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Cover Page : **Southern view of the HEADQUARTERS BUILDING** at
Varanasi.

Courtesy : **Sri Kuldip Singh Virk**, Life Member of TS.

APPROACHING THE DIVINE

During the early days of the Theosophical Society H. P. Blavatsky was known for being critical of the practices of the Church and the form that Christianity had come to take in her time. This is understandable, given the colonial situation, particularly in India. For HPB, it was a matter of ‘a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked’. I believe that she felt that the imposition of a badly practised foreign religion onto a culture where the existing approaches to the Divine had great merit, was something that should be addressed. And, of course, in her warrior-like fashion, she addressed it.

What we find in her writings is that she was frequently critical of the way in which the concept of God was approached in the Church. She rarely used the word ‘God’ in her writings, at least not in the sense familiar to normal Christian practice, and when she did, it was often to point out some of the limitations that had been imposed on this potentially great and uplifting principle. She was not opposed to God, but to the distorted characterization that emerged from unsound philosophy, and to the fact that this caricature of divinity was being forced on a colonial population.

The idea that there is an absolute, infinite, supreme intelligence that then becomes personified, that is given a name, that is described in terms of human limitations such as anger, wrath, displeasure, and to which a host of limiting attributes are ascribed, she recognized as tortured reasoning. And so she spoke to that. From HPB’s point of view, in speaking about the Absolute, the only way that it could be described was as darkness and nothingness — nothingness in the sense that the Absolute is completely without attributes; it has no association with any particular thing, and so ‘nothing’, ‘no thing’ was the most appropriate way of describing it.

Those who came after HPB in the Theosophical tradition — Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater, I. K. Taimni, and others — found no difficulty in using the word ‘God’ to express a particular meaning. In *The*

Key to Theosophy HPB takes on the role of the Enquirer and also of the Theosophist who answers the questions. In the book she asks a very direct question of the Theosophist who was responding. The question is: ‘Do you believe in God?’ It is a direct, seemingly simple question. The response that she gives to that question is quite revealing. It is not a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ answer. It is: ‘That depends on what you mean by that term [God].’ She goes on to describe all the things that would *not* be included in any functional belief in the Divine. Such things as a personality or anything that could be assigned a pronoun of ‘him’ or ‘her’ would fall beneath that standard. But she says that what we do believe in is a ‘universal, divine essence’. Annie Besant and others had a very clear idea of what they were saying when they used the term ‘God’.

Wherever you go and whatever time you examine in the world’s history, there has always been some conception of the Divine, something equivalent to the God concept. Over the last 100 years we have had an opportunity to witness an experiment that has been played out in a large way, where there was the very concentrated and deliberate effort to eradicate religious belief. In the experiment that was attempted in the Soviet Union and again in communist China, you had a population that was steeped in various approaches to the Divine, who found themselves living under a new social order where religious practice or belief was no longer permitted. Not only was it not allowed, but for anyone who was found practising, there were extreme punishments that would be applied. The prevailing idea in these communist societies was that religion is something unnatural that has been grafted onto human consciousness, and if it is denied the opportunity to express itself, it will die out. That experiment was attempted over approximately three generations. So, the children’s children of the people who first came under that experiment were raised in the absence of open religious expression.

When those regimes came to an end, the fascinating part was that suddenly, as if it had never disappeared, the religious urge arose again strongly, so that even though the bodies of the people who practised these religions might have been destroyed, or their minds might have been twisted through imprisonment or ‘re-education’, somehow those principles which give rise to the religious impulse remained untouched. From a theosophical point of view, it is clear. The source of the religious impulse lies deep within, beyond the reach of material, or even emotional, and mental forces.

There is an expression in theosophical literature that 'faith is unconscious knowledge'. The reason that there is this continual upwelling towards the Divine within the hearts of humanity is due to the presence of a 'knowledge' that exceeds the conscious mind. It lies beyond the realm of the mental grasp, yet continually reacts on the mind. We know of it, and it cannot disappear. There is an 'essential universal divine essence' that continually informs the lives of each and every one.

HPB was also quite critical of prayer, at least the manner in which it was practised in the Church of her time, and even the Church of our time. Much like her reaction to the philosophically unsound approach to God, prayer as commonly understood and practised, she felt, weakened the one praying. And just like with the God concept, her issue was not with prayer, but with the distorted understanding of the common practitioner. Prayer, after all, is one of the techniques of the spiritual life that is found and practised in every part of the world. Some of the greatest beings in history have been influenced by their practice of prayer.

In *The Key to Theosophy* HPB talks about prayer. First she discusses the inadequacies of an approach that places a request before a divine being for some selfish desire with the expectation that it will be answered whether deserved or not, or even whether it is something within the laws of Nature. She says that this approach is the opposite of true prayer. She says that as theosophists, yes, we do believe in prayer, but she described it as 'will prayer'. The prayer of a will that is not directed towards some exalted person, but that is directed towards the 'Father in Heaven'. She distinguished that from the prevalent belief of a divine Father figure on the clouds, who gives things to those who say the right words. The Father in Heaven is our own deepest spiritual nature: Atma- Buddhi-Manas. HPB made the distinction that genuine prayer was directed to this Father in Heaven, which is a principle because it is universal.

Annie Besant and others who came later in the theosophical tradition were very free in their use of the word 'prayer'. In fact, today, in almost any meeting that is held around the theosophical world we recite a prayer that was written by Annie Besant which came to be known as the 'Universal Prayer'.

She wrote that prayer in response to a request from someone who was convening a meeting and asked her to write a meditation that the

group could engage in. She wrote a prayer, and she said that as she wrote it, it seemed to chant itself inside of her. She felt that she could not write a meditation, as she considered that to be a more personal matter. Instead she wrote the prayer 'O Hidden Life' for this one meeting, with the idea that it could be recited two times during the day — in the morning and in the evening. It has, of course, gone on to become something that is chanted throughout the theosophical world and used in the personal practice of countless individuals.

One of the foundational points in the tradition of mysticism is the idea that God, or the divine universal presence, is something that can be experienced, and that it is only in that experience that true meaning and worth come into being. Even HPB, in her description of the will prayer, says that its effects can lead to a genuine communion, like the mingling of a higher soul with the universal essence.

There is a little book that comes from the Christian mystical tradition, written as a handbook for the practice of union with God, or the Divine. It is called *The Cloud of Unknowing*. In it there is a brief prayer that is potentially quite potent. It says:

O God, unto whom all hearts lie open,
unto whom desire is eloquent,
from whom no secret thing is hidden,
purify the thoughts of my heart
with the outpouring of your spirit
that I might love you with a perfect love
and praise you as you deserve.

We might just try to go a little deeper into the sense of these words. It is an inexhaustible prayer, but we can at least scratch the surface. 'O God, unto whom all hearts lie open' is the recognition, as any true prayer must be, of reality, of what *is*. It is not the specific combination of words that makes the difference, but the inner recognition that there is a universal divine essence to which all hearts are connected, unto which they all lie open. So the prayer begins with that basic recognition of what is the reality of things.

