

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST

NOVEMBER 2018

VOI. 116

NO. 11

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Editor

PRADEEP H. GOHIL

A STEP FORWARD

In the recently concluded World Congress at Singapore, the organizers gave a surprise to all the delegates by providing strict vegetarian food, meaning food without eggs, meat, chicken, fish, and all sentient creatures which can feel or are capable of feeling. Of course, this means food was prepared without harming anyone from the animal world. The chef was a little naughty by naming all items as some kind of fish, or meat or chicken but in reality it was made from soya beans and was not even made to taste like the real fish, meat or chicken. This was a point of discussion amongst many members and I thought I will share my views about the importance of practicing vegetarianism.

Let me start by saying that following vegetarianism is not a requirement of joining the Theosophical Society. However, a theosophist truly living theosophy, needs to consider some of the points I have made on practicing vegetarianism. Our first object of the Theosophical Society says “to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour”. Basically, this means that we must express love, affection and respect to humanity. The same idea can be extended to showing love, affection and respect for all life.

In this respect Brother N. Sri Ram says in *An Approach to Reality*:

“each thing in nature has a significance in itself, which is contained in its own existence and functioning. Hence the injunction not to kill, as far as possible. There is an innate quality in each, which is in a process of manifestation, of seeking to express itself”.

The discipline of ecology is evolving significantly these days and ecologists support the theosophical idea of other forms of life deserving moral protection from being killed mainly because they too are a part of this earth, just as we are. From an ecological point of view, the right of

all forms of life to live is a universal right which cannot be quantified. No single species of living being has more of this particular right to live and unfold than any other species.

The idea is well expounded by Sister Phillipa Rooke, a member of the Theosophical Society from Brisbane in Australia. She writes:

“In the human form, all parts of the body work to express their own particular quality, and function together, making a harmonious whole. Let one of those functions cease to work effectively and the whole entity is thrown out of balance. Anything we do intentionally to disturb the well-being of the body could be considered as violence. In the same way on the planetary scale, all the various areas of nature should be allowed to function without impediment to create harmony and balance. We have no right to dominate and destroy anything”.

As a school boy, when people asked me why I was a vegetarian, without understanding the Theosophical views, I used to say that “We have no right to kill anything that we cannot produce”. It was a very crude understanding of what has been explained in this article. I can conclude here by saying that there is a very quiet voice of practicing vegetarianism deep inside all of us and theosophical teachings can help in magnifying it, resulting in a transformation of our life. It will indeed be a step forward in the right direction for all human beings.

They only are the true Theosophists, they only reflect in small degree the spirit of the great Brotherhood of Teachers, who carry out the spirit of brotherhood amid all the warring creeds, and who not only carry the message of peace, but live the peace they teach, and show the ideal of brotherhood in life as thoroughly as they proclaim its reality in words.

ANNIE BESANT

THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

At our most recent General Council meeting, a mission statement for the Theosophical Society (TS) was finalized. Although many statements have been made related to the mission and purpose of the TS, particularly by H. P. Blavatsky (HPB), in the 143-year history of the TS there has never been a formal mission statement.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, in a short section titled “The Abstract and The Concrete”, HPB addresses the subject of the relationship between Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. One of the things she says is that “Theosophy is divine nature, visible and invisible, and its Society human nature trying to ascend to its divine parent.”

In that same section she also says that “Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of universal truth, love, and wisdom, reflecting its radiance on the earth, while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflection”. She tries to help us understand the relationship between Theosophy, which is divine, and our work within this organization, which has a form. She closes by saying that the TS “was formed to assist in showing to men that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help them to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities”.

In a sense, the idea of a Society whose purpose is to show the existence of an ever undefined Theosophy is a statement of mission. However, for someone not yet fully grounded in a studied awareness of Theosophy, it is an unsatisfying statement.

For a little more than a year, the General Council of the TS, with input from other members, has been engaged in the process of trying to refine a concise and comprehensible statement of the mission of the TS. Much like a sutra in the scriptures of the world, the attempt has been made to make the expression of mission so brief, compact, and easy to remember that it can be quickly communicated, but so conceptually rich that dwelling on it reveals ever-deepening layers of meaning.

The Mission Statement which has been adopted for the Theo-

sophical Society is a total of twenty-four words: “To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.” In the remainder of this article we will try to unpack this one sentence. Much like a sutra, every one of those twenty-four words adds something meaningful.

Service

To serve is the primary function of the TS. Service is often interpreted in different ways, but for our purposes it involves a conscious participation, a conscious compassionate activity that connects us with others in ways which relieve suffering. Of course, our service is often unconscious. For example, the simple act of breathing gives plants the carbon dioxide they require to live. Plants breath out the oxygen that humans and other life forms require. So, in a sense, just breathing is service. However, part of the role of the theosophical work is to become fully conscious, fully aware, so that our service is not just random activity, but charged with awareness and compassion.

Humanity

In what direction is that service focused? The mission is “to serve humanity”. The normal conception of humanity is as the seven billion individual human beings which populate the Earth. The collectivity of all these human beings is what we tend to call “humanity”. From the perspective of the Ageless Wisdom, there is the idea of the divine human. What we think of as humanity is not merely an amalgamation of seven billion different people; it is a single entity in much the same way that we as individuals are composed of many lives, but think of ourselves as a unit. When we think of our bodies or “I”, myself as a human being, if we are a little more precise about it, what we call “I” is a combination of the activity of trillions of human cells, more trillions of bacteria living on and within the body, and the unseen participation of every range of consciousness from the lowest mineral to the highest spiritual beings. The cooperative activity of all of these units and streams results in what we call “I”.

So, there is this humanity that we serve in our limited ways. Conscious service begins with a recognition of our unity with this greater Whole, this greater Self, and with a deepening understanding of the ways we participate within it. Humanity in another sense is an as-yet-unrealized ideal. In our behaviours and present level of development, we

are not yet fully human. On numerous occasions HPB compared so-called “human” behaviour with that of animals. To the degree that the focus of our consciousness lies in the realm of desire, selfishness, separation, humans become “the most consciously and intelligently bestial of all animals”. (HPB).

Genuine, or realized humanity, is what we strive toward. The realized human, it is said in *The Stanzas of Dzyan*, has within themselves the “mind to embrace the universe”, a holistic, all-embracing mind. This is still a distant goal for us. When we speak of service to humanity, it is twofold. We give service to the collective whole by serving the individuals and groups which form its body; and we are servants of the divine ideal planted within us in our efforts to root ourselves in its all-embracing consciousness.

Cultivating

How do we serve humanity? There are many organizations in the world that focus on service to humanity: the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and so on. What is particular to the service that the TS envisions? In the Mission Statement it says, “to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization”. Let us examine what might be meant by “cultivating”. It is a very particular term that normally relates to gardeners, or people who focus on growing or caring for plants. It is directly linked to the natural world and to the processes of life and consciousness.

Just planting a seed in the ground does not make someone a gardener. A person who takes on the role of caring for plants must engage in an intensive study of the cycles of Nature and the potentials of the seeds. They have to be aware of the needs and requirements for the growth of these living things, and be prepared to provide for these needs at the proper moments. All of this is involved in the process of cultivation.

The TS exists to bring about a flowering of a deeply hidden human potential — a Divine Seed. What is the seed that is planted within humanity that the TS exists to nurture? The next portion of the Mission Statement gives an indication.

Ever-deepening

We are here “to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization”. “Ever-deepening” speaks to not only the

direction, but the nature of this process.

The fact that this cultivation we engage in is without limits means that it is continually deepening. Often in spiritual dialogues we talk about “depths” and “heights”. In a way, depth and height are synonymous terms for a certain expansion of consciousness. As a word, “everdeepening” is perhaps more appropriate, because the idea of depth tends to draw our awareness inward, whereas height seems to move awareness up and out. The intention of the language is to turn our vision inward.

Understanding

We make a mistake in our appreciation of the meaning of “understanding” if we confuse it with “knowledge”. The two are different in nature and quality. Knowledge can exist in the complete absence of genuine understanding. It is very common for people of profound knowledge to have no sense of its relationship with all other things, which is the basis of understanding. This condition of mind is so evident that we should not require any additional proof beyond our daily observation. All we need to do is to look at recent history, at any major scientific invention or discovery that has come into the world — whether it is electricity, atomic energy, or biological substances. To the understanding mind each revelation of Nature’s powers deepens one’s recognition of relationship with the world around us, with others, and with invisible realms.

