

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST

DECEMBER 2017

VOI. 115

NO. 12

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Editor

PRADEEP H. GOHIL

A STEP FORWARD

One of the words that is most heard about from the news, from friends, from governments, from religious and spiritual teachers, from conferences, from people in general and seen in newspapers, magazines, movies, television shows, etc. is the word “tolerance”. A lot of misery is being created by people all over the world by not practicing tolerance be it Israel and Palestine, Iraq and the ISI, Afghanistan and the All Qaeda and all the terrorist groups everywhere.

It would be impossible to measure fully or even estimate the bitter prejudices that have arisen, the tears that have been shed, the hearts that have been broken, the blood that has been poured out, the starvation and hatred that have been caused by religious persecution and war – all caused by lack of tolerance.

The fact that tolerance is being spoken or written about all over the world indicates its importance. Let us look at the meaning of tolerance and then try to study the implications of tolerance.

The Macmillan dictionary defines tolerance as the attitude of someone who is willing to accept someone else’s beliefs, way of life, etc. without criticizing them even if the person disagrees with them. Oxford dictionary says that tolerance is the ability and willingness to endure the existence of opinions or behaviour that one dislikes or disagrees without adverse reaction. So tolerance is the capacity to hold open-minded consideration of the views, opinions, beliefs, customs and practices of others, particularly when they differ from one’s own and a large-hearted accommodation of them as a legitimate part of the social environment.

The opposite of tolerance is bigotry or complete intolerance. Both these qualities – the one a noble sentiment, expansive and elevating, while the other, mean, narrow and constrictive – are present in human nature in different degrees. The life of the people depends on which quality is dominant in the self. People holding these two mutually opposite attitudes can carve out for themselves two different destinies, and

create two different social environments – the one harmonious, unifying and progressive, and the other divisive, discordant and regressive. The predominance of one of these two qualities in the character of an individual is the outcome of his education and upbringing. A society sprayed and permeated with a culture of tolerance is necessarily harmonious and progressive while the one contrary to this is regressive and self-defeating.

The only way, the great ideal of tolerance can be substituted for intolerance is by knowledge. As we know and understand, we see the value of variety, the necessity for variety, and our second object in the Theosophical Society, the study of comparative religion and science, is specially intended to evoke Tolerance and to give us a firm ground on which that Tolerance may be based. The word ‘Tolerance’ here does not mean the contemptuous permission to those whom we think are wrong, to go their way to destruction without hindrance.

It does not mean the proud assumption which says : “Yes, I tolerate you. I allow you to express your views”. It means the definite recognition that each individual should be free to choose his own way without being dictated by another, without interference from another in the road that is selected. Tolerance does not claim to judge and criticize the ideals of another person, with a view either to dictate to him the opinions he should hold, or to grant him the permission to hold them. True Tolerance wholly renounces any attempt to lay down a road which all must tread. It sees that wherever a human Spirit is seeking after God, wherever a human intelligence is trying to rise to the Divine, wherever a human heart is thirsting for contact with its source, there a road to God is being trodden, and the treading will inevitably lead to the goal.

We all know that mankind is formed essentially of one and the same universal, eternal essence. Whatever affects one man or a nation affects all other men and nations just as a stone thrown into a pond sets up ripples, which move every other drop of water in it. True education must enable one to see one Self in all, and all in one’s Self, and selectively seeing one Truth which underlies all religions. “If the root of mankind is one, then there must also be one truth which finds expression in all the various religions”.¹ When these truisms are well known and understood, religious tolerance naturally follows. One realizes that harm that we may do to another – whether as an individual or a nation –

is harm done to oneself. Conversely, adverse conditions and difficulties which we often encounter in life are seen and recognized to be the just outcome of our own actions done in the past, all of which are necessary for soul's experience and evolution in the school of life.

Right knowledge of Universal Brotherhood and the Law of Karma are absolutely necessary to correctly understand the cause and the source of evils of life and how tolerance can be its remedy. Practicing tolerance will certainly be a step forward in our life.

1. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*.

To arrive at right action what is needed is a complete change of heart, a complete change of our attitude towards our fellow men, which leads us to a state of love in which all sense of separateness, of distinction between ourselves and our brethren vanishes; to arrive at a new, fresh awareness, a new spiritual insight into the real needs of our brethren, responding immediately to every appeal and being ever ready to help.

Zoltan De Algya-Pap

TIM BOYD

170th ANNIVERSARY OF ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTH

Annie Besant lived a life that exhibited true greatness. As with all such people there are many directions from which we can approach a discussion of her life. If we were to only consider the second half of her life, the time that she spent in India, we would be faced with having to comment on the many things that she did, not only *in* India, but *for* India. She was not only an activist and visionary, but she was also an institution builder. Far in advance of the nation's independence, she anticipated and then created institutions suited to the dawning national life. All across the country she founded numerous educational institutions, from colleges and universities to the primary and secondary level. Not the least of these was the Central Hindu College, which went on to become the Banaras Hindu University. The College was her creation because of her profound commitment to education, and not just education as it was being offered during her time, but a system that also included the education of women. She was an educationist at heart.

She also founded a weekly newspaper, *The Commonweal*, and purchased a daily, *New India*, which she used as an organ for Indian independence. She was the heart and soul of a movement for the independence of India, and the founder of the Home Rule movement — the first organization within the growing independence movement to clearly call for India's self-rule. Two years ago I was invited to be chief guest for an organization which was celebrating its centenary, also founded by Annie Besant: the Young Men's Indian Association, which was specifically founded to prepare India's young men for leadership in the coming nation. She was one of the founding members of the Women's India Association, which also celebrated its centenary earlier this year. The President of India joined us here to celebrate that occasion.

In area after area, Arts Leagues, civic associations, the Boy Scouts, which previously did not exist in India, she fought to bring necessary structures to a newly forming India.

One hundred years ago, in 1917, one of the things that marked not only her personal history, but also the history of this nation, was that she was arrested and interned. The arrest took place because during the course of World War I, many of the other Indian politicians involved in the freedom movement felt that it was appropriate to call a truce during the critical time when England was at war, that all should come together and support England in its time of need. Her idea was that it was not the time to step back from this movement toward India's rightful independence from colonial misgovernment, but that "England's need is India's opportunity". So rather than retreat, she accelerated her attacks, speeches, and writings against colonial rule. Her motto was: "You strike while the iron is hot, and you make the iron hot by striking." All this caused her to be arrested by the Viceroy of India.

Her arrest lasted only three months because, in support of this supporter of India, the Home Rule movement spread throughout the nation. Where once it was only in the major cities, it spread into villages, where they cried, "Annie Besant must be released". So the British government had to succumb and commit to a policy of gradual movement toward Indian Home Rule. This is what happened in 1917, one hundred years ago. That same year she was elected as the first woman President of the Indian National Congress.

Often when we speak of people who have done great things, rightfully we speak in terms of an ideal. We tend to acknowledge people in a heroic aspect who have done such great things as Annie Besant. Along with idealization and heroism come reverence and worship; along with these come distance and separation, these great ones appear so different from the state in which we find ourselves. The great one is somehow beyond us, beyond our stature in the purity of their motives and in the greatness of their being. For all of the remarkable heights *to* which Annie Besant climbed, even more remarkable are the depths *from* which she climbed.

