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## ON THE WATCH-TOWER

SOME of the greatest sages who have lived took special care to emphasize one particular point. Although the point has been expressed in numerous ways, the essential idea is that change is constant and unavoidable. Everything in this world changes. One would think that this point is so obvious that it need not be expressed so frequently and in so many different ways. However, it seems that for people who are wise there is a reason for this repetition. Those of us who with the years have watched our hair grow grey and our bodies change do not need to be convinced. The young among us witness the same process as their voices deepen, technologies change, and new levels of responsibility open up to them.

So, why such emphasis on the obvious? It seems that for us, even though we ‘know’ that change is inevitable, we have not learned to embrace it. The normal response is to resist and ignore. Whole industries have grown up around this mass desire to halt, or at the minimum slow down the onrushing tide of change. In the West, one of the fastest growing specialities in medicine is men’s cosmetic surgery — a nip here, a tuck there, and a person’s face can give the appearance of some surgeon’s approximation of youth, but these people do not live any longer, or achieve higher levels of happiness during their span of years. In fact these sorts of procedures probably have little to do with how others see us, but are driven by how we want to see ourselves. This is merely one glaring example of our need to create at least an illusion of constancy and control in this fluctuating world. Countless other examples can be seen with just a little thought — everything from a fixation with earning more and more money, the need for titles and recognitions, the desire for our hair to be darker, or lighter, the desire to be liked, to be highly thought of, to be pretty, to be smart. All of these reflect our need to connect to something greater than the limits of what we see.

Such behaviour is easy to criticize, or caricature. However, the Hermetic axiom stating that ‘As it is above, so it is below’ gives us some indication of a deeper meaning. A contemporary American writer, Jack Kerouac, made the point quite simply. He wrote, ‘Nobody believes that there is nothing to believe in.’ Deep within all of us there is a certainty of

something that is changeless. Everyone feels this. The fact that its presence is hidden from us in the ordinary world causes us to act strangely. Not finding what we all dimly know is real, we project it on to the world in these various funny ways. Strange as it may seem, our confused grasping at eternal youth, endless abundance, perfect health, knowledge, and power can be seen as a proof of their reality. What we Theosophists call Truth, is eternal, without limitation, perfect, everywhere present, and attainable by each of us. The drawback for us as human beings is our tendency to try to force the world to reward us with something it cannot give. The real need that lies beneath our striving is for peace, for wisdom, for a security that has its roots in the eternal.

Recently within the Theosophical Society the immediacy of change has forced itself upon us. With our international president’s passing, thirty-three years of leadership suddenly shifted. Following our extended election period we are now faced with adjusting to a new president. As with all such changes in the past, the TS will adjust and move forward. The work of the TS has not changed since its founding. HPB’s comments on the Future of the Theosophical Society in *The Key to Theosophy* are worth considering:

Its future will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last, but not least, on the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those members, on whom it will fall to carry on the work, and to direct the Society after the death of the Founders.

... the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiased and clear judgment. Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart.

... if the Theosophical Society survives and lives true to its mission, to its original impulses through the next hundred years — tell me, I say, if I go too far in asserting that earth will be a heaven in the twenty first century in comparison with what it is now!

Clearly, we have much to do.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist* May 2014)

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## PRACTISING THEOSOPHY : KNOWING AND BEING \*

The Theosophical Society, through the understanding of its Motto and the Three Declared Objects, has been trying to rid the world of its divisions and discords and has been encouraging its members to develop understandingly a positive outlook and approach towards life. What counts most in such endeavour is the sincere effort and the direction in which the knowledge and energy are being channelized. As we know, with the passage of time materialistic values are being given more and more importance in society in general. Individual interests, primarily economic as well as parochial, are putting people apart day by day. The individual is lost in the crowd, deprived of his sense of belongingness. As such, responsibilities of the members of the TS have increased more to carry on the work. People engaged in spiritual liberation have to be equally concerned about social ethics and social responsibilities as well. When life is attuned to a sense of such moral obligation then transformation of the individual and change in the social set up can be there simultaneously. But this requires tremendous self-sacrifice and social service, personal integrity and a strong social conscience.<sup>1</sup>