A sense of connection is a necessary component of the understanding mind. But, taking the example of electricity, driven by the mind that is focused only on knowledge, one of its early uses was in capital punishment — electrocution of prisoners. Rather than to behead or shoot someone, the knowledge-bound human genius who made creative use of electricity possible, used it to kill other human beings. The discovery of atomic energy had the same result, but worse. Instead of killing single individuals its very first use was in war and the massive annihilation of human life. Knowledge can be used in ways that deny connection and relationship with all life. Understanding, on the other hand, is the perception of relationship; it is an expression of the intuition, of *buddhi*. It is a recognition of unity.

Realization

We are here to “serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization”. Realization means a full awareness, whether it is of an aspect of the Divine Wisdom or in the case of a

realized person, the total awareness of an undivided state of being. In a sense, realization is the necessary outcome of a deepening understanding.

The Ageless Wisdom

The Mission Statement specifies an understanding and realization of three things. First, the Ageless Wisdom, sometimes referred to as Sanâtana Dharma, the Eternal Wisdom. Within theosophical circles we sometimes find “Ageless Wisdom” and “Ancient Wisdom” being used synonymously. Although the two terms are closely related, they express different ideas. Ancient Wisdom refers to a specific expression of the Ageless Wisdom tradition, something that has already come into existence, that has a history.

The Greek and Egyptian Mystery Schools, with their specific deities and ritual, and Vedic practice in India are some examples of Ancient Wisdom — specific expressions of the Ageless Wisdom, appropriate for a certain time, place, and people. “Ageless”, by definition, applies to the past, present, and whatever traditions develop in the future. It is the “rootless root” from which all else springs. At the commencement of our current cycle of growing global interconnection, the most recent expression of the Ageless Wisdom was introduced with the founding of the TS in 1875. At some point in a distant future, Theosophy, as we have come to know it, will also fall into the category of an Ancient Wisdom — completely true, eternal in its nature, but very specific, and time-bound in terms of its form of expression. This is the ever renewing nature of Theosophy — the Ageless Wisdom.

Spiritual Self-Transformation

The theosophical work we do as individuals we describe as “spiritual self-transformation”. It is rooted in the idea that the self, the norm of separative, personality-based living, can be transformed, acted upon by the indwelling spirit in ways that make it transparent to what Annie Besant described as the “Hidden Light shining in every creature”.

What is involved in transformation? Probably the process is simpler than the way we generally approach it. It is not a matter of adding more ideas or knowledge. The purpose of the knowledge that we accumulate is to assist in stripping away the many obstacles that we have created within ourselves to the natural and ever-present flow of spirit.

The Unity of All Life

The final words of the Mission Statement of the TS are “the Unity of all Life”. “An ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.” The Mission Statement ends where the work of the Theosophical Society begins. The first Object of the TS is Brotherhood, which could also be expressed as unity. There is no spirituality in the absence of the realization of unity or oneness. Unity is the basis of all understanding, spirituality, and even physical well-being. Even at the level of our personality, there is no strength where unity is absent. When we look at a small child, in its first efforts to walk, the child fails time after time. The reason for the failure is that the newborn body has yet to become united with its various parts. The muscles of the arms and legs are not fully under the control of the person. In human relations the absence of unity expresses itself as fragmentation, weakness, and illness.

The basis of everything that we call theosophical comes back to the unity of all life. Life is omnipresent and is necessarily intelligent, intelligence expressed in movement. All is in motion — not randomly, but in a patterned manner. Life’s underlying intelligence impresses itself on matter. Whether it is gravity, electromagnetism, or karma and reincarnation, we can speak about Laws of Nature or the Laws of the Universe because there is an intelligent patterning to life that we can perceive.

This brief article has been an attempt to highlight a few of the thoughts and insights that arise in dwelling on the Mission Statement. In order for it to come to life for us, we must each make our own exploration, in thought and in quiet reflection, allowing its depths to unfold for us. Like anything that is truly theosophical in nature, the depths that are possible for us to uncover are without limit.

Thus, the Mission of the Theosophical Society is:

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, October 2018)

THE ESSENTIAL WORK OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY*

It is easier to say what the Theosophical Society is not, rather than what it is, because the Society has a character which is a synthesis of a number of different elements. Its aim is to bring about the upliftment of the human being at all levels- physical, cultural, moral, intellectual and spiritual – and its work has to do with many aspects of life. But is not limited to any one aspect or level of human existence and activity.

The Theosophical Society is not for example a philosophical society in the ordinary sense of the term. There is a deep philosophy which we call Theosophy, which is in some measure presented through the literature published by the Society and is at the basis of its work. But that philosophy is not meant to be a speculative or theoretical exercise. There are learned men all over the world, capable of discussing subtle metaphysical points or delivering erudite lectures, but whose behaviour is exactly like that of ordinary people in daily life. When there is a problem, if a wife or son were to die, they are as likely to be unphilosophical about it as all other people. But the Theosophical Society probes into the nature of man and the universe in order to bring about a change in man and society.

Similarly although there is a deep religious side to the work of the Theosophical Society, it cannot be called a religious society in the ordinary sense. H.P.B. declared that Theosophy is not a religion, but *religion* itself because it is not concerned with mere tradition and belief. In the Theosophical Society there is no church, priests or scriptures, and like conventional religion it does not build a cult which separates people from others. The Society is religious only in the sense that its work is concerned with lifting the human spirit to the highest level.

The first Object of the Society is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without any distinctions. Some interpret this object to mean

* Reprint from the book *Theosophy and The Theosophical Society*, The Indian Section, TS, Kamachha, Varanasi, 1991

that members of the Society must work for relieving distress, run orphanages, save the derelict, and so forth. The Theosophical Society is not however a welfare organization in that sense, although it supports all work which benefits mankind. As H.P. B. wrote:

Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. ... We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight that is crushing down the poor. But, in our quality of Theosophists we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important and much more difficult work to do. The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity and justice, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think, they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice and generosity will be done spontaneously by all. (Message to American Convention).

We can also say that though the Theosophical approach to the questions of life is scientific, that is to say based on a rational, investigative spirit, it is not a scientific society with a sphere of interest limited to the world of sense perception. Similarly, though cultural development is within the purview of the Society's aims it cannot be equated with organizations which promote culture.

Philosophy, religion, science, philanthropic work, culture, research and enquiry-all these elements form part of the work of the Society. They must be blended together in such a balance, without stressing any one element or concentrating on any one level of human existence, that the Society's work brings about the good of humanity in a total sense. If it does not do so, the Society would lose its essential character.

It is important to recognize that universality of approach is fundamental to the work of the Society at any level whether it is the work of a Lodge, Federation, Section or the Society as a whole. It has been organized in such a way that it is not meant merely to preach brother-

hood but to consist of world-wide body of people who feel close to each other and who learn to co-operate and work together for the common weal. Men and women the world over live in a diversity of conditions, which modify their outer comportment in a variety of ways so that the central fact of their having a shared destiny is completely lost sight of, and relationships are full of tensions and conflicts. Contact with the Theosophical Society must help people to recognize that when they harm others they harm themselves, and when they love others, they create happiness for the world as a whole. The Society must be an example of how humanity can be united in affection and mutual care.

To bring this about, an atmosphere of universality must be maintained wherever there are members. The work of the Society must help people to drop their old habits and patterns of thought. The most pernicious habit of the mind is to divide everything. This divisiveness is the basis of the conflict and suffering which has been the bane of human society throughout the centuries. People have been conditioned to think of themselves in terms of tribe, race, nation, religion, family, the high and the low, and so on. Therefore one of the Mahatmas described humanity as 'poor, poor humanity' and as 'the orphan humanity'. He wrote:

It reminds me of the old fable of the war between the Body and its members; here too, each limb of this huge 'Orphan'—fatherless and motherless—selfishly care but for itself. The body uncared for suffers eternally, whether the limbs are at war or at rest.

The fragmentation which we have spoken of has been created by the mind. Unless the mind abandons its habit of thinking in terms of difference instead of endeavouring to realize the unity of life, there cannot be a fundamental change in human society nor can relationship be established in truth and goodness. The shift from old patterns of thought to which the mind is accustomed to a recognition of unity as *the* truth of life is a radical change and brings a creative quality and vitality to the mind which can be described as regeneration. Therefore from the early days of the Society, universal brotherhood which is the purpose of Society, was described as 'regenerative brotherhood'.

There are many ruts into which the mind falls without knowing why it is doing so. People unconsciously repeat ideas and adopt the attitudes, prejudices and animosities which surround them. The evils

which exist in the atmosphere of a particular society are unknowingly absorbed by everyone who is not aware. Therefore H.P.B. pointed out that anyone who seeks wisdom must endeavour to free his mind of all the ideas he may have derived from heredity, education, environment or other people. This implies that there must be a different quality of mind as a result of theosophical study and understanding, a quality which finds natural expression in action and relationship.