Nothing about Annie Besant's birth or upbringing destined her for the roles that she eventually played, not only in India, but throughout her life in the world. Few among us will found a university or newspaper, or start national organizations that live for more than one hundred years. Few of us will ever be the heart and soul of a national independence movement; I would venture to say that none of us will be. Those are the

things that are unique to her, but *if* we were to view the process of her unfoldment, Annie Besant as the national leader, the spiritual giant, was not born in that way. There was a process that moved her to this place of reverence and heroism.

Although we may not have founded universities and the like, certainly every one of us has had times in our lives when we have experienced dark moments, when we have been uncertain and confused. There have been times in *all* of our lives when we have had to make difficult choices, when our views about the world and our lives and relationships were in flux and uncertain. Hopefully we have had times when we have had a burning desire to connect ourselves more intimately, more deeply, with an all-pervading, all wise common source. As human beings, we have all had those times. These are the experiences that are more relevant to us when we take into consideration the life of a great one as Annie Besant.

She was born Annie Wood, of Irish parentage, in 1847. Probably, we lose sight of the context that these times indicate — a time when women were not allowed in universities in England, certainly there was no thought of vote, an era when a married woman was the *property* of her husband, and so on.

She had a very loving family of good situation, except that her father died when she was five, leaving her mother and her two children in dire financial straits, something that persisted during the lifetime of her mother. In trying to raise the two children, obviously, her mother wanted the best for the boy, which was for him to go to a university, and she sacrificed toward that end. She also wanted the best for her daughter, but a university education was not an option, as her meager finances did not permit it.

Soon after her father's death a wealthy spinster who had just lost her brother, whose mother had died, and who was looking for something productive to do in the world, had a friend who pointed out this very precocious and bright young child, Annie Wood. Soon it was arranged that this lady would use her extensive means to educate this child. The lady's name was Ellen Maryatt.

Miss Maryatt was an extraordinary teacher and educator, whose methods marked Annie Besant for the rest of her life. She did not teach
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by making one memorize, the way that probably most of us learned. Rote learning to her was wasted, and it was all learned in “doing”. The writing that Besant became famous for was learned in these very early days through observing, writing, and then explaining. Often Besant said Miss Maryatt would ask her to explain something. Young Annie, in trying to explain would say, “I have it in my head, but can’t quite explain it.” That was not good enough for Ellen Marryatt. Her comment was: “If you had it in your head, you would be able to explain it, so that then I would have it in my head.” And she insisted that her student observe, then explain.

A great American, one of the founding fathers of the United States nation, Ben Franklin, had an expression about education: “If you tell me, I will forget, if you teach me, I will remember, but if you involve me, I will learn.” This was Miss Marryatt’s method. She even surpassed this method in saying: “Not only will you become involved, but you will also teach others.” Study after study today demonstrates that this is when the deepest learning takes place. Not only when we are able to repeat it, or explain it, but when we are able to teach it, is when we learn at our deepest levels.

With this method Annie Besant learned French, German, writing, music; and she became quite a good pianist and composer. Hers was a very broad education that instilled in herself a love of knowledge. She was naturally an intellectually oriented person. A love for learning and a knowledge of how to *find* knowledge was instilled in her at a very early age, and carried her throughout.

One of the other things that came with Miss Marryatt’s education was that she was an Evangelical Christian. Not only did she teach book-learning, but also Christian values, and Annie Besant gobbled them up: for her there was Hell below and Heaven above, and depending on one’s actions here, one was going one way or the other. But also Miss Marryatt was brilliant in that she insisted that true religion was not a matter of belief or dogmas only, it was certainly involved in that from her perspective, but it also required service, working on behalf of those in need.

So Besant, at a very young age, was taken to help the needy, the poor, and the sick. Miss Marryatt would very rarely give people money.

If they were hungry, she would feed them; if they needed work, she would find work for them. She believed that unless a gift had some cost to the giver, it was of little value. This is what was instilled in Besant, that unless the giver came with the gift, the gift was empty.

At age 20 she was married to a priest in the Anglican Church, which turned out to be a very unhappy marriage. She had two children within three years. The marriage lasted six years before the separation took place for a number of reasons. Not the least of these reasons was that Annie Besant, who was a devout Christian who thought there was nothing better than being married to a priest to be able to serve in the Church, had the “problem” of having an intense intellect that caused her to ask questions.

She began writing about the glories of the Christian faith, something that required her to research. At one time she wanted to produce a “harmony” of the four Gospels in the New Testament of the Bible. She wanted to show their harmony in their reporting of the events in the life of Jesus. But as soon as she started this effort she found that the Gospels were telling different stories. The dates, times, and events did not coordinate. This was the first seed of doubt that was planted in her previously undisturbed view of her Christian faith.

She tried to get rid of this first seed of doubt. The method she used remained the same for the rest of her life: she had to know. Her deepest problem and deepest asset was that she asked questions and required answers. So she would go to the most profound people, the strongest writers and thinkers within the religion to ask her questions, a practice which resulted in few answers and a lot more questions. At a certain point, the combination of doubt and profound unhappiness in her life and marriage brought her to a critical stage. Her depression and uncertainty became so severe that she not only contemplated suicide, but actually sat down with a bottle of poison in her hand, prepared to take her own life.

She relates the story that at this critical moment, just before taking the poison, for the first time she heard a voice that was to become familiar to her many years later. The voice said to her: “Oh coward, coward, who has dreamed of martyrdom, but cannot stand a few years of woe.” Upon hearing this she threw the bottle of poison out the win-

dow and started afresh. This was when she realized that she could not continue in a marriage that had its difficulties, not the least of which was physical abuse, and so the separation took place.

At the same time her ideas were evolving within her own religion, and she started to find too many things that she could not support. She went from devout Christianity to atheism. In our normal thinking, when someone describes themselves as an “atheist”, the idea is that there is no God, which was not at all her position. Annie Besant, like *anyone* of high intellect, felt that *everything* required evidence.

From all the evidence, she could ascertain that God is necessarily unknowable; we cannot know God by evidences. But she was certain that the God that was described as the “angry, jealous God” of the Old Testament — the one that visited harm on those who he opposed and good on those who he liked, who responded to the prayers of those who were undeserving because they called his name using an approved formula — was not a God that she recognized as capable of being in existence. So she went in a different direction. She moved on to what was then called the Free thought movement and became one of its most vital proponents in England.

For the next thirteen years she was deeply involved in a materialistic approach to human betterment. She worked on behalf of the poor, on providing the knowledge that would support a better life, a kinder life, to people. She put herself in harm’s way time and time again in organizing unions, in working with people who were grindingly poor. She was not just a theorist, or an idealist, but someone who put her body right alongside her words.

During these times she was recognized as one of the greatest orators of her time. Thousands of people would gather to hear her speak. As great a speaker as she was, she said that every time she ever gave a speech, prior to doing so, she was nervous. Every time she was nervous when she was waiting to speak, but when she stood, all nervousness disappeared.

In her own autobiographical sketches, she describes the first talk that she gave, which was a talk to no one. She was alone in her husband’s church, practicing the organ pieces for the Sunday service. She wondered what it would be like to give a speech. Knowing that the doors

were locked, and that she would never be allowed to reach the pulpit officially, on her own she stepped into the pulpit, and she said that words flowed out of her. After this very first talk, which nobody heard, she knew that this was an avenue that was calling.