When I came to know about the theme of this conference it reminded me of a statement given by Acharya Vinoba Bhave in one of his talks. He said that he was not worried about Gandhian Thought because that is a living philosophy and will always remain a constant source of inspiration, 'it is universal and ever relevant'. He was seriously concerned about Gandhian conduct which is becoming weaker day by day. And we all know that as long as there will be gap between thought and conduct, gap between knowledge and action, one will not be able to find a solution, find a way- neither for himself nor for others – to come out of a difficult and complicated situation. Whatever we study and whatever knowledge we gain have to be imbibed and internalized as an experience in one's consciousness. Keeping all these in view, I think that the theme of the conference is very relevant. Because, Theosophy 'continues to be relevant today and would remain so in the future'.

Why is it that even what sounds to be sensible and feasible is often not accepted by the people at the practical plane? What can be done to

\*Talk delivered during the Indo-Pacific Conference held at Bali (Indonesia), on 2- 6 November, 2013

improve the existing situation? The vital question is not only of a structural change. It is one of the relationships and of the minds of men. The relationship of man with man is what we are basically concerned with. It is nearness of hearts that is needed and not just physical proximity, not merely living side by side but living together. What humanistic frame of mind shall produce such an ethical environment? It constitutes a challenge, more than a challenge a great responsibility, for all members – nay for all mankind.

Tagore in one of his lectures, points out to the difference between the 'perfection in doing' and 'perfection in being'.<sup>2</sup> A person with his inherent talent and training in a specific field may be able to perform his job or present his art very systematically, methodically and efficiently. A professor of Religion and Philosophy may be very good at explaining the teachings of Gita, Buddha, Gandhi and J.Krishnamurti. But, outside the classroom he may not be true in his day-to-day dealings and in his relationship with others. So, it is very essential that one is true to his core in his behaviour and conduct. It is very necessary to have and to develop certain basic humane and benevolent characteristics in order to proceed on *the path* otherwise whatever we study and listen to will remain at the academic level only. Gap between knowledge and action will lead us nowhere. As Gandhi said, 'Satyagraha is not a thing to be practiced in the caves of Himalaya. It must manifest itself in the form of action in our day-to-day life.' For this it is pertinent for us to become genuinely strong within, because then only our noble and good qualities will be able to create positive impact on others. Basic transformation in one's inner being alone can help in bringing about change in the outer world. Inner transformation is the source of outer revolution. Transforming personal characteristics into social values is *the revolution*. Change within alone can bring about change in one's outlook and change in the outer world. A person is genuinely knowledgeable or not can be judged by seeing whether he has become more humble, sympathetic, sensitive, patient and with a feeling of love and brotherhood for all living beings.

'The main purpose of the T.S. is regeneration of human conscience through Universal Love.' If one desires to understand, examine and judge the Theosophical Society then he can do it not by knowing the number of members but by their way of living and the qualities of their behaviour. We will have to search and locate our strength and vitality in the qualities of the members because in the formation of a new system of human civilization these supreme qualities will play the main and prominent role.

The pioneers, leaders and scholars of Theosophy tried / have been trying to explain that search or discovery of truth, understanding and following the path of truth is a continuous ongoing process. The Theosophical Society lays great emphasis on search of truth, commitment to truth and putting in all one's effort and energy to live that truth. This commitment to truth awakens sensitivity, sense of awareness and sense of urgency for a cause. When there is intense and complete commitment to truth then the personal *Agraha*, personal considerations, automatically wither away; but the intensity channelizes itself in a creative, constructive and positive way.

