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Editor

S. SUNDARAM

Cover Picture : **The advent of spring**

Courtesy : **Pradip Kumar Mahapatra**

CLOSING OF CONVENTION, 2015-16

We have been here together for this 140th Convention. I want to thank our three young members who gave their impressions, each one so different, and each one rounding out the picture of the possibilities of experience involved with this event. It was quite inspiring to hear. I thank Mrs Laura Rodriguez for reminding us of Joy Mills once again.

As has happened 139 times before, we have come to the end of this Convention. It has been a beautiful one. I think the quality of minds and frame of heart we were able to cultivate together has been very good work, not just for our benefit, but for what has gone out into the world — that which we do not see. Twenty-nine countries are officially represented this time. The world is here with us. It is a reminder of the fact that at every moment this is true. We take this occasion to be reminded of the simple fact that, from moment to moment, wherever we may be, we are connected. Within this theosophical movement which we are a part of, we are connected through this centre, Adyar.

This is the second Convention over which I have presided. I have been in this position for a very brief time. I came here from the United States, a very different country, and in coming here one was hopeful that the openness and support that would be required for this job would be forthcoming, but one did not really know. In this beautiful work, whatever experiences I have compiled during my life have led to this moment. This work is not one that could be done, on any level, unsupported. One of the things that has gone largely unsaid and unseen is the support of my wife Lily. It is a wonderful job and work, but it would not be the same without the support and commitment which comes from my home. The support that has been required to even allow myself to think about the possibilities that lie before us, I have found in abundance since I have come to Adyar.

I know you see changes here. Everything we see that has happened and is in motion is the result of a team of people of which you are

a part. Specifically here at Adyar there is a solid team that is still in the process of developing. Because preparations for this convention have gone so smoothly this year, it is easy to think that this is just the way it is. I do not think you know what it took to get this place ready so that you do not have to think about it at all. It has been a remarkable work that the people here have done, from the very bottom to the top; and the top, in terms of the real work that has been done, stops below me. The work done, the mind that has been applied, and the ceaseless energy expended to make this place look like it does, to have been able to greet you all and make it so comfortable to share in the way that we have, are all the result of this team.

What seems to be revealing itself more and more is that, although we have so many needs here, the need that is unspoken often goes unrecognized. We have spoken about some of those things at this Convention, and I am overwhelmed with the response of generosity and openness of heart that has been shown by our members. I am quite confident that all of the things that we have talked about, you will be seeing with your physical eyes in the days and years to come. That is the small part. The big part is that we are learning what we need to learn to be of benefit to this world. The major thing that we have learned is the art and habit of cooperation beyond the normal limitations and obstacles that we place in our own way.

Every day we run into one another to accomplish the very deepest needs for us all. We do it very imperfectly — we always have. Anyone who thinks that there were the good old days where there was perfection of cooperation, when personalities were sublimated and in the background, is believing in a fairy tale. It is not the world we are living in and that is the way it is supposed to be. All of us function at different levels, have different strengths and weaknesses. Our goal is to recognize the strengths and to recognize the common divinity. We have all talked Oneness. I do it as much as everybody else. But the *realization* of it is the goal that is before us, and it is not such a distant goal, because we have opportunities in every single moment.

Once again, we have come together and have done very good work. Whether we realize it or not, the current of this gathering is out there and afoot in the world, and that is a very good thing. So we can

be happy and proud about that, but at this point we go home. For some of us we will travel for a few hours or days and will be in familiar surroundings with familiar people and the familiar problems that we all have to deal with. Something has been developed during our time here together that will serve us, a touchstone that we can reach out to and remember. The only work we have to do together in this world today is to remember who we are. And if we can remember that, then we will also know who is sitting across from us and will behave accordingly. We have it in us, and as the days go by we are going to be able to see it more and more. We have a great work to do in this world.

The world specifically needs the thing that we are trying to cultivate now. It is the gift that we have to give. All of us will be gone soon in 10, 20, 30 years from now; it makes no difference. It will not be long. The thinking perhaps is in what I can 'do', not what trace I can leave. We are all going to be leaving here. The ideal life is maybe the one that leaves no trace in the physical world. We do not put our print on the world, but on the hearts that come after us. We are all capable of this. That is the legacy and philanthropy that is within everybody's reach.

I am proud of the way in which our Theosophical members gathered here together, have been able to exemplify the sense of reverence for one another, and the gratitude for the blessing of being in each other's presence. It is something that I want to be associated with and try to magnify.

With all of this, and with the wonderful contribution you all have made to make this moment what it is, now it is time for me to declare that our time together here as a Convention is over and so I can say that this Convention is closed. As always, thank you.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, March, 2016)

U.S.PANDEY*

STOICISM, MARCUS AURELIUS AND "MEDITATIONS"

Introduction

Stoicism is an ancient Greek philosophy which impacted thoughts and action of many kings, philosophers and ordinary persons of different ages. Marcus Aurelius was a Roman king -philosopher who deeply reflected on problems of his own life as human being and composed certain valuable thoughts for living life rightly. His thoughts are compiled in the book titled "**Meditations**" and show the influence of Stoicism. Quotes from this book are often referred and found useful in living a meaningful life in this turbulent world.