The phrase 'unto whom desire is eloquent' might be a little bit tricky. In the Hermetic tradition there is a saying that we are perhaps familiar with: 'Behind Will stands desire.' It is only from the effort that

is made in cultivating desire of a particular type that the personality is influenced and becomes open to the higher nature. The desire that is indicated would be more along the lines of aspiration. In the absence of the cultivation and direction of what is named 'desire', we do not experience the descent of the higher will. The word 'eloquence' relates to persuasiveness. So, the phrase 'Unto whom desire is eloquent', describes the persuasiveness of our highest desire, that desire that borders on, and invokes the descent of Divine Will.

The next phrase says: 'from whom no secret thing is hidden'. The only place where there are secret things hidden is within the dark recesses of our own personalities, those corners of our being where we are unwilling to allow a higher light to enter. These are the places where we feel limited, where we hide from ourselves and others, where we harbour all the complexes and difficulties that keep psychologists in business. In our relationship to the Higher Self, the Divine, secrecy is both meaningless and unnecessary. All is known, always. This recognition permits a release from the massive effort that is required in our attempts to fortify these hidden places. Again, it is simply a recognition of reality.

Thus the first part of this prayer moves us through the process of recognizing different aspects of the Divine and its potential for creative involvement within the personality. The next part of the prayer makes a request: 'purify the thoughts of my heart with the outpouring of your spirit'. The request is made that the light of the Divine may shine upon those thoughts that are generated in the deepest part of our being; not the thoughts of our normal mind, or those which seem to come and go in every moment, but the thoughts of 'my heart'.

We often think of 'Light' as synonymous with the Divine. For a person who builds a windowless house and spends their life inside, it is unreasonable to expect that the continuously shining light of the sun would find its way to them. The fact that we find ourselves cut off from this light in no way diminishes the light of the sun. It only affects our access.

This portion of the prayer is not asking the sun to shine more brightly, or asking the sun to penetrate the walls that we have erected around ourselves. The prayer says 'purify the thoughts of my heart with the outpouring of your spirit'. It is an expression of our will to

remove the barriers that we have created so that the light may be allowed entrance. It is not a prayer intended to change the way that the Universe functions. It is an expression of our will to access the shining of the light of the divine sun.

The prayer culminates with: 'that I might love you with a perfect love and praise you as you deserve.' What is the nature of 'a perfect love'? What is the nature of 'praise'? When we speak about praise, there are different ways and types of praising that we do. Often with children if they do some little accomplishment, we will praise them so that they can develop confidence. Real praise occurs when we see something of value and acknowledge it. It is not created or made up in the moment. It is the recognition and acknowledgement of that which *is*.

And what is the praise that the 'universal divine essence' deserves. This is probably something much less complicated than we think. Perhaps it means nothing more or less than the acknowledgement of the presence of the Divine in each and every person, in *all* things, everywhere we look. This is the praise that flows from one who genuinely has reached a point in their unfoldment that allows them to see. To falsely praise that which we do not see or have not realized is an empty gesture. But every person has had an experience that in some way has confirmed this 'mingling' of our higher soul with the divine nature that Blavatsky talks about. We have that awareness, so in this prayer we speak to that. In the *Bhagavadgitâ* Krishna calls himself the Inner Ruler Immortal present in the hearts of all beings. With the appearance within us of the capacity to see it, that simple recognition is the praise that is deserved.

There are many similar prayers. This one from the unknown author is offered as an example of the potential for quickening all of the activities of our personality, so that they may be pointed towards the actual experience of this hidden Life, hidden Light, and hidden Love that Annie Besant addressed in her Universal Prayer. It is everywhere present, generally unrecognized and unacknowledged. Any tool that affords the possibility of at least momentary recognition is worthy of our consideration.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, June 2016)

THE PERSPECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THEOSOPHY ESSENTIAL TO PROMOTE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND SPIRITUAL REGENERATION OF MANKIND

Theosophy the essential knowledge
Truth and Universal Brotherhood

The Mahachohan in his letter of 1881 has foretold that knowledge of theosophy must be popularized. This knowledge of ancient wisdom must reach all sections of society. Accordingly the Presidents of the TS and its eminent members have followed up this for all-time message of the Mahachohan by various means and methods which included their occult powers of interaction with a wide cross section of the public. Col. H.S. Olcott has emphasized the spiritual heritage of humanity obtained through the essential teachings of religions and philosophies. H.P. Blavatsky has unveiled the sacred knowledge of ancient wisdom through her writings- *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy* and so forth. Dr. Annie Besant had psychic power which she employed to investigate, along with C.W. Leadbeater, the atoms of various elements. She also lectured on various aspects of man and the universe and enlightened the public of her time on the necessity to follow the path of truth. C.W. Leadbeater also lucidly explained the universal truth of man and the universe. He thus contributed to remove the harm done by materialism and dogmatism. C. Jinarajadasa has brought to light at the level of common man's understanding the facts of nature as a synthesis of modern science and ancient philosophy. He has illustrated particularly Occult Chemistry. He has diagrammatically presented hitherto unseen aspects of nature. The teachings of the Mahatma Letters have been published with commentary on some of them by C. Jinarajadasa. The Teachings of the Masters on the occult path is a superb contribution through the agency of J. Krishnamurti as suited to the common man's understanding. *At the Feet of the Master* has received worldwide recognition. Other contributions to theosophical knowledge to a wide section of the public

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has been made by N. Sri Ram, Geoffrey Hodson, Radha Burnier and others.

The Occult Hierarchy as a Beneficent Force of Universal Brotherhood in Nature

Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature and is constituted of existences who are perceptible to our senses and also those that are not. These existences evolve and fundamentally change their conscious man, life and form so as to live more, and have their being in a state of unity. The elect among these existences have been able to attune themselves to this unity by regulating their lives. This is the basis for the fact of universal brotherhood. All the above facts are known, to the members of the occult hierarchy as truth and when stated in the framework of a philosophy is given as teachings of Theosophy. The way of life and resulting relationship is stated as the spiritual or occult path.

Lord Gautama Buddha was the first among men to attain this state of enlightenment by which those truths came to be realized and he is at the head of the adepts who constitute the Occult Hierarchy. There is an occult unity among the inhabitants of the Solar system of which our earth is one and the other is Planet Venus. Attuning themselves to this unity of occult brotherhood, the Sanat Kumara from Planet Venus came to earth to help evolve spiritually child humanity on this earth 18 million years ago.

They helped child humanity to evolve spiritually and thereby fulfilled the occult purpose of spiritual evolution. The Kumara occupy a higher position than Lord Guatama Buddha in occult Hierarchy. The child humanity had only nascent or beginnings of consciousness by which they could know the existence of the world outside of themselves. They learnt slowly from the Kumara to develop in themselves the power of speech, the alphabet and rudiments of language. They learnt how to use their hands to work with skill. They also began to sow seeds of plants which yielded food which were brought by the Kumara from the Planet Venus. The process of learning aided by teaching continued in different direction upto the present times by the successes of the Occult Hierarchy. The Masters or Mahatmas are at the basic level of the Hierarchy. One of the main teachings of the Masters is concerning the use of the mind. The human species is given the name of Man to signify that he has evolved the capacity to think and yet he has much to learn to use it in the right direction. Among many individuals the teachability

of the mind is to surrender the dirt or distortions which it has gathered during past and present lives. His own higher nature which is oriented to Truth is that to which he must surrender. That which the truth-seeking aspirant has to surrender can be summed up as 'pride' and 'prejudice' which have attracted themselves even as a mirror gathers dust which can however be wiped through constant and sustained attempt by the aspirant. Such a course of discipline is essential to realize brotherhood as a fact in one's own nature.