In 1875 she gave her very first public talk. Later in her life she realized that this happened at the same time when Madame H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) and Col. H. S. Olcott were founding the Theosophical Society in New York City, far across the ocean. She was proud to note that during this year, it was her growing involvement with the Freethought movement that ultimately would lead her to the Theosophical movement, and that both began at the same time.

Around the time when The Theosophical Society headquarters at Adyar was established in 1882, HPB, who was very much in tune with what was going on in the world, was following the activities for social upliftment in England. In her writings she would comment from time to time on the work being done in England by Annie Besant, although they had not met. This was a time when Besant had no interest whatsoever in Theosophy. Her involvement was in what she considered to be clear thinking and material help to the world.

On one occasion some people in the Free thought movement asked Besant what she thought about members of their secular movement joining the Theosophical Society. So she studied a bit about Theosophy, and she told them that she did not see any basis of commonality. From her point of view, she wrote: “This Theosophy seems to be a dreamy, emotional, somewhat scholarly interest in the religio-philosophic fancies of the past.” Clearly, it was not something that she could recommend. Again, HPB learned of what Besant had said and she wrote to Besant very kindly, commenting that her view was partial. So there was interplay between the two of them although they had not yet met.

In her *Autobiography*, she writes that eventually the Freethought movement was not enough to encompass an inner growth that had been taking place. In her life she transformed from a devout Christian to an atheist, to a Freethinker, to a Socialist, and in every phase she was fully invested.

In the same *Autobiography* she has a final chapter: “Through Storm

to Peace". In it she speaks about herself and what had started to grow inside of her, and the awareness that for all of the work that she had done, for all of the organizing and raising of people's wages and living conditions for which she had sacrificed, it was not enough. Nothing in her experience had inspired an abiding commonality, something that could lift people to selfless service. In all of that time she had been unable to put together a group of selfless servers who were interested in the betterment of humanity, not just from the point of view of material conditions, but rooted in a universal force she would describe as "love".

Again she started to search, and to think, and to wonder. Soon she found that the materialistic approach that she had for so long embraced had had the effect that her "intellect had misled her from the soul". Typical to Besant, she started to research and to find, current studies and experiments in psychology, hypnotism, things that were pointing out recesses and uses of the mind that went beyond anything that she had previously conceived. She needed an explanation which she sought, but could not find.

She had a habit that after a long day of work, when it became dark, she would sit alone and ponder. One evening she found herself wondering about when she would be able to find some light in the darkness that was pervading her mind. At this point she says she heard a voice again, a voice that she was beginning to recognize. And this voice told her: "Be patient, the light is near."

Two weeks later an editor for one of the newspapers for which she wrote said to her: "We need to have a book review done. I have these two very thick books and nobody else wants to do it. I know you are interested in this sort of thing." And he handed her the two books. The two books were the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, written by H. P. Blavatsky. She went home, read the books, and she said that as she turned each page it was filled with meaning. She had an intuitive understanding of these very deep subjects. It was something that page by page, she felt herself coming closer and closer to the missing Truth that for so long she had been seeking.

Having read the volumes and published the review, Besant asked her editor to arrange a meeting with HPB, who was then living in England. Describing how she first saw HPB, she says that she recognized

in HPB someone that her heart had longed for, but that at the same time the proud nature inside of her rebelled against. She said that it was "as if a wild animal was rebelling against the mastering hand that was now taking hold of her".

The conversation between them was "normal" for HPB, which is to say it was about her world travels and a variety of things, but nothing about occult wisdom. When Besant got up to leave, HPB came to her and told her: "My dear Mrs Besant, it would be so wonderful if you were among us." Besant said that when she heard that, her proud resistance dropped away. Within one month she had joined the Theosophical Society. For Annie Besant, the world renowned Freethinker and Atheist, joining the TS was not the same as others joining the TS. What it meant for her reputation among the community of people that she had worked with, among the army of people that she had raised in social causes, was that all but a very few of them would turn their back on her.

Her choice was made, knowing full well that once again she would be reviled and fighting for a point of view that was not accepted, but for her there was no choice in the matter. She joined the TS, eventually becoming its second President. This place that was the Adyar headquarters, all fourteen acres of it, she expanded to 266, feeling that a deeper sort of silence was needed for the work that was being done here. All the work she did around the world and in India followed from that moment, and from the choice to follow her teacher, HPB.

Many more things could be said about her life, but probably the most important is her epitaph — very short, very simple. It was her request that when she died she did not want a lot of language taking up space on her tombstone. The most apt description of herself was the one she provided in her *Autobiography*: "SHE TRIED TO FOLLOW TRUTH." (p. 326). To those who look back toward her on occasions like her birthdate, we look to her as one who was an exemplar of Truth, a spokesperson for Truth, a person for whom Truth was the byword and the key to her living. From her perspective, she *tried* to follow Truth.

Once a year we try to understand this great person from different avenues. The details of a life have a certain importance, but the motivating power behind that life comes down to this: There is something which

can be known and identified as Truth. To the extent that we find it within our capacity to embrace that, we must try. If there is any meaningful example that she provides, it is of someone who tried. She left with us this marvelous invocation:

O hidden Life, vibrant in every atom,
O hidden Light, shining in every creature,
O hidden Love, embracing all in Oneness,
May each who feels himself as one
with Thee,
Know he is also one with every other.

The Theosophical Society was founded to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity; oneness is its keynote. That oneness is not based on similarities or even shared humanity, but on the simple fact that there is an all-embracing love that links us all; that is actually the formative power behind each and every one of us. "May all who feel themselves as one with Thee, know they are therefore one with every other." Think about it. On this day we commemorate Annie Besant.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, November, 2017)

If sorrow that you shrink from comes upon you, remember that the hand of Love allows it thus to fall, and that in bearing that sorrow bravely, you are swiftly working out your own deliverance.

Annie Besant
Meditations

LUKE MICHAEL IRONSIDE*

THE WISDOM OF THE BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISHAD**

The purpose of the paper is an exploration of the Hindu concept of the Absolute, Brahman, through a selection and analysis of key passages from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the tenth of the Mukhya (or 108 major) Upanishads and one of the oldest, with scholars estimating the date of its composition to be about 700 BCE. The text is primarily a treatise on Atman, the Self, and explores subjects relating to metaphysics, ethics, and the relationship between the Self and the Absolute.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad essentially consists of a series of instructions for disciples, in as much as it points the way to the knowledge of the Cosmos as a living organism, in which each emanation is related; in which all Life is One. Much of the Upanishad may be considered as being cosmogonical – concerning itself with the emanation of the Cosmos from the slumber of the Cosmic Night; with the primeval manifestation of the Logos and its first duality - its distinction between itself and Maya – and thereafter, the progressive manifestation of the hierarchies, planes and principles which constitute the worlds. The Upanishad reveals the two contending forces which permeate the Universe: those of manifestation and dissolution – represented throughout the text by the Devas and the Asuras, respectively. To the disciple is revealed the mystery of the workings of these forces, which interpenetrate the world of forms, and the lives of all.

