, but seeking the divine spark in each can help. The difficult character often turns out to be an interesting one, what's more!

The Service Link: You currently serve as a member of the Racial Justice Group of your Diocese. What does that involve?

Fr. Kevin: Our group is responsible for monitoring race relations in the communities served by our churches and encouraging a positive attitude to ethnic variety through educational projects. Sadly, the Christian Churches in the UK have not had a very good record

in being friendly to Christians from ethnic minorities and immigrant communities. In our part of rural England there are few black or brown faces and we are sometimes told 'racism is not a problem here'. This is, of course, a problem in itself! In fact many members of the ethnic minorities in some of our towns and larger villages have experienced discrimination and even violence.

The Service Link: You say the Group organises educational projects. Can you give an example?

Fr. Kevin: We have conducted awareness sessions for clergy and other church workers, based on a model developed by the police, to show how easy it is to treat people from minority social, racial and religious groups in our area differently from others. Case studies are examined so that attitudes can come to the surface. We might ask a priest, for example, how he thinks he might react to racial abuse, some subtle, some more obvious, directed at the new Asian proprietors of a village shop in rural Somerset. How far might he go in showing solidarity with the newcomers, when he knows that some members of his congregation have expressed hostility?

The Service Link: Don't you mean he or she when talking of your priests? Didn't the Anglican Church admit women several years ago?

Fr. Kevin: What an error! Indeed we have female priests and I was active in the campaign to get our rules changed so that they could be ordained. It just shows how old gender specific thought forms lurk in our subconscious. Mea culpa!

The Service Link: Have you noticed a difference in the strength of the Church since women were admitted to the priesthood?

Fr. Kevin: I would say that there has been a broadening and strengthening of pastoral ministry since women were ordained. Some of those who were opposed to the ordination on theological grounds have changed their minds after encountering the reality of women exercising priestly ministry, but many continue in their opposition. Provision is even made for parishes to decline contact with female clergy. They probably represent about 15% of parishes. Of those who were uneasy not for theological reasons but because of a generally conservative outlook, almost all have changed their minds. We are currently awaiting further discussions about the consecration of women bishops.

They exist in other parts of the Anglican Communion but not yet in England.

The Service Link: You are on the Executive Committee of the World Congress of Faiths. What does that work entail?

Fr. Kevin: The World Congress of Faiths is a UK based organisation that links individual members of all faiths who are committed to a greater understanding of each other's traditions. It publishes a journal, organises meetings and conferences to foster dialogue. It was founded in 1936 by Sir Francis Younghusband. We could do with many more members, including Theosophists who have access to such rich information about the principles underlying the great religions. I invite you to look at our website for more information: www.worldfaiths.org. For many years WCF has organised meetings and conferences that provide a forum where people of different faiths can meet and build personal friendships. Like the TS, it has in some ways suffered the fate of pioneering movements in that it has now been joined by many other groups doing similar work, especially in our larger cities where ethnic minority populations now live in larger num-

bers.

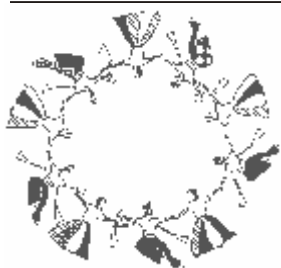
The Service Link: Have you met Rowan Williams, the new Archbishop of Canterbury?

Fr. Kevin: Yes, I have. Though he is not a friend, I had the pleasure of some encounters with him before he took up his new appointment. I would commend his books as guides to some of the best current Christian thinking. He is a wise and godly man, and has a very difficult job to do at the moment. There are now great tensions within the Anglican Communion. It is very sad that conservative voices are challenging the freedom of interpretation that has, up to now, characterised the Church of England and other provinces of the Anglican Communion. At least this is not the case in the TS, of which freedom of thought has been a cornerstone since its inception.

In the TS context, I must say that it has been a great privilege to hear talks by and meet such people as N. Sri Ram, Clara Codd, Wallace Slater and Geoffrey Hodson. I heard Edward Gardner speak when he was 100 years old. He was of course past his best then, but hearing him was nevertheless a very remarkable experience for me. I heard Krishnamurti speak on several occasions, both in England and once in India and found him inspiring, challenging, but perhaps too detached from the practical realities of the world.

Humanity can be served in many ways. It seems to me important that each of us strives to discover our particular calling. We may be inspired to action by individuals, but not in the same field of service. Some may be better at practical acts of succour, some in the realm of education, some at taking ideas forward in the fields of social reform, religion or politics. These tasks may change in the course of our lives. The active and the contemplative support each other at an inner level, and both should be directed towards the spiritual advancement of all humanity.





WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE TOS AROUND THE WORLD?