Mahatma K.H. in a letter (ML 5-cr.ed.) to A.P.Sinnott, while describing about an urgent call to himself from H.P.Blavatsky refers to a quote of Marcus Aurelius as under:

But our friend (H.P.B.) is not one to cause her mind to reflect the philosophical resignation of Marcus Aurelius. The fates never wrote that she could say: "*It is a royal thing, when one is doing good to hear evil spoken of himself.*"

The present article, in brief, describes the concept of stoic philosophy, life-sketch of Marcus and few quotes from the book *Meditations*.

Stoicism as Philosophy

Philosophy, in the West, in the modern sense is largely the creation of one man, the fifth-century B.C. Athenian thinker Socrates. One of the Hellenistic systems, most important for Romans in general was the Stoic school. It takes its name from the stoa ("porch" or "portico") in downtown Athens where its founder, Zeno (332/3-262 B.C.), taught and lectured. Zeno's doctrines were reformulated and developed by his successors.

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According to Stoicism, the world is organized in a rational and coherent way. It is controlled and directed by all-pervading force that Stoics designated by the term *logos*.

The term (from which English “logic” and the suffix “-logy” derive) has a semantic range so broad as to be almost untranslatable. At a basic level it designates rational, connected thought. Logos operates both in the individuals and in the universe as a whole. In the individuals it is the faculty of reason. On a cosmic level it is the rational principle that governs the organization of the universe. In this sense it is synonymous with “nature”, “providence”, or “God”. (When the author of John’s Gospel tells that “the Word”-*logos*-was with God and is to be identified with God, he is borrowing Stoic terminology.)

All events are determined by the *logos*, and follow in an unbreakable chain of cause and effect.

Logos is not simply an impersonal power that governs and directs the world. It is also an actual substance that pervades that world, not in metaphorical sense but in a form as concrete as oxygen or carbon. In its physical embodiment, the logos exists as *pneuma*, a substance imagined by the earliest Stoics as pure as fire. *Pneuma* is the power-the vital breath-that animates animals and humans. It is present even in lifeless material like stone or metal as energy that holds the object together- the eternal tension that makes a stone a stone. When the object perishes, the *pneuma* that animated it is reabsorbed into the *logos* as a whole. This process of destruction and regeneration happens to individual objects at every moment. It also happens on a larger scale to the entire universe, which at vast intervals is entirely consumed by fire (a process known as *ekpyeosis*), and then regenerated.

Chryptos and his followers divided knowledge into three areas: logic, physics and ethics, concerned, respectively, with the nature of knowledge, the structure of the physical world and the proper role of human beings in that world.

Marcus Aurelius

Marcus Aurelius was the ruler of Roman Empire. Born in AD 121, was later adopted by a childless senator Antoninus who became ruler and died on August 31,161 and then Marcus became the ruler. Marcus was a philosopher-king. He had ups and downs in life and died in AD 179 at the age fifty eight. In the ten years between AD 169 and 179 he

had to cope with constant fighting, the revolt of his General Cassius, and death of his colleague Versus; his wife, Faustina; and others.

As a ruler Marcus tried to preserve consensus and cooperation with the senate. In Athens he was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, a sect of mystic rites connected with the worship of Demeter, the goddess of agriculture.

Meditations: Marcus Aurelius is said to have been fond of quoting Plato’s dictum. We see Plato’s idea of philosopher-king in the personality of Marcus, the author of the immortal *Meditations*. It was originally composed in Greek, the natural language of Marcus.

Meditations consists of philosophical ideas of Marcus influenced by ethics part of Stoicism. It tries to answer the questions of metaphysical and ethical nature. Why are we here? How should we live our lives? How can we ensure that we do what is right? How can we protect ourselves against stresses and pressures of daily life? How should we deal with pain and misfortune? How can we live with the knowledge that someday we will no longer exist? He addresses these questions with clarity and insistence. The pattern of thought in “Meditations” shows the doctrine of the three ‘disciplines’: the disciplines of perception, of action, and of the will. Marcus composed these thoughts basically for his own use. Its purpose is not to describe or reflect, but to urge, direct, and exhort. Perhaps the title *Meditations* was given by somebody later. The entries do not present new answers or novel solutions to problems of life but only answers reframed. There are certain recurring themes. The sense of mortality pervades the work. Death is not to be feared. It is a natural process, part of continual change that forms the world.

The whole book consists of twelve sections. Below are given few quotes on the themes as only a glance of the ideas reflected in the book.

Death and transitory nature of life:

Don’t look down on *death*, but welcome it. It too is one of the things required by nature. Like youth and old age. Like growth and maturity... Like all physical changes at each stage of life, our dissolution is no different.

So this is how a thoughtful person should await death; not with indifference, not with impatience, not with disdain, but simply viewing it as one of the things that happen to us.

Now you anticipate the child's emergence from its mother's womb, that's how you should await the hour when your soul will emerge from its compartment.

x x x

Everything fades so quickly, turns into legend, and soon oblivion covers it.

And those are the ones who shone. The rest- "unknown, un-asked- for" a minute after death. What is "eternal" fame? Emptiness.

Then what should we work for?

Only this: proper understanding; unselfish action; truthful speech; A resolve to accept whatever happens as necessary and familiar. Flowing like water from that same source and spring.

The only thing that isn't worthless: to live this life out truthfully and rightly. And be patient with those who don't.

Overcoming Laziness:

At dawn when you have trouble getting out of bed, tell yourself; 'I have to go to work-as a human being. What do I have to complain of, if I'm going to do what I was born for-the things I was brought into the world to do? Or is this what I was created for? To huddle under the blankets and stay warm!'