The second chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad begins with a narrative, in which the learned and proud Brahmin, Balaki Gargya, approaches the king Ajatashatru with the offer to explain to him the nature of Brahman – the Ultimate Reality – to which the king responds that he will grant to Balaki a thousand cows, in return for the knowledge

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**Adapted from a lecture delivered at the School of the Wisdom, Adyar, in 2016

of such. Balaki endeavours to expound the sacred wisdom twelve times in succession, each time providing a definition of Brahman as the soul, or *Purusha*, in various aspects of nature; such as in the sun, moon, lightning, ether, wind, fire, water, and so on. In each attempt at definition, however, the king points out its weakness, as such definitional limitation subordinates Brahman to a particular position in nature, and as such is merely a partial definition. In the light of this refutation, Balaki is thus silenced, recognising the limits of his own wisdom and understanding which he had hitherto held in such high esteem. Although Balaki was undoubtedly learned in the knowledge of the Vedas, the king possessed the higher virtue of wisdom, this springing forth from his love of Brahman. Blinded by his pride, Balaki had sought to conquer the Mystery of Mysteries, yet in the prideful quest, found himself, at the last, both mystified and conquered.

The king Ajatashatru, recognising himself as the wiser of the two, proceeds to enquire of the Brahmin: “Dost thou know only so much, oh Balaki?” Humbled in the awareness of his own limitation, Balaki responds, “Only so much, O king”. Ajatashatru, now as instructor, prepares to impart his knowledge: “Thou hast vainly proposed to me; let me reveal to thee the Divine Wisdom”.

It is worth noting, that in the description of the Brahmin, Balaki, he is referred to as “learned” rather than as “wise”. Knowledge and book-learning he may possess, though he is vain of his learning and by it, conceited. It is this arrogance which, when he approaches the king Ajatashatru, impells him to at once volunteer to impart to him the Divine Wisdom, without waiting for as much as a single question from the king, and to attempt his futile exposition on the nature of Brahman by the mere recital of theoretical knowledge. To each of his definitions, the king responds that such is already known to him, yet to each he adds also the missing element of spiritual fruit, which can be attained only when that theoretical knowledge is transformed into realised Wisdom by the fire of Understanding; like gold from the alchemist’s furnace.

Each of the definitions given also carries a symbolic, or esoteric, element, where the “sun” means at once the visible sun of our solar system and the spiritual sun, or Solar Logos; and thus for each answer there is a multiple meaning, with the exoteric meaning sheathing the inner, mystical meaning contained within each. The sun, the soul of

which is given by Balaki as the first definition of Brahman, can therefore be considered exoterically as the vital source of heat for life on earth, and esoterically as standing for that higher corresponding power which nourishes and sustains the higher principles of our complex natures. In this interpretation, the moon becomes a representation for the psychical nature in its mental and emotional aspects, which, like this twofold nature, shines by the borrowed light of a higher source – the sun – and waxes and wanes in a pendulum swing of incessant flux and influx, like the changing moods of psychical nature. The definition of Brahman as the soul, or *purusha*, of lightning, likewise carries a deeper shade of meaning, revealed by the king: as lightning symbolises the transmutation of power, by which the light of understanding pierces through the darkness of *avidya*, or ignorance. Just as lightning, in the phenomenal world, breaks through and dispels the darkness of the looming clouds, so does this inner lightning dispel the ignorance of one’s lower nature in the flash of consciousness that is illumination. The spiritual nature of ether, or *Akasha*, too, is enunciated by the king, as is that of wind as a symbol of the Great Breath, by which *Fohat* springs forth into manifestation; and of fire also, representing in its highest form the divine fire of spiritual rebirth. Still yet, the definition of Brahman as the soul of water is given its inner meaning by the king, where water is regarded as standing for the reflecting power through the agency of which manifestation and self-consciousness are brought into being. As self-consciousness it may be understood as the mirror of the self, by which we perceive our own natures. In like manner does the king Ajatashatru respond to each of Balaki’s definitions. These inner meanings are omitted by Balaki, yet discerned by Ajatashatru, who in his wisdom perceives the unperceived.

The definitions provided by Balaki are rooted in the chasm of duality. As such, each is only a partial definition, failing to adequately explain the whole. This leads us to a definition of Brahman provided in Chapter 2, Section 3, Verse 6 of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, which reads:

“Now therefore the description (of Brahman): ‘Not this, not this.’ Because there is no other and more appropriate description than this ‘Not this.’ Now Its name: ‘The Truth of truth.’ The vital force is truth, and It is the Truth of that.”

This “*neti neti*” (“neither this, nor that”) referred to this verse, 492/ THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST, December./ 2017

conveys the teaching of various schools of Hindu philosophy, that the Absolute – Brahman – may only be glimpsed indirectly through the negation of conceptions about it. This description of Brahman as being devoid of attributes is referred to in Hindu philosophy as *nirguna*, which is contrasted with the conception of a qualified Brahman – the Absolute as characterised as possessing qualities (as being *saguna*).

“*Neti neti*” corresponds to the *via negativa* of Western theology, in which God is described only by negation – standing in contradistinction to the positive, or cataphatic, approach to theological reasoning. The purpose of the negative approach is to negate the rationalisations of intellectual speculation from the non-conceptual awareness of Ultimate Reality, in which union with the Absolute is attained by the denial of the body, name, form, intellect, senses, and all such limiting adjuncts which sheathe the underlying Self, or Atman, which is itself identical to Brahman. *Neti neti* is thus a negation of all the descriptions and conceptions about Brahman, or the Absolute, but not a negation of Brahman itself, which is by its nature undifferentiated and ineffable. As a method of enquiry, *neti neti* seeks to arrive at an understanding of Brahman, or Ultimate Reality, by first understanding what Brahman is not. Being birthless and deathless, beyond the reach of speech and mind, and existing above duality, Brahman exceeds, by necessity, every superimposed formulation and idea of discursive thought. All transitory and temporary things must therefore be negated in the quest to understand Reality, after which only the pure awareness of Brahman remains.

Turning next to the third chapter, we encounter a debate between Yajnavalkya and Gargi Vachaknavi, the ancient Indian philosopher and expounder of the Vedas, in which Gargi questions Yajnavalkya as to the nature of Brahman. Let us here examine his response given in Chapter 3.8.11, in which Yajnavalkya speaks of Brahman as the “Immutable”:

“This Immutable, O Gargi, is never seen but is the Witness; It is never heard, but is the Hearer; It is never thought, but is the Thinker; It is never known, but is the Knower. There is no other witness but This, no other hearer but This, no other thinker but This, no other knower but This. By this Immutable, O Gargi, is the (unmanifested) ether pervaded.”

Thus, in the light of the non-dual nature of Brahman, there is only ever one Witness – the Real Self, or Atman, which is itself identical to

Brahman. Existing beyond the limitations of attributes and distinctions, it is unable to be seen, heard, thought of, or known. The very act of seeing, hearing, thinking, or knowing implies a separation – an object which may be seen, heard, thought of, or known. What Yajnavalkya is suggesting here is that the awareness of Brahman removes the dualism of the Witness and the witnessed, after which realisation only the Witness itself remains. Or, to use a famous phrase from the 20th century philosopher, Jiddu Krishnamurti, it is the realisation that: “the observer is the observed”.