With such propound teachings serving as to philosophical background the Master K.H. and M. founded the Theosophical Society by inspiring at the outer level Col. H.S. Olcott and Madam H.P. Blavatsky to propagate Theosophy and establish centres of universal brotherhood. Whatever truth the Masters have realized as a fact they have tried to impress upon the sensitive and purified minds of the public. The qualities of the faulted mind of man with pride and prejudice have to be conquered slowly and steadily. The Masters have stated that universal brotherhood can be realized and practiced by man inwardly although outwardly such individuals may differ in diametrically opposed directions. This unity in diversity is the basis of forming a nucleus of universal brotherhood.

To give spiritual strength to the TS the esoteric school of Theosophy has been instituted where membership is restricted to select number of TS members who owe allegiance to the Masters, observe rules of vegetarian diet, do not have habits of smoking, promiscuous sex relationship and thus follow a disciplined way of life. They made a valiant attempt to live brotherly life in spite of outward differences. In short, members of the E.S. try to live the life of truth in which love is the sustaining, immortal spiritual link. Other virtues of wisdom and compassion should lend spiritual support to love in such individuals. When this becomes a *sadhana* or sustained spiritual practice, the attributes of the Solar Logos can be partaken as qualification of the aspirant. These attributes are Will, Wisdom and Love.

Mans' Involution and Evolution guided into spirituality by the inspiration of the Masters.

This theme of universal brotherhood as the spiritual link in mankind has been helped during long periods of pre-history and history. This period can be divided into periods of Involution and Evaluation. During involution man has been in the lap of Nature as he himself did

not have the ability to be conscious of himself much less the capacity to think. The Inner Man or spiritual ego is spiritually placed within the already progressed animal stage. The progressed substance is called Prakriti and includes both physical and psychic matter. At the beginning of the involution of early man such material has been made habitable by the Spirit or Purusha. However, only the building of the physical, astral and mental bodies could take place with Prana or life force integrated with them and later the self-consciousness of man. Matter and spirit have conjointly worked together to bring about child humanity which marks spiritually the beginning of universal brotherhood. This work of spiritual cooperation comprised of or gaining the elementary human body brings about an orderly state of functioning. This included among other things enabling the nascent or innocent state of human consciousness of self in man to come into existence. Thus he was able to sense his surroundings which included other existences. The intelligence was beginning to open up so as to make him distinguish between what is good or bad and so on. This was a land mark achievement and a turning point towards spiritual evolution. Spirituality was on the upward trend and marked the beginning of spiritual evolution, Man became teachable and the Sanat Kumaras from Planet Venus were able to indicate the rudiments of language, spoken and written, acquisition of skill in the use of hands and to use primitive stone implements. The Kumaras were also able to teach brother humanity to progress spiritually. This was also the beginning of philanthropy which was the state of mind and self which learns to forget its selfishness within and to care for others' welfare. Those who were attuned to this consciousness in later years that is in incarnations to come became the adepts or Masters of the Wisdom, and Compassion. Such Masters of the Wisdom with the spirit of brotherhood in them were able to guide the rest of humanity along with spiritual path of which philanthropy was the key.

Man's duty of Responsibility (Dharma) extends towards formless devas and obedience to the Law of Karma.

In the present era, the Master envisions Nature as Shiva but not with form and its worship. This formless ideal of yogi of yogis who is in deep meditation or Samadhi is in attunement to the highest level of truth and consciousness and is the means of attaining spiritual regeneration of man through the channel of the Master who is himself in spiritual attunement with Nature or Shiva. Hence anthropomorphic of idolizing the highest truth for obtaining personality gifts of powers, possession

and privileges is not conducive to reaching the spiritual goal or regeneration. What is needed is recognition of Nature or Shiva in his highest formless state and cooperate with him so that the spirit may dawn upon the consciousness of man for the welfare of man as a whole.

Another way of cooperating with Nature is by recognizing Nature's Law of Karma and Reincarnation. The nature of such cooperation is by willingness to obey the incontrovertible laws and acting according to the behests of truth of these laws. The process of the working of the Law of Karma is carried out by the semi intelligences of the invisible elemental kingdom. The Masters enlighten us by explaining to us how these forces operate. As we send out our thought they are ensouled and survive as thought form. This survival extends to future immates of the person who has died but the thought forms do not. By repeating thoughts of the same nature the life of thought forms is prolonged. However man does not understand that he himself is the cause of effects which he has to endure.

The language of the semi-intelligences is of invisible colours. However, man can also generate thoughts of unselfish nature, capable of creating good to others. He can direct these beneficial thought forms with the strength of his will power. Thus man can benefit altruistically his fellowmen by making use of semi-intelligent forces although unknown to himself. This can be successful as a brotherly act when strengthened by love as the important qualification.

Brotherhood implies that man should be able to regenerate the qualities of Wisdom and Compassion. These are spiritual powers only to be used for the spiritual welfare of the world including man.

The Master states that only when man has learnt to be unselfish can he have true brotherly peaceful relationship with the world. This means that he should not be proud or act with prejudice. He should not alienate himself from the men and living things around him. He should not discriminate others because of colour, caste, creed, sex and so on. The senses and mind have the limitation of perceiving the world around with pride and prejudice. Very often man is not keenly aware of or possess wisdom and hence the need arises of evolving or fundamentally changing his approach and relationship with the world. This change entails that he should be able to an inherent faculty of perceiving men and things in their true perspective. However, such an achievement re-

quires sustained spiritual effort or *Sadhana*. The Master states that this wisdom is practically feasible to achieve to result in brotherhood which is a fact in nature.

The conjoint use of reason in daily life and Buddhi in higher life is spiritually desirable. This is recognized untowardly in life and *At the Feet of the Master* points out that only a wise man can wisely help the people.

The Master states that in having wisdom and Buddhi the meaning of all existences including man is fully realized. This wisely helpful work is undertaken by The Masters since they are wise although we may not realize this since we are in the limitation of the senses and the mind.

Compassion is a virtue of the Master and is within the spiritual achievement of man. This can also be achieved by the aspirant by fundamentally changing human nature or humanizing as the Masters call the same. Man has inherited as part of his lower nature the quality of negative aspects of his nature, namely crude passion. This crude impure aspect of man's nature namely, anger, jealousy, hatred, which violate his true nature can and should be purified.

The Master, states that only when man has learnt to put away and remains steadfastly secure in the state of love which is the spiritually finding force that he can live in peace and harmony. The Master further states active that only when man has realized to live with love as the most important qualification and extending it to all humanity both in bodily existence as well as out of the body. This is the hall mark achievement in practical life of regenerating brotherhood. Thus we are taught that the cardinal virtues of love, wisdom and compassion are not utopian but practical.