Looking for a new service project? Try reading this report of TOS activities in 2003 prepared by the International Secretary and the Spanish Language Coordinator. You may pick up a worthwhile idea to try out in your own community.

Argentina

MUSIC AND THE HEALING ARTS

In Buenos Aires and Rosario, the beautiful TOS ritual is performed fortnightly. Financial support is given to a number of people who are seriously ill and unable to afford medical treatment.

A TOS choral group in Rosario sings at charitable events. The Rosario group is also heavily engaged in the campaign 'For the Reconstruction of Santa Fe', a region greatly affected by unemployment and recent flooding. TS members collect all kinds of household goods to deliver to needy families. An excellent bimonthly bulletin reports on activities.

Australia

BUSYBEES AT WORKING BEES

Members are active working in and raising money to support a range of groups: Amnesty International, UNICEF, the Red Cross, the City Farm, Men of the Trees, the Greening Australia Project, the Alternative to Violence Project...

TOS members in Queensland organise meditation, healing and ecology workshops, as well as working bees at the TS Retreat Centre at Springbrook in the state of Queensland.

In 2003, clothes were collected for

a Chernobyl orphanage.

The TOS in Australia continues to make generous donations to the Endowment Fund of the TOS in Pakistan, the Golden Link School in the Philippines, TOS educational work in Kenya and the Olcott School at Adyar.

It publishes the 'TOS Network' that reports on the wide variety of activities of the TOS groups in Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Hobart, Adelaide and Perth.

At the 2003 TS Convention, the TOS hosted a presentation by the Perth group of the 'Alternative to Violence Project' (AVP) at which participants talked about their work with prisoners in local jails, helping them come to grips with their anger and their circumstances.

Each year Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney and the TOS collaborate in organising a fundraising seminar. Their most recent one was in support of UNICEF and was entitled

'Sacred Rivers: a Source of Life'. Four speakers spoke on the Nile, Ganges, Urumbamba (Amazon) and Parramatta Rivers.

Bolivia

MODEST BUT KEEN

TOS Correspondent, Grover Crespo Vides, reports that members support a health and nutrition programme for the farmers of the Tunari mountains. Classes in vegetarian nutrition, yoga, exercise and relaxation (both physical and psychological) are being given on TS premises in Cochabamba.

Members support a health and nutrition programme for the farmers of the Tunari mountains.

Classes in vegetarian nutrition, yoga, exercise and relaxation (both physical and psychological) are being given on TS premises in Cochabamba.



Be careful when you take pity on a stray cat! When Geoff and Carolyn Harrod of the TOS in Brisbane, Australia picked up a near-dead kitten from a gutter, thinking to comfort it in its last hours or days, little did they realise what they had taken on. No fewer than twenty three years later, Tabitha is still with them and going strong!

Brazil

UNUSUAL UNDERTAKINGS IN 2003

The ecology department of the TOS in Brasilia invited the Fire Brigade to give a talk in the TS building about how to prevent and combat forest fires. The following day a practical exercise took place on the grounds of the Theosophical Institute, under the guidance of experts of the fire brigade staff.

Rio members designed a Christmas card as an income-generating suggestion for a local animal protection society.

Members of the Augusto Bracet branch in Rio prepared 20 sets of baby supplies for pregnant women in difficulty. Each set included handmade nappies, blankets, baby

shoes and shirts, along with feeding and washing materials.

Rio members participated in a movement working against religious discrimination obliging children to study only Christianity in school; they are also part of an inter-church movement trying to promote tolerance amongst the different divisions of Christianity.

The Brasilia TOS carried out an informal survey of the eating habits, physical and psychological condition of local TS members, an initiative welcomed by everyone and whose results were above expectation. An experimental holistic health education programme is being developed by a group of doctors and psychologists.

Long-term goal

Since July 2002 when Terezinha Franca Kind accepted the role of National Director of the fledgling TOS,

she has been applying a great deal of energy to reinforcing and expanding the groups in Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and São Paulo, and to re-activating work in Belo Horizonte and Recife. Her long-term goal is to have TOS representatives wherever there is a TS Lodge or Study Group.

National plan of action

To this end, the TOS in Salvador-Bahia hosted the 1st National Meeting of the TOS in September 2003 which was attended by about thirty people. Six TOS representatives came from other states. Many could not attend the event because they could not afford to pay for air tickets. Non Governmental Organisations, whose objects are similar to those of the TOS, were also invited to participate and made very worthwhile contributions. Besides inspiring lectures relating to TOS activities, reports were presented during an administrative meeting, and a National Plan of Action was drawn up. Everybody was enthusiastic. Volunteers from other cities now feel they are not operating on their own. Terezinha is in constant communication with them via e-mail and once in a while by telephone. São Paulo will host the 2nd National Meeting at the TS's Raja Centre at the end of October 2004.