In the fourth chapter, Yajnavalkya moves on to a brief discussion of the Self, before concluding that this individual Self, or *Jivâtman*, is in fact identical to the Supreme Self – Brahman. The third section discusses the concept of *moksha* (or liberation), and postulates that the Self suffers transmigration due to the limitations of *mâyâ* (or illusion). Breaking free from such limitations, through *moksha*, the Self experiences the Brahman that is immediate and direct; as *sat-chit-ananda* – or “Being-Wisdom-Bliss”.

In Chapter 4.3.32, Yajnavalkya states that:

“It [the Self] becomes (transparent) like water, one, the witness, and without a second. This is the world (state) of Brahman, O Emperor. Thus did Yajnavalkya instruct Janaka: This is its supreme attainment, this is its supreme glory, this is its highest world, this is its supreme bliss. On a particle of this very bliss other beings live.”

When the Self transcends the illusion (*mâyâ*) of separation, it becomes as an ocean in which the “bubbles” of the phenomenal world have immersed themselves in the single unity of the ocean’s body. In this state only the witness exists, without any external objects that can be witnessed, because all that exists is the non-dual unity of the Absolute, Brahman. Nothing being separate, there is nothing that the Self may see, smell, touch, or know. The illusion of separation – the distinction between the world and Brahman – is thus the result of ignorance on the part of the observer in which the reality of Brahman is lost amid the mirage of *mâyâ*. It is only by the recognition of the unity of all things that the two, the world and Brahman, become one.

In his instruction to Janaka, Yajnavalkya describes this realisation as “*the supreme attainment...the supreme bliss*”. This total identification
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NEWS AND NOTES

of the Self with all that exists is the highest attainment possible to the Self, to which state nothing is comparable. As the supreme bliss, it is contrasted with the relative joys experienced in the state of ignorance; the “*particle of this very bliss*” on which “*other beings live*” – ie, those who are separated from the supreme bliss by ignorance: by their perception of a difference between the Self and Brahman.

Key to an understanding of the relationship between the Atman and Brahman is an exposition by Yajnavalkya found also in the fourth chapter, in which the king Janaka proposes the question: “What serves man for light?” In response, Yajnavalkya provides an answer which essentially evades the question: it is the sun that serves man for light. The king enquires further: “How about when the sun has set?” “Then,” Yajnavalkya says, “it is the moon that serves man for light.” “And when this has likewise set?” - “Then it is the fire that serves man for light.” “And when the fire also is extinguished?” - “Then it is the voice.” “And when the voice is silenced?” “Then is he himself (Atman) his own light.”

This is merely a precursory overview of the rich treasure chest of *theosophia* that is the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Many other insights and ideas undoubtedly lie hidden within its depths, and I will leave it to the lips of those wiser and more knowledgeable than I to impart the pearls of further wisdom which may one day pave the paths of our own evolutionary trails through the spiritual landscape. I hope, for now, that this humble analysis may serve to awaken the appetite for further study and reflection, as we – students all – unlock, one by one, the many hitherto unexplored corridors of the universal School of Wisdom of which all and each form a precious part.

Sources:

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad with the Commentary of Shankaracharya (Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama, 1950)

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad by Swami Krishnananda (The Divine Life Society Sivananda)

The Supreme Wisdom of the Upanicads: An Introduction by Klaus G. Witz (Motilal Banarsidass 1988)

The Spirit of the Upanishads; or, The Aphorisms of the Wise by Yogi Ramacharaka (Yogi Publication Society, Chicago, 1907)

Bihar

Dr. Bipul Sarmah, National Lecturer, visited Samastipur Lodge (and also Oasis Public School, Samastipur), Muzaffarpur Lodge and Gopalganj Lodge in Bihar from 3 Nov. to 6 Nov. 2017. The subjects he spoke on were “What is Theosophy?”, “Why Theosophy?” and “Love-the basis of Theosophy.”

Bombay

A meeting to celebrate Dr. Annie Besant’s Birthday was jointly organized by BTF & Blavatsky Lodge on 1st October 2017 at Besant Hall. The meeting started with recitation of the Prayers of All Religions and the Universal Prayer and opening words by Blavatsky Lodge’s Vice President Bro. Navin Kumar attuning Brethren for the reverential meeting.

BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya said that Dr. Annie Besant was the biggest contributor in the Theosophical Society. She spread theosophy at several places and saw to it that her goal is achieved. She never said “I have no time” Sis. Ruby Khan mentioned that Dr. Annie Besant was the 2nd International President and described her as ‘a Diamond Soul’. She authored 300 books and pamphlets. She had done remarkable work in connection with Women’s Rights and stressed on Right Citizenship.

Sis. Jasmine Cawasji read about Girlhood from the Autobiography of Dr. Besant. Looking back today AB said over her life, through all the blunder and the blind mistakes, and clumsy follies had been this longing for sacrifice to something greater than the self. And so with all those whose ears were opened to the wailings of the great orphan Humanity they were less to be praised for helping than they would be to be blamed if they stood aside.

Bro. Navin Kumar said that Dr. Besant is known to us through her books. A.B. contributed a lot for India. She started the Masonic move-

ment. TOS was also started by her. Bro. Navin thanked Sis. Aban Patel taking up the book “Man Whence How & Wither” and taking pains in writing notes and drawing diagrams.

Sis. Aban Patel thanked her husband Bro. Pervez Patel who is also a member of Blavatsky Lodge, for full support in making it possible for her to take up the book “Man Whence How & Wither”. Sis. Aban read out Annie Besant’s speech in Gujarati from the book “Na Jivan Na Ajod Prasongo” by Harjivandas Kalidas Mehta. Sis. Aban Patel translated in English about Annie Besant. She said AB was a dynamic woman, a Diamond Soul and had the Masters’ blessings.

Sis. Deepa Kapur said she had brought greetings from TOS Tanzania which was founded in 1908. She said that most members were elderly in the lodges and they were worried as to why the youths did not become members and attend lectures. Sis. Deepa gave the youths some project work which the youth did so well that they were declared the best Youth Group. The youths were between the age group of 13 and 35.

Bro. Navin Kumar showed a documentary on Dr. Annie Besant. He showed how Dr. Besant helped the women working in the match factory in poor light and used deadly chemicals. She improved the working conditions. HPB the founder of TS wrote a book ‘*The Secret Doctrine*’ and gave it to Dr. Besant to read. AB found the answers she wanted to know about the pain and suffering. In 1893 she moved to India. She had a vision for India’s freedom. Dr. Annie Besant passed to peace on 20th September 1933. An ardent believer of truth her epitaph read, “She tried to follow truth”.

Sis. Kashmiri Khambatta spoke briefly about Dr. Besant’s children. They were separated from her. The moment they were old enough to free themselves, they came back to her. Both children treaded in her steps as regards their views of the nature and destiny of man, and joined in their bright youth the Theosophical Society of which, after so many struggles she won her way.

The meeting ended with the Sanskrit prayer recited by all members present.