-But it's nicer here.

So you were born to feel "nice"? Instead of doing things and experiencing them? Don't you see the plants, the birds, the ants and spiders and bees going about their individual tasks, putting the world in order, as best they can? And you're not willing to do your job as a human being? Why aren't you running to do what your nature demands?

Is helping others less valuable to you? Not worth effort?

Tolerance and Patience:

To feel affection for people even when they make mistakes is uniquely human. You can do it, if you simply recognize that they are human too, that they act out of ignorance, against their will, and that you'll both be dead before long. And, above all,

that they haven't really hurt you. They haven't diminished your ability to choose.

x x x

Don't be overheard complaining about life at court. Not even to yourself

x x x

As you move forward in the logos, people will stand in the way. They can't keep you from doing what's healthy; don't let them stop you from putting up with them either. Take care on both counts. Not just sound judgments, solid actions- tolerance as well, for those who try to obstruct us or give us trouble in other ways.

Because anger, too, is weakness, as much as breaking down and giving up the struggle. Both are deserters: the man who breaks and runs and the one who lets himself be alienated from his fellow human beings.

Indifference to earthly life:

Whatever this is that I am, it is flesh and a little spirit and an intelligence. Throw away your books, stop letting yourself be distracted. That is not allowed. Instead, as if you were dying right now, despise your flesh. A mess of blood, pieces of bone, a woven tangle of nerves, veins, arteries. Consider what the spirit is: air, and never the same air, but vomited out and gulped in again every instant. Finally, the intelligence. Think of this way: you are an old man. Stop allowing your mind to be a slave, to be jerked about by selfish impulses, to kick against fate and the present, and to mistrust the future.

x x x

Soon you'll be ashes, or bones. A mere name, at most- and even that is just a sound, an echo. The things we want in life are empty, stale, and trivial. Dogs snarling at each other.

Quarreling children- laughing and then bursting into tears a moment later. Trust, shame, justice, truth- "gone from the earth and only found in heaven."

Why are you still here? Sensory objects are shifting and unstable; our senses dim and easily deceived; the soul itself a decoction of the blood; fame in a world like this is worthless. - And so?

-Wait for it patiently-annihilation or metamorphosis.

And until that time comes-what?

Honour and revere the gods, treat human beings as they deserve, be tolerant with others and strict with yourself. Remember, nothing belongs to you but your flesh and blood-and nothing else is under your control.

Rational living;

Characteristics of the rational soul;

- Self-perception, self-examination, and the power to make of itself whatever it wants.

- It reaps its own harvest, unlike plants (and, in a different way, animals) whose yield is gathered by others.

-It reaches its intended goal, no matter where the limits of its life is set.

-It surveys the world and the empty space around it, and the way it's put together. It delves into the endlessness of time to extend its grasp and comprehension of the periodic births and rebirths that the world goes through. It knows that those who come after us will see nothing different, that those who came before us saw no more than we do, and that anyone with forty years behind him and eyes in his head has seen both past and future-alike.

Also characteristic of the rational soul:

Affection for its neighbors. Truthfulness. Humility. Not to place anything above itself-which is characteristic of law as well. No difference here between the logos of rationality and that of justice.

x x x

To be angry at something means you've forgotten:

That everything that happens is natural.

That the responsibility is theirs, not yours.

And further...

That whatever happens has always happened, and always will, and is happening at this very moment, everywhere. Just like this.

x x x

What links one human being to all humans: not blood, or birth, but mind.

And...

That an individual's mind is God and of God.

That nothing belongs to anyone. Children, body, life itself- all of them come from that same source.

That it's all how you choose to see things.

That the present is all we have to live in. Or to lose.

x x x

Injustice is a kind of blasphemy. Nature designed rational beings for each other's sake to help-not harm-one another, as they deserve. To transgress its will, then, is to blaspheme against the oldest of the gods.

And to lie is to blaspheme against it too. Because "nature" means the nature of that which is. The nature is synonymous with Truth-the source of all beings. To lie deliberately is to blaspheme-the liar commits deceit, and thus injustice. Likewise the involuntary liar disrupts the harmony of nature- its order. He is in conflict with the way the world is structured.

And to pursue pleasure as good and flee from pain as evil- that too is blasphemous.... To fear pain is to fear something that's bound to happen, the world being what it is-and that again is blasphemy. While if you pursue pleasure, you can hardly avoid wrongdoing- which is manifestly blasphemous.

To privilege pleasure over pain-life over death, fame over ano-

nymity-is clearly blasphemous... Real good luck would be to abandon life without encountering dishonesty, or hypocrisy, or self-indulgence, or pride.

To do harm is to do yourself harm. To do injustice is to do yourself an injustice -it degrades you.

And you can also commit injustice by doing nothing.

x x x

Objective judgement, now, at this very moment.

Unselfish action now, at this very moment.

Willing acceptance-now at this very moment-of all external events.

That's all you need.

Conclusion:

There are numerous valuable and thoughtful passages like above in the book. One of the popular sayings of Marcus quoted for managing adverse situations is:

“Our actions may be impeded...but there can be no impeding our intentions or dispositions. Because we can accommodate and adapt. The mind adapts and converts to its own purpose the obstacle to our acting.”

“The impediment to action advances action,

What stands in the way becomes the way.”

Truly, the difficulties teach us lessons and help to develop our faculties of endurance, intellect and intuition too.