Several groups around the country regularly perform the TOS healing ritual and a meditation for world peace. Much is done in the way of material and financial assistance for the underprivileged. Animal welfare work is also a feature of the Section's efforts.

Canada

CHOOSING A PROJECT TOGETHER

Fundraising for the Animal Welfare Fund at Adyar was selected by those interested in helping new TOS Correspondent, Lorraine Christensen, re-activate the TOS. So far \$US100 has been collected

NEWSLETTER

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE IN CANADA

Issue No. 1
Autumn 2003

IN THIS ISSUE

A PROPOSAL FOR TOS WORK IN CANADA	1
SEVEN AREAS OF SERVICE	1
National Projects	2
Local Projects	2
Individual Projects	2
DONATIONS FOR TOS WORK	2
PROGRESS REPORT – January to November	2
SERVICE NOTES	3
ANIMAL WELFARE – <i>Work at Adyar</i>	3
ENVIRONMENT – <i>International Year of Fresh Water</i>	3
SOCIAL SERVICE – <i>Christmas Humphrey's Efforts to Abolish Capital Punishment</i>	4
AN INVITATION	4

Seven Areas of Service



In our brochure on the TOS in Canada, seven areas of service are identified:

- Administration (Organization and Promotion)
- Animal Welfare
- Culture (Education and the Arts)
- Environment
- Healing
- Peace
- Social Service.

The idea for seven departments of service came to me when I discovered in our Lodge Archives an old TOS chart, yellowed and brittle with age, listing the following seven departments. These have been modified to suit our present purposes.

Watcher (or "Eyes of the Order", which we have changed to "Administration", as this department also needs "eyes" to oversee and keep on top of everything!)

Animal Welfare

Arts & Crafts (which we have changed to "Culture" as it includes a broader range, including Education)

Healing

Back to Nature (which we have named as "Environment")

World Peace (which we have shortened to "Peace")

Social Service (where is listed such work as "International Emergency".)

**A PROPOSAL FOR
TOS WORK IN CANADA**

- By Lorraine Christensen, Canadian TOS Correspondent -

During the last ten years, there has been more than one attempt to start up the Theosophical Order of Service in Canada. We trust that this year – 2003 – we will succeed by laying some solid foundations. Our expectations are realistic as we begin anew at a slow and steady pace.

The motto of the Theosophical Order of Service is

**A Union of Those Who Love
In the Service of all That Suffers**

In Canada, we are committed to building up a fellowship of TOS members dedicated to serving this motto. Service can happen in numerous ways and on varying levels of intensity, as suggested in the articles to follow.

and sent to Adyar. Lorraine, who comes from Calgary, Alberta, has produced an introductory leaflet, the first issue of a bi-annual newsletter and a report for the national TS magazine, *The Light Bearer*.

Chile

HOW CAN SO FEW ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH?

11 individuals, 7 of whom are TS members:

- offer Christmas gifts to underprivileged children and adults.
- collect and distribute food and clothing to the needy.
- organise regular visits to a short list of sick people.
- organise lectures on themes such as animal welfare (the danger of the extinction of certain species, how to shop for cruelty-free products), ecology (the ozone layer, water conservation, deforestation, pollution) and the roots of war.
- meet once a week to meditate for world peace.
- perform the TOS healing ritual (39 times in 2003 for 143 individuals).
- put paintings by members on display.
- perform as a choral group.

Colombia

OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC

TS Lodges are being encouraged to organise service activities for members, friends and sympathisers to provide an outlet for those attracted to theosophical ideals but not yet interested in attending lectures and study classes. A greater sense of belonging to the TS amongst a wider circle is being sought in this way.

In 2003 classes in vegetarian cuisine were offered, along with talks and activities on the theme of love



Reprinted with permission. This cartoon is one of hundreds of different 'Pot-Shot' cards. For U.S.\$3, a starter set and catalogue may be ordered from: Brilliant Enterprises, 117 W. Valerio Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, USA.

for animals, ahimsa, etc.

The younger members present classical music concerts, painting exhibitions, short pieces of theatre and tales for children in order to familiarise them with theosophical ideals.

The TOS continues to provide special support to the Fundación Sueños del Mañana (Dreams of Tomorrow Foundation), an association that feeds, clothes and educates some fifty children from the poor areas of Bogota. In 2003, money, gifts and tools were presented to the Foundation at the TS premises.

TOS Correspondent, Julia Ballesteros, accompanied by Beatriz Acosta on the piano, made a beauti-

ful CD of songs and gave the proceeds of its sale to the Foundation. Bravo, Julia and Beatriz!

