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*Editor*

**PRADEEP H. GOHIL**

## A STEP FORWARD

New thinking by the Theosophists based on our objectives and the Golden Stairs, with application of intellect and reason and a quality of purity in it, is the step forward in this age. As observed by Brother D.K. Telang (General Secretary of the Indian Section, 1928-1933): ‘the appeal that the Society had made and the beneficent character of its work in the eyes of the intellectual and advanced men of the time, in the early days, were due to its gospel of the superphysical and spiritual worlds, based on an unassailable intellectual and practical foundation, which provided an escape from the materialism of the day’. As long as the Society did this, it was far in advance of the times in those days. The huge success and popularity of *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled* came from the fact that the books delivered to common people the thoughts of enlightened scientific world and spirituality which were the monopoly of the few.

However, in today’s world, with considerable more education and learning, soaring technology, wide spread communication and ease of travel, the work of the Theosophical Society of the days when it came into existence with a big bang, has now passed out of our hands and we no longer have the monopoly of it as we enjoyed in those days. If one looks at Theosophy today, it does not have any attraction or appeal to the present day “Techies”. The technocrats and narrow focused intellectuals are not attracted to the faith and devotion story that we keep on professing rather than new intellectual thinking and logic. Naturally, this has failed to arouse any interest of the foremost thinkers of the day, much less the kind of attention that was drawn by the books of Madam Blavatsky. A great thinker, Count Keyserling had actually said that the Theosophical Society would be relegated to a back seat unless it evolved a new gospel for the redemption of the world from its dead-locks, as it once had been. The effort of our President Tim Boyd at Naarden during

the brain storming and strategy planning session was in this direction. But then, it is not so easy to evolve something so profound.

In the words of Mr. N. Sri Ram “let us not go on thinking along conventional lines, doing the same things, over and over again, or doing them with a little more noise and splash. Our work should not be that Theosophy should mean a purer kind of life, with a new lustre, a quality of purity in it; in fact, the quality should exist in all one’s dealings, actions, relationships, thinking, tastes and in all details of one’s private living”. For a period of about 50 years, Krishnaji too did exactly what Mr. N. Sri Ram had prescribed. He expressed the advanced thoughts and pointed the new ways. At once, it held great appeal to the intellectuals and seekers after truth. The new lines that his thoughts constantly suggested held the greatest hope for the society. If we keep abreast of this kind of emphasis on innovation and new thinking and base our gospel on quality, then may be even the quality systems of ISO (International Organization of Standards) world certify us to be acceptable to the modern society!!!! It could very well be a great step forward for all of us.

Our purpose is obviously to bring about happiness and peace for all creatures and growth in spiritual knowledge and spiritual love for all human beings. To state our duty briefly, the skill of a Theosophist must seek to bring about what is right and beneficial from the evolutionary point of view for all beings from plant to man.

**RADHA BURNIER**  
‘Presidential Address’,  
129th Annual Convention of the T.S,  
26 December, 2004

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CENTRE

With the passing of time the idea of the “center” has taken on a greater importance for me. All of us have some idea of what we mean when we use the word “centre”, but depending on what we are discussing, its meaning can be quite nuanced. As members of the Theosophical Society (TS), we are aware of the first and primary Object of the TS: “To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.” A nucleus is the central, most important part of any organism, system, or organization. It is that centre which directs the activity and growth of whatever body it belongs to.

Annie Besant spoke of the Theosophical centre in Adyar as “The Masters’ Home”. So there is an element of history and interaction with different people, consciousnesses, that has flowed through this place, and continues to flow. At any moment there are people there, and others around the world, sending their thoughts and energies to Adyar; is *that* the centre? One of the things that becomes clear is that each of the above-listed components is involved in this centrality, but no single one of them constitutes that centre. Even when we put all of them together, the whole somehow exceeds all of its parts combined. So, where is the centre? Is it something identifiable in the way that we would like to think these components can be identified? Can we point to it?

All of us hold an idea, an image, of who and what we are. Without giving the matter much thought, we point to our bodies in conversations where “I” and “me” are prominent. When in Tibet I was impressed with the way that Tibetans point to themselves in conversation. Westerners tend to point to their chest; Tibetans point to their nose. No matter where we point, we have this concept of some identifiable unit that is “me”.

The human body is composed of trillions of cells, and each is an independent life with its own agenda, involving its nutrition, reproduction by cell division, creating a climate and environment that is hospitable to its life. As many human cells as there are in the body, there are even more individual cells that are bacteria. These are literally colonies

of cells, living within the body, but not part of the human organism. In terms of the number of cells within the body, we are more bacteria than we are human. These independent life forms participate in the processes of human life. Cells form themselves into larger organisms, and each organ has a specific consciousness. The heart does not function like the liver; the kidney does not function like the lung; they all have a particular expression and consciousness.

There is no “I” that can be in any way described or understood through merely physical processes; it is impossible. So it is a process of consciousness. Nowadays we are able to transplant organs. In the USA organ donors have notices placed on their drivers’ licenses that give permission to donate their organs in case of accidental death. The notices are there because transplants need to be done quickly, before the cells in the organs start to die. Today there are about 3,100 heart transplants every year. Something that occurs with a significant number of transplant patients is that they experience changes in their personalities, outlook, likes and dislikes, and so on. These are not rare incidents.

There are transplant patients who, before the operation had a pure diet, and after it, suddenly, they only want to eat “junk food”, or they experience other changes in food preferences. I read about a person who had a heart transplant and used to have a non-vegetarian diet, who all of a sudden became a devout vegetarian. The patient found out that the donor of the heart used to run a vegetarian restaurant. Generally these facts are kept from the recipients, who are only told the gender, race, and age of the donor.

There are also people who after having had a heart transplant began having dreams about a person with a certain name and appearance, who later they discovered was the donor. A particularly remarkable case was an eight-year-old girl who received a heart transplant from a ten-year-old boy who had apparently been murdered. After the operation she was plagued with terrible nightmares about the murder, and her parents took her to a psychiatrist. She could remember the person, what they were wearing, what they said, to the point that they were able to track down the actual murderer of the boy and convict him!

The organs within the body possess a certain distinct consciousness. Under normal circumstances the organs work cooperatively. There are diseases such as cancer, which involve the unregulated growth of cells. With cancer, normal cooperation and rhythm breaks down. If it

progresses far enough, it interferes with the functions of other organs and we die. So the product of the cooperative effort among these varying levels and streams of consciousness is what we tend to point to and call “I”. But even that is not enough, because there is a higher centre that we could describe as “soul”, the genuine “I” centre, the central orchestrating principle, which at some points takes possession of this body.

When we think about a kingdom, there are people who build the roads, collect taxes, and go out and fight the wars; and what does the king or queen do? You could say they do nothing, but that is not correct. Basically, they sit and all else takes place around them, moving out from this central consciousness. In our case it is this “I” centre, which is rooted in something that maybe we will be able to consider.