Many expressions of Marcus in “Meditations” reflect Theosophical ideas.

References:

1. *Meditations*-Marcus Aurelius- translated by Gregory Hays
2. ML 5 (cr. ed.)

NEWS AND NOTES

Bombay

The year 2016 was heralded at Blavatsky Lodge with Festive decoration of Christmas Spirit by Sis. Navaz Dhalla and opening of the Support Convention 2015-16. The Support Convention was opened on 1 January, 2016, with the Prayers of All Religions & the Universal Prayer. Brethren condoled the passing away of former International Vice- President Miss Joy Mills. Tributes were paid to her by Bro. Arni Narendran.

Bro. Navin Kumar showed the video of the Presidential Address delivered by Mr. Tim Boyd at the opening of the 140th International Convention at Adyar on 31 December 2015. Then the floor was open to share thoughts on ‘Compassion’. Bro. Rustom Dalal, Bro. Arni Narendran, Bro. Navin Kumar, Sis. Aban Patel, Ms. Shernaz Vatchha and Sis. Mahazaver Dalal shared their views.

A cultural evening was organized on 2 January during the Support Convention. Bro. Navin Kumar handed over charge of the evening to master of ceremony Sis. Aban Patel. BTF President Dr. Ajay Hora led the Universal Prayer and welcomed all with playing the song ‘*Swagatam, Shubha Swagatam*’ sung by renowned artists, which is usually played at International events.

This year the cultural evening was dedicated to ‘Children of India’. Video of ‘Arti festival of Lady Engineer High School’ was screened. The creativity of students displayed through their paintings on varied themes, clay-work of Ganesh & other idols, ‘Best out of Waste’ and projects to spread awareness on educational, social & ecological issues were praiseworthy.

The National Anthem of India was the Silent National Anthem by hand and face actions and expressions of deaf children. Members of Maitreya Round Table created an uplifting atmosphere with Meera’s Bhajan ‘*Mane Chakar Rakhoji*’. Bro. Birthram Redwood rendered a soothing and inspiring Healing Song.

The other items were Gyarati Folk Dance, songs played on mouthorgan and piano, and a few solo songs rendered by the members.

Bro. Zinoo Master delivered a talk on '*Tani Ravani, geti Minoani*-in the Light of Theosophy' on January 3.

Inspiring uplifting ceremony of the Ritual of the Mystic Star was performed on 4 January with Sis. Jasmine Cawasji as 'Power' and all other officers. Sis. Mahazaver Dalal explained the salient features and purpose of the Ritual written by C. Jinarajadasa.

Bro. Navin Kumar screened a specially prepared overview of the 140th International Convention on 5 January. At the outset he showed part of 'Mini Tour of Adyar', which was presented by President Tim Boyd at the Convention. He covered snippets of the programmes from the Opening Day 31 December 2015 to the Closing Day 5 January 2016. He covered Mr. Tim Boyd's Inaugural Address for the India Section Convention when he urged Brethren to practice compassion with responsibility & insight into wisdom, as Compassion is the Law of our very existence. One has to improve oneself and environment around him, one must open oneself deeply for higher possibilities, which are waiting for us. Convention is 'A Gathering of Consciousness for a Purpose'. One needs to become compassionate, not just wise.

The screening was followed by sharing of thoughts by Sis. Mahazaver Dalal and Bros. Berthram Redwood, Arni Narendran and Dhananjay Singh.

The Support Convention ended with thanks to Bro. Navin Kumar for organizing the programme, to participants and to Brethren, who by attending joined in attuning energy towards Adyar for the 140th International Convention.

Bro. Vinayak Pandya was the only member of Bombay Theosophical Federation to attend the 140th International Convention at Adyar. Hence, he prepared a special Power Point Presentation with 50+ slides. As he said he tried to show, what was not covered by the screening for U-Tube.

Shanti Lodge: late Sis. Khorhsed D. Avari Art Competition Prize Distribution at Lady Enginner High School on 15 February 2016- Sis. Bana Mehta, Sis. Viloo Adajania & Sis. Mahazaver Dalal represented Shanti Lodge. There were 30 Individual Prizes and four Group Prizes for Theme Projects. From BTF 'Short Biography of Annie Besant' by

C. Jinarajadasa was given to all prize winners. Principal Mr. Errick Elavia and Art Teacher Mr. Anand were presented Theosophical books.

BTF & Blavatsky Lodge jointly organized a meeting to observe Adyar Day on 17 February 2016 at Besant Hall: The meeting was opened with Prayers and Adyar Song rendered by Bana Mehta. BTF Vice-President Bro. Vinayak Pandya chaired the meeting and spoke about the significance of Adyar Day and said, 'Whenever I go to Adyar, I learn something new'. Sis. Aban Patel spoke about personal experiences of Col. H.S. Olcott and Sis. Ketayan Irani spoke about HSO's life and his dedication to the Masters. Bro. Annie Narendran paid tributes to Giordano Bruno, who was burnt alive for speaking the Truth. Sis. Ruby Khan spoke about J. Krishnamurti's life and his teachings. Sis. Kashmira Khambatta paid homage to Bishop C.W. Leadbeater speaking about his life, dedication to Theosophy and place selected by the Founders as guided by the Masters. Bro. Navin Kumar showed the video on Adyar's beauty & buildings prepared by Int. president Tim Boyd. The video also showed structures of Adyar which need repairs and for which funds need to be raised. Brethren pouring out their gifts of heart, mind and purse contributed towards Adyar Day collection. At the meeting Rs. 3,500/- were collected. Shanti Lodge gave another contribution of Rs. 500/-. BTF will send the collection to Adyar, which will be used for: (1) Adyar Library (2) The Olcott School (3) The Theosophical Society.