East & Central Africa

SEVEN TONS OF HELP!

The TOS in Kenya has a long tradition of making substantial donations to selected deserving charitable homes in Nairobi on Founders' Day. This year it donated seven tons of foodstuffs to homes for orphans, children with HIV/AIDS, impoverished elderly people, etc.

It sponsors the education of five orphans at the Starehe Boys Centre and their study progress is moni-



Young Theosophists in Colombia introducing theosophical ideals to children through theatre.

tored.

A member of Voi Lodge who is a doctor treats patients in a poor, rural area for free.

Visits of condolence are made by members of the Lodge in Nairobi and regular meditation, healing and Bharat Samaj Puja sessions are held. The Bharat Samaj Puja, a Hindu congregational ceremony for peace, harmony and spiritual upliftment, brings in some donations for the worthy causes supported by the TOS.

In Tanzania members donated toward the cost of surgery for seven underprivileged Africans this past year.

Lunch was provided for 120 patients in a local hospital and for the children of a Salvation Army orphanage.

Forty blankets were given to the poor.

The TOS greatly appreciated receiving another donation from the TS in Australia.

England

SOLDIERING ON

For some years now, the TOS has been struggling, which is a shame, because since its inception in 1908, the TOS has been a well-anchored part of the life of the TS Lodges. Fund-raising for a wide variety of charitable projects has been a fine tradition amongst the members for many decades and still continues lo-



Joan and Larry Murtagh on one of their visits to the El Shaddai street children's homes in Goa, India

cally in spite of difficulties at leadership level.

Ivy Pope, a devoted TOS worker in the North West Federation of the TS sent a splendid report about the purposeful year the TOS has had in her region: 'We have sent 700 teddies to destitute children this year. Maureen Atkinson spoke to the pupils of the Westholme School in Blackburn about the Teddies for Tragedy project and no fewer than 189 bears were donated by the students. The TOS in Lancaster cooperated with a local golf club that gave a holiday to 20 children from Chernobyl fighting cancer by sending a teddy along for each child. The Federation also donated 30 shoe boxes filled with goodies for young

and old alike. Bonnets, hats and scarves were knitted by a member from Blackburn. Blankets and other bedding went to a local charity 'Nightsafe'. For over three years now, Bolton Lodge members, Joan and Larry Murtagh, have been collecting money, books, toys and sweets for the El Shaddai street children's homes in Goa, India. They go out personally at Christmas and take supplies. The proceeds from the Federation and TOS Christmas social hosted in Blackburn were donated along with stationery for the children's schooling. The National TOS donated £1000 which was added.' In December 2002, Joan and Larry went to Goa with a cheque for £2000 raised from a variety of sources. In 2003, a further £250 was allocated by the National TOS for the purchase of toys.

Other members and Lodges contributed to a variety of charities even if it was not under the auspices of the TOS.

Bradford Lodge, for example, makes annual donations to the TOS and to local charities such as Bradford Soup Run, Animal Aid, Humane Research Trust, the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection and the Cats' Protection League. The national TOS allocated a grant to Julie Cunningham of Bangor Lodge in 2003 for Compassion in



Helen Gething MBE, daughter of well-known TS writer, Wallace Slater, passed away on January 27, 2004 after many years of dedicated work for the TS in England. Helen had a distinguished record of service. In 1995 she was made a Member of the British Empire for her work with the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Helen had just taken over as coordinator of the TOS in England when illness overtook her. She is greatly missed.



Top: TOS and TS members eat out in Paris to celebrate World Vegetarian Day.

Middle: Core TOS workers after a planning meeting in January 2004.



Bottom: Michel Chapotin, vice-president of the TOS in France, celebrating with the National President, Mrs Perrette Domer, her eternal youthfulness (going on 91)!



France.

The TOS organises a two-day sale at TS HQ each November to finance the bulk of its activities. Items that sell best: secondhand books on

Theosophy and related subjects, spiritually-oriented Oriental art and craft and . . . cakes!

India

A VERY SPECIAL SECTION

Can you imagine being a member of a TS Section with over a *hundred* local TOS groups? Our Indian members can – because they have them! Their total TOS individual membership is over 5000. Organised service work, principally in the fields of health, education, animal welfare and the environment, is extensive compared with that undertaken by members in Western countries.

Examples of initiatives in the fields of health and education in 2003:

- A sum of 300,000 rupees was spent on more than 40,000 beneficiaries by way of free medicine, cataract operations and medical checkups.
- Several free homeopathic dispensaries were run for the poor. Ayurvedic medicines and pranik healing procedures are also

World Farming.