Many people may accept theoretically that although there are physical differences among human beings—some are tall, others short, the skin is black, white or yellow, etc.—these are of no importance, for all are human and experience the same joy, pain and aspirations. When there is only an intellectual acceptance of this fact, action in daily life and relationships with others contradict the concept of unity. When attitudes of difference condition everyday relationship, it is the old mind at work. Regenerative brotherhood exists only when there is a real deep sense of non-separateness,

Regeneration is the key to the work of the Society. It gives direction with regard to the nature of the work, clarifies what must be done and what programmes are not compatible or useful. All T.S. activities must have a direction, and that direction must be one of inner change towards unity, co-operation and affectionate relationship. In theosophical lodges and groups, very often study is undertaken and discussions take place. What is the purpose of the study? Study can be a mere pastime or an intellectual preoccupation in which case it is empty from the theosophical point of view. Or the study and discussion can be of such a nature that they help the mind to shed its prejudices and conditioning and bring about transformation.

The three Objects of the Society do not mention the word 'theosophy'. So we can ask ourselves what place Theosophy has in promoting the Objects of the Society. Theosophy is wisdom which is not mere knowledge; it is the kind of knowledge which finds expression in right action. Action includes not only physical action but thinking, feeling, in fact every movement of consciousness within each person. Discovering wisdom is therefore not different from regenerating oneself.

Since the work of the Society must be carried on in an atmosphere of universality, the atmosphere of any lodge or group should be such that any person, western or eastern, Christian or Muslim, black or

white, feels welcome to participate. The programmes must not be of such a nature that they appeal only to a particular group. There are members who say that the West has a wisdom tradition and so it is not necessary to turn to eastern thought. There are others who are of the view that in Indian thought one can find all the essential teachings and therefore it is enough to study the Upanishads and the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In such cases, each group remains within its own enclosure and shuts the door on others. This is in contradiction to the essential purposes of the Society.

Every Section, Federation and Lodge is a representative in its own area of the Society as a whole. Therefore it must embody the essential characteristics of the Society, including universality of approach. However, universality does not mean that all kinds of misleading ideas, superstition or frivolous activities should be encouraged or included as part of the work of the Society. The society cannot become a forum for every kind of cult, philosophy or activity. Discrimination must be used and this means finding out what brings about the new quality of mind about which we have spoken.

The study of comparative religion which is part of the second Object of the Society does not imply that all religions and all teachings are equally good. In all religions there are superstitions and accretions which are unhelpful or positively undesirable. If the followers of different religions are asked to deliver talks in a Theosophical Lodge and they do it from a narrow or dogmatic point of views, how does it help the work of the Society? It is good to appreciate what is of value in all religions; it is equally necessary to be discriminating and promote only that which will help people to become wiser, more selfless and loving. Those who come into a Theosophical Lodge must be able to get new insights concerning man and his relationship to all creation. Lectures which treat a subject in such a manner that they promote division, blind belief or dogmatism are not suitable for the Theosophical Society.

Another point of importance is derived from the fact that truth can only be seen by each person for himself. The beauty of a sunset described by someone else never conveys the experience of that beauty. The description can only give an indication. Repeating other people's ideas or conforming to belief in a particular tradition is not tantamount to seeing. The instrument for seeing is one's own consciousness. There are certain things which cannot be done by anyone else on another's

behalf. If one is ill it will not do if someone else takes medicine instead. Similarly no one else can impart the deeper truths to another unless he works at his own nature and prepares himself to be receptive. It is only when his consciousness is pure, clean, sensitive and capable of responding at a subtle and deep level, can he really know the truths of life. So each person must purify and prepare his own consciousness to receive the light. Purity means egolessness. Therefore H.P.B. says, 'Ethics is the soul of Theosophy'. The impure mind can be very clever and make a fine exposition of ideas, but that is all.

Thus self-preparation is an important aspect of theosophical work. It is important because when a person comes to the threshold of truth perception, everything in his life changes and he also has the power to influence changes around himself. There are many things in life to see and to know. The most important of all is to realize the significance of life and perceive the true relation of the many existences with each other. One who sees significance cannot be destructive. A person who perceives the loveliness of a flower – beauty is a way of seeing significance- treats the flower with care and delicacy, and his relationship with it is one of concern. But he who does not see the beauty, the glory and the meaning of the flower, throws it away. Those who realize the truth of life can never be destructive. The seers of truth are loving and compassionate individuals. The problem of the ordinary man is that he is not prepared to perceive significance. Most people give special value to some person or thing and then become attached to that. This is not a real awareness of their essential nature. Such attachment arises out of a desire to derive some benefit-physical or psychological-out of that person or thing. When the mind is sensitive and clear, that is, when it is truly capable of seeing, it sees significance in all of life, for all life is full of meaning. So the mind must learn to see, and the seeing has to come from within.

Therefore any kind of activity, programme or teaching which ignores the necessity for self-purification and true seeing, but on the other hand encourages conformity, belief, obedience and dependence, is not in tune with the spirit of the Theosophical Society. None of our activities should result in the closing of the mind, letting other people do the thinking on our behalf, telling us what the truth is. An official statement of the Society has been made to the effect that neither H.P.B. nor anyone else is an authority in the Theosophical Society whose words must

be accepted by all members as the truth. What certain people have said may be of much value, but all the literature of the Theosophical Society is presented only for consideration. Every presentation must be enquired into, experimented with, and understood in relation to the situations and problems of one's own life. If through such testing it is found to be worthwhile and true, then it has a different meaning. Therefore an essential part of theosophical work is to maintain the spirit of free investigation, deep thinking, an open mind, and readiness to take responsibility for oneself.

All work within the Society must be done in a spirit of anonymity and not with a sense of self-importance. We do not want to build up within the Society personalities on whom we throw all responsibility for our own progress. Every person is responsible for his own action. The nature of the unregenerate mind can be summarized in the word 'egoism'. The essence of ignorance is the feeling of 'I'-ness which exhibits itself in many different ways. It shows itself not only through aggressions and prejudices but also in the form of self-satisfaction and self-concern. Even if it exists in a mild and concealed form it can sprout forth at any time and create havoc. The desire to be known as a capable person, as a guru, as a competent lecturer or leader, and so forth is only egoism. It is egoistic action which is destroying the social fabric. Therefore in our Society a platform for egoism should never be created. A spirit of self-sacrificing, altruistic work is essential for the success of the Society's aims.

Unless the essential elements are maintained in the Society's work, no amount of propaganda can further the cause. But if the spirit behind the work is right then the adoption of suitable means can serve a purpose. Therefore the understanding of the true character of the Society is of primary importance. It is not just what we do which makes the work of the Society theosophical but the quality of our mind and the spirit of understanding and selflessness which we bring to it. When that quality exists a spiritual influence pervades the work and affects other people, helping to bring about world transformation. So the members of the Theosophical Society must be people who are working towards the liberation of the mind and who are full of the spirit of co-operation and affection in their relationship. In India there are temple structures with a thousand pillars. Each pillar is important because it bears a part of the weight. The Theosophical Society's work must be like that, with each member sharing the responsibility.

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST, Nov./ 2018 / 415

K.V.L. KANTHA RAO*

THE INNER PURPOSE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY **

The basic needs of human beings are food, shelter, clothes, safety and security from the aggression of other beings, groups, nations etc. The needs beyond basic necessities are emotional, psychological and spiritual. Once the basic needs are satisfied – right from the primitive man to the civilized human beings - traditions, culture, religious foundations, spiritual centres are formed.

Activities of spiritual needs through the physical appearances are visiting religious places like temples, churches, mosques, gurudwaras etc. and offering devotion, performing rituals, practicing yoga, meditation, study of scriptures, doing social service etc. The search for Truth and concept of God, beyond the physical, are the cause for founding various religions all over the world. Attempts for realization of absolute Truths, God or Almighty in different ways and means lead to the formation of different religious groups in different places of the world.

“Every great Teacher coming to the world has brought as His priceless gift to man some new proclamation of spiritual truth in the form of a new religion” - Annie Besant.

Essential messages of a few religious schools of thought are:

Hindu Philosophy: *Advaita* – Non-Dual; *Dvaita*-Dual; *Vishitadvaita* - Qualified Non-Dualistic

Islam: From the sacred scripture Quran - The Being which is Allah is the fundamental Being from which all beings - all things which exist or have existed - derives. We must understand - that Being is independent of our 'minds' and our bodies, and must be understood through *its* nature, *its* essence, and not through the limitation (or appearance, or form) of our own being.