History is replete with instances that whosoever tried to understand and discover truth, whosoever tried to follow truth, their life clearly manifests that a truth-loving person is always inquisitive, has an inquiring mind and tries to know, understand and perceive truth in its true perspective, in its totality. He wants to go deep into the inherent meaning, motive and message of truth. Now, theosophy encourages the spirit of inquiry, theosophy helps in exploring avenues for solving the fundamental questions of life and provides clarity to one's thinking. A man with such a state or level of mind remains true to himself, remains true to his society, and remains true to nature. In other words, he remains true to the entire world. The discovery, study, meditation and pondering over truth is possible only when one is leading a simple, clean and pure life with commitment to high ideals. It cannot be imposed from top or by authority. It is a reward for which one will have to make efforts with a great sincerity and his beliefs should be the result of his own study, observation and inner knowledge. Theosophy presents a philosophy in its totality which can make one understand life and practice the art of living. Truth always manifests itself through welfare, justice and good conduct. So, it is necessary for one to have complete commitment to truth and also sincerely try to generate this sense of commitment in others as well.

In order to question and test ourselves, we need not compare ourselves with others. The progress, the inner depth, evolution and transformation have to be seen, fathomed and judged by our own selves in our own way of thinking and living. To what extent have we become self-disciplined and have control on our thoughts and actions? Whether these reflect in our day-to-day dealings and activities? How far are we able to insist on truth under the challenging and adverse situations? What has been our contribution in promoting the cause of the Theosophical Movement? Have we tried to kindle within ourselves the sense of commitment, intensity and urgency which a movement constantly demands? Every individual member will have to seriously think and will have to have a dialogue with one's own conscience. He will have to listen to and

heed his 'inner voice'<sup>3</sup>. The criterion of judging one's integrity is that one is honest to himself. His honesty is not for the sake of policy but one is *just honest*. Then one's actions are also manifested accordingly. It will enhance the intensity of his commitment and involvement and will also expand his area of theosophical activities.

The Path Finders have laid emphasis on Discrimination. Man has the ability to distinguish and decide what is right and what is wrong; what is just and what is unjust; what is proper and what is improper. He has the freedom to decide and determine the necessities of life. And this freedom is the basis of man's progress in the field of morality, sense of duty and so forth. Though it is subjective and individualistic in nature, it is also a social characteristic. Because determining of what is right, just and proper and ascertaining of what is wrong, unjust and improper can be judged in the context of social relationship which is reflected in man's social interaction. But, in spite of having the capacity to discriminate between right and wrong we find that most people are unable to practice it in real life and find it difficult to act accordingly. Because having only the power to discriminate between true and false, between right and wrong leads us nowhere. *Viveka* on its own is lame and so it is very necessary to understandingly realize the strength of *Vairagya* and *Tyaga* (Healthy Dispassion and Sacrifice) along with the capacity to discriminate.<sup>4</sup> It is not running away from life, but being in the midst of life, without being attached to it.<sup>5</sup> In other words, rising above those bondages which enslaves man and prevents him from his journey upward.

One might say that it is very difficult to live and survive with such ideal notions. It is not possible to practice them in day-to-day dealings. Then the question arises, what are we living for? What are we afraid of? Are we interested in only our physical safety or existence? Can we convert obstacles into opportunities? Why are we not able to change others' outlook towards life by our own way of thinking and living? As stated by Tagore, "A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame..... Truth not only must inform but also inspire."<sup>6</sup> In other words, 'if the inspiration dies out, and the information only accumulates, then truth loses'<sup>7</sup> its freshness and vitality. 'Life is a continual process of synthesis, and not of additions.'<sup>8</sup>

The aforesaid profound perceptive observations clearly indicate that the unenlightened life I am living is without real meaning and truth. I must try to concentrate on thoughts and actions which may help me to move from personal considerations 'to a moral and spiritual self.' I must learn to respond to a situation and not react to it. In order to elicit, inspire and channelise the good qualities hidden in me I have got to touch something which is more profound than the intellect. I will not do

any harm to anyone is a very good idea. But a more positive step would be in what manner I can do good to others. We have to till and cultivate the soil within us so that it becomes fertile, receptive and vulnerable to receive and nurture the seeds of transformation *within* which will bloom, flower and transcend into a being which has *Oneness* of vision, thought and action.