We have considered the spiritual help of the occult hierarchy, the involution and evolution of man and the spirit "informing", "impelling" and "verifying" and the indolent and resisting change by man.

In overcoming the obstacles man has to learn to be true man, by being kind and harmless towards animals and plants to revere the formless devas in seeking their help to elevate man spiritually by learning to obey the hidden laws of Nature and to receive the beneficent qualities of wisdom, compassion and love.

QUEST FOR TRUTH**

There are two initial motives in man's inner life: the search for meaning and the search for the eternal, and both in turn and together search for the Truth. Truth is a beautiful hologram; It is what you see yourself, in your 'self' – not what others see in you. There are always three sides to every story: your side, the other side and the truth. Truth is the highest reality. Sat is the truth of existence: *Sat-Chit-Ananda*: Truth-Intelligence-Bliss. Quest for Truth must experience first an intense metamorphosis in eternal life and be able to endure the eternal divine light, says Scholastic Theology. In truth, "Mysticism is the scholastic of heart and dialectic of feeling", said Goethe. Jesus says: I am the way, the truth and the life. Truth is our Saviour. Truth shall make you free, says St. Luke in the Gospel; for 'Truth is always the strongest argument' said Sophocles. Truth is truth to the end of reckoning, said Shakespeare. Truth, like Eliot's poetry, is truth first and last, and nothing else... There is no way to Truth: Truth is the way. A man is free to speak the truth, not free to lie. And that's why a witness deposes in the court of law to "tell the truth, only the truth and nothing but the truth." And hence in all fitness of things we have our national motto: *Satyameva Jayate* (Truth alone triumphs/prevails) as our insignia in the Emblem. *Satyamvada Dharmamchara*- Speak the Truth; tread the path of righteousness.

Truth exists; only lies are invented, concocted. Truth is One; lies are many; truth is natural, lies are unnatural. A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes, said Charles Spurgeon. Truth is simple, straight and singular; lies compound and complex, having twists and turns and are plural (tissue of lies) – truth is all convincing, lies are confusing and confounding. "Truth is Truth,

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** Based on a short talk delivered on 13th Feb. 2016 on the occasion of the 51st Annual Conference of Utkal Theosophical Federation in conjunction with the Centenary Celebration of TS, Cuttack Branch.

one, alone, it has no sides, no paths; all paths do not lead to Truth. The heart must be full and mind empty in order that Truth comes to you. Now you have the mind full and your heart empty. Truth does not belong to you or to me; it is totally impersonal and anonymous," said JK.

Declaring Truth to be a pathless land, JK wished to set man absolutely and unconditionally free. "You must distinguish between truth and falsehood; you must learn to be true all through, in thought and word and deed... Never attribute motives to another... Never present to be other than you are, for all pretence is a hindrance to the pure light of truth..." said Alcyone in *At The Feet of The Master*. There is nothing so strong or safe in an emergency of life as the simple truth, wrote Charles Dickens. Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon and the truth, said the Buddha. Truth is inherently simple; falsehood is acquisitively complex.

Truth cannot be sold, lies can be purchased. Truth is never availed in the crowd: Truth is availed in solitude. Truth is the virtue of all virtues: it entails all other virtues. It is believed if a man speaks truth uninterruptedly for 12 years, whatever he speaks thereafter will come true. Truth about oneself is always self-evident.

Dorothy Jinarajadasa said, "Theosophists are the seekers of the Truth, and Theosophy the great universe for the search. The TS is for exploration. It goes on exploring, wondering, seeking, knowing that the whole of Truth can never be found; but continual search and inquiry reveal the ever growing and increasing splendour of life." Mystics perceive reality through Self-realisation, and poets and thinkers perceive it through transcendental imagination. There are innumerable literary examples of visionary poets revealing primeval truths. These poetic revelations are universal spiritual truths. "Truth is victorious, never untruth. Truth is the way; truth is the goal of life, reached by sages who are free from self-will," espouses *Mundaka Upanishad* (3.1.6). 'Truth is said to be the unequalled means of purification of the heart', says *Narada Dharma Sutra*. Sri Ramakrishna said, "Truth is One, only it is called by different names. All people are seeking the same Truth. Truth is One, sages call it by different names," vide *Rig Veda*. All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them, said Galileo. It is morally uplifting to speak the truth; the Truth is Divinity itself.

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There are several instances of miraculous power of truth in our Epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Truth is God's decree. Lies have a limited life and need to continuously breed and proliferate to keep up the pretence of constancy. Truth is like pure fresh water, cleansing the mind of sensory debris like desire, hatred, greed, jealousy, envy and animosity; it's detoxifying. There's nothing called pleasant or unpleasant truth. 'Sometimes when you're in a dark place, you think you've been buried. But you've actually been planted. Wherever a man turns, he can find someone who needs him', said Albert Schweitzer.

Our thoughts & feelings, fears & aspirations, likes & dislikes are known to us and yet we hardly express ourselves fully and truthfully. Instead we battle with our conscience, concoct stories and manipulate our expressions to camouflage our thoughts and true feelings – we either simulate or dissimulate to dissemble. We choose the hard option driven by all sorts of fears: fear of being found out, of rejection, of losing honour, grace, status & image, and so on. Pursuing truth in thought, word and action, the mind attains a state of tranquillity and starts mirroring the truth of people, objects, events and situations well beyond constraints of time and space. The Mahabharata says that there is no virtue equal to truth and no sin greater than falsehood; Truth is sacred. The two vital aspects of the Self viz. *Prakash* (light) and *Vimarsa* (understanding) illumine. Through *Prakash* we are able to see an object; through *Vimarsa*, we are able to identify it or differentiate one from the other – the truth from falsehood, the reality from illusion. Cosmic vision and perspective alone reveals the Truth. Eternity provides a curative, a therapeutic perspective. Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies, Nietzsche would aver.

There is no religion higher or greater than truth. There may be denial of God, but denial of Truth is never known. "My religion is based on truth and nonviolence. Truth is my God; Nonviolence the means of realising Him. To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face, one must be able to love the meanest of creations as oneself. Students thou art, thou art the seekers of wisdom and truth. Truth and nonviolence are like my two lungs", said Gandhi. Gandhi's initial impression of '**God is Truth**' to the final assertion of '**Truth is God**' is by no means a mean transition – it's a great transcendental truth. God and Truth are identical in their substance and thus exchangeable. His

Satyagraha is search for Truth and his nonviolence is like radium in action. Nonviolence is the basis of the search for truth. Truth is God and nonviolence is the means to attain Him. Truth never damages a cause that is just. The most authentic autobiography ever written in the annals of human history is Gandhiji's: *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Truth is so kind; falsehood so cruel. Truth is so peaceful; lies so turbulent. Like the layers of an onion, under the first lie is another, and under that another, and they all make you cry.