Delhi

The members of Besant Lodge shared their views on Self-Realization in The Light of Self Knowledge. It was held on 4 February. Bro. M.P. Singhal conducted a day- long study class at the Federation HQrs in Patel Nagar. The study was held on 14 February. The subject studied was "Self Realization through Study, Meditation, Love." Thirty members participated in it. Besides, he delivered Dr. Taimni Memorial Lecture at Allahabad, on, "Self Realization through Rajyoga." The talk was held on 16 February.

Bro. Singhal addressed the members of Indra Prastha Lodge on 'TS- Messenger of Theosophical Doctrines and its' Teachings'. It was held on 28 February. He spoke at Mayfair Lodge of Kolkata on "Women's Day and Universal Brotherhood without Distinction". Besides, he addressed the members of Bengal Theosophical Federation on 9 March on

the subject “Does Theosophy Transform?”. It was followed by interaction with the members.

Gujarat

Rewa Lodge, Vadodara, organized a day-long programme on the subject: ‘Man and His Bodies’. It was held on 7 February, 2016. The subject chosen was very useful and the members were deeply interested and participated in lively discussion.

The study was directed by Mrs. Avatikaben U. Mehta, National Lecturer & former President, Gujarat Federation. The participants were grateful to Mrs. Avantikaben Mehta not only for accepting to direct the study but also for making such a subject very easy to be understood by all the participants. Even the new members also could understand it without any difficulty.

The morning session started at about 9.30 a.m. Welcome address was given by the President of Rewa Lodge, Dr. Parikh. During the two pre-lunch sessions Sister Avantika explained about the various bodies and their functions, with special emphasis on Etheric & Astral Bodies. In the post-lunch session she threw light on Mental Body, lower four divisions known as mental body and on Causal Body.

The following members of GTF passed to peace between July 2015 & Feb. 2016: Valjibhai Patel, Diploma No. 67220, Rewa Lodge, Vadodra; Hashmukhbhai Patel, Diploma No. 100605, Sardar Lodge, Karamsad; Jitendrabhai H. Mehta, Diploma No. 101141, Ahmedabad Lodge, Ahmedabad; Harshabhai B. Joshi, Diploma No. 77649, Shree Ram Lodge, Himmatnagar; Srikantbhai B. Shukla, Diploma No. 66340, Girnar Lodge, Junagadh; Hemantkumar J. Panchal, Diploma No. 94171, Rohit Lodge, Ahmedabad; Madhukantaen C. Pandey, Diploma No. 45928, Harjivan Ashram Kadoli; AsaduzzamanIbrahimbhai Shaikh, Diploma No. 92314, Ahmedabad Lodge, Ahmedabad

Kerala

President of the Federation, Bro. S Sivadas, attended the International Convention at Adayar along with more than 15 members from Kerala Theosophical Federation. He conducted a study class on “Talks on the path of Occultism Vol.III” on 13 January 2016 at Anantha Lodge Trivandrum; conducted study class on “Divine Plan” at Sree Sankara

Lodge, Ernakulam on 15 and 29 January; directed study class on “Yoga Sasthra and Theosophy”, and attended a discussion class on J Krishnamurti’s teachings on 24 January. Besides, he participated in the Lodge Meeting and Bharat Samaj Pooja on every Sunday at Annapoorni Lodge, Aleppey.

M.P. & Rajasthan

The 91st annual conference of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation was held on 31 October and 1 November 2015 in the Lion’s Club at Ratlam. The theme of the conference was “The flowering of Love is Meditation”. About 80 delegates from various lodges participated in it. In the inaugural session, Prayer of All Religions was held and it was followed by welcome address by Dr. Leela Joshi, President of Vedant Lodge, Ratlam. Prof. H.S. Dwivedi, Federation Secretary of M.P. & Rajasthan and President Dr. Kamal Mahnot gave greetings while welcoming the delegates, chief guest and other special invites. Mrs. Manju Sundaram presided over the inaugural session. Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary of the Indian Section, was the chief guest. He delivered the inaugural address. Bro. M.P. Singhal, former International Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, was a special invitee. He delivered a public lecture on Nov. 1 on the topic: ‘Love as the highest universal law of life’. In his inaugural address Bro. Sundaram analysed beautifully the topic ‘the flowering of love is meditation’. He said that the process “flowering” gradually shapes itself into love which reflects the selfless motives of human life beyond the physical senses, breaking the bonds of *Vasana*. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary of U.P. Federation, delivered a talk on “*i ě vřj /; ku vř; řř; řřJr ĝř*” (Love and Meditation are Interdependent). The lecture delivered by Bro. Pandey highlighted the importance of love and meditation- Love that generates and creates the feeling of dedication and the submission of personal “I ness” in the broader vision of the cosmic reality, inseparable from the higher mode of Sadhana that is known as meditation or the process of Dhyana. The theme of Mrs. Manju Sundaram’s talk was *řřDr l s řřjkV řh řřj** (From Individual to Universal). The talk of Bro. Singhal remained operative on the topic. ‘Love is the highest universal law of life’. When one talks of such love he excels the peripheral and territorial limits of the physical world and makes it an inner property of the spirit. He analysed such ingredients of love which show an inseparable bond between Atma and Parmatmaa