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**Talk delivered during the 95th South India Conference organized by the Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, at Adyar, Chennai.

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Christianity: The Lord our God... is Almighty, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. It is He Who possesses all wisdom and all light. He has existed since all eternity, and His existence will have no end. The secrets of nature are in the hands of God. For the world, before it appeared, existed in the depth of the Divine thought; it became material and visible by the will of the Supreme.

Jainism: The path of victory in crossing over life's stream of re-births through an ethical and spiritual life followed by 'ahimsa' (non-violence).

Buddhism: Practices of Buddhism include taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, study of scriptures, observance of moral precepts, renunciation of craving and attachment, the practice of meditation (including calm and insight), the cultivation of wisdom, loving-kindness and compassion leading to Nirvana.

Zoroastrianism: Ascribed to the teachings of the Iranian prophet Zoroaster (or Zarathustra), it exalts a deity of wisdom, Ahura Mazda (*Wise Lord*), as its Supreme Being. Major features of Zoroastrianism, such as messianism, judgment after death, heaven and hell, and free will have, some believe, influenced other religious systems, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The Parsis belonging to this Religion, after their death sacrifice their bodies also to the birds.

The common observation from the above religion-philosophies shows that "The basic and fundamental Truths of all religions initially promote peace and harmony".

However, there was a gradual change in the outlook of the religions proclaiming supremacy over other religions, keeping peace and harmony at stake.

The outer purpose of the Theosophical Society is explained through its Aims & Objects:

To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.

To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Science.

To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

Giving equal importance, 'Prayers of All Religions' are usually recited at the beginning and the closing session of the National and International Convention of the TS, conference of the Federations and in some Lodge's meetings. Yet, the TS is not a conglomeration of all religions. It has its own identity and uniqueness in spreading the Truth of Evolution, through various levels of consciousness.

Therefore, the inner purpose of the Theosophical Society is:

'The unity of every faith that loves God and serves man'
To draw all faiths together, to see them all as sisters, not as rivals.
To join all religions in the divine love and human service to reverence and serve religion wherever we find it.
To pierce through the varieties of the outer faith to the unity of the hidden life.

The founding of the TS was due to 'the impulse from the spiritual plane that came to incarnate itself in the world around us'. THEY (The Inner Founders – The Masters of Wisdom) chose the time and the agents (HPB & HSO) to accomplish this task. At every critical period of history, when a new race or family is to be born, there comes from THEM alone the first impulse. A Spiritual Herald will be sent to announce a new step forward in the evolution of humanity.

The sacred words of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavadgita remain as Universal Truth, which is appropriate to mention here:

; nk; nkfg/keL; XyKfuHkbfRHKjrA
vH; Fkue/keL; rnk·Rekua l tK; ge-AA4-7AA
*yadhaa yadhaahi dharmasya
glaanirbhavathi bhaaratha
abhyuthaanamadharma
thadaathmaanam srujaamyaham
– Jnaana, karma, sanyaasa yogaha – IV-7*

Lord Krishna proclaimed that He, in any form – individual or a group or an association, would descend and self-create Himself whenever the Divine Law (Dharma) is destroyed, and when the True Religion suffers beyond repair.

Thus the inner purpose of the Society may be said to be twofold: to the world at large, - to herald the forward step.

To the members of the Society - to use them as the pioneers of that forward movement.

To bear something of the burden, and make that burden lighter for the race that is yet to be born – for a noble humanity, more divine than we have yet touched.

The TS does not bring new religion, does not advocate people to come out of their faiths, but proclaims the common basis of all religions alike. TS makes its basis in the unity of all its forerunners, it joins all together instead of adding a new one to the many faiths of the world.

This is unique characteristic, one belief for all in one spiritual life, one common evolution, one goal which all may approach by different roads - every road right and divine. The members of the TS are supposed to carry the message of peace, live it, show the ideal of brotherhood in letter and spirit. It foretells the dawning of a new civilization where unity shall be the keynote instead of strife, co-operation shall be the means of life rather than competition.

The Theosophical movement should bring about deeper understanding, closer bonds, real love between nations and ‘PEACE’ in due course of time.

The members of TS are called to form a nucleus of souls at one; to show by our lives the unity we proclaim; to live lovingly in a world of hatred and to live in peace in a world of strife.

Jolt to the TS – past, present and future:

It was shaken in its outer form over and over again, but not in its spirit & purpose (e.g.: when Coulombs’ couple created trouble to HPB; when JK declared that the ‘truth is a pathless land’ and supposedly left TS). There may be such jolts in future too. It is well that it should be shaken from time to time so that equilibrium in preaching and practice of Theosophy makes us strong to move in the uphill path as pioneers, make the path easy for the weak to tread the path with no ill will towards the weak.

The teachings of the TS shall spread everywhere, no matter what lips proclaim it (it may be TS, Point Loma, United Lodge of Theosophists or any other). If our Master’s Truth be told, what matters it who shall tell it? If there are failures in treading the Path, they are due to our own weaknesses, by our own folly and by our own sin but not left to poor ‘fate’.

The magical words of the inner purpose of the TS are:

“First step: Coming into the Society, ending: To be one of the Saviours of the world” - Annie Besant

‘We are all Gods in the becoming’ - George Sydney Arundale

A few hints we get to achieve this goal are from *The Path & Way of Discipleship* (by Clara M. Codd) and *At the Feet of the Master* (by J.K.) are:

Preliminary Qualifications:
Right Motive; Honesty & Unselfishness; Courage & Will; Intelligence; Spiritual Perception

Qualifications for Initiation:
Viveka; Vairagya; Shatsampatti; Sama; Dama; Uparati; Titiksha; Samadhana; Shraddha
Mumukshatva

Daily Practices that help on the Path:
Study; Meditation; Service; Ashtanga Marga

Conclusion:

Care not for your own joy, happiness, satisfaction.
Care only for the upward treading of the world.
Care for the little help you may bring to it.
You must either be lifted, or lift the heavy Karma of the world at least by an inch.

TS IS NOT MEANT FOR SELF-GLORIFICATION, BUT FOR PERFECTION OF HUMANITY.

(Source: Excerpts from Adyar Pamphlets No. 43 - by Annie Besant - A speech delivered in 1898 at the Tenth Annual Convention of the European Section of the Theosophical Society; Published in 1914 and 1930, TPH, Adyar, Chennai, India)

NEWS AND NOTES

Bombay

Jamubhai & Suryaben Dani Interschool Elocution Competition for the year 2018 was organized jointly by Bombay Theosophical Federation and Junior Red Cross, Maharashtra, on 1st September, 2018, at Besant Hall of Blavatsky Lodge, Theosophical Society.

BTF's President Bro. Vinayak Pandya welcomed all and spoke about the great Theosophists & Gandhian Teachers Suryaben & Jamubhai Dani. The Chief Guest Rtn. Godrej Dotivala, Chairman Junior Red Cross Maharashtra, addressed the students. The Judges Dr. Francesca Aranha, Ms. Huzan Wadia & Mr. Ajeet Bhide were introduced by Principal Errick Elavia. Sis. Mahazaver Dalal of BTF was Master of ceremony and Sri Bhavesh of JRCM explained the Rules of the competition. The Registration was taken care of by Mr. Bhavesh and Ms. Pinto of JRCM. The Judges and Committee Members & Volunteers of JRCM were acknowledged with presentation of Theosophical Books. Blavatsky Lodge's Vice-President Bro. Navin Kumar spoke briefly about the 'Three Objects of Theosophical Society & TS Seal'. Bro. Taral Munshi interacted with students with a question "What have you learnt today?" JRCM Secretary Prof. Rajesh Satghar spoke about 'Objects of Red Cross'. Mr. Phillie Karkaria and Mrs. Havovi Dotivala also graced the programme.

Young speakers, 36 Students of 17 Schools of Mumbai & Thane, in two groups spoke well on the subjects given to them. The Judges after sharing their observations declared prizes as under:

Group for 5th to 7th Std. Students: First Prize- Jai Bellare, Second Prize- Huzan Sfroff, Third Prize- Siddhi Katyayani and Consolation Prizes – Samika Shinde & Khadija Rangwala.

Group for 8th to 10th Std. Students: First Prize- Issac Rodrigues, Second Prize- Meghana Basrur, Third Prize- Behram Motafaram and Consolation Prizes- Sanjeev Hunnur & Aarushi Morakhia.

Junior students were given 'The Garden of Theosophy' (by Mary Anderson) and 'The Application of Yoga to Daily Life' (by Ianthe H. Hoskins). Senior students were given 'Annie Besant on Right Citizenship'. Students and all were given Snacks Box & Fruttie.