Truth has the eyes to disprove the lie that has only lips and ears. Here was living truth at last – that was Mahatma Gandhi. You must go to the Mahatma, if it is morality you want, and not to the Archbishop. For Gandhi is the epitome. Morality is the basis of things and truth is the substance of morality. Gandhi prescribed truth for mental health for lies make us mentally sick. To seek the Self is the true end of wisdom, to seek anything else is ignorance, says the Gita (13.11) "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true... I'm bound to live by the light that I have", Lincoln would vouch. The ideals which have lighted my way, and have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty and Truth, said Einstein. The concept of 'Confession' in Christianity is a profound way to speak up the Truth. The only thing that will redeem mankind is Truth. It's the essence of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) who spent hours in introspection, exploring the realm of moral truth – 'the interior of the heart'. "Confession of errors is like a broom which sweeps away the dirt and leaves the surface brighter and cleaner. Confession of one's guilt purifies and uplifts. Its suppression is degrading..." said Gandhi.

Guru Nanak proclaimed: Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is true living. For him the soul is the bride and God is the groom and our brief life is meant to make a union of the two. Nanak preferred to call God *Satnam* – the eternal holy truth, implying that truth is the essence of God. The *Guru Granth* verses, when chanted, the ordinary words change into Logos. Nanak compares the evolution of a true devotee to the minting of a perfect coin of gold. The *Mool Mantra* pronounces: There is but one God; His name is Truth. The Lord bestows glorious greatness upon those who are truthful. Those who see Truth and speak Truth, their bodies and minds become truthful. Truth is their evidence; Truth is their instruction. Truth is the praise of the truthful. Realise the

Truth by experience, said Rumi. Opinions are not important, only facts are. Look for facts and enquire all opinions, holding them tentatively.

We needn't go too far as Truth is here and now all the time. That which puts off the human and puts on the divine is transformed into God, into Truth. Life should be studied most devotedly and lived most divinely. The ultimate goal is truth which is in the plenitude of the present. "Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal... it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty... For... You develop in the luxuriance of purity... nor that the future is arbitrarily framed by any separate acts of the present, but that the whole of the future is in unbroken continuity with the present, as the present is with the past", affirms *Light On The Path*. Occultists live in the eternal; no time frame for their lives. When we live in the present we do not need to rely on memory. All virtuous qualities are just modified expression of Truth. To see things in their beauty is to see things in their truth, said Matthew Arnold. "Truth is Beauty and Beauty Truth / That is all we know on earth, and all we need to know," composed Keats.

Nothing exists unconditionally and absolutely; everything is dependent upon something other than itself. Truth is not dependent on anything, it is self-existent. What is 'is a fact'... Purity of life is the highest and truest art. Our true Self is different from the character we are enacting in this movie of life. The life of the world is but comfort of illusion, says the *Quran*. All of us are travelling on the spiritual path, at our own pace. This journey is obligatory for every being, both sentient and insentient:

A stone I died and rose again a plant;
A plant I died and rose again an animal;
I died an animal and was born a man;

Why should I fear? What have I lost by death? ... God sleeps in minerals; God dreams in vegetables; God is conscious in animals; God is self-conscious in humans. Our existence is more important in the psychic world than in the physical world; the physical world is so evanescent – quickly fading like the winter fog. The witness-self has to bacon to a dimension beyond the transitory. The real quest for Truth elicits us to be like a salt-doll desirous of delving deep and experience the ocean. "Absolute truth is indestructible. Being indestructible it is

eternal. Being eternal it is self-existent. Being self-existent, it is infinite. Being infinite it is vast and deep. Being vast and deep, it is transcendental and intelligent", said Confucius.

Truth needs no confirmation. Something needn't be said aloud, needn't be said repeatedly, needn't be said by many in order to make it true. Truth has its own voice that speaks in silence; its only falsehood which needs the voice that is louder, louder than before every time it is spoken. "Trees are the earth's endless effort to speak to the listening heaven," wrote Tagore all in quietude. 'When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the One – the inner sound which kills the outer', wrote HPB in *The Voice of The Silence* (1.7). "Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of *asat*, the false, to come un to the realm of *Sat*, the true," *ibid* (1.8). 'The wise ones heed not the sweet-tongued voices of illusion', *ibid* (1.31). '... in the Hall of Wisdom, wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory', *ibid* (1.32).

The self is encased not merely in one but four bodies: physical, astral, causal, and supra-causal. The four states of consciousness correspond to the four bodies: waking, dream, deep sleep, and transcendental respectively. The dream state of consciousness is experienced through the astral body. The deep sleep of consciousness is experienced through the causal body; it's the state of the void, of total darkness, where one is completely unaware of one's existence. This ultimately leads the seeker to the sublime state of '*Turiya*' in which the supra-causal body is experienced. The seeker attains communion with God who manifests Himself in the dazzling Blue Effulgence called Eternal Blue of Consciousness. The ego gets completely merged in the Divine Effulgence and all the past karmas are burnt in the fore & fire *atmajnana*. Then you cannot remain frozen in your ego or false self. Ego is the greatest lie; falsehood is most vicious. The body is not the self, though it exists for the self. The self is universal, immanent as well as transcendent. Know the knower. The one, who you have to know, is the true you. Know Thyself. To know is good, to live be better, and to be that is perfection. Truth is the only absolute and ultimate standard, fixed like the laws of gravity, to measure our actions, words and feelings. However knowledgeable one is there is still a higher state of knowing. True knowledge is "of the Spirit and in Spirit alone". When the heart weeps

for what it has lost, the Spirit laughs for what it has found; for time has a way of revealing the truth.

“O, incessant traveller, you may tread the worldly path with the help of eternal truth”, enunciate the Vedas. Scriptures cannot transcend reason and truth though the truths they teach are ‘**eternal verities**’ that they represent realised knowledge. Spiritual wisdom is the experience of extraordinary moments of prime existence. Men are probably nearer the central truth in their superstitions than in their science, avers Henry Thoreau. A belief in something eternal is needed to enhance our quality of existence, or else life is “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, and signifying nothing”, said Shakespeare in Macbeth. The Supreme is manifest when audible (*Omkaar*) and un-manifest when dormant and formless as *Om* in *Brahmn*. What can words relate about things which have no yesterday, no tomorrow and no today? In pure awareness, there is no time: ‘*Nitayah anityaanaam*’ which means the timeless upon which there is the appearance of time. Past, present and future are correlates of time that help establish a chronology. They are as much a figment of imagination as time itself. In *Advaita Vedanta* Hari, and Hara are one representing the oneness of all things: Time being Hara and Space being Hari – there is only being, no becoming – the Ultimate Reality. The highest Brahmn is transcendent, a-cosmic. Brahma is self-existent and the absolute and thus ‘The Truth’.

The universe is the university for those who care to watch and learn. The world is a miracle moving towards its expression, said Mother Teresa. And for its expression truth is the only way out. The true mystery of the world is the visible, not the invisible, said Oscar Wilde. God is not hidden, only our eyes are closed. Understand humanity as part of the extraordinary cosmic symphony. God made the illusion look real and the real an illusion in order that humans exercise their insight to discriminate. Once we can see our thoughts for what they are, we are free, we are at peace. A seeker never says he found something; but it just revealed itself to him. Vedanta says that the mind itself must be used as an enquiring tool to look into the purpose of life beyond the visual-auditory-sensory matrix of impressions. As life outreaches matter, so does the mind outreaches life. When matter is reduced to its essence it is mind. One can be an intellectual even if he disrespects truth, but he cannot be wise if inclined towards falsehood. Brahmn is described as

Truth in the Upanishads. Universal truths are better expressed in the present tense and sense. The sun always shines above the clouds.