*The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben has some profound insights about the consciousness of trees and the forest network. The author notes that in the forestry industry, the whole object is to provide conditions for trees to develop a great deal of mass so that they can be cut down in eighty years or so, and then get the wood. So forestry, by its nature, moves against real forest growth and promotes the individual isolated tree. It always wants to have space. What the author observed is that the individual tree may grow fast, but its life is much shorter than the other trees in the forest.

When trees have an infestation of caterpillars, for example, they can produce a pheromone, a chemical odour that will attract the predators for this specific caterpillar! The scent goes out and little wasps gather and have a feast on the caterpillars attacking the trees. Trees also communicate through their roots. Much as with us, the life beneath the surface is much broader than what we see above. All the roots within a forest are interconnected. In fact their network of communication is so far-reaching and swift like the internet, that the author coined the term “wood-wide web”. There are fungi that are not part of the tree, but they are related to the roots, and there are all of these growths within the fungi that pass messages from rootlet to rootlet beneath the earth.

When we think in terms of *one* tree, it indicates an ignorance of the fact that there is no such thing as *a* tree. Much like the cells within our bodies, each tree is part of a greater life within which all of these organisms participate, draw their life, and gain their identity.

What is the centre? In *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky describes the human being as very complex. The shorthand way of expressing it is that we are highest spirit and lowest matter linked by mind. This human project comes into being where three streams of evolution meet: the spiritual, intellectual, and physical. Where they meet, there we have a humanity. She describes it as: “Each of these three systems has its own laws and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis, or ‘Logoi’. Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is.” (I, 181) The union of these three streams of the directing and guiding intelligences associated with each stream, and the hierarchies of beings which function within those intelligences, is what makes us human beings.

Naturally, we are complex. When we speak of the physical realm we tend to believe that we know what it is. Probably what we know is the mere surface. We are told that throughout the universe there are “black holes”. Their physicality is beyond our comprehension. They are so dense, that at a certain level, where matter starts to move into that hole, even light cannot escape. What we think of as matter in our world, composed of atoms with a huge space around the nuclei, with electrons circling around, in the black hole *that* is also condensed to where there is no space in between these particles. Such density and physicality are utterly incomprehensible to us, but this is ultimate physical reality.

We also tend to think that we know something about spirit from the fleeting experiences that we have, where the mind becomes illumined by the light of the universal soul, or *buddhi*, from time to time. This is our glimpse into the world of spirit, but it is beyond our present capacity to grasp. All these elements are part of the process that we point to and declare: “This is me.” Even when we simply eat a meal and digest it, we think of it as “my digestion”. But the same intelligent process is going on throughout the human kingdom. It is not an isolated phenomenon. It is an intelligence operating through every one of us. We are so convinced of what HPB described as “the heresy of separateness”, that we model systems for *all* of our relationships on the conviction of being separate from each other and from all other things.

A beautiful little book by James Allen called *As a Man Thinketh* has a poem in the beginning. It reads in part, “We think in secret, and it comes to pass, environment, is but our looking glass.” The book is

about our process of thought, and it is non-secrecy, and non-separateness. In the Mahatma Letters the process is described as every thought of a man being emanated, passes into the inner world and becomes an active entity. How? by associating itself with an elemental — one of the semi-intelligent forces of Nature. It survives as an active intelligence, a creature of the mind's begetting. A good thought is perpetuated as an active beneficent power, and an evil one as a malevolent demon — all within the shared atmosphere of thought.

There are lines from one of the letters of the Masters of the Wisdom which talks about our process of thinking. It was the first letter that was sent to A. O. Hume. The idea it expresses is quite powerful, and worth consideration: thoughts are perceivable by others. It reads: "Man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions; a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organization which comes in contact with it." This describes a process that is shared. We think of the mental capacity as somehow individual. We project our perception of reality as a separated universe with separate beings functioning independently, and we operate that way. But every thought attracts to it that which makes it more active in the world and gives it a sustained life.

Just on a normal level, these are things that we are quite aware of. In Nature there are smells, colours, sounds, etc that attract specific creatures. The fragrance of certain flowers attracts the bees, the butterflies, and so forth. The smell of garbage attracts different things, flies, maggots, and so on. All life forms are attracted to different things. This is normal, natural world knowledge. In spite of this awareness we carry an odd conviction that the laws of the natural world that we witness from day to day, somehow change when we go to the unseen world. This is not true. If the Mahatma is correct, our thoughts are attractive. According to what kinds of thoughts we think, each one of us ends up "peopling" our current in space. We have a "crew" of thoughts that follows us everywhere we go, continually influencing one another.

Anyone who has spent time around someone who is depressed or angry, can feel it. Their thoughts and emotions react on us. Similarly, those of us who have been around someone who is inspired, uplifted, feels empowered.

There is another profound statement by HPB: "Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, the only realities." (I, 40) When we are angry, we live in a bad and hostile world; when we are sad, people talk about the world going gray. The positioning of our consciousness along the spectrum of possibilities determines what we see as real at any moment. The possibility to elevate or move that centre from something that is base or self-oriented to something more expansive, should be of interest to us.

How do we change our plane of consciousness? There is a little book titled *Think on These Things* by J. Krishnamurti. This title goes back to St Paul in the New Testament. He made the statement that whatever is true, good, beautiful, think on these things. It is an advice not given lightly, having a profound potential to affect our consciousness. This is one of the core understandings of the Ageless Wisdom.

There is a simple idea, variously expressed, but many of us are familiar with it, that the centre of our being is a spark, a divine spark from an eternal flame. This spark is in every way identical to the flame from which it has emanated, but it is small, it has not quite come fully to life. This whole process of spiritual practice — study, meditation, service — that we engage in, is one of first becoming aware of the spark, and then fanning it into life. In this fanning process it will grow to a greater flame, and then the separation that we feel and perceive ceases to exist when the spark unites with the flame. This is a core idea worth considering. An awareness of the spark, the divine presence within us, even if just for a moment, opens something powerful within us.

We may have profound spiritual experiences from time to time. When they happen, some people do not know how to understand them. Often little puddles of water form on the seashore. Each one of us is like one of those puddles. We have our limited content. If the puddle sits there long enough the water gets stagnant. But from time to time this puddle is washed over by a wave from the sea, and for a moment, this isolated small body of water disappears, and its consciousness suddenly becomes oceanic. We share in the vision and experience of the limitless body of which we are temporarily a part. Then the water goes back, the wave always goes away, and what is left is a puddle in the exact same shape as before. Nothing is changed with its shape or size, but every-

thing is new. Our body does not change; we have the same family, the same friends, the same look, everything is the same, but nothing of importance remains the same with these sorts of experiences.