Merit Certificates and Prizes will be given to students by Dr. Deepa

Padhi, International Vice-President of TS, at the 87th Annual Session of Bombay Theosophical Federation on 26 October 2018.

Obituary: Sis. Goolcher Manjra, Member of Vimadalal Bilia Lodge and Associate Member of Blavatsky Lodge passed away to Light Eternal on 29 August. Ever smiling, gentle, helpful Goolcher, within 10 years of her membership, was Secretary of Vimadalal Bilia Lodge, VB Lodge's Representative to BTF Council and a ready helping hand at Blavatsky Lodge. May her soul blessed with Peace continue progress on Higher Planes.

Gujarat

A special programme in memory of Dr. Annie Besant was organized at Sheth C.N. Kishor Vidyalaya, Ahmedabad. It was held on 20 September. Mr. Chandrabhushan Pasi, Principal of the School, welcomed Bro. Darshan Modi and Sis. Damini Modi. The students recited prayer and rendered devotional songs. Bro. Darshan Modi introduced Sis. Damini Modi to the audience. Then Sis Damini spoke about the life and work of Dr. Besant and narrated as to how she worked for the Theosophical Society as well as some work related to other fields. Her multifaceted personality was like a multifaceted diamond. The talk was followed by interaction with the students. The meeting came to a close with the recitation of the Universal Prayer.

Kerala

Under the auspices of the Kerala Theosophical Federation a day-long **Bharat Samaj Pooja Camp** was organized at Sri. Sankara Lodge, Ernakulam, on 16 September 2018. Dr. T.P Babu Lodge's President presided. Dr. M.A. Raveendran, K.T.F President, inaugurated the Camp. Bro. T.S. Usman welcomed the members. Sis. Lakshmi Bai, Camp Director, explained the aim of the camp and the importance of the Bharat Samaj Pooja. Dr. M.A. Raveendran spoke on the subject '**Relevance of the various mantras in the Pooja**' and also the effects of the pooja at various planes. Bro. S. Sivadas spoke on '**Benefits of the pooja in the inner and outer world**'. Bro. K. Dinakaran spoke on '**Unity of Life and the Pooja**'. Sis. Lakshmi Bai conducted the chanting session in which the participants learned how to chant the mantras in unison. She conducted the pooja at the Lodge in the morning at 8.00 a.m.

The camp concluded at 4.00 p.m.

Report on the Project “Right Citizenship”: Dr. T. K. Nair of Perinjanam Lodge received 100 copies of the book “Annie Besant on Right Citizenship” from the International President Bro. Tim Boyd. As soon as he received the books he distributed 10 copies each to ten educational institutions in Trichur and Ernakulam district- Four B.Ed. Colleges, 5 Higher Secondary Schools and 1 High School (English medium). Due to the flood in Kerala two B.Ed. colleges and one H.S.S could not organize the programme. So, two more Higher Secondary Schools were approached at the last moment. In every institution 10 students spoke about one chapter of the book to all the students of their class. One student from each institution was selected for the programme on 1 October, 171st birthday of Annie Besant. It was held in the premises of Perinjanam Lodge. The Kerala Federation’s President Dr. M.A. Ravindran presided over the meeting. The Lodge’s President Bro. Suresh Babu welcomed the gathering. Dr. Nair explained the purpose of the project. The Indian Section had sanctioned Rs. 10000 for cash award for all the ten participants. The cash, a copy of the souvenir of the Federation and a copy of “At the Feet of the Master” (in Malayalam) were presented to the nine participants by the Federation President. After the vote of thanks by the lodge’s secretary, tea and snacks were provided.

Seven institutions organized the programme in which all the students of that class were present. The target was the audience and not the participants. They were all tools in this project. We wanted to make the message reach the maximum number of students. Due to lack of space in a few schools it was not possible to accommodate all the students. As such, the students of some classes could not participate. In all, 900 students and 30 teachers were involved in the project.

Rayalaseema

Dr. Annie Besant’s *Vardanthi* was observed at Bellary Sanmarga Theosophical Society. The portrait of Dr. Annie Besant was displayed with Floral Decoration with series of bulbs. Dr. A.I. Basavaraja Reddy spoke about Dr. Annie Besant. Twenty-five persons were present in the meeting.

On 1 October Dr. Annie Besant’s Birthday was celebrated and photo displayed as usual with Floral Decoration and series of bulbs arranged. Bro. B. Madhusan Rao, Retd. Principal, gave a short talk on Dr. Annie Besant and mentioned relevant events of her life. *Prasadam* was distributed to all on the occasion of both the aforesaid meetings.

Telugu

Olcott Theosophical Lodge at Machilipatnam observed Annie Besant’s 85th death anniversary on 20 September. Lodge’s President Appaji and Senior Auditor recited Universal Prayer and gave a brief talk about Annie Besant’s work in India and TS. D. Srinivasachari, Director of Pattabi Memorial Institute, S.Venkateswara Rao, a Retd. Lecturer and L. Balaji, a pleader gave talks remembering Annie Besant’s services for Education and freedom struggle in India and Universal Brotherhood and Humanity in TS. In all, 25 members attended the meeting and they observed silence for two minutes to pay homage to the great soul.

A meeting to celebrate Dr. Annie Besant’s 171st Birth Anniversary along with Gandhi’s 149th Birth Anniversary (in advance) was held on 1 October at Olcott Theosophical Lodge, Machilipatnam. The Chief Guest and Principal T. Damodar of Lady Amthil Govt. Junior College said, “Annie Besant was born in Ireland and fought for working women’s right and equal salaries in Britain. Later she came to India and did remarkable work for women’s education and regeneration of this country. Besides, as President of TS she worked for the welfare of every living being. Lodge’s President Appaji said that Annie Besant started TOS in 1908 to help needy people. There were 40 members and students who attended the meeting. Bro. K. Ramesh gave vote of thanks. The principal and other 10 employees joined TS by paying subscriptions on this occasion.

Uttar Pradesh

The following talks were organized by Dharma Lodge , Lucknow, in September: “Quest for Self-Transformation’ by Bro. B.P. Shukla, ‘Etheric Double’ by Bro. U.S. Pandey, ‘Uses of this World’ by Bro. A.P. Capoor, and ‘I promise’ – Booklet of C. Jinarajadasa by Bro. B.K. Pandey. Besides, a special meeting for new members was organized on the theme ‘Introduction of Theosophical Society and the Theosophy’. The speaker was Bro. U.S. Pandey.

Bro. U.S. Pandey, Federation Secretary, along with Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri (from Lucknow), Bro. J.K.Khanna (from Noida Lodge) and Br. Suneel Sharma (from Ghaziabad –Anand Lodge) and few others visited Agra Lodge on 06 September and discussed with local lodge officials, the arrangements to be made for the centenary celebrations of U.P. Federation planned to be organized there in October, 2019.

During the lodge meeting held in the evening on same day Bro.

Pandey delivered a talk on the theme “Stoicism, Marcus Aurelius and ‘Meditation’.

Study Camp at Allahabad: A study camp on “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom” –compiled by C. Jinarajadasa and “The ‘KH’ letters to CWL” was conducted from 14 to 16 September. The study was directed by Bro. U. S. Pandey, Federation Secretary. The other resource persons were Bro. S.S. Gautam, Federation Lecturer and Bro. K.K. Srivastava, Joint Secretary, of the Federation. About 20 persons from both the lodges of Allahabad and from Varanasi participated. The study camp began with recitation of all religions’ prayers followed by invocation of the Universal Prayer in the morning of 14 September. Sis. Sushma Srivastava, Secretary of Anand Lodge, welcomed the participants and speakers. Bro. U.S. Pandey while inaugurating the camp explained the nature of Mahatmas and their letters, a brief history and purpose of receipt of these letters by some persons, mode of receipt of such letters, main points of teachings contained in these letters and their importance in Theosophical studies and also about different books available on this subject. Bro. U.S. Pandey covered contents of letters 1 to 6, 8 of First Series, detailed comments on letter 8 as given in the book “The ‘KH’ letters to CWL” and letters 1 to 10, 26 to 63, 74 to 82 and also appendixes of Second Series during five different sessions. Bro. S.S. Gautam covered letters 7, 9 to 19 and 20 to 42 of the First Series, detailed comments on letter 7 as given in the book “The ‘KH’ letters to CWL” and letters 11 to 25 and 64 to 73 of the Second Series during five different sessions. Bro. K.K. Srivastava covered contents of letters 43 to 51 of the First Series during one session. Bro. Adya Pandey of Anand Lodge, Allahabad, made a preliminary presentation on letters 52 to 60 of the First Series during one session. During interactive and concluding session Bro. U.S. Pandey highlighted some points from another important book *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* and recommended its study. Bro. K.K. Srivastava and Bro. K.K. Jaiswal, Treasurer of Anand Lodge, proposed vote of thanks on behalf of U.P. Federation and local lodges respectively.