Now the question is ; What it is that hinders, that impedes and comes in the way of journey upwards? For transformation in one's psyche, for change in one's whole being, preparation within is a must.

As HPB categorically stated, Theosophy is 'true occultism' and 'altruism'. It needs 'great renunciation of self'. In this context, I would like to mention an incident and share my views with you all. When I was a boy of 10 years, a poem in Hindi was prescribed in our course in the school at Varanasi. Along with the poem the life and work of the poet was also mentioned in brief. He was a well known figure in the field of Hindi literature. The poem dealt with the painful emotions of a man belonging to the lowest socio-economic strata of society and it was written in early 1930s when Gandhi had launched a movement for the upliftment and welfare of poor people. In the Indian Section, we had a senior and dedicated member with the same name as that of the poet. In fact the aforesaid poem was written by our senior member during his teaching career. It was not written by the person whose life and work were mentioned in the book. When a Professor of Banaras Hindu University pointed out (in 1960) the mistake the publisher had been committing for the last 25 years, the response of our senior member was "if the message which I wanted to convey through the poem is reaching more people with his image in mind then it is better to publish it as it was being done till now. Because, the conveying of message is important and not the individual".

This aforesaid real life story imparts a few significant lessons: when one is engaged in a noble mission then the work of the mission is important and not personal glorification. Unless one gets rid of the thoughts and actions which strengthens one's ego, the consequences are bound to be what we are witnessing at various places in the world today. The true religious spirit is 'living and being conscious' of the sense of responsibility that we have toward higher goals, toward our organization and toward the society in general. Besides, it is an example of how one must respond to such situations if there is a strong feeling to conduct them in a Theosophical way.

The key to development is transformation, complete change. Certain experiences and incidents bring about great change in an individual's

life. We all know the story how Gandhi was thrown out of a railway compartment in South Africa. Before this incident, and even after this incident, several dark skinned passengers must have been prevented from entering the railway compartment or other places due to the then prevailing racial discrimination in that country, but there has been only one Gandhi in history. There are several such instances which show that a questioning mind, observing mind, an enquiring mind, the spirit of enquiry is necessary to understand one's own real self, to understand the mysteries of this marvelous earth, the cosmic truth and above all the oneness of whole phenomena of realizing that one consciousness that is the supreme energy is pervading every particle in every being of this cosmos. This change is not without pain and discomfort. The more the intensity of change the greater will be the pain. However, the being that emerges after undergoing the intense pain and suffering is an illumined one – which has the clarity of perception and the radiance of wisdom. Lord Buddha's life reveal that after seeing an old man, a diseased person, a crying woman and so forth he underwent pain and sorrow and then he had to struggle hard to discover the Truth.

In Dr. Annie Besant's case, we find the personal suffering at the crucial stages of her life made her understand human sufferings at large. Suffering of her child, her suffering for the child, resulted in the awakening of compassion for humanity. Was it not a revolutionary moment? The burning questions and doubts about the very existence of God, with the depth of Wisdom turned into immense, unfathomable faith in Divine Power and in mankind. Thus the pain, the suffering, sorrow, conflicts, doubts and questions eventually resulted in her personality becoming the fountainhead of limitless love, compassion and deep concern for the entire world.