between the soul and the cosmic reality. There was an interesting session of short talks on fuely thou presided by Bro. Ashok Lokhande, President of Marathi Federation. Tribute was paid to Mrs. Radha Burnier, former President of the Theosophical Society, on her 2nd *Punnya Tithi* (31 October 2016). Bro. Sanad Kumar Vyas of Ratlam Lodge gave a power point presentation on reincarnation and also man and his bodies. A short documentary film in Hindi was also shown by him on “Beauty without cruelty”. The closing ceremony was presided and addressed by Bro. M.P. Singhal. The conference concluded with a vote of thanks given by Prof. H. S. Dwivedi.

Marathi

The Maitreya Lodge, Nagpur, observed Adyar Day on 17 February. The meeting was presided over by the Lodge President Bro. Bhalchandra. The programme commenced with Universal Prayer and addressed by Lodge Secretary Bro. Sunil Selokar. He spoke about The importance & significance of Adyar Day. The meeting was attended by the members of the Lodge.

Rayalaseema

The 33rd Chartered Day was observed by Secunderabad Lodge on 25 December 2015. Bro Parasuram, Secretary of the Lodge, informed the gathering about the Lodge’s History, the sacrifices made by the founders and subsequently by all members of the Lodge. Bro Durga Rao explained the devotion of members while constructing the Lodge Building. Bro. K. Sivaprasad, Secretary, TOS, Rayalaseema Region, visited the Lodge on 20 January 2016 and he explained the objects of TOS and various activities. It was well received and appreciated by one and all.

A family get together was organized on the occasion of the renovation of Lodge with colours and painting. It was held on 30 January. The members of all Lodges were invited. Bro N C Krishna of HTS and Bro Krishnamohan Rao Jnanabharathi gave short and inspiring thoughts for carrying Theosophy to younger generation. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary U.P. Federation, visited the Lodge on 3rd February and gave a talk on ‘Gratitude’. Smt. G. Gayatri Devi, member of Rayadurgam Lodge, visited Secunderabad Lodge on 12 February where she explained the need of propagation of Theosophy in a very easy and appealing way.

Even within a Federation members do not know each other or about location of Lodges. She emphasized the need of Relationship within Society with informal communication.

Adyar Day was observed by the members on 17 February. Bro. M. S. Raghunath, inspired the members with his presentation. All were given hard copies of his presentation.

Varsha, a young member presented short video film about Adyar estate and responsibility of all for maintaining Adyar as told by the International President in Convention. An amount of Rs 3300/- collected on this occasion was sent to Adyar.

The members of Secunderabad Lodge regularly meet on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Adyar Day was observed by the members of Sanmarga Lodge at Bellary on 17 February. The meeting started with the Prayers of All Faiths. Bro. A.I. Basavaraj Reddy spoke on this occasion about Col. H.S. Olcott, J. Krishnamurti and Giordano Bruno. Bro. S. Ranjaiah Setty spoke in brief about C.W. Leadbeater.

The donation of Rs. 300/- collected on this occasion will be sent to the International Headquarters of the TS.

A day-long study camp on ‘At the Feet of the Master’ was held at Sanmarga Lodge on 14 February. Bro. A.I. Basavaraj Reddy dealt with the subject ‘Viveka’, Bro. R.V. Vastrad talked about ‘Vairgya’, Sis. K. Parvathamma explained ‘Sadachar’ and Bro. K.L. Nanjunda Setty & S. Rangaiah Setty dealt with the topic ‘Love’. These were followed by question-answer session. The vote of thanks was given by Bro. Medehal Basavaraj, Secretary of the Lodge.

Utkal

The centenary of the Cuttack Lodge in Odisha, chartered by Dr. Annie Besant in 1916, was celebrated on 13-14 February, along with the 51st Annual Convention of the Utkal Theosophical Federation. The International Vice-President, Dr. Chittaranjan Satapathy, was the chief guest. He spoke on the theme of the conference ‘Theosophy: The Eternal Wisdom’, and highlighted the present-day challenges before the Theosophical Society. He also gave a public lecture on the theme, ‘Enlighten-

ment through Self-Surrender'. Mr. S. Sundaram, General Secretary of the Indian Section, was the guest of honour. There was a TOS session where he gave a talk on the theme, 'Love and Service: Direction and Vision of Universal Brotherhood'. Mrs. Manju Sundaram was the chief speaker at the session devoted to the centenary program. She spoke on the theme, 'Theosophy: the Path of Unfoldment'. The conference also had a programme of short talks on 'Quest for Truth', a symposium on 'Theosophy and the Modern World', 'Theosophy in Practice', and a Youth Conference on the topic 'Human Values'. A research professor, Dr. F.M. Sahoo, also delivered an address on 'Relevance of Theosophy in Life'. In the course of the centenary celebrations, mementoes were presented to members with 35 to 52 years of membership, prizes were distributed to school and college students who participated in debate and essay competitions, and two books were released along with the centenary souvenir. One of the books was a compilation of biographies of Madame H.P. Blavatsky, Col. H.S. Olcott and Dr. Annie Besant in Odiya, and the other book was by Professor S. Patro, titled *Infinity and Beyond*. The conference and centenary celebrations were well organized by Mrs. Amiya Mohapatra, Bro. J.K. Sahoo, Mr. Ashutosh Pati, and other members of the Cuttack Lodge.