On Invitation by faculty members of Jagat Taran Girls’ Degree College, Allahabad, Bro. U. S. Pandey delivered a talk on “Developing Multidimensional aspect of Wellness through Education.” It was delivered before a group of about 100 undergraduate girl students and 15 teachers of that college and was held on 14 September. During his talk Bro. Pandey mentioned about prevailing disorderly condition in society, disharmony in human relations, anxiety and stress among all including

students, unnatural and natural ways of living life, ills and deficiencies of present education system, Object, aims and purpose of education, integrated and holistic living, - steps to be taken to mould the education system to enable such living, higher and lower nature of man, need for transforming lower nature to higher nature, universal and core values, developing harmonious relationships with all, core religious values-points of ethics-their need, minimizing worries, importance and points of good health, qualities of leadership and wholesome philosophy in life. The talk was followed by interaction with the participants.

Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, National Lecturer, and Mrs. Vasumati Agnihotri, Federation Lecturer, conducted lecture/discussion session on 15 September with students and the teaching staff of Yashoda Rastogi Inter College, Lucknow, on the theme “Holistic health”. The subject for this session was mental health and stress management based on Theosophical principles.

Bro. U.S. Pandey visited Ghaziabad on 22 September. In the forenoon he visited Prayas Lodge and addressed the members of that lodge on “The Hidden Side of Lodge Meetings.” He also distributed diplomas to new members of the lodge. In the afternoon he delivered a talk on the same topic in a joint meeting of other two lodges i.e. Besant Lodge and Anand Lodge. He also discussed administrative matters with Lodge officials of all the three Lodges.

During the lodge meetings held in the month of August, 2018, at Barabanki studies were conducted on “Life and work of H.P. Blavatsky”, and “The Yogavashishtha.”

Chohan Lodge of Kanpur organized Annual General Meeting, one public meeting and a special event to celebrate Dr. Annie Besant’s birth anniversary on Sunday 30th September.

The talks on ‘Asala Full Moon Festival’, on ‘The King of the Spiritual Hierarchy’ on the lines of the book *‘Masters and The Path’* by C.W. Leadbeater and on the *‘Mahatma Letters’* were delivered during the normal meetings of the Lodge. A public meeting was organized on 1st September at the residence of Brother P.N. Kapur, a member of the TS, in which a presentation was given on ‘Introduction to the Adepts and Spiritual Hierarchy’. It was delivered, by Brother S.S. Gautam.

A special event was organized on 30 September to celebrate birthday of Annie Besant. Brother R.L. Gupta, President of the Lodge, pre-

sented Dr. Besant's brief life sketch, Brother S.K. Pandey, Vice-President, presented her life over several births and presented her steadfastness of not deviating from the truth as Bruno who did not yield to falsehood even at the cost of his life. He was burnt alive as punishment of declaring that the earth was moving around the star Sun, which was opposite to normal understanding at that time. Brother S.S. Gautam, Secretary of the Lodge, presented an important extract from her book, 'Avatara'. Other members also presented their views about Dr. Besant.

A lecture cum-demonstration session on 'Pranik Healing' was conducted by Dr. Manisha A. Malhotra, Asst. Professor, Economics, BHU, on 28 September. It was held under the auspices of Kashi Tattva Sabha. Other activities of KTS were : A lecture cum-demonstration on 'Shiva Shakti and Classical Dance' by Dr. Smruti Vaghela, Asst. Professor, Dance (Bharat Natyam), M.S. University, Vadodara. It was held on 5th October. Prof. S.S. Sinha, Dept. of AIHC & Archaeology, BHU, gave a very informative talk on 'Shaiva Trails : Timeless Tradition of Indian Culture'. This was held on 12 October.

Shri M.L. Chawala (Dip. 99193) of Ghaziabad (Besant Lodge) passed to Peace on 31.08.2018.

National Lecturer

Bro. U.S. Pandey was the chief guest at TOS West Zonal Conference and 94th Annual Conference of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation held at Jaipur. During the TOS conference held on 08 September he delivered a talk on "Spiritual Basis of Social Work" and the subject of his talk in the Annual Conference of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation on 09 September was "Self-negation."

On invitation of Delhi Federation Bro. U.S. Pandey conducted a study camp at Delhi on 23 September. The theme of the study was "The Doctrine of the Heart." After recitation of Universal Prayer, Bro. D. K. Satsangi, President of Delhi Federation, welcomed the participants and speaker. Members of Delhi Federation and of U.P. Federation participated in it. The study was conducted in three sessions. Thereafter an interactive session was held with the participants. Bro. V. K. Taneja, Secretary of Delhi Federation, proposed vote of thanks.

Indian Section Headquarters

A meeting to celebrate Dr. Annie Besant's 171st birth anniversary

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was organized at the Section HQ, Varanasi, on 1 October. Bro. U.S. Pandey, National Lecturer, was the guest speaker on this occasion.

Sister Uma Bhattacharya introduced the speaker and welcomed him and the participants. Bro. U.S. Pandey in his talk delivered before the members and students mentioned about multi-dimensional and extraordinary personality of Dr. Besant covering certain significant events and aspects from her life and work in all fields i.e. personal, social, religious, theosophical and political. He quoted the opening paragraph of her inspiring address delivered to the Indian National Congress in December 1917 at Calcutta in which she had said, "...India, who has been verily the crucified among nations, now stands on this her resurrection morning, the Immortal, the Glorious, the Ever-young; and India shall soon be seen, proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant Splendour of Asia, as the Light and the Benediction of the world." In this address her exalted aspiration for India was reflected. Bro. Pandey also quoted her last address during the 56th International Convention of the Theosophical Society in which her concluding paragraph was "—it is no good to talk Theosophy unless we live what we talk" and also about her statement elsewhere that " The First step of all, without which no approach is possible... may be summed up in four brief words: 'the service of man' ". After the talk, Sis. Uma Bhattacharya thanked the speaker, the members and the students who attended the talk.

Study Camp

Shrikrishna Theosophical Lodge, Amaravati, Maharashtra, is organizing a study camp on "Glimpses into Secret Doctrine", from 16 to 22 February, 2019. Bro. U.S. Pandey, National Lecturer, will direct the study and Bro. S.K. Pandey, National Lecture, will be the other resource person. There will be a Registration charge of Rs. 500/-. Board and Lodging will be provided by Shrikrishna Theosophical Lodge.

Members of all Federations of the Indian Section are welcome to participate in the study camp.

For details please contact Bro. Kajale No. 9822804477; Bro. Wankhade No. 9309455714; Bro Raut No. 7057676080.

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**The School of the Wisdom
The Theosophical Society
Adyar, Chennai 600 020
Session of 2018-2019**

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.

Living Theosophy in the 21st Century

Dec 3, 2018 - Dec 15, 2018

Mr Jacques Mahnich

We are living at a time where the evolution of our human civilizations is accelerating. Values, ethics & community's life models are changing rapidly. Science and Technologies are reshaping the landscape of our human development. Ancient Wisdom teachings are more than ever a robust guide on an ever-moving path. Their application to day-to-day life requires an adaptation to the new challenges.

This session offers an assessment of the current world situation. It reviews the main principles of the Ancient Wisdom, applied to our human lives; and their role in transforming our existence, thus helping us on our evolutionary Path.

Recommended reading

The Key to Theosophy, by H.P. Blavatsky

Human Regeneration, by Radha Burnier

Science and the Sacred, by Ravi Ravindra

Glimpses into the Psychology of Yoga, by I.K. Taimni

Director

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Jacques Mahnich spent his professional career in Aeronautical Engineering Industry, specialized in Aircraft Powerplants Systems. He is a regular member of the French Theosophical Society, Adyar, since 1978, and of TOS-France. He is the founder of a Theosophical Study Group in the South of France, and he supports regular theosophical training courses and conferences. He is a member of ITC (International Theosophical Conferences Inc.), a worldwide lecturer, the co-founder of a web blog dedicated to the search for the origin of the Stanzas of Dzyan <http://prajnaquest.fr/blog>, and the co-founder of a web-based Project <http://theoscience.org> which publish a quarterly review of Researches Relevant to Theosophy.