I would like to mention an incident to deal with another point. The typist in the library of the Research Institute where I was working was very much interested in listening to moral and religious stories, in knowing about the content of the talks delivered in our Theosophical Lodge at the Indian Section Headquarters or talks delivered during the International Convention. Once I mentioned to him about the statement given in *At the Feet of the Master*; "It is well to speak little; better still to say nothing, unless you are quite sure that what you wish to say is true, kind and helpful....think carefully whether what you are going to say has those three qualities." Next morning when I reached my Institute he told me that during the last 16 hrs. he could speak only three sentences. Then, I thought that he had at least made experiment with what was suggested in the book. In this way he must have saved lot of energy by not indulging in gossip and unnecessary talk. Now, the only thing he has

to do is to utilize that energy in the right direction. Because what counts most in such endeavour is the sincere effort and the direction in which the knowledge and energy are being channelized. It is the direction in which we proceed that matters most. The question is, how many readers who have read that portion really experimented with it?

The more one practices or develops the habit of right thinking and taking right action greater will be the possibility of understanding and discovering the right values of life. After all, man has 'certain moral and spiritual capacities' which can keep him under reasonable restraint and control. So, the understanding and knowledge to discriminate between 'life negating causes' and 'life promoting forces' are very essential. And this is possible only when one is prepared to listen to his *inner voice* and is ready to be guided by his voice of conscience. As mentioned by Prof. Rege during the International Theosophical Convention in 1990 :

“The practice of human and humane values, the purification of individual mind and pursuit of spiritual knowledge go hand in hand. Each is necessary support to the other. You cannot pursue spiritual liberation in isolation from social ethics and responsibilities.”<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Annie Besant's life and work give us the lesson that every law abiding citizen must accept the moral obligation of refraining from all such thoughts and actions which would create hindrances in the way of unity, integration and brotherhood. She inspires us to work for the whole of mankind.

We will have to question ourselves – what it is that hinders, that impedes and comes in the way of journey upwards? In what way are we different from others? What are the changes that have taken place in our lives after joining the Theosophical Society? Are we here in the TS merely 'to generate information' or 'to generate an understanding'? Each one of us will have to have dialogue with oneself to find out how much of Theosophy has really become part of us. How do we approach a problem? How our way of tackling an issue is different from others? Has our way of dealing with a situation created any positive impact on common people? These and several such questions may help us to understand as to where we actually stand and what more requires to be done. Theosophy helps in widening our mental horizon. Its genuine understanding leads to the blending of head and heart. It strengthens us from within. The deeper we go into it the greater are the chances of transformation. The more we try to put it into practice greater will be the scope to live a life based on harmony, cooperation, compassion, Brotherhood and Love. Nevertheless, let us not wait passively for inspiration

to be given on a platter. Let us labour hard and put in our best efforts so that *we* become the very meaning. As mentioned by HPB, “Put without delay, your good intentions into practice, never leaving a single one to remain only an intention”. Then, the innate harmony, wisdom and truth, on their own will unfold themselves through us. In order to make a positive contribution we must be strong in ourselves. If we are determined to make Theosophy 'a living force' in our life there is no reason why it should not have multiplier effect. Thus, perhaps, there will be no need to explain the relevance of Theosophy because the very presence of a Theosophist will reflect Theosophy in its deepest and holistic sense.

Now, I would like to conclude with a few lines from Hazrat Inayat Khan :

“There are two things: knowing and being. It is easy to know truth, but most difficult to be truth. It is not in knowing truth that life's purpose is accomplished. Life's purpose is accomplished in being truth.”<sup>11</sup>

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6. *Thoughts from Rabindranath Tagore*, Indian Edition, Macmillian & C., London, 1933, p.135.
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8. *Ibid*, p.153
9. *At the Feet of the Master*, TPH, Adyar, Deluxe Edition, Third Reprint, 2011, pp.16 & 24-25
10. M.P. Rege, talk delivered on 'What India Needs in the field of Religion' during the International Theosophical Convention in 1990 at Varanasi.
11. Hazrat Inayat Khan, *op.cit.*, p.119.