In response to interest from rank-and-file members, a meeting was held at the TS Summer School in 2003 and plans made to revitalise the TOS. Helen Gething, already over-extended but dedicated, was named coordinator and she and long-time key workers such as Annette and Alan Coombs, Greta Walker and Maureen Atkinson, set about providing information, support and advice to branches and members interested in initiating projects. It was agreed to have a regular AGM at Summer School every year as this allows members all over the country to attend. A regular Newsletter was going to be sent out. Unfortunately the untimely death of Helen in January 2004 has set the TOS back again....

France

MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES

TS and TOS members sponsor the education of well over a hundred Tibetan and Indian students.

They donate to the Olcott Educational Society at Adyar.

Medicines are sent to a hospital and two clinics in Togo, and to the Order of Malta.

Large quantities of clothing and other saleable items are donated to several aid organisations within



During the TOS Camp held in Allahabad, India in March 2003, National TOS Director, Mr Mahendra P. Singhal (centre, in dark vest) presents hearing aids to children who are hard of hearing.



Top: A dance class amongst the girls.

Bottom: Swami Nityanand Ji teaching yoga at a Sunday morning TOS meeting.

Some of the drawings done by the TOS children of Orai for their French sponsors



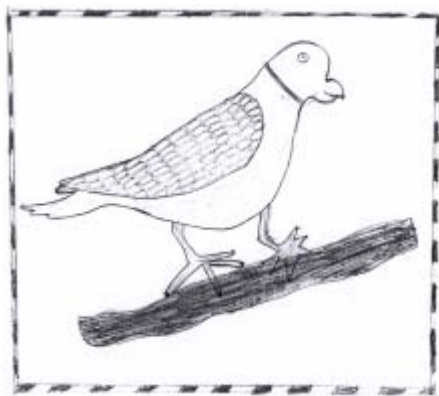
Name: Ankit Batham



Name: Shikha Yadav
Class: VII



Name: Nishi Gupta
Class: VII



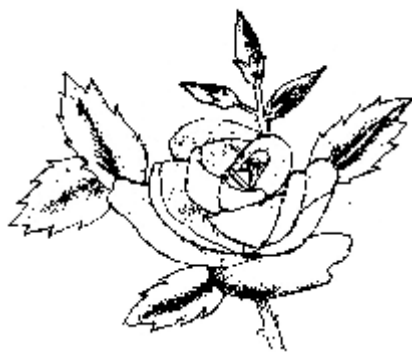
Name: Dixit Gupta



Name: Ashish Gupta
Class: VII



Name: Shubham Purwar
Class: VII



Name: Anoop Kumarpal
Class: 9th
School: Adovish



Name: Neeloo Rajibut
Class: VII



Name: Ranyana Senger
Class: VII



Tricycles are presented to two handicapped persons by Mr Singhal. Also present: Mr Shiva Kumar (front left), TOS Regional Secretary in East Uttar Pradesh, and Mr P.S. Mital (centre), TOS National Secretary.

made available in one or two places.

- Leaflets were distributed in regional languages about cancer and HIV/AIDS prevention. Thousands of leaflets against tobacco were distributed in Bihar Region.
- Bombay region sponsored the education of more than 400 students, ten of whom were supported by Save The Children Fund (London).
- An elocution contest was organised on the life of Annie Besant by the Hassan group of Karnataka Region.
- Two primary schools were adopted by Besant group in Delhi and deserving poor students given scholarships covering uniforms, books and stationery.
- A member donated Rs.100,000 for the construction of an additional classroom in a school run by the TOS in Calcutta for slum children.
- Of the 50 boys and girls given intensive tutoring in Delhi over the last year on an experimental basis to enable them to enter regular classes at their own age level, 12 secured admission in primary school.

Recent TOS workers' gatherings have been so successful that it has been decided to hold the next one at Adyar itself on January 1 & 2, 2005 in order to facilitate the participation of overseas members. (For details, see page 2.)

Italy

STEADILY EXPANDING

The TOS has been growing for



Students of the TOS's Literacy Centre in Lyari, a very poor area of Karachi, Pakistan inhabited mostly by ethnic Baluchis. It is wonderful to see this community cooperating in the education of its girls. Unfortunately the TOS may have to close the Centre for lack of funds.

the last 15 years under the leadership of Luigi Marsi.

The education of 110 underprivileged children is sponsored, 77 of them by members of a single group (Zogno).

Fourteen groups meditate regularly for world peace. There are over 140 members in the Naples meditation circle alone. National Director, Luigi Marsi, notes that a rapid growth in numbers in 2003 in this area was largely due to concern over the war in Iraq.

The TOS sent 1670 euros to Adyar in 2003 for the Olcott School and 60 euros to the TOS in Pakistan.