This type of potential for upliftment that we have, and that comes through often, we should “think on these things”. There is a thought in religious traditions that the Father in Heaven is that source from which the soul that is the essence of our being has emanated. The Lord’s Prayer begins: “Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Your name . . .” Just the mention and the thought of “Your name” brings an upliftment that is described as holy, as the potential for a deeper level of contact with something that we are not separated from; but we need these reminders.

In HPB’s Diagram of Meditation she begins by saying: “First conceive of UNITY by Expansion in space”. It is a challenging statement. Unity cannot be grasped in any concept, but we are asked to try. One of the necessary components of a concept of the Divine, the ultimate unity, is that it is without limits, endless, boundless. Our nearest conception is the idea of “space”, which is all-encompassing, without any limitations. Our effort at “expansion in space” necessarily extends us beyond our normal condition. There is a poem that says: “Our reach should exceed our grasp, for what’s a Heaven for?” What we reach for must necessarily exceed what is our capacity to grasp.

Unity, “Think on these things”, who am I, what is the centre? Whether we look for it outside or within ourselves, ultimately, we find that there is no cut-off point where one person ends and the other begins. The process we are engaged in is a human process, not an individual one. Humanity functions as yet another organ within the divine body. As humans we are not the “be-all”, “end-all”. We have a role in the divine economy. Where we end is unknowable. Where we begin is untraceable. In every way, *all* things are linked together.

Universal Brotherhood is not just about people, it is the nature of reality — *all* things are interdependent. Everything is interconnected. When we talk about a centre, it might be good to recall the expression: “God is a circle whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference is nowhere”. Think on these things.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, April 2017)

N. SRI RAM

## WHITE LOTUS DAY

The White Lotus Day is one of the three or four days which are celebrated all over the Theosophical world, from New Zealand in the far East to the United States and other countries in the West. We hold this commemoration following the wish of H.P.B. who desired that on the day of her passing Theosophists who care for her should meet, and there should be readings from the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The Light of Asia*. In many places there is also a reading from her work, *The Voice of the Silence*.

It was Colonel Olcott who named this “The White Lotus Day,” possibly because there are, or used to be, plenty of white lotuses in the various pools and tanks on the Adyar estate, which in those days comprised only the Headquarters area of twenty-six acres. I remember certain occasions when this whole platform in the Headquarters Hall at Adyar was completely covered with white lotuses and there were even garlands of lotuses hanging from the beams. Today we have a number of white lotuses, but only in the brass bowl in front of the Founders’ statues.

There could not have been a more beautiful name given to this day. In India the lotus is regarded as a sacred flower, full of symbolic significance. There is much reference to it throughout Indian literature, both sacred and purely literary, in poems and so on. There is a chapter on the symbolical meaning of the lotus in *The Secret Doctrine*, by H.P.B. herself, where she explains that the louts is a symbol of generation in the occult sense, the evolution of all things from their subjective source in Divine thought, that is, from their archetypes. There is in Occultism the conception that evolution starts from the loftiest levels of subjectivity and comes down by degrees to the objective forms we behold. Thus the lotus expresses the realized perfection of things, the full manifestation of the Divine thought embodied in every form that can be objectively perceived, as explained also in *The Lotus Fire* by Dr. George S. Arundale.

In India we think of the lotus more as a symbol of how life and consciousness start from the lowest plane, of physical matter, and grow through the intermediary region, which is the waters, until finally what is most beautiful and hidden in them blossoms out in the air and is exposed to the sunlight of the Spirit. Thus it is symbolical of the life of the Spirit which rises from its immurement in matter, and expresses its mysterious beauty, whatever it has to unfold, in the higher regions of the human consciousness. The lotus thus becomes a symbol of the divine or spiritual Soul and also of spiritual Wisdom which is identical with the nature of the Soul.

We could not have a better symbol to associate with H.P.B. I say this because it makes this day a happy one to contemplate with all these beautiful associations. It is right that there should be one day in the year dedicated to the memory of her who founded the Theosophical Society and gave to the modern world the magnificent presentation of the ageless Wisdom, which we call Theosophy. We do not think of her passing with any tinge of sadness. It is only for a time that one feels sorrow over the departure of anyone; afterwards the recollection of all that the person was and did becomes a cause for joy and happiness.

As the *Bhagawad Gita* says: "The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead". It is rather a strange saying because of the inclusion of the living in this context. We think of HPB's splendid qualities and her great work of restating the philosophy of Occultism, which had been largely forgotten in her days. She has opened to very many all over the world—many of her own and subsequent generations a new pathway to the eternal Truth. All that she was and the nature of her self-sacrifice is summarized in these words in one of the earliest Letters from one of the Mahatmas:

"Chaste and pure soul, pearl shut inside an outwardly coarse nature.....anyone might well be dazzled by the divine Light concealed under such a bark, Devoted to the great cause of Truth, she sacrificed for it her very heart's blood".

Most of us speak of Occultism and the great truths, the life to be lived and all that, but are like a man who sits on the bank of a river contemplating the waters, refusing to take the plunge lest the waters

should prove too cold or carry him away from his place of safety. What we all need to do is to let go and take the plunge into what we may consider to be the Truth, living our lives according to our highest conception of it with complete abandonment, regardless of the consequence to ourselves or prudential considerations, to use the phrase from one of the Letters of the Master K.H. Very few can do that, but it is such people who really bring about a vital, a serious change in the lives of people or in the affairs of the world.

H.P.B.'s book, *The Secret Doctrine*, and her other writings are appreciated today by students of Occultism as ever before. It is only gradually that we have come to realize how profound is her thought, as expressed in the various works she has written. It will surprise many to know the total quantity or output that is to her credit, the amount of writing that she was able to achieve amidst all the excitements, bustle and disturbances of her life. Perhaps her writings are more appreciated today than they were even when she was alive. There is so much in them which has been vindicated by the progress of modern Science. In her days the whole atmosphere of modern thought was materialistic, not only to the core but in its entire texture, but this atmosphere, has been changed unrecognizably during the years that have passed since then. In her time, matter and matter alone reigned supreme, and everything, including the most beautiful flights of imagination of a Shakespeare, Plato or Shankaracharya, was traced to matter, to molecular combinations, as their sole cause and origin.

Would it be too much to say that the impetus given by H.P.B. is responsible for the change that has come about more than anything else? I personally feel that the change, the revolution of the world's thought, which is taking place, with corroboration and echoes of the ancient teaching in many unlooked for places, will continue at an even faster rate, because we are obviously in a time of transition, and there is not only uncertainty in the world of human affairs, but also uncertainties and problems in the domain of thought. H.P.B. in her writings has given some foreshadowings of what the future will bring, what turn the course of events will take during this century. She has prepared us to expect vast and revolutionary changes. But whatever may be the nature of the changes or happenings, we have in the occult philosophy that she

gave—which has been elucidated and brought closer to our understanding by her great successors in the Theosophical work – an impregnable basis of knowledge and confidence. So it does not matter what cataclysms or catastrophes may take place, what fears we may have on the surface of our minds; deep down in us there ought to be an unshakable confidence, because we know that everything proceeds on a certain inexorable course. It may be deflected by man to a slight extent, but it is a river which cannot be turned back to its source, but must eventually merge itself in the sea, whatever may be our conception of that sea.