Our life has no end in just the same way in which our visual field has no limits. Life isn’t about finding yourself; it’s about creating yourself, said GB Shaw. The essence of eternal evolutionary enlightenment is found in the precise moment when nothing becomes something – naught becomes aught. Past, present, and future merges in the eternal ‘Now’ in the experience of a mystic. The Masters say enlightenment is ‘Right here, Right now’. The ancient Romans worshipped a deity called Janus, who had two opposing heads: One looking at the past, the other at the future. There’s an African myth: The Sankofa bird flies forward while looking backward with an egg in its mouth which represents that there is no end and no beginning. Myths are only undiscovered facts of truth. Theosophy is able to give to science such evidences of the truth of the ancient philosophy and comprehensiveness of ancient science that it will, as Mme Blavatsky pithily expresses it, ‘set to work to learn a new alphabet of Science on the lap of Mother Nature’. In nature there is no such thing as death but only reshuffling of atoms – that’s the truth eternal. Quantum physics paves the way to accept mind and matter as two irreducible, but inseparable aspects of universal reality. David Boehme envisioned the existence of a higher order of reality called the ‘implicate order’ that may be called Elysium.

Man is the messenger who forgot the message. Man is the only being who refuses to be what he is. We are what our thoughts are and the world is what our deeds are. When you realise there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you. Everything has beauty but not everyone sees it, said Confucius. What you consider ugly may be differently beautiful. Human beings search for either reasons to be good or excuses to be bad. If you have any intuition you will work out ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ and perhaps realise whence the difference, says Master KH. Cognitive sheath enables one to understand cause and effect – an awareness to distinguish and discriminate. We deceive ourselves in several ways, we believe what we wish to believe, and turn a blind eye to the truths we don’t like.

Truth is what the voice within tells. What is the distance between you and yourself? – Such a retreat can awaken you to the living realisation.

Tat-Tvam-Asi: That thou art, you are the object of your search. You are that means the Self in its original, pure and primordial state that is wholly identical or identifiable with the Ultimate Reality as the ground and origin of all phenomena. The snow goose need not bathe to make it white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself, said Lao Tzu. For the one who dies for the sake of truth, death is easier than life with falsehood. For the ancient Greeks a life lived well was a life rounded off. The knower of truth is never miserable in the world. Truth wears vestures of many colours and speaks in strange languages; we need to have open mind to find truth. There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it, asserted GB Shaw. Truth is the property of no individual but is the treasure of all men. 'Every truth has two sides; it is as well to look at both, before we commit ourselves to either', said Aesop. "Your problem is you are too busy holding onto your unworthiness," said Swami Ramdas. 'Some of us think holding on makes us strong; but sometimes it is letting go,' said Hermann Hesse. Our truest life is when we are in our dreams awake, said Thoreau.

Seven lives lie between the first initiation and the **Arhat**, said Leadbeater. Life is metamorphosed into death and death is metamorphosed into life. There is neither birth nor death, everything is transcendental. Kahlil Gibran's *The Wonderer* speaks of the story of two philosophers who discussed their quest for truth. One of them said that he was searching for the 'fountain of youth' and the other one was seeking the 'mystery of death'. They got into a wrangle until a third man, an arbitrator (probably a Theosophist!) interjected to assert that they both really belong to the same school of philosophy but just that they speak in different dictions. Truth is attainable only through intuition; it cannot be received second-hand, said Emerson. Almighty is invisible yet true. And the path of love is amongst various paths on the journey to Truth, exemplified by the lives of the mystics. The point of myth or mythology is to point to the horizon and to point back to ourselves. This is who we are; this is where we come from; and this is where we're going. On the path of Truth, stay away from words and illumined by heart, with love. All change is only change of environment and embodiment. What dies is what belongs to this world of form and illusion.

In tittle-tattle Death asked Life: why does everyone love you and hate me. Life replied: Because I am a beautiful lie and you are a painful Truth. Death destroys the personality but it cannot annihilate individual-

ity. The truth is close to us but illusion casts a spell that the rope and the snake look analogous. Both science and spiritual persons are in search of truth. Hence, science and religion are bound to meet in conformity one day. Theosophy is the ultimate science; it's just on transit. Action consecrated to a higher ideal is worship in which we evolve spiritually; we need to transcend the necessity of time and space. The worship, the worshipper and the worshipped all three together is called *Yajna*. The soul is like the third dimension of solid geometry vis-à-vis the Euclidian plane geometry. The soul can also be comparable to the four-dimensional space-time continuum. You can't know where you're going unless you know where you come from. Thus goes a Sufi saying; I searched for God and found only myself. I searched for myself and found only God.

The God gave a microbe a drop of water, and in it he lived. They gave an ant a half acre of land and he prospered. They gave a tiger the forest and he formed an empire and became an emperor. They gave man the Universe and all the knowledge therein. He entered of his own free will the dungeon of Dogma, shut his mind to truth, and slew and starved his brothers. "Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth," said Marcus Aurelius. Modern malady is that we focus on 'having more' rather than simply 'being more'. To lose spirit of altruism is to lose the very reason for one's being. A Bodhisattva fears the loss of altruistic spirit more than the torments of hell. The ultimate truth is that there is neither creation, nor destruction; neither birth nor death, neither destiny nor free will, neither any path nor any destination. It is to have respect for the unknown, the Occult, and not to deny the unknown.

Ultimate Reality is singular like time and space although appears to be many due to apparent divisions. The darkness that one feels with closed eyes is not the same as the one with open eyes. We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light. Truth is attainable only through intuition; it cannot be received second-hand. Man has to die unto himself to be one with that divine consciousness which, like space, is an indivisible whole. The truth is 'the boy stole an apple'; the Truth of the truth is; 'the boy was hungry' and peace is 'nobody stole anything, now, give the boy an apple'. (cf. *The Bishop's Candlesticks*)

NEWS AND NOTES

Bihar

Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, Asst. General Secretary of the Indian Section, was the chief guest on the occasion of the 111th Annual Conference of Bihar Theosophical Federation held on 15-16 April 2016 in Patna. He inaugurated the conference with a talk on Universal Brotherhood. Besides, he presided over a session of short lectures on 'Divine Love'. Bro. S. S. Gautam, former National Lecturer, was the guest of Honour. He delivered a talk on 'Love and Universal Brotherhood'.