620 Euros were donated for the printing of books on Theosophy in Eastern European countries.

Promotion of the vegetarian ethic is strong among Theosophists in Italy, as is assistance for the elderly and ill.

Pakistan

HELP!

Most readers will recall the hundreds of underprivileged children and young adults the TOS in Pakistan educates through sponsorships, in addition to running a Montessori school on TS premises in Karachi. This work has been seriously undermined in the last two



Independence Day celebrations at the TOS's Literacy Centre in Lyari, Pakistan.

years because, as was reported in 2002, many of the TOS's donors vanished as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA. The political tension arising from the subsequent bombing of Afghanistan and the resulting unrest in Pakistan frightened them; they apparently thought that their donations wouldn't reach their des-

tination. This has left the TOS in difficult straits. In spite of the continuing and greatly appreciated help of the TOS in England, Australia, New Zealand and one or two kind individual members, damage has been done. This year, the Management Council had to stop paying the salaries of the two part-time doctors working in two medical clinics

for the poor.

The Honorary Secretary, Fareeda Amir, writes: 'We are thinking now of closing down our Literacy Programme Centres as the TOS cannot afford to run those as well as the Family Relief and the Educational Sponsorship Programmes. Since the Literacy Programme is our newest venture, it seems that it will have to be the next to go. It will break our heart to have to stop it, but we really don't know what else to do.'

On a happier note, Fareeda reports that in addition to regular music classes, the Montessori School children continue to participate with great enthusiasm in World Animal Day and Independence Day celebrations by presenting songs and skits for the children and parents of the educational sponsorship programmes. Support continues to be given on a regular basis to 43 families and elderly people who have no independent means.

Peru

LIQUEFIED FROGS

Members cooperated with the authorities in the fight against the



Members of a new local TOS group in New Zealand have linked up with the TOS in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India to support selected projects. More news of this in the next issue of the The Service Link. Back Row: Richard Sell, John Vorstermans, Murray Stentiford, Val White. Front Row: Renee Sell, Henriette and Ian Rutherford.



Old and new friends enjoying themselves around the TOS stall at the TS annual convention in Orewa, New Zealand, January 2004. From left to right: Richard Sell, Charles Sitwell, Vicki Jerome and Bryan Pollock.

sale of *maca*, a juice made from a nutritious tubercle and frogs liquefied while still alive, a mixture supposed to cure various illnesses and increase sexual energy.

In 2003, toys were once again collected and presented at Christmas to children in hospitals and orphanages.

Books and magazines were donated to a Centre for people with drug-related problems.

Clothes were delivered to the poor and visits to the sick organised.

Philippines

EIGHT AREAS OF WORK IN 2003

- a health, nutrition and medical programme benefiting 233 people.
- a youth development programme teaching theosophical principles and ideals to children and teenagers.
- an educational scholarship programme for 144 students from kindergarten to university level.
- a livelihood programme extending interest free loans to three individuals.

- a learning centre for nearly 100 pre-schoolers.
- the Golden Link School with a roll of 51, being added to each year by two classes.
- vegetarian parties and cooking lessons for TS and non-TS members.
- a publications department bringing out regular news bulletins for parents and friends of the

Golden Link School.

The TOS's **latest project** is a 500 square metre **organic vegetable garden** in the suburbs of Manila. Its primary aim is to supply produce to TS members but the commercial possibilities for fund-raising purposes will also be explored.

Spain

MULTIFACETED FERNANDO!

In addition to his extensive work supporting and encouraging the TOS in Latin America, Fernando Pérez Martín directs the TOS in Spain. He reports that four branches continue to perform the healing ritual, that two do the peace meditation and 40 individuals participate in 'Circles For Peace'. A local TOS representative has been appointed in the northeast to develop the work there. In the south of the country, a member-at-large collects clothes and toys year round for a local orphanage.

High point of the TOS year: In September a weekend seminar was organised for 20 people on the theme of support for the terminally ill. The group has chosen to continue to meet periodically.



Kindergarten children at the Golden Link School



TOS National Director for Sweden, Birgitta Stålhammar, with the children of the boarding school the TOS helps support in Riga, Latvia.

Sweden

BOARDING SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY HOME SUPPORTED IN LATVIA

TOS National Director, Birgitta Stålhammar, continues her remarkable work for a boarding school and teenage community home in Riga, Latvia. She works in cooperation with an organisation called Letthjälpen, which she co-founded with her friend Kickan Håkanson. TOS members help her gather donations and tons of furniture, bedding, cleaning supplies, clothing, toys, and even computers to ship to Rigas Internatskola.