## THE BHAGAVAD GITA : THE METAPHOR AND METAPHYSICS\*\*

“I hold that when a person dies  
His soul returns again to earth  
Arrayed in some new flesh-disguise  
Another mother gives him birth  
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain  
The old soul takes the roads again” – John Masefield

The commencing single solitary *sloka* nay *shoka* expressed by King Dhritarashtra at the very outset sets the tone of the Gita which is considered to be the quintessence of all ‘*Shastras*’ for it raises essential questions about human nature and its inner quest. It begins with the words ‘*Dharma*’ which means ‘essential Being’ and ends with ‘*mama*’ which means ‘my’. Hence it all means ‘**my essential Being**’ which is the theme of the Gita. The purpose of life is to realise one’s essential Nature; to discover the Supreme Self within. Make no mistake Kurukshetra is *dharmakshetra* as acknowledged even by Dhritarashtra. It’s then a question of confrontation between ‘known unknownness’ and ‘unknown knownness’ as the sine qua non.

“If the red slayer think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again”. - Emerson’s *Brahma*  
(cf. Kathopanishad 9)

The Bhagavad Gita, written on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the waxing moon in the month of Margashirsha, is the most important of the Hindu scriptures

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\*\*This article is a syncretic presentation of the Chapter, The Bhagavad Gita in Vol-VI of the writer’s book *Infinity & Beyond*

comprising 700 *slokas*, a part of Book VI, Bhishma Parva. Spread over 18 cantos in consonance with 18 days of war and 18 Parvas of the Mahabharata, it may be divided into 3 sets of 6 cantos each explaining the Vedic aphorism of *Tat-Tvam Asi* : the first set explaining *Tvam* or Thou, the 2<sup>nd</sup> set *Tat* or That, and the last set is about *Asi* or Art. *Tvam* is the Self within; *Tat*, the Supreme God, and *Asi* connotes that the **Self in you and God are one**. The first 6 cantos talk of *Karmayoga*, as selfless service destroys lust, anger, and greed. The next 6 cantos deal with *Bhaktiyoga* as devotion helps us overcome sloth and desires. And the last 6 cantos deal with *Jnanayoga* that paves the way to Self-knowledge. It all deals with five key elements viz. the soul, karma, time, nature and the Over-Soul. Different people react differently to the message of the Gita according to their nature. It alerts as to the deeper truth of contradiction, for a powerful message of peace and love emanates from the battlefield, of the citadel of violence, notwithstanding Krishna’s final attempt to diffuse the impending war by entreating the *Kauravas* for a minimum of five village habitats in lieu of Indraprasta. Real peace reigns with the contentment of minimum of possessions in all simplicity, serenity and sincerity for it maximises the values – a Gandhian practice and proposition.

“When me they fly, I am the wings;

I am the doubter and the doubt,

And I the hymn the *Brahmin* sings”. – Emerson’s *Brahma* (cf. Isa Upanishad 9 : the Self contains within itself contradictory traits : “It moves, It moves not; It is far away, It is near; It is inside all this, and It is outside all.” It’s the ‘**Beyond**’: Beyond Infinity, where no opposites exist.

Since it is part of the epic Mahabharata, the Gita is technically *Smriti* or traditional literature rather than *Shruti* or revealed sacramental text. Nevertheless, the Gita attained the level of *Shruti* and is consulted as a source of truth and wisdom. The essence of Krishna’s teaching is that the individual is ultimately linked to the ultimate divine reality. The relationship of Arjuna and Krishna stands as a metaphor for the real relationship between humanity and divinity. It’s the dialectics between the Sathi aka Arjuna and the Sarathi Sri Krishna. The Gita is unique in as much as it is free from dogma, and hence it is the best Sermon for all

Faiths. “The Gita is the universal mother... Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks,” said Gandhi; the Supreme Lord dwells alike in all beings; the Imperishable in things that perish. Never was the spirit born, never the spirit shall cease to be. Never was a time when it was not... **ends and beginnings are but dreams.**