M.P. & Rajasthan

Study Camp at Gwalior: Under the auspices of Gwalior Lodge, a study camp was jointly organized by M.P. & Rajasthan and U.P. Federation at Gwalior on 9 and 10 April. The book taken up for study was *The Pathway to Perfection* by Geoffrey Hodson. The camp started on the morning of 9 April with recitation of prayers of all religions followed by Universal Prayer. Dr. H.S. Dwivedi, Secretary of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation, welcomed the participants and speakers. About 40 persons including members from both Federations participated in it. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Federation Secretary of U.P., introduced the subject and inaugurated the camp. He also covered chapters I, VIII, X and XII of the book during four sessions on both days. Dr. O.P. Budholia covered ch. II and III and Dr. H.S. Dwivedi covered ch. IV on the first day. Bro. S.K. Pandey, National Lecturer, covered ch. V, IX and XI during three sessions. Bro. S.S. Gautam covered ch. VI on first day and ch. VII on second day. On 9 April a C.D. containing a talk by John Algeo on "Seven Rays" was played. It was followed by a devotional meet when Smt. Sumati Vaishy, Smt. Prabha Dubey, Smt. Suman Tomar, Shri Dal Chandra Jain and Shri Madhuplal Madhukar- all teachers of Padma Girls School rendered devotional songs.

An interactive session was held on 10 April when as per the suggestion of Dr. H.S. Dwivedi, Bro. U.S. Pandey and Bro. S.K. Pandey also gave brief introduction of the purpose of Theosophy and Theosophical Society for the benefit of new persons participating in the camp. On behalf of U.P. Federation, Bro. S.K. Pandey thanked the officials and members of the host Gwalior lodge. Dr. H.S. Dwivedi proposed the vote of thanks and then declared the camp closed.

Uttar Pradesh

Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, organized Bro. U.S. Pandey's talks on 'Ashtavakra Samhita: its philosophy' and 'Seven Human Temperaments'. These talks were held in the month of April.

The special study of Annie Besant's book *Hints on the study of Bhagavadgita* by a group of members of Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, conducted during additional weekly meetings organized since February 2016 was concluded on 21 April. Bro. U.S. Pandey directed the study.

Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri delivered a talk on "Ashtavakra Gita- a Theosophical View" at Satyamarg Lodge on 3 April. About 36 delegates, including non-members, attended it.

Bro Agnihotri spoke at National Public School, Lakhimpur, on the topic "Theosophy- Introduction and Yoga of Durga Saptashati". It was held on 10 April and about 20 delegates (non-members) attended it.

The study of 'Ashtavakra Samhita' was conducted at Gyanodaya Lodge, Barabanki, during weekly meetings held in the first fortnight of February, March and April.

During a special meeting of the lodge held on 3 April, Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri and Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri from Pragya Lodge, Lucknow, also joined. Bro. K.K. Srivastava, Secretary of Gyanodaya Lodge, gave a brief history of the lodge and also mentioned about some basic points of Theosophy. Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri spoke about development of human sheaths and also about allegory in Durga Saptashati. Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri talked about purpose of Theosophy, and its importance in human life. About 20 persons including some non-members participated. Some theosophical literature was distributed among the participants. At the end Bro. K.K. Srivastava thanked the visitors and participants.

Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk on "Mahatma Letters-their teachings" in a meeting of Gwalior Lodge held on 08 April. Dr. H.S. Dwivedi introduced the speaker. The talk was followed by interaction with the participants.

Address to students in DLW School Varanasi: Bro. U.S. Pandey addressed a group of about 200 students of class 10 to 12, along with

some of their teachers and personnel officers in DLW Higher Secondary School in Varanasi on 19 April. The theme was “How to live a healthy, happy, successful and peaceful life”. During the talk he mentioned about importance of ethical conduct, interconnectedness, helpfulness, sensitivity, impartiality, equanimity etc. in daily life and how to cultivate virtues by examining our negative traits in the light of theosophical teachings. He also advised students to choose subjects of their study and later the profession according to their innate aptitude and then pursue study and profession with utmost dedication.

Bro. U.S. Pandey visited Rampur on 26 April where he delivered a public talk on the theme ‘Points for living a noble and successful human life’, before a gathering of students and teachers of Saraswati Shishu Mandir Inter College. Besides, he spoke on ‘Mahatmas, their letters and teachings’ in a meeting of the Rampur Lodge held in the forenoon.

A public talk was delivered by Bro. S.K. Pandey on the theme “Death and Reincarnation” before a gathering of about 40 members and other citizens in the evening.

The following talks were held at Sarv Hitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, between Jan. and March, 2016: Sri H.N. Bhatt spoke about the ‘Laughing Religion’ based on the ideas of Acharya Rajanish. Sri A.P. Srivastava’s subject of talk was ‘Dharma’. Dr. G.C. Gupta, with the help of slides, explained about a new herbal care medicine for diabetes, blood cancer, etc. He explained how herbal medicine works inside the body. Dr. Ajay Rai delivered a talk on *The Voice of the Silence* in which he explained that OM is the word which came first during the manifestation and then he further explained the vibrations, consciousness, Monad, etc. Bro. S.B. R. Mishra explained the IIInd & IIIrd fragments of *The Voice of the Silence*. His other talk was on some aspects of Chinese philosophy. Dr. R.P. Singh gave a talk on *Advait Darshan*. Mr. Kandoi highlighted the contribution of the Theosophical Society for the good of humanity. Sri A.P. Srivastava spoke on Upanishad. Dr. V. Dwivedi’s talk was on ‘Yoga and Upanishad’ and Dr. Ajay Rai’s second lecture was on ‘Good Friday’.

The Annual Meeting of Kashi Tattva Sabha was held on 29 April, 2016, in which office-bearers for the year 2016-17 were elected.

Shri Srinivas Sharma (Dip.No.92408) of Nirvan Lodge, Agra, passed to peace on 21.03.16.

National Lecturer

Bro. S.K. Pandey attended the Taimni Memorial Study Camp jointly organized by the three Lodges of Lucknow on 20 and 21 Feb. 2016. He presented a brief resume of I.K. Taimni’s book *Man, God and The Universe* relating it to the present findings in physics, the latest theory, ‘The Superstring Theory’ which is commonly known as a Theory of everything. Besides, Bro. Pandey delivered lectures on some chapters of *Ashtarakra Geeta* in a study camp held at Ghaziabad on 12-13 March 2016. It was organized by Anand and Besant Lodge of Ghaziabad.

Bro. Pandey was one of the resource persons in a study camp on Geoffrey Hudson’s book *The Path Way to Perfections*, held at Gwalior in the second week of April. He delivered lectures there on ‘Discipleship’, ‘The First Initiation’ and ‘Difficulties and Dangers of the Path’.

Study Camp at Bhowali

A study camp was organized by the Indian Section of The Theosophical Society at Himalayan Study Centre, Bhowali, from 20 to 26 April 2016. Prof. C.A. Shinde, National Lecturer, directed the study of the book *Light on the Path* by Mabel Collins.

In all, 16 delegates from the Theosophical lodges of Varanasi, Pune, Chennai, Salem, Bangalore, Amravati, Lucknow, Bhowali and Trivandrum participated in it. The camp was a great success to understand the subject in great depth. During the opening session Prof. Shinde gave the notes and the plan of study to be undertaken during the course. Bro. V. Narayanan, Bro. P.S. Panchakshari and Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri spoke in the inaugural session.