Birgitta, Kickan and others organise summer camps, holidays for the children with Swedish sponsors and sports activities. Recently, they have even managed to donate to two centres for street children and a home for infants in the same region. TOS and Letthjälpen negotiate reduced delivery and shipping costs. This year they organised specialised training courses for the staff and a collaborative project with members of the Stockholm College of Social Work. For that purpose they have received financial sup-

port from the Swedish International Development Agency. They recently applied for more money to be able to conclude the training courses for the staff and for the teenagers as well.

USA

SEVEN DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

The core team of the TOS in America puts a great deal of work into providing timely information to

members and friends on matters of current concern, enabling them better to apply Theosophy in their own service activities. Seven volunteer department directors contribute articles to the magazine *For the Love of Life*, edited by the National President, Jean Gullo, assisted by her husband Joe.

Three points of special interest this year:

- the TOS Internet site run by Miles Standish which now has a discussion forum.
- the decision of the Theosophical Society in America to include the TOS brochure in the information it sends in response to inquiries received by headquarters.
- the healing network directed by Hutsy Contractor, who daily sends names of those who are ailing to those who do the TOS healing meditation. There are close to 60 groups and individuals currently performing the ritual and there is a special free phone line for receiving patients' names.

Wales

'Nothing new to report', says Correspondent, Alice Shergold, 'except that I would like to find someone young and energetic to take



Ananya Rajan, who works at American TS HQ in Wheaton where she is assistant editor of Quest magazine, volunteers as director of the healing department of the TOS. Ananya feels it is important to inform as many people as possible about the ability we have within ourselves to be channels of healing for others and ourselves. 'We don't need to be enlightened', she says, 'we just need unselfish intent and love'.

over the work!' Alice goes on to say that the TS in Cardiff continues to lend its large lecture room every two weeks to one of its stalwart members, Howard Plummer, who runs a 'Bowen Technique' free clinic for Cerebral Palsied children, along with a small team of helpers. People from different parts of the country have been coming to observe, with a view to setting up similar efforts elsewhere. 'Isn't it wonderful', writes Alice, 'that the Lodge has made a contribution not only to Cardiff and surrounding areas, but also further afield?' The healing ritual continues once a month, as does the charity bookstall that supports the MacMillan Nurses Fund.

k k k

George S. ARUNDALE:

Remember that everything you can say or think about another has probably already been said or thought by others about you.

When you yourself are injured in any way, remember that those who injure another suffer more than the person injured.

Do not look for the fruits of your service, nor feel unhappy when no words of gratitude come from those whom you help. It is the soul you serve and not the body, and you may always see the gratitude of the soul, though the lips remain silent.

The less people think about themselves, the more they are really paying attention to their growth. Each little act of service returns to the doer in the shape of an added power to serve.

Give to others as much credit for good intentions as you would wish bestowed upon yourself.

No one is insulted unless they bring themselves down within reach of the insult, for an insult is a product of the lower nature and cannot affect the higher.

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

*Extracts from a talk given by
Mr Mahendra P. Singhal, National
Director of the TOS in India, at the
International Convention of the TS at
Adyar in December 2003*



What is compassion? It is an inner knowing that our self is one with the selves of all that suffer. When that inner knowing comes, love and sympathy reign in our hearts.

For compassion in action, we need will, wisdom and love: wisdom, because it enables us to help wisely, will to direct the wisdom and love to inspire the will.

Compassionate action is the greatest therapy for healing wounds. It is a two way therapy benefiting the server and the served.

Compassion in action is love. Love in action is selfless service.

Concern for others should become a hallmark of the human mind. In addition to alleviating suffering, we are also concerned with communicating and inspiring the spirit of altruism.

It is not how much we do that counts but how much love we put into the action.

When we act wisely and compassionately, there is peace and harmony. There are smiles on faces. There is love overflowing. We experience unity with all life – life in all kingdoms of nature.

And how can we develop a compassionate nature? We need sensitive nerves to carry sensations from images to the mind. We require an unselfish, steady and pure mind to sustain those images and an emotional body that is pure and sensitive. Each day, we need to think of someone who is in sorrow and suffering and pour our loving thoughts onto them. As Gandhi said, 'We have to recall the face of the poorest and the weakest person whom we have seen, and ask ourselves if the step we are contemplating is going to be of any use to him and will it restore to him control over his life, security and dignity.'

Let us remember a beautiful prayer from the diary of Dag Hammarskjöld, the first Secretary General of the United Nations:

O Lord,

Give me a pure heart, so I can see

Give me a humble heart so I can listen

Give me a heart of love so I can serve

Give me a heart of faith so I can yield to thee.