Meditation in the Light of Theosophy

Jan 10, 2019 to Jan 26, 2019

Although meditation covers a wide range of methods, in the essentials they aim at one direction: to master the mind, at first. Understanding and practicing meditation would further lead to modify one's own paradigm, and thus to transform one's way of living. Through awareness, one can heal oneself and the world. This would lead to the thorough assimilation of the entire process of meditation, and particularly of HBP Meditation Diagram.

Ms. Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu post-graduated in pharmaceutical technology. She has been exploring Eastern philosophies and religions in parallel with scientific ideas. She is most drawn to the philosophy of Nagarjuna and Krishnamurti. She is a member of the TS since 1972 and has been the General Secretary of TS France. She is also the Chairperson of the European Federation since 1995. She has travelled and lectured all over the world and regularly conducts meditation retreats in Europe.

Applying to the School

Application Form you find as an attachment from the Session's description. Students may register for all or some of the School of the Wisdom sessions in one form, and are expected to attend all the classes in the session chosen. The form should be sent to:

email: study.hq@ts-adyar.org

or

The Theosophical Society

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Secretary's Office The School of the Wisdom
Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India Tel: (+91 44) 2491 2474 and 2491 7198
Accommodation

If you need accomodation, please specifically say so in your application, or send the accommodation needs to acco.hq@ts-adyar.org. There are two styles:

LEADBEATER CHAMBERS (LBC), Western style accommodation, basic amenities

Member rates: Single Rs. 500/- per day per person

Sharing Rs. 400/- per day per person

Non-member rates:

Single Rs. 1000/- per day per person. Sharing Rs. 800/- per day per person

NEW QUADRANGLE, Indian style accommodation, bathrooms outside, is basically for Indian participants. Rates are given on request.

Meals

All meals (breakfast+lunch+dinner) will cost Rs.190-220/- per day, according to what you order. Taking only lunch (Rs.70) must be informed the day before. Tea/coffee at 4 pm is Rs.20.

Other information

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.

Those members who wish to stay for the International Convention are requested to register separately, see instructions.

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

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 emailtostudy.hq@ts-adyar.org or by post: The Theosophical Society, Secretary's Office, School of the Wisdom, Adyar, Chennai600 020, India.

Name:() Ms () Mr.....
Nationality.....Date of Birth.....

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: Do you need accommodation in Adyar: () Yes
() No email-contactacco.hq@ts-dyar.org

Applying for the following Session(s):

Date of Application:

Recommended by:

Those members who wish to stay for the International Convention are requested to register separately at the Convention Office and book accommodation separately.

Applicant's Signature

Recommendation Signature

THE 143rd INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Theme: *Truth and Beauty: A Field Beyond*

The 143rd International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, **from 31 December 2018 to 5 January 2019**. All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. **Non-members** may send **requests** for permission to attend, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation or the Section, **to the Convention Officer (CO) before 25 November**.

Package rates from 29 Dec. 2018 to 6 Jan. 2019, inclusive. One-day rates are not available.

LEADBEATER CHAMBERS (LBC) Registration with full board

Overseas delegates US\$ 360/ 310 EUR / 490 AUD

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates Rs.9,300

- Includes registration fee, sharing room, mosquito nets, sheets, no blankets, all meals at LBC dining hall. No reimbursement, if one eats at the Canteen.- *Note: half rate for children of 3-10 years.*

INDIAN STYLE Registration with full board

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates Rs.2,000

-Includes registration fee, mat/cot or mattress, sheets, all meals at the Canteen- *Note: half rate for children of 3-10 years*

CANTEEN Only meals

Canteen from 30 Dec. (dinner) to 5 Jan. (lunch) Rs.1,200

- Includes breakfast, lunch, snacks, dinner-

Canteen will be run by the Karnataka Theosophical Federation.-

Note: half rate for children of 3-10 years

ACCOMMODATION

All Indian style accommodation is dormitory accommodation – that is, shared accommodation, multiple beds within the same room or

hall; no attached bathrooms or toilets; and, no kitchen. No special facilities can be provided for members who are ill or for women with babies. Ordinary medical attention will be available for minor complaints and there are no facilities to treat serious illness. Since accommodation is limited, especially ground floors, preference will be given for very elderly delegates who register early. Accommodation availability will be confirmed by the Convention Officer by email. Specific building / room allotment requests cannot be entertained.

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENTS

Last date for registration: 1 December 2018

Cancellation: last date 15 December 2018; payment will be refunded, except the Registration fee of Rs.300 or USD 70. After 15 December there will be no refund of any amount.

Delegates from India: Send the Registration form with the details (available at <www.ts-adyar.org>), along with the package charges, to the Convention Officer before 1 December 2018. Remittance by crossed **cheques or bank drafts** should be **made payable to *The Theosophical Society***. If making online transfers, it is essential to communicate by email to CO, the following details: delegate(s) name, Bank name, amount, date of transfer and transfer reference number.

Delegates from other countries: Make sure you take travel insurance. Send the Registration form (available at <www.ts-adyar.org>) by email. Payment on arrival in foreign currency is accepted. Master Card and Visa credit cards are also accepted. If payment is being made by online bank transfer, then make sure that the purpose of payment is marked “donations” and an email is sent to CO with the following details: delegate(s) name, Bank name, amount, date of transfer and transfer reference number.

Contact Convention Officer by email:
tsadyarconvention@gmail.com or

By Post: The Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

Marja Artamaa, *International Secretary*

GOALS FOR — 2018-2019

Indian Section Headquarters

1. To conduct a goal setting meet at Varanasi/Bhowali for the President and Secretary of all the Federations.
2. To organize one workers' training camp in Varanasi and one in Adyar.
3. To strengthen the administrative set-up of the Indian Section by hiring at least two administrative officers and two volunteers.
4. To make a pilot project/camp for combined study, meditation and service at Varanasi.
5. To reprint at least six Theosophical Books which are out of copyright period.
6. To develop a syllabus and start a course on Theosophy at Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya (VKM).
7. To initiate generation of a surplus at the rate of Rs. 1 Crore per year before the end of the year at The Indian Section and grant a reasonable amount to each federation that qualify for work on propagation of Theosophy.

Assam Theosophical Federation

8. To organize visits to 4 schools and 6 colleges by good speakers to attract young generations towards Theosophy.
9. To form two new Theosophical lodges.
10. To revive four inactive lodges.
11. To conduct 6 study classes at federation and lodge level for better understanding of Theosophy.
12. To translate two English books on Theosophy in Assamese.
13. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali in which at least 10 members will participate.
14. To publish 500 copies each of 10 pamphlets in Assamese on Theosophical subjects for lodges and general public.
15. To organize 10 debate/essay competitions at school and college level.
16. To publish Quarterly newsletters in Assamese for members.
17. To increase net membership in the federation by 10 members.
18. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

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Bengal Theosophical Federation

19. To increase net membership by 16 members.
20. To open two new lodges during this year.
21. To increase the number of members attending our weekly study classes by 25%.
22. To popularize Theosophy amongst students through the members who are in teaching profession and induct at least two new student members.
23. To translate, publish and distribute four books on Theosophy in Bengali.
24. To conduct 4 study classes by National Lecturers.
25. To make the Federation's library facility available to the public.
26. To reactivate two dormant lodges/centers by visiting and motivating workers and old members.
27. To send at least 10 members for the Bhowali study camp.
28. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Bihar Theosophical Federation

29. To organize a two hour talk on a Theosophical topic in each of the 11 lodges.
30. To organize a two-day study class in each of the 11 lodges.
31. To organize a three-day study class by Bihar Theosophical Federation.
32. To organize a daylong seminar in each lodge on a social topic related with Theosophy in which chairperson will be a reputed person other than a member of the TS.
33. To revive four defunct lodges. (Hajipur, Patna Maurya, Patna Bodha and Patliputra)
34. To organize one talk on basic theosophy in two schools and two colleges.
35. To increase net membership by 30 members.
36. To develop a website of Bihar Theosophical Federation.
37. To conduct a five-day study camp at Bhowali in the first week of May/June, 2019, with at least 15 members.
38. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Bombay Theosophical Federation

39. To increase net membership by 5 members.
40. To start a E-Lodge as a pilot project in Mumbai.
41. To ensure that the members of Anand Lodge meet at least once in a month.
42. To encourage participation and presentation by young and new members in at least three meetings.
43. To have at least two reach out programmes at schools and colleges.
44. To prepare at least three Second Line Workers to take more responsibility in lodge and federation administration.
45. To organize funding for one Indian Section Educational Project (Library Upgradation).
46. To send at least five members for the study camp at Bhowali.