Both Sis. Manju Sundaram and Bro. S. Sundaram attended a joint meeting organized by Sidharth Lodge, Bhubaneswar, on 9 February, in its premises. The inmates of AUM Girls Hostel also attended it. Sis. Manju Sundaram delivered a talk on effect of 'PRAYER'. Then Bro. S. Sundaram delivered a talk on 'Relevance of Gandhi in today's world'.

Sis. Manju Sundaram conducted a three day study class in the premises of Utkal Federation at Brhma Vidya Bhawan, Gautam Nagar, Bhubaneswar. The book taken up for study was *The Principles of Theosophical Works* written by Dr. I K Taimni. The study class was held from 10 to 12 February in memory of Dr. Ramachandra Rath who was the first President of the Utkal Theosophical Federation. The study class was attended by 25 to 30 members and sympathizers. Sis Manju Sundaram very lucidly described the purpose for formation of the Theosophical Society, the Devine Plan and the Divine Purpose behind every action. Further, she pointed out the role of sincere member and what all he can do for the Theosophical Society. With the joint effort of the

family members of Dr. Ramachandra Rath, Debapi Lodge and with the active cooperation of Utkal Federation the study class was successful. Bro. Binod B. Palai conveyed vote of thanks to Sis. Manju Sundaram for her presentation of theosophical ideas during the study class.

Uttar Pradesh

Dharma Lodge of Lucknow organized the following talks in January 2016:

'Known to Unknown' by Bro. M.C. Pandey; 'Mahatma Letters' by Bro. B.P. Shukla and 'Concentration' by Bro. M.C. Pandey.

The following talks were held at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow in February:

'Gita at a glance with eye of Theosophy' by Bro. S. N. Pandey; 'Essence of President's Address at 140th Convention' by Bro. B.L. Dube; 'Chinese Philosophy: I-Ching and Taoism' and 'Applied Theosophy' by Bro. U.S. Pandey. Besides, Adyar Day was observed at the Lodge on 17 February.

Bro. U.S. Pandey visited Brahmanvidya Lodge at Orai on 06-07 February. He discussed administrative matters with lodge officials. In a meeting with a group of young students, and their guardians, he explained the meaning and purpose of Universal Prayer and the objective of the Theosophical Society. In the meeting of the lodge he delivered a talk on 'Idols and Idolatry'. These were followed by interaction with the participants.

Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk at Hyderabad Lodge on 2 February on 'Idol & Idolatry'. He spoke at Secunderabad Lodge on the topic "Gratitude and Spirituality". This was held on 3 February.

In Secunderabad, Bro. U.S. Pandey was invited to address a group of about 40 young probationary engineers of Indian Railway Institute of Signal and Telecom Engineers there. He spoke on the theme "Science of Life". During the talk he brought out points on need of ethical fitness, need of being aware to our outer environment and inner state of mind/emotions, interconnected and interdependence of everything in universe,

the law of cause and effect, use of thought power, oneness of life and consciousness, importance of meditation etc.- in the light of theosophical teachings. The talk was followed by interaction between the speaker and the trainee officers.

Bro. Pandey, Fed. Secretary, visited Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, on 13-14 Feb. He discussed administrative matters with the Lodge officials and directed a study there on the philosophy of "The Tao-Te-King".

He visited Basti on 14 February when seven persons of that place applied for membership of the Theosophical Society and also for starting a lodge there. Thus a new lodge was started. Bro. Pandey delivered a talk there on "Historical background and objects of the Theosophical Society".

A special meeting was organized to observe 'Adyar Day' on 17 February in which members of all the three Lodges at Lucknow, one member of Arundale lodge Sitapur, and some non- members also participated. At the beginning Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed by Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri assisted by Bro. M.C. Pandey. Then Bro. U.S. Pandey apprised the participants about significance of the day as death anniversary of the Col. H.S. Olcott, the founder President of the Theosophical Society. He also talked briefly about some important events in the life of Col. Olcott and his thoughts about "Applied Theosophy".

A study camp at Lucknow was organized on 20-21 February by Satya Marg Lodge on the theme "From Self Culture to Self Transformation". It was held as a memorial programme for Dr. I.K.Taimni, a distinguished theosophist. His three books namely, *Self-Culture*, *Man, God and Universe* and *The Science of Yoga* were taken up for study. . The camp was jointly managed by all the three lodges namely, Satyamarg, Dharma and Pragya Lodge of Lucknow. About 70 persons including members from Gorakhpur, Sitapur, Kanpur, Shuklaganj (Unnao), Rampur, Orai, Lucknow and Delhi besides some non- members also participated in it. The camp started in the morning of 20th February with recitation of prayers of all religions followed by Universal Prayer. Bro. J.N. Sharma, President of Satyamarg Lodge, welcomed the participants and Bro. U. S. Pandey offered his greetings to participants and

organizers on behalf of the Federation and also expressed deep appreciation for the initiative taken by Satyamarg Lodge in organizing the camp. Bro. M.P. Singhal, former International Vice-President, offered his greetings and narrated some points of his memoirs regarding Dr. Taimni. Sister Vasumati Agnihotri presented a brief outline on life and works of Dr. Taimni.