Uttar Pradesh

The following talks/activities were organized at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, in October: Annie Besant’s birthday was observed by paying homage and discussing her life and works. The speaker was Bro. Rajesh Gupta. The book on “Pain-its meaning and use” was read by Bro. B.K. Pandey. The other talks held were ‘Allegory and Symbols in Mahabhrata and the Bhagavad Gita’ and ‘Science of the Soul’ by Bro. U.S. Pandey; ‘On Education by Annie Besant’ by Bro. Ashok Gupta; (Article published in ‘*The Indian Theosophist*’ Sept-Oct, 2017 read and discussed); ‘Essential Unity of Religions and The Theosophical World Views’ by Bro. U.S. Pandey.

Inter-religious dialogue: Pragma International Trust organized an Inter-Religious dialogue for U.N. Sustainable Development Goals 2030 on the occasion of the 200th birth anniversary of the founder of Bahai Faith at Lucknow on 24 October. Representatives of various religions spoke on essential teachings of their respective religions like Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Bahai Faith. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary U. P. Federation, was invited on this occasion and he spoke on “The Theosophy and Essential Unity of Religions”.

The following talks/activities were organized at Nirvana Lodge, Agra, in September, 2017: ‘Science, Faith and Superstition’ by Dr. J. M. Tandon; ‘Indian Culture’ - a seminar in which the speakers were: Bro. Harish Sharma, Bro. S. K. Sharma; Bro. U. C. Sinha, Bro. Devendra Vajpayee; ‘Life and its utility’ - a seminar in which the speakers were Bro. R. P. Sharma, Bro. S. K. Sharma, Bro. U. C. Verma, Sis. Pratibha Sharma.

Study Camp at Gorakhpur: A study camp was organized on 28-29 October on “The Voice of the Silence”. About 40 members participated. The study was directed by Bro. U.S. Pandey. Other resource persons were Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, National Lecturer, Bro. S.B.R. Mishra and Bro. Ajai Rai.

The camp started in morning of 28 October with recitation of all religions’ prayers followed by the Universal Prayer. Bro. S. B. R. Mishra, President of Sarvahitakari Lodge, Gorakhpur, welcomed the participants

and speakers. Bro. U.S. Pandey introduced the subject giving brief background of the book written by H.P. Blavatsky and its high place among spiritual books. Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed by Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri in the morning of 29 October before resuming the study.

A close interactive session was held with the participants before the concluding session. During the concluding session the participants appreciated the study programme and also the arrangements made by Gorakhpur Lodge. Bro. Ajai Rai Secretary of the local lodge proposed vote of thanks.

Annual General Meeting of the Lodge was held on 28 September.

The following talks were organized at Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur in October: 'Charvak Philosophy' by Bro. A. P. Srivastava; 'Birth of Sri Ram' by Bro. Raghu Rai; 'Deepawali-its significance' by Bro. S. B. R. Mishra, Bro. Ajai Rai; and Bro. S. C. Tripathi; 'Man and Nature' by Dr. Suraj Ji.

A public talk on "Character Building" was delivered by Bro. Br. U. S. Pandey on 30 October before a group of about 100 students and their teachers in Naval Post-Graduate College, Gorakhpur. Bro. S. B. R. Mishra and Bro. V. K. Srivastava also made supplementary points after the talk.

The students of Vasant Balika Vihar spoke on the life and work of Dr. Annie Besant in a programme organized by Kashi Tattva Sabha on 13 October. The Lodge at Varanasi organized a programme of *Kavyapath* on November 3 in which Sri Hariram Dwivedi recited poems.

Shri Anoop Kumar Srivastava (Dip. No. 93454) of Gorakhpur Lodge passed to peace on 17.10.2017

North India Study Camp

The North India Study Camp was held at the Indian section Headquarters, Varanasi, from 6 to 8 October 2017. The subject of the study was "The Process of Unfoldment: An Education of the Soul" and the study was directed by the International President Bro. Tim Boyd. There were 104 members from 12 Federations who registered themselves for the study camp.

Brother Tim Boyd spoke on the problems which one faces during the process of unfoldment of the soul. The problem of multiple (temporary) identities which a soul starts acquiring right from its birth being one of the problems. As for the way to free oneself from the identity crisis, he discussed in detail the two ways - Via negativa and Via positiva. Via negativa (*Neti neti* in Indian philosophy) encourages the seeker to drop off the false identities one by one and come to the core. Through Via positiva one makes an effort to imbibe the positive qualities. Though these two approaches may appear different but they are to be taken simultaneously. He also talked about the importance of these false identities as important tools for the soul to grow. Like various resistance exercises we have in a gymnasium to develop our physical body, these identities are the resistance against the Divine influence. Madam Blavatsky's diagram of meditation was also discussed in detail as help towards the unfoldment of soul.

A public lecture on 'The Importance of the Centre' by Bro. Tim Boyd was held in the evening of the first day of the study camp. Besides, the International President addressed the members of TOS group in the Workers' Training Programme on October 9.

A programme of Indian Classical Music was organized for the delegates on 7 October. It was held in collaboration with Kala Prakash.

THE SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM
The Theosophical Society
Adyar, Chennai 600 020, INDIA

November 2017 – February 2018

The School of the Wisdom aims at bringing each student to survey life 'from the centre', which is intuitive awareness. An intense sense of Life must always accompany every true student. There can be no Wisdom without an ever increasing sense of Wonder.

Essential in the progress towards Wisdom is a growing intimacy with all aspects of Nature. The message which each tree, flower, animal, meadow, sea, sky, and cloud has, must be listened to and understood.

Concept and Reality

Director: Venerable Olande Ananda Thera, Sri Lanka
5 to 15 December 2017

Self-Transformation and the Spiritual Life

Director: Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr., Philippines
8 to 19 January 2018

The Meditative Brain, a Challenge to the Digital Revolution

Director: Dr José Foglia MD
22 January to 2 February 2018

Classes and Timings

Monday to Friday
Meditation: 8.00 to 8.30 a.m.
Classes: 8.30 to 11.00 a.m. and 3.30 to 5.00 p.m.

Some afternoons will be reserved for presentations by the students, who may spend free afternoons doing research on their own or at the Adyar Library and Research Centre. Applications for Library cards are available.

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Additional Information

The venue of the Sessions will be informed on arrival and notice boards.

Application

Applications, providing membership details and a recommendation from the General Secretary or main Officer in the applicant's country of residence, may be emailed to: study.hq@ts-adyar.org or sent to:

The Theosophical Society
The International Secretary (SOW)
Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India
Tel: (+91 44) 2491-2474

The Application form can be downloaded from the TS website (Learn>).

Students may register for all or some of the sessions and are expected to attend all the classes in the session chosen. Scholarships, full or partial, may be provided for some deserving.

TS workers: Applications should be made well in advance, providing full details and suitable recommendation.

Attendance at the School of the Wisdom does not confer the right of residence at The Theosophical Society, Adyar. For accommodation in the Society's premises, please apply to the acco.hq@ts-adyar.org.

Those members who wish to stay for the International Convention (31 December 2017 to 5 January 2018) are requested to register, and book accommodation separately.

5 to 15 December 2017

“Concept and Reality”

Director: Venerable Olande Ananda Thera, Sri Lanka

The first 5 days the accent will be on the texts that have been recommended below. Based on the third book and on my own experi-

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ence, we will practise meditation daily and after the 10th December we can shift the accent from the intellectual to the experiential.