Krishna of the Gita is perfection and right knowledge personified – an ‘apotheosis’. The idea of perfect incarnation is ascribed to Him for performing real extraordinary service to mankind. The belief in incarnations stands testimony to man’s lofty spiritual pursuit. Man is not at peace with himself till he becomes like unto God. It shows the most excellent way to attain self-realisation through renunciation of fruits of action. Right knowledge is necessary to attain renunciation. And in order that knowledge may not run riot, Vyasa has insisted on devotion accompanying it. Knowledge without devotion will be like a misfire. Renouncing all *dharmas* means ending ego completely. “He only is fit to contemplate the Divine who is slave to nothing, not even to his virtues. He who gives up action falls; he who gives up only the rewards rises.” Salvation of the Gita is perfect peace, and not just *Jivanmukti*. Salvation is here and now, not then, not hereafter, postulates Theosophy, and rightly so. Future is beyond the bounds of one’s domain of duty, says Sanjaya. Whatever one does, be done for the purpose of sacrifice, service to humanity, for ‘*loksamgraha*’ or public welfare, engaging oneself wholeheartedly with conviction in performing the purported action. Instead, renunciation is at the core of spiritual life. “I myself do nothing. The Holy Spirit accomplishes all through me”, says the English Romanticist and mystic William Blake.

The Gita is also a pure administrative gospel, and not just a religious text. Karma never pollutes its discharger. It’s just imperative to differentiate between *karma*, *akarma*, and *bikarma* i.e. deed, misdeed and wrong-deed in order that one is free from doer-ship. Thus Krishna, though duty-bound, is above the compulsions of duty. It is the science of action. We have many roles in life but we can play only one role at a time; give your all to the role you play and that is ‘*vyavasaya buddhi*’, which is Gita’s term for dedication; bring your ‘*vyavasaya buddhi*’ to ‘*samadhi*’ i.e. quiet concentration. And when we act with Him in mind, He takes care of the fruits – ‘*yogakshemam vahamyaham*’. One who seeks work in no work, and no work in work, is indeed wise and wor-

thy of liberation. Karma is performed by the mind in thought, by the tongue in speech, or by the body in action. The disunited mind is far from wise; how can it meditate? How can it be at peace? Treat fortune and misfortune alike; both equal imposters. Right knowledge is to seek the Self as the true end of wisdom; anything contrary is ignorance. **Truth**, it appears, **nestles somewhere in the midst of contradiction.**

The whole of the Gita’s teaching is presented in an epigrammatic way with an arresting simile in *Puroshottamyoga*. The cosmic tree, the Tree of life, is described as an ‘*Aswatha*’ or peepal tree turned upside down with roots above and branches below. The analogy is replete with deep esoteric significance. The root is far above and beyond the reach of ordinary men. Its leaves are the ‘*Vedas*’ and trunk ‘*Brahma*’. Its branches, in luxuriant profusion, shoot to heaven and sink to earth, typifying respectively sages and savants, who soar upward for spiritual amelioration and rank and file of humanity who remain on earth. The cosmic forces do not work upward from below, but downward from above, says Hermes. Allegorically, the three *gunas* – good, passionate, and slothful – fatten the sap, which generates buds and twigs, symbolic of sense objects. The combination of *gunas* creates the infinite variety of beings just as three primary colours red, yellow, and blue combine to create all-colour spectra. We look at life from our structure of thoughts and, therefore, find the world imperfect. The term *Aswatha* in Sanskrit connotes that which exists today, but not tomorrow. It underscores that **the world is transitory; but absolute truth absolutely changeless.** The ‘*Puroshottama*’ – supreme spirit, omniscient, immutable, omnipotent, un-originated – is untouched by action and untainted by stain.