The book *Self-Culture* was covered in the forenoon in two sessions; one on 'Dehatma or Lower Self' by Km. Preeti Tiwari and the other on 'Jivatma or Higher Self' by Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri. The book 'Man, God and Universe' was covered by Bro. S.K.Pandey (National Lecturer) in the afternoon session. This was followed by interactive session. In the evening a Devotional meet was conducted by Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri.

On 21 February ,the book *The Science of Yoga* was covered in three sessions; one on 'Samadhi Pada and Five Kleshas' by Bro. Vipul Narayan, second on 'Outer Limbs of Yoga' by Bro. R.K. Shukla and third on 'Vibhuti Pada (Inner limbs of Yoga) and Kaivalya Pada' by Bro. U.S. Pandey. This was followed by a Q and A. session which was conducted by Bro. M.P. Singhal and Bro. U.S. Pandey. Several participants made valuable comments and points of clarifications.

Bro. M.P.Singhal delivered the valedictory address. The camp concluded with vote of thanks by Bro. Vipul Narayan, Secretary of Satyamarg Lodge.

Two talks were organized by Kashi Tattva Sabha, Varanasi, in the month of February. Sri Dadan Tripathi spoke on 'Human Values in Valmiki Ramayan'. The other talk was delivered by Dr. Urmila Sharma, a scholar of Sanskrit and Philosophy. She spoke on 'Sant- Gyaneswar and Gyaneswari'.

Ms. Sharda Srivastava (Diploman No. 28940), President of the Lodge at Sitapur, passed to peace on 28.12.2015.

National Lecturer

Bro. B.D. Tendulkar undertook a lecture tour in January 2016. He visited five Lodges of Karnataka Federation where he addressed the

members on: 'There Great Truths', 'The Three Objects of the T.S.', 'What is Theosophy', and 'How to propagate Theosophy' respectively. Besides, he visited five different schools and a college where he addressed the students on 'Personality Development', 'Human Values', 'Practice of Concentration', 'Students and Social Service', and 'Universal Brotherhood' respectively. Throughout these visits, Bro. A. Subbareddy accompanied him. Others who enthusiastically participated were Bros. K.N. Rama Reddy, Ashwatha Reddy, N.A. Sadashiv Reddy.

Bro. Tendulkar conducted a study camp on 9-10 January at Bangarpeth Lodge on *The Voice of the Silence*, where Bro. Venkatramanappa, Secretary of the Lodge, took great interest in making it a success. Bro. Satyanarayan was helpful in Kannada translation wherever necessary. Bro. Tendulkar visited Bangalore City Lodge and Malleshwar Lodge on 11th January and gave talks there on 'Human Regeneration' and 'Universal Brotherhood'.

Indian Section Headquarters

Keeping the 125th year of the Indian Section in view, a talk on 'The Future of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society' by Prof. P. Krishna was held at the Section HQ on February 5.

'Adyar-Day' was observed at the Indian Section Headquarters on 17 February 2016, Smt. Uma Bhattacharyya who was the main speaker, drew attention of the gathering to the significance of remembering such sacred day as we get inspired to imbibe great values, a fresh enthusiasm for Theosophical ideals and make bigger use of Adyar as power-house. She highlighted the fact that although Theosophical Society had taken birth in New York city with the inspiration of Masters it was brought to India to flourish on its fertile ground and spread Theosophical Truth 'Divine Wisdom' throughout the world. The moment Col. Olcott and Madam Blavatsky viewed the compound, then known as Huddleston's garden, they recognized that search for Headquarters was over. HPB intensively spoke about the splendid beauty of Adyar and maintained that real charm of Adyar is that eyes and words cannot see or picture it but can only be perceived by senses. In fact beauty takes possession of the soul. Elucidating it further, she brought out that Adyar is a presence which touches us with joy and elevated thoughts. There is something

deeper affecting inner being, something more powerful and more subtle than what is perceptible to the dim physical senses. She revealed that Adyar has been referred at different times as "flaming centre", 'A throbbing centre of the vital forces to circulate throughout the ramification of the theosophical movement'.

Quoting Radhaji, Smt. Bhattacharyya referred to Radhaji's views that anyone who makes himself sensitive enough can become increasingly aware of this 'Presence'. She then shared the quotes of Dr. Annie Besant, J. Krishnamurti, Dr. Arundale and C. Jinarajadasa about Adyar with the gathering in which they extensively spoke about this 'Presence'. She also indicated to the world-wide nature of Adyar where members from all over the world come to visit, to work or to study and each gives and leaves something of his rational temperament and tradition and takes back and experience which partakes in some mysterious way of world consciousness.

Drawing attention to the motto of the Theosophical Society i.e. "There is no Religion higher than Truth", Smt. Uma Bhattacharyya highlighted the fact that Madam Blavatsky was herself an embodiment of truth. She further clarified that universal brotherhood and freedom of thought are two pillars of the Theosophical Society. She specified that what Adyar means is to be able to experience a sense that each individual is an integral part of that great brotherhood of humanity. As a spiritual centre, Adyar has been an inspiration to members all over the world. She opined that Adyar provides favourable conditions for an experiment in living and life at Adyar can itself be one continuous meditation.

The meeting started with the Prayers of All Faiths. While welcoming the members and guests the General Secretary mentioned about some significant points related to Adyar Day. The vote of thanks was given by Dr. Abha Srivastava.

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I, S. Sundaram, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

S. Sundaram

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