Daily there will be plenty of time for Dharma discussion as well.

Recommended reading:

What the Buddha taught by Walpola Rahula -link or link

Concept and Reality by Katukurunde Nyanananda -link

The Heart of Buddhist Meditation -link

Ven. Olande Ananda Thera has been ordained in Sri Lanka on 21st September 1975 and received Higher Ordination in August 1977.

He was resident teacher at Rockhill International Meditation Centre, Sri Lanka

1982- now: Buddhist Delegate to Inter-religious living Dialogue, held in Germany, Sri Lanka, India, Bali, Japan, Pakistan, France etc.

He conducted retreats and taught meditation all over the world.

He is a member of INEB (International Network of Engaged Buddhists), and INEB Netherlands, and of the Network of Western Buddhist Teachers Conference, and of the Advisory Board of Mandala Project of Tibet House, New Delhi, India.

Since 1997 Resident meditation teacher at Pagoda Meditation Centre, Pagoda, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka.

8 to 19 January 2018

Self-Transformation and the Spiritual Life

Director: Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr., Philippines

Every theosophist is recommended to attend, giving tools for applying the principles in one's life and in introducing the means to lodges or section.

The course covers an approach to self-transformation that serves

as a foundation for an integrated and effective life, as well as an essential preparation for living the spiritual life. It includes exercises in self-awareness and a detailed study of meditation. Other facets of the course are, approaches to daily awareness, the exploration of transcendence, nurturing essential life-skills, probing into the nature of intuition, and the integration of impersonal values into our lives.

Recommended reading:

The Process of Self-Transformation by Vincente Hao Chin Jr.

The First and Last Freedom by J. Krishnamurti

The Key to Theosophy by H.P.Blavatsky

Mysticism by William James (The chapter on *Varieties of Religious Experience*)

Understanding Mysticism by Richard Woods

The Science of Yoga by I. K. Taimni

Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr is a former president of the TS in the Philippines, and a former president of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS. He is the author of *The Process of Self-Transformation, Why Meditate?, On Education*, and other works. He compiled and edited the chronological edition of *The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnet*, and is the Associate Editor of the *Theosophical Encyclopedia*.

22 January to 2 February 2018

The Meditative Brain, a Challenge to the Digital Revolution

Director: Dr José Foglia MD, Uruguay

“The Meditating Brain, a Challenge of the Digital Revolution” is a seminar about our nervous system, how our brain processes information and creates our reality. Using a reductionist approach we will study the neurons; the sense organs; the brain, it's structures and the different areas of the cortex; consciousness and self - awareness; memory; meta cognition; the development of the nervous system of animals and the Homo Sapiens brain. How our brain processes the information in digital and analog modes. We attempt to bridge science and philosophy, and some of the subjects studied by Theosophy in interactive discussions.

The creative brain, holistic, artistic, intelligent, is a challenge to the digital revolution. The urgency of creating a radically New Culture for mankind.

Recommended reading: will be given after registration

Dr José Foglia MD graduated in 1979 as a doctor from the Medical School of Montevideo, specializing in General Surgery and Hemotherapy. He also studied acupuncture and other health-related therapies. For 5 years he taught Biology and Pathophysiology at The School of Nursing.

He joined the Theosophical Society in 1978 and became interested in the teaching of Jiddu Krishnamurti whom he met on his trips to India. Following these visits he decided to travel and learn about other cultures and ancient civilizations. Besides his medical studies, he dedicated his time to studying the link between the psyche and the body, graduating in psychoneuroendocrine immunology in 2012. He has published his monograph 'The Neurophysiology of Meditation', and a book, 'Homo Lux'.

**THE SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR, CHENNAI 600 020, 1INDIA**

Please fill in BLOCK CAPITALS and send this form to the Assistant Director of the School of the Wisdom, after obtaining the recommendation of the General Secretary or main Officer in your country of residence. You may send the Application by email to study.hq@ts-adyar.org or by post: The Theosophical Society, Secretary's Office, School of the Wisdom, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India.

Name: () Female () Male
Nationality:.....Address (in home country):
.....Email.....
Telephone:Occupation (if retired, former occupation):
.....
Date of Joining the T.S.: Diploma No.....
Section/Federation/Branch to which attached:
Brief History of Activities in the T.S.:
Mention briefly any other Activities (allied movements or any humanitarian work):
Duration of stay in Adyar: Accommodation in the Campus: () No () Yes, Western style () Yes, Indian style
If accommodation is needed, send the dates to acco.hq@ts-adyar.org
Applying for the following Session(s):

Date of Application: Applicant's Signature

Recommended by: Recommendation Signature

Those members who wish to stay for the **International Convention** are requested to register separately to the Convention and reserve accommodation separately.

HIMALAYAYN STUDY CENTRE BHOWALI SUMMER PROGRAMME OF STUDY CAMPS — 2018

Sr. No.	Date and Details of Programme	Dormitory 6 persons	Old Rooms 24 persons	Deluxe 20 persons
1.	13 April to 19 April 2018 Indian Section's Study Camp on "GLIMPSES INTO THE SECRET DOCTRINE" by Bro. U.S. Pandey	3600	4000	4400
2.	22 April to 28 April 2018 The Indian Section's Study Class on "A GLIMPSE ON" THE BOOK OF STANZAS OF DZYAN" by Prof. C A Shinde	3600	4000	4400
3.	30 April to 2 May 2018 Retreat by Prof. C. A. Shinde	1800	2000	2200
4.	04 May to 13 May 2018 Karnataka Federation's Study Class Director- Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy and others	4500	5000	5500
5.	Other programmes are not yet finalized.			

a) Members who want to attend the programme should remit the amount given above latest by 28.2.2018 by cheque or transfer in the name of Indian Section, Theosophical Society, Varanasi in Vijaya Bank, SB A/c No. 718301010005045, IFSC Code VIJB0007183.

The rate includes afternoon tea, coffee and dinner on the day prior to the camp and breakfast & lunch on the day after the camp. Any

extra study subject to availability will be charged separately. The amount is based on Dormitory bed for Rs. 100/day, Old Room bed for Rs. 150/day and Deluxe bed for Rs. 200/day. Food will be charged at Rs. 350/day.

- b) Members having any physical problem and requiring any special attention should write to us about it along with the application.
- c) We have 6 beds in the Dormitory, 24 beds in the Old Rooms and 21 beds in the Deluxe Rooms. We cannot accommodate more than 50 persons.
- d) Accommodation will be on "first pay first serve" basis.
- e) For any further information kindly contact V. Narayanan, Treasurer of the Indian Section.