Most of us who have studied Theosophy or Occultism know the general direction of progress and know our duty to promote the deeper, more comprehensive, more spiritual view of things which theosophy means. Because of this confidence and this knowledge, we can take the lesser things in our stride and with more equanimity than the average man. I think what the world needs is not so much learning, which is overrated and unduly praised and prized these days, but rather what in *The Voice of the Silence* is called soul-wisdom, that wisdom which alone will bring about the regeneration of man, and enable him to stand out in a new nature different from the old, the nature which is of the earth earthy.

H.B.B.'s own books are really a phenomenon of erudition and learning; yet all that learning was not acquired by her by a laborious process of research and study; it came to her in the course of her own occult development. She was able to get at whatever facts or truths she required for her purposes. She was very remarkable in many ways, but I think perhaps the greatest lessons we can take to our hearts from her life is the need to be absolutely free in our thought and in our devotion or dedication to the Truth as we may understand it, and to stand by that Truth without any kind of compromise or qualification. H.P.B. herself stood for the Truth and the Truth alone; as the Master said, she was “devoted to the great cause of Truth”, which is really the cause of human happiness, because all suffering and sorrow are due to the illusions we cherish.

She expressed the hope that the Society will go on till the last quarters of this century when there will be a fresh spiritual impetus, but she said also that the Society would be able to benefit by that influence

only if it did not get stranded in the meanwhile on the sand-banks of sectarianism and dogma; the danger to beware of is that of the Society becoming crystalized round a particular creed or personality, however great, because then it will be just one cult amongst numerous others, though perhaps a little more liberal in thought than they.

I feel it is important in this Society to preserve the open approach to Truth, because Truth is nobody's possession. It cannot be set up as an enclosure to which people should come. Truth is everywhere, and therefore even though we may profoundly appreciate and respect H.P.B.'s writings—I yield to no one in my respect for them—yet they cannot be set up as a bible from which no one should depart, except for the interpretations he may put on it. Of course when there are different interpretations, there are wrangling and quarrels. In the Theosophical Society we should preserve a complete openness, so that everybody is free to accept the Truth he perceives, wherever it may be. We cannot say that Truth is that which conforms to what has been written in some book or decreed by some great and wise person.

If the Society keeps clear of all such sand-banks, which would arrest its progress, if the waters of Theosophy are allowed to flow freely without any check or hindrance, then the fresh current that will be set in motion will be joined by the old and the Society will enter a vaster field of usefulness, irrigating many fields of thought with the new knowledge and wisdom that we will then be able to unfold. For a new era, of which so many people speak, to come into existence for the world at large, there must be a new mind and a new spirit. The new era will not come by the mere lapse of time, through the procession of zodiacal signs. To think that merely by the flow of events according to the law of cause and effect the whole world will be transformed into something absolutely new is to indulge in an illusion.

If we really desire that humanity should enter an era of peace, of real Brotherhood, of complete freedom for everyone to express what is good, what is precious, in himself, then there must be the attitude of mind, the tolerance, the respect for freedom which will lead to the discovery of new values in ourselves and others. Unless there is in a section of humanity this new approach in thought, this new spirit, there will not be the possibility of a new era taking the place of the old; there will



merely be the old somewhat modified, patched-up, white-washed to some extent. There must be at least some people to pioneer the new way, some who believe in freedom from the bottom of their hearts, who are different from the crowd, who recognize the new values, and are willing to order their lives in accordance with that recognition, not minding what other people think or say about the way they go.

Theosophists in these days must not be content merely to hold meetings, distribute books and think in the same old way, that is of very little value. I am not contemptuous of the old things. If there is truth in the old as I believe there is, the discovery of it will ever be new and fresh. It is the mere repetition of the old which is of no consequence. The discovery of what is, beautiful, precious in the old really creates the new; and that is really the mission of those who care for H.P.B., care for Theosophy and the Theosophical movement. There will be wonderful developments if there is the change initiated by those who perceive the need of such a change. There must be in the eyes of some at least a vision of how things can be. The rays of the rising sun will first fall upon the summit of the mountain. If Theosophists stand upon a certain eminence of thought, they must be able to perceive, to catch those rays, which will presently flood the plains of the commonplace world.

We will really be honouring the memory of H.P.B. if we live and act in such a way here and now that the Society becomes truer than ever to the ideals of the Ancient Wisdom and to the spirit of that Wisdom. Thus, when once again there is a fresh revelation (if we believe in revelations), or a fresh spiritual impetus, there will come out of it the regeneration, the transformation, of many people all over the world.

(Reprint from *The Theosophical Review*, May 1978.

The original article was published in *The Theosophist*, June 1959)

U.S. PANDEY\*

## OCCULT FUNCTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF SOME HUMAN ORGANS AND SENSES

**Introduction:** Man has many subtle bodies, beside the physical body. In lifelong activities of man all these bodies particularly the physical, etheric double, astral and mental bodies do affect each other continuously. The physical body consists of many organs and only their physiological functions are known to modern medical science and that too partially. But our emotions and thoughts affect the physiological conditions of these organs and conversely, the physiological conditions of these organs affect our emotions and thoughts. Further some organs have potential functions yet to manifest. We may call all such functions which are not described in physiological science as occult functions of the organs. There are certain correspondences also between human organs and human principles which govern their functions. This article brings out some important details of such occult functions and correspondences as described in the theosophical literature.

**Organs and Emotions-** According to the traditional Chinese and also some other medicine systems each organ in the body is governed by a particular emotion. Hence any problem in these organs can lead to emotional disorder. Thus, for instance, mood swings are sign of disturbed liver, which also gets expressed as anger, violence, impatience, frustration, resentment, etc. On the other hand, a person with healthy liver is generally calm with unwavering judgment. Likewise, kidney and bladder when in disharmony are governed by fear and insecurity. Fear can injure kidneys. Any disorder in spleen and pancreas can make a person stagnant and extremely compulsive, in turn affecting his creative potential. Lungs are associated with grief. People with weak lungs tend to stifle their sadness, especially in letting go off relationships and emotions. Those with healthy lungs keep their commitments, hold to their principles and are able to deal better with grief and sadness. Healthy food nourishes and regenerates organs and that in turn helps to generate positive emotions.