The Theosophical Order of Service

The Theosophical Order of Service was founded by Dr Annie Besant in 1908 to provide an opportunity for participation in activities which promote the first object of the Theosophical Society:

To form a nucleus of universal brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

Defining itself as 'a union of all who love in the service of all that suffers', the TOS offers a framework in which the individual may demonstrate practical and humanitarian action in a theosophical spirit, and acts as a forum whereby members may air their views on affairs of public interest.

The TOS is international although not active at this time in all countries where the Theosophical Society is represented. Each section is autonomous and organised to meet the needs of its own communities. Members of the TOS need not be members of the TS. A variety of interests is welcomed. For further information, and written contributions to *The Service Link*, write to: Diana Dunningham Chapotin, TOS International Secretary, Résidence Isabelle, 18 Avenue Berlioz, 93270 Sevrans, FRANCE. E-mail: tosinternational@wanadoo.fr

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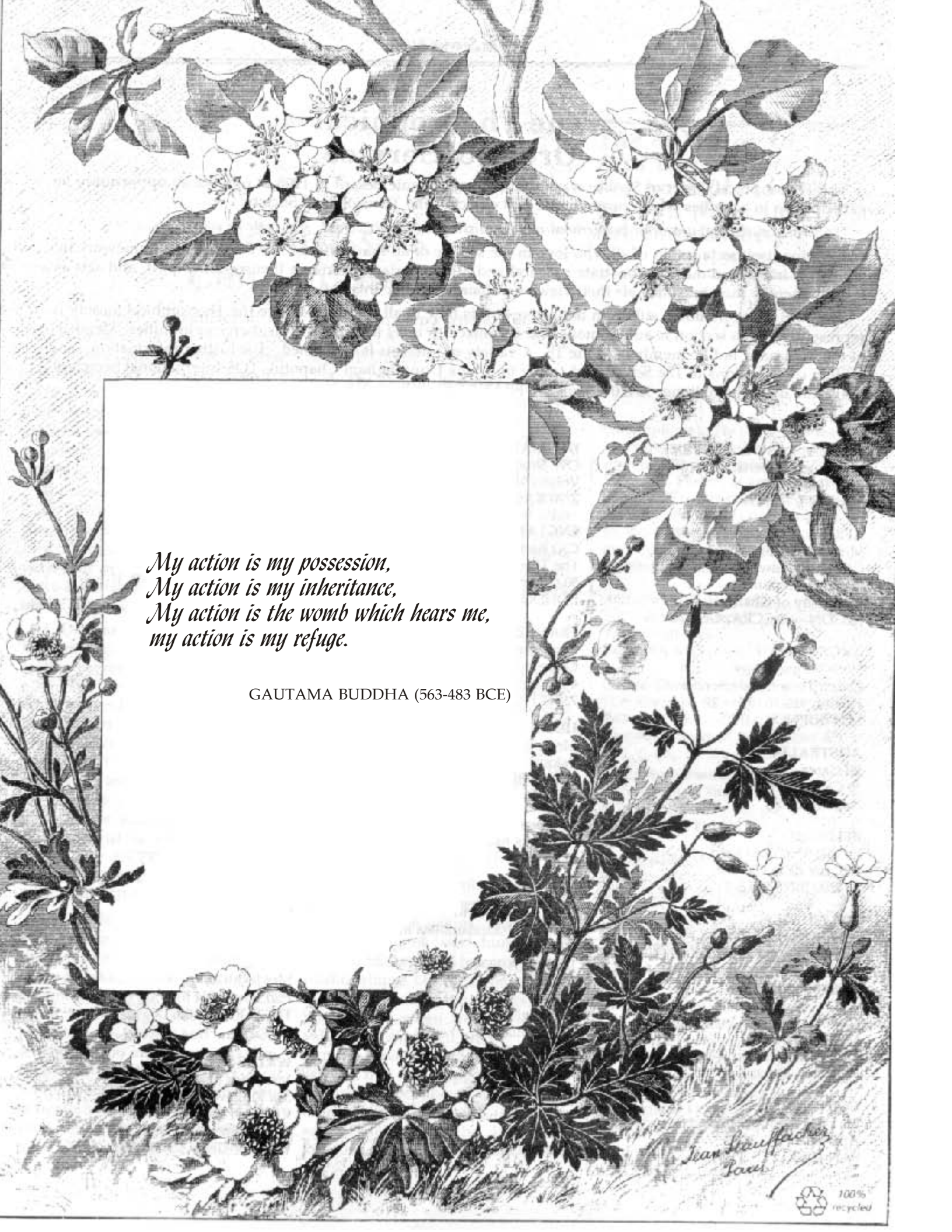
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*My action is my possession,
My action is my inheritance,
My action is the womb which hears me,
my action is my refuge.*

GAUTAMA BUDDHA (563-483 BCE)

*Jean Bouffacher
Paris*