Pradeep H. Gohil
General secretary

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
International Headquarters, Adyar, 600 020
Chennai, India
142nd INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Theme: "From Teachings to Insight: The Altruistic Heart"
31 December 2017 to 5 January 2018

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 30 December 2017 _____

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*
9.30 am Holy Eucharist *Liberal Catholic Church*
8.00 am General Council Meeting *Library Hall*
(For Members of the Council only)
2.00 pm General Council Meeting *Library Hall*
(For Members of the Council only)
3.00 pm Order of the Round Table *Headquarters Hall*

Sunday, 31 December 2017 _____

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*
8.00 am Prayers of the Religions *Adyar Theatre*
OPENING OF THE CONVENTION
Mr Tim Boyd, *International President*
10.00 am Opening of O.E.S. Stall *Near Enquiry Office*
(OES= Olcott Education Society)
1.00 pm Indian Section Council - I *Administration Building*
(For Members of the Council only)
1.30 pm Inauguration of the Exhibition *Museum, HQ building*
3.30 pm Reception *Near Administration Building*

5.00 pm THEOSOPHY-SCIENCE LECTURE *Adyar Theatre*
"Yoga & Social Cognition: Clinical Applications"
Prof. B. N. Gangadhar, *Vice Chancellor and Director,*
National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences,
Bangalore

7.30 pm Ritual of the Mystic Star *Headquarters Hall*

Other Activities

EXHIBITION, ADYAR MUSEUM:

One Hundred years of Annie Besant

STALLS, NEAR ENQUIRY OFFICE:

by Olcott Education Society and Social Welfare Centre

Monday, 1 January 2018 _____

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*
8.00 am Universal Prayer and Meditation *Adyar Theatre*

SHORT LECTURES

"Looking Within To Reach Out"

Dr Deepa Padhi, *International*
Vice-President, India

"Meditation, Self-Study and Healing Speech"

Mr Jonathan Colbert, *ULT, California, USA*

9.30 am ADDRESS *Adyar Theatre*
Honourable Thiru Banwarilal Purohit
Governor of Tamil Nadu

10.00 am INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION – I

Address by G.S. Mr Pradeep Gohil
on State of the Indian Section

1.00 pm Theosophical Order of Service *Headquarters Hall*
in India
(*Meeting of Executive Committee*)

1.30 to 3.00 pm Social Welfare Centre -
Cultural Activities
Adjacent to Main Gate

5.00 pm BESANT LECTURE *Adyar Theatre*
“Tamil: the Glory of India”
Prof. Lokesh Chandra, *President*,
ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations),
Delhi

7.30 pm Bharatanatyam, *Adyar Theatre*
Dance performance
Mrs Krithika Subrahmanian

Tuesday, 2 January 2018

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*

8.00 am Devotional Meeting *Bharata Samaj Temple*
Ms Chandrika Mehta, *India*

10.00 am SYMPOSIUM *Adyar Theatre*
“Altruistic work of today –
in the footstep of Annie Besant”
Mrs Padma Venkataraman (*India*),
Mrs Angeles Torra (*Spain*), and
Mr Vinay Patri (*India*)

1.00 pm Indian Section Council – II *Administration Building*
(*For members of the Council only*)

3.00 pm PANEL *Adyar Theatre*

“Mission, Purpose and Scope of the TS”
Mr Tim Boyd (*President*),
Mr Vic Hao Chin Jr (*Philippines*),
Mr Pradeep Gohil (*India*),
Mrs Patrizia Calvi (*Italy*),
Mr John Vorstermans (*New Zealand*),
moderator, Mr Jan Nicolaas Kind (*Brazil*)

5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE *Adyar Theatre*
“The Great Awakening:
Is it all in the Mind?”
Ms Dorothy Bell, *Australia*

7.30 pm RENOVATION UPDATE *Adyar Theatre*
Blavatsky Bungalow,
Mr Nilesh Thakkar, *India*
Archives and other projects,
Mr Michiel Haas, *the Netherlands*
Host by Mr Tim Boyd, *Adyar*

Wednesday, 3 January 2018

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*

8.00 am Universal Prayer and Meditation *Adyar Theatre*

SYMPOSIUM
“What leads to Insight”
Prof. C. A. Shinde (*India*),
Mrs Isis de Resende (*Brazil*),
Mr Gerard Brennan (*Australia*)

9.30 am INDIAN SECTION *Adyar Theatre*
CONVENTION - II

“Pure Heart and Eager Intellect”

1. Dr C P Bhuyan of *Assam Theosophical Federation*
2. Dr G. S. Gopalakrishna of *Karnataka Theosophical Federation*
3. Prof. Satheesh S. G of *Rayalaseema Theosophical Federation*
4. Bro. Ashutosh Pati of *Utkal Theosophical Federation*
5. Bro. Y P Desai of *Gujurat Theosophical Federation*

Indian Section Management System:- A software for management of HQ, Federations & Lodges is under development. There will be a ‘demo’ of this software at the time of the International Convention at Adyar January 2018.

- 1.00 pm Theosophical Order of Service *Headquarters Hall*
in India (*General Body Meeting*)
- 1.30 pm Bharata Samaj Association *Bharata Samaj Temple*
(*General Body Meeting*)
- 3.00 pm THEOSOPHICAL ORDER *Adyar Theatre*
OF SERVICE
“A Life of Active Altruism”
Ms Nancy Secrest
(*TOS International Secretary, USA/India*),
Mr Luke Ironside (*UK/Philippines*), Dr Revathy (*India*),
Mr Birendra Bhattacharyya (*TOS India*), chair
- 5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE *Adyar Theatre*
“The Heart’s Wisdom”
Mr Tim Boyd, *International President, TS Adyar*
- 7.30 pm Members programme *Adyar Theatre*
The Bangalore Cousins

Thursday, 4 January 2018

- 6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*
- 8.00 am Universal Prayer and Meditation *Adyar Theatre*
SHORT LECTURES
“The Heart of Theosophy”
Mrs Barbara Hebert, *USA*
“There Is No Other”
Mr Pedro Oliveira, *Australia*
- 9.30 am QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS *Adyar Theatre*
Mr Tim Boyd, Mrs Linda Oliveira,
Mr Pradeep Gohil, Mrs Dorothy Bell
- 1.00 pm Indian Section Council – III *Administration Building*
(*For members of the Council only*)
- 1.30 pm to } *Olcott Memorial Higher Besant Gardens*
- 3.00 pm } *Secondary School - Cultural Activities and Exhibition*
- 3.00 pm LECTURE *Adyar Theatre*
“The Digital Revolution, a Challenge
to the Theosophical Society”
Mr José Foglia, *Uruguay*
- 5.30 pm “The Story of Buddha” *Damodar Gardens*
A Play by KFI Students *transport by buses*

Thursday, 5 January 2018

- 6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*
- 8.00 am Prayers of the Religions *Adyar Theatre*
CLOSING OF THE CONVENTION
Mr Tim Boyd, *International President, TS Adyar*
- 9.30 am Admission of New Members *Headquarters Hall*

10.30 am Youth Forum *Headquarters Hall*
3.00 pm Youth Forum *Headquarters Hall*

Friday, 6 January 2018_____

6.00 am Bharata Samaj Puja *Bharata Samaj Temple*

CANTEEN from 30 Dec dinner until 5 Jan lunch

Coffee and tea available from 5:15 to 6:00 am

06:30 am – 07:45 am Breakfast

12:00 am – 01:30 pm Lunch

04:15 pm – 04:45 pm Snacks

07:00 pm – 09:00 pm Mini-meals

Cool Corner is open 10 am to 10 pm.

Coffee/tea can be bought in between the meals with Rs.10/-.

LBC DINING from 29 Dec breakfast to 6 Jan dinner

06:30 am – 07:45 am Breakfast

12:00 am – 01:30 pm Lunch

06:15 pm – 07:30 pm Dinner