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Thomas Carlyle calls the body of man, a temple. "We touch heaven when we lay our hand on a human body." However at the same time, the body of man is described as the great inscrutable mystery. <sup>1</sup>

Just like our physical body has its counterpart astral body in which feelings and emotions find expression, so also each physical organ has its own astral counterpart. Some organs are related to higher faculties of thinking, intellect and even intuition.

### **THE OCCULT FUNCTIONS of some vital organs:**

**Brain-** It is instrument of mental body. Every thought we express or attempt to express produces a certain wonderful change in the substance of brain. The sentient consciousness (lower Manasic Light), is inseparable from physical brain and senses.

### **Brain is the centre of the psycho-intellectual consciousness.**

In case of dying man, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body-his brain thinks and the Ego lives over in those few brief seconds his whole life again. 'The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse, and memory restores faithfully every impression entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest naturally becomes the most vivid and survives so to say all the rest which now vanish and disappear forever, to reappear but in Devachan.'<sup>2</sup> The last strongest thought feeling moulds the future birth.

**Pituitary body-** "The formation of the pineal gland and pituitary body presents some of the most interesting phenomena which are connected with the development of the *Thalamencephalon*".<sup>3</sup>

Pituitary body is the organ of sixth sense and is connected with pure psychic visions. Its activity shows in rapid increase of psychic sensitivity so prevalent nowadays. Its future use will be to bring into the waking consciousness the phenomena of the psychic plane.

"Later on, the pineal gland, linked with the pituitary body, will bring the consciousness of the spiritual worlds into the waking awareness. But by then man will be standing on the threshold of being more than man".<sup>4</sup>

Development of pituitary body along with that of pineal gland leads

to unfoldment of intuition. Madame Blavatsky says that when our pituitary body and pineal gland meet, there will be born in us omniscience.

**Pineal gland-** It is "the small pea-like mass of grey nervous matter attached to the back of the third ventricle of the brain".<sup>5</sup> Physiology describes it as a horny gland with mineral *concretion* and a little *sand* in it. In truth it is 'the very seat of the highest and divinest consciousness in man, his omniscient, spiritual and all-embracing mind'.<sup>6</sup> It is connected with spiritual clairvoyance. It is back eye of early Fourth Race, now an atrophied organ. During activity of inner man (during trance and spiritual visions) this third eye swells and expands. Pineal gland is witness to the third eye, now dead.

The normal and abnormal state of the brain, and the degree of active work in the medulla oblongata, reacts powerfully on the pineal gland. Sexual action is closely connected by interaction, with the spinal cord and the grey matter of the brain.

"Descartes saw in the pineal gland the *Seat of the Soul*".

Pineal gland is far more connected with Soul and Spirit than with the physiological senses of man... It was an *active* organ at that stage of evolution when the spiritual element in man reigned supreme over the hardly nascent intellectual and psychic elements. And as the cycle ran down towards the point when the physiological senses were developed by,... that median eye ended by atrophying along with the early spiritual and purely psychic characteristics in man.<sup>7</sup> Pineal gland will develop again as the man becomes more spiritual.

Pineal gland 'is the pendulum which, once the clock-work of the inner man is wound up, carries the spiritual vision of the Ego to the highest planes of perception, where the horizon opens before it becomes almost infinite...'<sup>8</sup>

The development and increased size of the pineal gland may be considered to be an index of astral capacities and spiritual proclivities of any man. The pineal gland is developed in more highly evolved or spiritual man.

The third eye is indissolubly connected with KARMA. It was known as 'eye of Siva' also.

"The special physical organ of perception is the brain, and percep-

tion is located in the aura of the pineal gland. This aura answers in vibrations to any impressions, but it can only be sensed, not perceived, in the living man. During the process of thought manifestation in consciousness, a constant vibration occurs in the light of this aura, and a clairvoyant looking at the brain of a living man may almost count, see with the spiritual eye, the seven scales, the seven shades of light, passing from the dullest to the brightest. You touch your hand; before you touch it the vibration is already in the aura of the pineal gland, and has its own shade of colour. It is this aura which causes the wear and tear of the organ, by the vibrations it sets up. The brain, set vibrating, conveys the vibrations to the spinal cord, and so to the rest of the body. Happiness as well as sorrow sets up these strong vibrations, and so wears out the body. Powerful vibrations of joy or sorrow may thus kill".<sup>9</sup>

Pineal gland 'is a rudimentary organ in most people, but it is evolving, not retrograding, and it is possible to quicken its evolution into a condition in which it can perform its proper function, the function that, in the future, it will discharge in all. It is the organ for thought-transference, as much as the eye is organ of vision or the ear of hearing'.<sup>10</sup> It is destined to be again in the distant future as the organ of our seventh and highest sense.

The pineal and pituitary glands within the brain are the focal points through which the manifestation of individual consciousness primarily occurs. From them consciousness extends throughout the brain as waves of energy, varying in frequency according to the nature of the thought. In the normal man the pineal activity consists of concrete thought with occasional extensions into the abstract, whilst the pituitary gland conveys emotion with occasional extensions into intuition.

In the developed man intuition passes through and is interpreted by the intelligence, reaching the brain by way of the pineal gland. As intuition develops, concrete thought is gradually relegated to the subconscious, there joining with emotion and reaching the brain through the pituitary gland.

Development of consciousness is accompanied by a parallel development of brain, including an increase in the range of vibratory responsiveness of both glands. Their positive and negative polarities become accentuated owing to their increased activity as receivers and transmitters, so that a direct interplay-in electrical terms a magnetic field- is established between them. The third ventricle of the brain is

included in this field, completing the constitution of a triple mechanism for the manifestation of the triple Self through the brain.

"An embryonic etheric opening at the anterior fontanel, filled in the normal man with etheric matter, is gradually cleared by the radiations from this cranial 'machine'. This channel, when opened, makes possible a new and direct relation between the higher Self and the brain, a short cut as it were, between consciousness and the vehicle. The normal passage is through the mental, emotional, and etheric vehicles, the pituitary and pineal glands, each of which must serve as a relay station receiving, transmitting, and modifying in varying degree the message in the process. The ego of developed man manifests directly in and through the brain via fontanel and third ventricle".<sup>11</sup>

**Kundalini** is a triple force, positive negative and neutral. These three forces have their names. The feminine winding force is called Ida and the masculine Pingala and the central which flows vertically along a canal in the spinal cord is called Sushumna. Ida and Pingala flow together on either side of Sushumna which they cross and intertwine at certain important force and nerve centres. One goes into the pituitary body, one into the pineal, while Sushumna travels straight up the spinal cord, along the medulla oblongata and flows out at the anterior fontanel.

The Fires are always playing round the pineal gland, but when Kundalini illuminates them for a brief instant the whole universe is seen. Even in deep sleep the Third Eye opens. This is good for the Manas, who profits by it, though we ourselves do not remember.