The book, *Light on the Path* was published first in 1885. Definitely intended for the quickening of the evolution of those who are on the Path, this book puts forward ideals which people of the world are rarely prepared to accept.

The study course included 14 study sessions. Every day there were two study sessions in the morning and group discussion and presentation in the evening. The whole book Part I and II including preliminary comments, ‘The Three Great Truths’ and the essay on ‘Karma’ were covered during the course.

Prof. Shinde conducted the study on first three days. Then Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, National Lecturer, assisted the director to take one session every morning on the last three days of the camp.

The concluding session was addressed by Prof. C.A. Shinde and all the delegates gave their feedback about the course. Vote of thanks was given by Bro. P.S. Panchakshari on behalf of the Indian Section.

The daily routine included Bharat Samaj Pooja in the morning and meditation session before starting of the morning study session.

Indian Section Headquarters

A meeting was organized at the Section HQ on the occasion of White Lotus Day. After the Prayers of All Faiths excerpts from *Bhagavadgita*, *The Light of Asia* and *The Voice of the Silence* were read by Pt. Jwala Prasad Misra, Dr. Jannvi Tandon and Dr. Atul Bhatnagar, respectively. The General Secretary, while welcoming the members and the guests, mentioned a few of the observations made by great thinkers and scholars about HPB's books. This was followed by a short talk delivered by Mrs. Manju Sundaram.

Poor people were fed in the morning for which the members had donated money.

Study Camps

1.) The Indian Section as part of the celebration of its 125 years is organizing a National Seminar at Patel Nagar, New Delhi, on '**THEOSOPHY AND THE MODERN WORLD**' on 30-31 July 2016, with the help of Delhi Theosophical Federation [DTF]. Members of the Theosophical Society and sympathizers are welcome to attend the seminar as delegates. The delegates are requested to donate voluntarily. The members who are interested to attend the seminar are requested to contact following members by 15 June 2016 :

- 1- Dr. Rajiv Gupta, President, DTF, Mob. No. 09650015396.
- 2- Sis. Meena Thakur, Secy. DTF, Mob. No. 09873111242.
- 3- Bro. V K Taneja Treasurer of DTF, Mob. No. 09810525757.
- 4- Sis Suvralina Mohanty, Librarian of DTF, Mob. No. 09873335928.

5- Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, Asst. Gen. Secy. Indian Section, TS
Mob. No. 09437697429 .

2.) U.P. Federation is organizing a study camp on ***First Principles of Theosophy*** (a book by C. Jinarajadasa) at Lucknow on 30-31 July, 2016 . The study will be conducted in Hindi. Members of U.P. Federation and also of other Federations are welcome to participate in the study camp.

The members coming from outside Lucknow will be provided board and lodging from 29 July (evening) to 31 July (AN), for which each such participant is requested to pay a contribution of Rs.400/- on arrival at Lucknow. Each such member may advise his/her name to any of the following contact persons latest by 15 July, 2016:

Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Secretary Pragya Lodge,
Mob. No. 09839912070

Bro. B.B. Lal, Vice-President Dharma Lodge,
Mob. No.8004388090

Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary, U.P. Federation, T.S.
Mob. No. 9451993170

3). Seminar at Chapra, Bihar, on 24-25 September 2016

CHANDRA DEO THEOSOPHICAL LODGE, SALEMPUR, CHAPRA, will organize a seminar on the theme 'THEOSOPHY AS A CATALYST OF WORLD PEACE' for Hindi knowing members/sympathizers. Twenty delegates from outside Bihar are welcome to attend it. The Registration Fee is Rs.300/- per delegate. The delegates from outside Bihar will be provided board and lodging from 23.09.2016 evening to 25.09.2016. In this regard, kindly contact the following persons before 10.09.2016.

1. Bro. S P Srivastav, Vice-President, BTF, Cell No. 09430624806
2. Bro. R. K. Prasad, Secretary, BTF, Cell No. 09835643048
3. Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, AGS, Varanasi, Cell No. 09437697429

The 14th Triennial Conference of the Indo-Pacific Federation 2016:

The *Indo-Pacific Federation Conference* will be held in Auckland, New Zealand, from 14 to 19 October 2016, starting with arrivals on **Friday 14 October** and 6:00pm dinner, and finishing with breakfast and departures on **Wednesday morning 19 October**. We are fortunate to have confirmed Tim and Lily Boyd as guests for this conference.

We welcome members from throughout the Indo-Pacific region to explore and share the ageless wisdom in fellowship, meet old friends and make new ones. These conferences are full of learning and inspiration.

The Indo-Pacific Conference is a special event held every few years with people coming from many countries in the Asia Pacific region. New Zealand is the host Section for this conference and we look forward to welcoming you here.

Theme: The Why of the Theosophical Society

Exploring the purpose of the Society, the reason for its existence in today's world.

Venue: Rose Park Hotel (Visit the website to have a closer look).

Located in Parnell, Auckland overlooking Sir Dove Myer Robinson Park, which incorporates the stunning Parnell Rose Gardens with attractive views over the Auckland Harbour. The location is close to central Auckland CBD with easy access to walks and harbour cruises.

Accommodation: Rose Park Hotel

Single or twin share rooms available with wifi access, restaurant and swimming pool.

Twin share room on the left and view from the restaurant to the rose garden across the road.

Registration:

Registrations are now open via the host country, the Theosophical Society in New Zealand website at <http://theosophy.nz>

Post Conference Outing. See further down page.

Conference Costs:

Option 1: Registration & Accommodation for full conference:
NZD \$590 (Approx. USD \$400)

Twin share accommodation

Includes:

- Registration
- Accommodation (5 nights from 14 October)
- 5 Breakfasts
- 4 Lunches
- 5 dinners

Option 2: Registration & Accommodation for full conference.
NZD \$920 (Approx. USD \$625)

Single room accommodation

Includes:

- Registration
- Accommodation (5 nights from 14 October)
- 5 Breakfasts
- 4 Lunches
- 5 dinners

Option 3: Registration ONLY. No meals & No accommodation.
NZD \$100 (Approx. USD \$70)

Option 4: Registration & Meals – No accommodation.
NZD \$295 (Approx. USD \$200)

Includes:

- 4 lunches
- 5 dinners

Post Conference Outing.

Below are some options for tours in New Zealand following the conference.

· Scenic Pacific <http://www.scenicpacific.co.nz/auckland-2-3-day-tours.htm>

· Great Sights <http://www.greatsights.co.nz/find-a-new-zealand-tour/north-island-tours/>

THE GOLDEN STAIRS

A Clean life, an open mind,
A pure heart, an eager intellect,
An unveiled spiritual perception,
A brotherliness for one's co-disciple,
A readiness to give and receive advice and instruction,
A loyal sense of duty to the Teacher,
A willing obedience to the behest of TRUTH,
Once we have placed our confidence in,
And believe that Teacher to be in possession of it,
A courageous endurance of personal injustice,
A brave declaration of principles,
A valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked,
And a constant eye to the ideal of human progression
And perfection which the Secret Science depicts,
These are the Golden Stairs
Up the step of which
The learner may climb
To the temple of Divine Wisdom.