Delhi Theosophical Federation

47. To publish 1000 pamphlets on introduction to Theosophy in Hindi for general public.
48. To arrange at least 6 lectures on Theosophical subjects at various schools and colleges of Delhi.
49. To achieve an increase of 10 members in net membership.
50. To organize 6 study classes of two days' duration at the Lodge and Federation level.
51. To organize a workers' training camp.
52. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.
53. To conduct a three-day study camp at Bhowali in the last week of May, 2019, with at least 30 members.

Gujarat Theosophical Federation

54. To organize a workers' training camp.
55. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.
56. To organize a three-day study camp for at least 70 members at one location in order to activate the members of the Lodge.
57. To reactivate two dormant lodges/centers by visiting and motivating workers and old members.

58. To publish one thousand pamphlets and two books each on five Theosophical subjects in Gujrati and distribute them to lodges and members.
59. To organize one youth camp, one elocution competition and three essay competitions to encourage youth activities.
60. To celebrate Foundation Day, Adyar Day, Dr. Annie Besant's Birthday and White Lotus Day at different schools and colleges.
61. To increase net membership by 20 members.
62. To conduct a four-day study camp at Bhowali in April/May, 2019, with at least 35 members.

Karnataka Theosophical Federation

63. To set up a school of Theosophy at Bengaluru to imbibe standard practices of learning and dissemination of Theosophical wisdom for the benefit of different classes of membership-basic, intermediary and higher
64. To set up a cadre of at least 20 teachers of Theosophy and supplementary staff as resource persons and enabling staff, at all events for propagation of Theosophy.
65. To set up a committee of 10 core members to prepare a common plan of activity for all lodges and oversee its implementation.
66. To lend a characteristic identity of Theosophy to all lodges in the state by enforcing uniform pattern of activity in the lodge's programmes for at least five days in a week.
67. To establish a Lodge Activity and Development Fund (LADF) made up of voluntary donations, sponsorship and endowments worth at least Rs. 3 lacs.
68. To set up libraries, one each, in at least 10 lodges and provide them with free supply of books stock, journals, pamphlets for the benefit of the members and interested general public.
69. To achieve an all-around progress in number of general activity by + 20%.
70. To conduct a ten-day study camp at Bhowali in the first week of April, 2019, with at least 45 members.
71. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.
72. To organize ten school visits.

73. To organize gift books on TV programmes (Chandana) – That Antha Heli.
74. To organize 130 one-day camps.
75. To organize 10 two-day camps.
76. To organize 9 three-day camps
77. To organize 10 four-day camps.
78. To organize a ten-day study camp cum-workshop.
79. To organize 313 half-day study classes.
80. To organize 365 Bharat Samaj Pooja.
81. To publish five Theosophical books in Kannada.

Kerala Theosophical Federation

82. To organize two “Wake Up India Youth Camps” with at least thirty students in each camp.
83. To organize two “Reaching Out” programmes for interaction with Teachers and Students.
84. To organize one workers’ training camp with at least thirty members.
85. To organize two book exhibitions for ten days with the co-operation of public libraries and other institutions.
86. To publish two books in Malayalam, this year.
87. To organize two Retreats/study camps in Kerala and Bhowali with at least thirty members in each camp.
88. To celebrate four Red-Letter Days of T.S., like October 1st by organizing competition for school and college students in their respective school and college followed by the final competition at the lodge.
89. To celebrate the 125th anniversary of Dr. Besant’s arrival in India with a public function on 16th November 2018 at Trivandrum.
90. To publish 500 copies of pamphlets on two Theosophical subjects in Malayalam on Theosophy.
91. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

M.P. & Rajasthan Theos. Federation

92. To increase membership by 20 members.
93. To arrange at least four Theosophical orientation sessions for

- Scouts and N.S.S. students from college.
94. To arrange at least four “Yoga and Meditation” camps at different lodges.
95. To form four groups and clusters of lodges for better communication and better documentation.
96. To conduct one study camp at Bhowali in June with at least 20 members.
97. To organize five study camps/seminars at different lodges.
98. To form at least two Youth groups at lodge level for Theosophical activity.
99. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Madras Theosophical Federation

100. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.
101. To improve attendance by 25% through dissemination of information in the print media.
102. To organize two study camps on Theosophy at Adyar.
103. To publish two books in English on Theosophy.
104. To publish 500 Theosophical pamphlets on five aspects of Theosophy for wider circulation amongst the public.
105. To prepare a concise book on political role of Dr. Annie Besant in India and have it printed with support from the Indian Section.
106. To increase the net membership by 10 members.

Marathi Theosophical Federation

107. To organize five one-day seminar on Theosophical Subject.
108. To conduct five Essay competitions and Debate competitions based on Theosophical books for Higher Secondary and College level students.
109. To publish 1000 copies of a book on five topics of Theosophy in Marathi language and to distribute them to lodges and also in schools.
110. To introduce one three-day vacation study camp based on theosophy for 30 students of Higher Secondary Schools at Akola.

- 111. To increase the membership by 10 members.
- 112. To conduct three one-day introductory camps for new members.
- 113. To arrange three guided meditation sessions for members and also for general public.
- 114. To conduct a five-day study camp at Bhowali in the first week of May, 2019, with at least 25 members.
- 115. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Royalaseema Theosophical Federation

- 116. To develop a website of the federation to popularize Theosophy and present Theosophical ideas to members and to outsiders.
- 117. To activate four dormant lodges.
- 118. To form three study centers and one new lodge.
- 119. To enhance the net membership by 25 members.
- 120. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali during the last week of April, 2019, with participation of 40 members.
- 121. To visit two colleges/schools at least once in every two months for popularizing Theosophy.
- 122. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.
- 123. To start Theosophical Libraries in 4 lodges of the federation.
- 124. To conduct three training camps to train members to become federation lecturers and resource persons.
- 125. To print and distribute 500 copies of four Theosophical books, and 1000 copies of pamphlets on Theosophical subjects in Telugu.

Tamil Theosophical Federation

- 126. To organize 6 study classes in different lodges.
- 127. To publish 500 pamphlets on 10 Theosophical subject in Tamil for lodges and general public.
- 128. To increase net membership in the federation by 10 members.
- 129. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

- 130. To organize 10 debate/essay competitions at school and college levels.
- 131. To conduct a study camp at Bhowali with at least 10 members.
- 132. To organize at least six lectures in Tamil on Theosophical subjects in six schools/colleges.

Telugu Theosophical Federation

- 133. To increase net membership by 50 members including 10 women and 10 Youth members.
- 134. To revive and activate three dormant lodges.
- 135. To popularize Theosophical literature in three colleges and one University by providing 500 pamphlets on basic Theosophy.
- 136. To conduct a five-day study camp at Bhowali with at least 40 members during May, 2019, and a two-day study camp at any lodge of the Federation.
- 137. To conduct two meditation classes at different lodges.
- 138. To conduct at least two public meetings to introduce Theosophy to the people to attract new members.
- 139. To publish two sets of 500 pamphlets on basic Theosophy in Telugu language.
- 140. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Utkal Theosophical Federation

- 141. To form two new lodges and revitalizes four dormant lodges.
- 142. To increase net members by 20 out of which five shall be women.
- 143. To invite four National Lecturers for conducting study camps of three-day duration.
- 144. To impart Theosophical education once in a fortnight at two different schools.
- 145. To arrange two study classes of two-day duration for non-members at Bhubaneshwar and at Cuttack.
- 146. To publish three translated Theosophical books and one reprint in Odia.

147. To distribute 500 Odia pamphlets and 100 books in schools, colleges and social functions.
148. To organize a two-day youth camp at Bhubaneswar.
149. To use electronic and print media to popularize Theosophy among general public through three TV interviews/talks and three newspaper articles.
150. To conduct literary competitions on Theosophy for Youth at two different colleges and schools with incentives.
151. To conduct a five-day study camp at Bhowali in the last week of May, 2019, with at least 20 members.
152. To conduct a goal setting meet for the President & Secretary of all the Lodges.

Uttar Pradesh Theosophical Federation

153. To conduct 6 study camps of two to three days in different lodges.
154. To organize 8 sessions/public talks of one to two hours each for exposure of general public to Theosophy.
155. To conduct 6 one-day seminars on Theosophical subjects.
156. To organize three programmes for students on integrated development/self-transformation at college level, higher secondary level and school level.
157. To organize two introductory camps for new members
158. To arrange four guided meditation sessions.
159. To increase net membership by 5 members.
160. To conduct a three-day study camp at Bhowali in June, 2019, with at least 20 members.
161. To set goals for all the 22 lodges.
162. To print Hindi translation of one Theosophical book.