"Kundalini- one of the mystic yogi powers. It is Buddhi considered as an active instead of a passive principle (which it is generally, when regarded only as the vehicle, or casket of the Supreme Spirit (Atma). It is an electro-spiritual force, a creative power which when aroused into action can as easily kill as it can create".<sup>12</sup>

Kundalini is said to rise from the root chakra at the base of the spine, to the heart chakra, and thence to the sixth chakra between the eyes(brow); that is, consciousness 'rises' or refocuses from the physical to the spiritual vehicle of the ONE SELF in us, and thence to the individual Self. The place between the eyes has reference to the pineal gland and the pituitary body. The forces from both the sixth and seventh astral centres (which are between eyebrows and on top of head) usually converge on the pituitary body, when the etheric centre is aroused, and

then vivify it and act through it. But there is a certain type of people in whom the seventh astral chakra vivifies the pineal gland instead of the pituitary body, and in that case forms a line of communication directly with the lower mental plane, without apparently passing through the astral plane in the ordinary way. Through that channel comes for them the communication from within, while for the other type of people they come through the pituitary body.

Awakening of kundalini will take place usually somewhere near the Third Initiation, or, in the present Kali Yuga, even later. Kundalini is 'called the *Shabdabrahman* in the body'. Shabda or sound is the creative force. 'Speech is considered to be the most outward form of it. It is an expression of thought, which in its true active form is *kriyashakti*'.<sup>13</sup>

**Heart;** - The heart is the king, the most important organ in the body of man. It is the seat of life, the centre of all, Brahma, the first spot that lives in the fetus and the last that dies.

There is a mysterious relation existing between substance of Agnishavattas which are called Heart of Dhyani-Chohanian body.

Heart is the organ par excellence through which the Higher Ego works and it is the seat of spiritual consciousness.

'The pangs of remorse, the prickings of conscience, they come from the heart, not the head'.<sup>14</sup>

"Father in Secret", the divine Saviour of the man of flesh is not an extra-Cosmic God but is enshrined in his own heart and soul.

**Spleen-** It is the physical vehicle of the Protean Double (Plastic soul or etheric double) which is the vehicle of life principle, Prana. Thus spleen is a centre of Prana.

H.P.B. points out that spleen, liver, stomach and naval are kamic organs, associated with and influenced by kama and therefore by kama-manas or lower mind. Naval, stomach, liver and blood are seats of kamic consciousness. When a particular organ is described as seat of a principle it means that it is the centre through which certain state of consciousness has the facility to work.

Sensations are received and transmitted by blood cells.

"Our thoughts, feelings and actions of lower or higher nature, make an impression on the cells of our body...memory of the purely

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daily-life functions such as eating, drinking, planning to harm another or gratification of desires, etc. have nothing to do with the higher mind but is related to lower mind or personal ego. So also, on the physical plane, it has nothing to do with heart and brain, because they are organs of power higher than the personality. These impressions are made on *kamic* organs, such as spleen, liver, stomach etc. It is the hungry stomach which first evokes the memory of last banquet, which stimulation is then passed on to brain and lower mind which then remembers or sees it in the astral light. It is only the superconscious mental experiences, which are impressed on the brain and heart cells".<sup>15</sup>

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

There are correspondences of some organs with principles etc. such as,

<b>Organ</b>	<b>corresponds with the Principle</b>
Right Eye	Buddhi (and Mercury)
Left Eye	Manas (and Venus)
Right Ear	Lower Manas
Left Ear	Kama Rupa
Right Nostril	Life Principle
Left Nostril	Life Vehicle
Mouth	The organ of Creative logos
	The Paradigm of the 10th (creative) orifice in
	The lower triad

The Lower ternary (excretory and regenerative organs) has a direct connection with the Higher Atmic triad and its three aspects (creative, preservative and destructive or rather regenerative). These lower organs are the creative centres, corresponding to the creative forces of the Kosmos. The abuse of the corresponding functions is of most terrible of Karmic Sins, the Sin against the Holy Ghost or with the Christians.<sup>16</sup>

The five physical senses correspond with the five lower Tattvas. Two more Tattvas corresponding to two higher (the sixth and seventh)

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senses are yet to manifest - corresponding to the highest human principle - Buddhi and Auric Envelope integrated with light of Atma.

Another correspondence between some inner organs and principles is described as under:

“The Spleen——	corresponds to the Ling-sarira
The Liver	“ Kama
The Heart	“ Prana
The Corporaquadrigenina	“ Kama-Manas
The Pituitary body	“ Manas-Antahkarna
The Pineal gland	“ Manas

until it is touched by the vibrating light of Kundalini, which proceeds from Buddhi, when it becomes Buddhi-Manas” .<sup>17</sup>

**Septenary correspondence-** Anatomical structure of man corresponds with septenary division of human principles. The heart has four lower cavities and three higher divisions. There are seven nervous plexuses of the body radiating seven rays. There are seven distinct layers of human skin.

In the sevenfold nature of man each principle is correlated to a plane, a planet, and a race and the human principles are, on every plane, correlated to sevenfold occult force, those of higher planes being of tremendous power.

**CONCLUSION:** The knowledge of the occult functions and correspondences helps the student of Theosophy to know the intricate and subtle mechanism of functioning of organs and the body. It gives clear understanding of importance of purifying our thoughts, feelings and actions. One knows his ‘self’, the personality, better which in turn helps him to know the ‘Soul’, the Ego, better and then perceive the SELF, the ONE source of all life. Such knowledge, thus, like knowledge of other subjects of theosophy, helps in evolutionary progress.

**References:**

<sup>1</sup> “In the Light of Theosophy”, *The Theosophical Movement*, Theosophy Company(India) Private Ltd., Mumbai, Feb, 2010, p.33.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, First Edition, 1998, First Reprint, TPH, 2003, p. 326

<sup>3</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, Anthropogenesis, Third Reprint, TPH, Adyar, 2010, p.297.

<sup>4</sup> Clara M. Codd ,*The Ageless Wisdom of Life*, TPH, Adyar, Reprinted in 2002, p.14

<sup>5</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *op. cit.* p.294fn.

<sup>6</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, Theosophy Company-Second Indian Edition, 1948-photo offset Reprint 1997, p.119.

<sup>7</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine, op. cit.* p. 298.

<sup>8</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *Raj-Yoga, or Occultism*, Theosophy Company, India, Third Edition,1973, Reprinted 1977, Bombay, p.213.

<sup>9</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *Esoteric Instructions, TPH, Adyar, 2015*, pp.274-275.

<sup>10</sup> Annie Besant, *Thought Power: Its Control and Culture*, Second Edition,TPH, Adyar, 2016, pp.34-35.

<sup>11</sup> Geoffrey Hodson, *Meditations on the Occult Life*, TPH, Adyar, Second Edition, 1986, p.10.

<sup>12</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, Third Reprint, TPH, Adyar, 2005, p. 124.

<sup>13</sup> C.W. Leadbeater, *Talks on the Path of Occultism*, Vol. II – Ninth Reprint, TPH, Adyar, 1998, p. 116.

<sup>14</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *Esoteric Instructions*, TPH, Adyar, 2015, p.238.

<sup>15</sup> “In the Light of Theosophy”, *The Theosophical Movement, op. cit.* Feb, 2010, p.34.

<sup>16</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *Esoteric Instructions, op. cit.* p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p.268

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Bombay

Adyar Day meeting jointly organized by BTF & Blavatsky Lodge on 17th February 2017: The Meeting was opened with the Prayers of All Religions & the Universal Prayer. BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya was in the Chair with Blavatsky Lodge President Sis. Kashmiri Khambatta. Bro. Viayak Pandya opened the meeting explaining the significance of Adyar Day. He added that it is a day to be tuned with gratitude to the Masters' place Adyar. Sis. Kashmiri Khambatta conducted the meeting.

Sis. Ruby Khan speaking on Adyar Day said that Adyar with its beauty is a Sacred Lagoon. She spoke about how Adyar was developed as H.Q., and for theosophical activities. It is a day to remember and thank ALL who have worked for spreading Theosophy and serving Theosophical Society.

Sis. Aban Amroliwalla speaking about extra ordinary qualities of Col. H. S. Olcott said that before Col. H.S. Olcott met Madame H.P. Blavatsky, he heard a call from another world and answered it with his unquestioned commitment to the Masters. HSO, an American, made India his home and continuously working for realization of human unity he became a true citizen of the world. He became a National Hero of Sri Lanka for reconciliation of all schools of Buddhist thoughts. The Occult Hierarchy used HSO as the Chief Organizer & Executor of TS and encouraged him with their material presence. Master KH writes, 'Him we can trust under all circumstances, and his faithful service is pledged to us come well, come ill.....where can we find an equal devotion?'

Bro. Khusrov Pavri paid tributes to Giordano Bruno, an early incarnation of Annie Besant. Giordano was a great orator, writer and philosopher. For the Truth he spoke he was declared atheist and was burnt alive. It is said that he went to a higher plane in a Chariot of Fire.

Sis. Aban Patel surprised all with her opening words 'Bishop C. W. Leadbeater was born somewhere in 450 to 550 B.C. (Her explanation is narrated in the BTF Bulletin.) And it is also true that after 2300 years later CWL was born on 17 February 1854 in London. He had

joined TS in 1883 when he became an associate of Annie Besant. Though HPB had looked at him searchingly at the first meeting, he writes about her, 'I wish I could convey to my readers some adequate conception of what she was to me and all who had come in close touch with her, the deep affection and intense enthusiasm which she evoked.' Aban spoke about his clairvoyant discoveries which provided details of the occult effects of all that he could see with his inner eyes. She mentioned names of some of his 69 books. She added how blessed she felt with the opportunity to study CWL's few books and to share her study with Brethren at Blavatsky Lodge.

Bro. Berthram Redwood, who had opportunities to listen to Shri J. Krishnamurti said this Messiah was identified by CWL. The Higher Intelligence had transmitted Divine Knowledge to JK. Whatever JK spoke was Theosophy. His life was a life of Love, Understanding & Respect for all Life. He spoke about Self-Knowledge and advised all 'to be in Present' always.

Bro. Navin Kumar showed a Video on Adyar, which was the recording of International President Tim Boyd's PPP at an American Convention in January 2015. The video starting with maps of Adyar covered the landscape, HQ and other buildings, Shrines and Temples, Amphitheater, Palm Groves and River Path, Nature in abundance with plants, birds, insects & animal lives, garden workers, International Convention, archival artifacts like HPB's Cup and long term planning for 100 year old buildings of Adyar, which needed repairs.

The Diplomas were presented to New Members by BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya. The meeting ended with recitation of Sanskrit Universal Prayer.

BLAVATSKY LODGE WRAP UP SESSION ON 'PATANJALI YOGASUTRA' at Aarey Colony on 18 February 2017: In the beautiful Natural Surrounding of Aarey Milk Colony about 15 Brethren gathered again for one more interactive wrap up session. Bro. Arni Narendra, who had conducted the study of '*Patanjali Yogasutra*' at Blavatsky Lodge opened the Wrap Up Session. He said: Yoga is a Science and believes in a Temple of Living God. Body is outside, Mind is inside and Soul connects the two. We are born to go through experiences to evolve with Self-Realization. Yogic practice started with stable mind, and over-

coming agitation & negativity and concentrating on positive thoughts leads to *Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi*, the ultimate realization of 'Kevalya' - 'Sat Chit Anand'. Goal of life is the union of *Atma* with *Parmatma*. His talk was followed by sharing of spiritual experiences and information by Brethren Khurov Pavri, Rustom Cooper, Aban Patel, Aban Amroliwalla, Berthram Redwood and Navin Kumar. Not quantity, but the quality of aspirants was emphasized.

## Uttar Pradesh

Following talks were organized by Dharm Lodge, Lucknow, in March: Bro. U.S. Pandey gave one talk on 'Will' and his other talk was on 'Self-transformation'. Bro. B.B. Lal spoke on 'Eternal life in Vedanta'. Mrs. Linda Oliveira's article 'Living from the still centre' was discussed by Bro. B.P. Shukla. Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Smt. Vasumati Agnihotri, Bro. B.B. Lal and Bro. B.L. Dubey from Pragya and Dharma Lodges of Lucknow visited Sitapur and participated in lodge meeting there on 5 March. Bro. Ravi Ratna, Secretary of Sitapur Lodge, welcomed the participants. Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri delivered a talk on 'Allegory in Durgasaptashati'.

Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk on 'Self-Transformation through Awareness' during a meeting of Nirvana lodge at Agra on 23 March.

Study camp at Agra: A study camp on the theme "Philosophy of Bhagvad Gita" was conducted on 24-26 March. The camp started on 24 March with recitation of prayers of all religions followed by Universal Prayer. Bro. L.S. Sengar, President of Nirvana Lodge, Agra, welcomed the participants and speakers. About 40 members from the Lodges of Lucknow, Kanpur, Barabanki, Noida and Agra and one member from M.P./Rajasthan Federation participated. Three books i.e. "*Hints on the study of the Bhagvad Gita*" by Annie Besant, "*Philosophy of the Bhagvad Gita*" by T. Subba Row and "*Notes on the Bhagvad Gita*" by W.Q. Judge were covered. The camp was inaugurated and directed by Bro. U.S. Pandey, Federation Secretary, who introduced the subject by bringing out significance of these three books. On first day i.e. on 24 March, one chapter each of the four chapters of the book "*Hints on the study of the Bhagvad Gita*" was covered by Bro. U.S. Pandey, Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Bro. S.K. Sharma and Smt. Vasumati Agnihotri. On 25 March, one chapter each of the four chapters of the book "*Philosophy of the Bhagvad*

*Gita*" was covered by Bro. S.K. Pandey, Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Bro. Gyaneesh Kumar Chaturvedi and Bro. U.S. Pandey. On 26 March the book "*Notes on the Bhagvad Gita*" was covered by Bro. U.S. Pandey and Bro. S.K. Pandey. This was followed by a close interactive session with the participants. Earlier in the evening of 25 March a devotional meet was organized.

During the concluding session on 26 March the participants expressed their appreciation for the presentation by speakers and for the board/lodging arrangement made by Nirvan Lodge. Thereafter vote of thanks was proposed by Bro. K.K. Srivastava on behalf of the federation and by Bro. S.K. Sharma on behalf of the host lodge. Bro. L.S. Sengar offered his concluding remarks and declared the camp closed.

Prof. S.C. Lakhotia gave a very informative and instructive talk on 'Life style diseases' on March 24. It was organized under the auspices of Kashi Tattva Sabha. The talk was followed by question and answer session in which a number of students asked questions and were given clarifications by the learned speaker. The other talks organized by Kashi Tattva Sabha in March and April were: "O Hidden Life" by Dr. Abha Srivastava; '*Valmiki Sahitya main Ram*' by Prof. Triveni Prasad Shukla of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University and 'Ravindranath Tagore and Kabir' by Prof. (Retd.) V. Chakarvorty of Banaras Hindu University. Besides, a programme of Devotional Music by Sri Rahul Bhatt was held on April 7.

Shri Vishnu Kumar Srivastava (Dip.94467) of Barabanki lodge passed to peace on 04 April, 2017.

## National Lecturer

Bro. S.K. Pandey spoke on 'The Laws of Karma' in three meetings organized by Chohan Lodge, Kanpur, in November. He discussed the subject 'The awareness of the Mind' and the 'Necessity of Reincarnation' in December. The theme of the International Convention was discussed by him on 15 January 2017 and he conducted a discussion on February 5 on '*Theosophy ka Siddhant*'. He visited Lucknow on 24-25 February to speak in the study camp organized on Annie Besant's book '*The Study in Consciousness*'. There he spoke in depth on Consciousness. He spoke on 10-18 Chapters of *Bhagawadgita* in a study camp

held at Agra on the 'Philosophy of the Bhagawadgita in the Light of Theosophy'. It was held on 24-26 March 2017. Besides, on March 26 he discussed about the first chapter of *The Philosophy of Bhagawadgita* by T. Subba Row.

### **An Introduction to Theosophy**

A workshop on 'An Introduction to Theosophy' was held in Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Kamachha, Varanasi, on 20 March 2017. This workshop was the first in the series of three workshops on the topic. The college has planned other two to be conducted in October 2017 and Feb. 2018. Principal of the college Dr. Rachna Srivastava designed the workshop keeping in mind the objective of introducing young fellow colleagues and students, to the concept and principles of Theosophy. The proceedings of the workshop witnessed the graceful presence of Sri S. Sundaram, President-Besant Education Fellowship, Sri Pradeep Gohil, General Secretary, Indian Section of the Theosophical Society; Prof. Sushila Singh, Manager VKM; Smt. Manju Sundaram, Dr. Abha Srivastava; and Dr. Rachna Srivastava, Principal, VKM.

The workshop was in three sessions. First session had two lectures. Prof. Sushila Singh and Dr. Abha Srivastava spoke about the Objectives of the TS, which are: (a) To form a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood; (b) To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science & (c) to know the latent powers hidden in man and nature. Prof. Sushila Singh said that the three objectives are inter-connected as the ultimate aim of it is to investigate, analyze and empower nature in order to maintain inner unity in the visible diversity of the world. She said that the scientific branches and different philosophical schools that emerged from time to time unfolded this inherent unity in their discussion. Religious systems were also meant to channelize human efforts towards understanding the basic concept of oneness of souls. But when we fail to learn this underlying objective of all sciences, philosophies and religions, an imbalanced approach emerges which disturbs the realm of absolute coherence in nature. She focused on the role of Theosophy which emphasized on comparative study of different cultural beliefs to uncover the unlimited powers of Mother Nature and its beautiful creation 'humans'. She suggested some books to the students for further reading.

Dr. Abha Srivastava said that students should be introduced to a habit of learning Theosophical Principles. It may evolve them into a tolerant, civilized and compassionate global citizen. She said that Theosophy believes in the synchronization among souls. World suffers most when this rhythmic chain breaks. To ensure peace of mind and harmony in all worldly orders, every soul has to practice to see the same soul existent in the body of its neighbour.

In the post-lunch session, students interacted with the General Secretary, Indian Section, Mr. Pradeep Gohil, President of B.E.F., Sri S. Sundaram and a member of TS, Smt. Manju Sundaram. Mr. Gohil detailed the circumstances in which Madam Blavatsky held the flag of Theosophy through her much controversial publication, '*The Secret Doctrine*'. Her marching against religious dogmatism and chauvinism was not welcomed by the world but she together with Col. Olcott kept on counting liberation for the spirited world. Citing various quotes from every-day life, Mrs. Manju Sundaram suggested solution to the students regarding their problems with Theosophical insight. The discussion also included meaning and message of Theosophical symbolism.

The workshop witnessed participation of 25 students who registered and took the membership of Theosophical Society, India. Asked about the impact of the workshop on their personality, they said that 'it gave them an insight into the reading and understanding of all religions'. They felt matured and tolerant towards the beliefs of all and felt an increased amount of compassion for citizens of the globe.

It was a successful completion of the first phase-workshop which also enriched faculty members of the college. Workshop was conceptualized by Dr. Rachna Srivastava, Principal VKM and attended by Dr. Kumud Ranja, Dr. Nandini Verma, Dr. Nairanjana Srivastava (Coordinator), Dr. Supriya Singh, Mrs. Purnima Singh, Sri Shashikesh K. Gond, Dr. Arti Kumari and Dr. Manju Kumari.

The report of the workshop was prepared by Dr. Nairanjana Shrivastava, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Ancient Indian History Culture and Archaeology, Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Kamachha, Varanasi.



## **BOOKS ON THE MAHATMA LETTERS**

### **THE MAHATMAS AND THEIR LETTERS**

*Geoffrey A. Barbara*

Two Mahatmas inspired the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875. But who are the Mahatmas? Are they real persons? How authentic are their letters? These and many other questions are answered in seventeen chapters containing facsimiles of the letters and other materials of much interest.

### **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MAHATMA LETTERS**

*Virginia Hanson*

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