The lessons of the Gita is that one must face the vicissitudes of life with the attitude of ‘*a-shoka*’, without grief, unmoved equally by pleasure and pain, unperturbed by the vagaries of a turbulent world. All mankind is born for perfection, and each shall attain it, will he but follow this nature’s duty to discharge adroitly. Life is a perpetual instruction in cause and effect, said Emerson. The Gita is a moral dictionary; it gives us the exact connotation of important moral notions. Free the senses, from attachment and aversion alike, and live in the full wisdom of the Self. The mind, intellect, ego, ether, air, fire, water and earth are the eightfold transformation of My nature, says Krishna. Lord Krishna, the *purna avatar*, goes from sheer sensuality to serene spirituality. In the



Gita, **deliverance is advocated by transcending the cause-effect algorithm.** It is unique in that it is neither doctrinaire nor dogmatic.

Law of Karma according to Bal Gangadhar Tilak is an energetic principle and that the Gita preaches Karmayoga for unless some karma or action is performed it is not possible for the imperceptible to become perceptible. It is one of the clearest and most comprehensive summaries of the perennial philosophy of the *homo-sapiens*. Hence its enduring value, not only for the Indians but also for all of mankind across all faiths, said Aldus Huxley. It goes beyond religion and provides deep insights into the working of the human mind. Kurukshetra represents the struggle that takes place in our mind when desire, expectations and arrogance try to dominate innate Virtues of the Soul i.e. like the 'White Lotus' vide Theosophy.

Caste has been misinterpreted as being hereditary whereas Krishna states clearly that caste is a classification of people's potential. A child interested in academics can be said to have Brahminical qualities; one wanting to join the armed forces can be said to be Kshatriya-like; the one who prefers business has *Vaishya gunas*, and the one who likes serving has *Shudra gunas*. We might even find more than one trait in one person. Microsoft's Bill Gates for instance, can be said to be quadric-caste since his functions and aptitude contain elements of all four castes. Whatever one's potential and interest, the ultimate aim is self-realisation and not self-gratification. There is no nobility in these divisions, as they are merely functional.

That man sees the Truth who sees that thought and action is one. We can see how inside every culprit there is a victim. This leap is possible with spiritual wisdom; to be in the world yet remain unscathed; to be active, even heroic, yet retain innocence. This is what exemplifies Gandhi's life and hence *The Gita* his inseparable companion through and through. Gandhi made it his own '**spiritual reference book**'. For anyone seeking equanimity in action, the Gita is a good beacon. That's how and why J. Robert Oppenheimer, the father of the atomic bomb, cited verses from the Gita in the hope of distancing himself from the destructive power of the nuclear arsenal that he had brought into being.

All characters in the Gita deal with one aspect or the other of Yoga. It is evidently a spiritual metaphor used for the exposition of Yoga.

**Persons portrayed are ingenious depictions symbolising the various stages in the development of matter into spirit – a Theosophical conspectus.** The battle proper represents the real struggle that ensues within a person who realises that all along it is the mind and its deep-seated tendencies that play a devious game of deception with him leading to false perception of truth and happiness. Kurukshetra, the battle field, refers to our own bodily domain. '*Kuru*' derived from the root '*kri*' means 'action' and '*Kshetra*' means 'domain'; thus it symbolises '**domain of action**'. And hence Dhritarashtra, one who holds the sceptre and the crown, worriedly asks Sanjaya, who is bestowed with the divine vision, as to what goes on at Kurukshetra when Kauravas and Pandavas are aligned affront that the Bhagavad Gita begins with.

The five Pandavas are likened to the five fingers of the palm of Kunti of the arm of Pandu, who was the rightful and noble monarch of Bharata, the bodily kingdom. The five fingers held tight in fisticuffs are ever invincible. 'Pandur' means white or pure which refers to the faculty of discrimination between right and wrong, who is able to be spirited. His five sons from his wives Kunti and Madri represent the power of dispassion. The bodily kingdom comes to be ruled by the blind king Dhritarashtra who represents senses; infatuation and hence blind whose eldest son Duryodhana represents vain, material desire that is most difficult to fight off. Duryodhana's 99 brothers represent all other sense-entrenched tendencies of the mind. The five Pandu sons are born of rightful discrimination and dispassion, and together they possess qualities to recover the lost kingdom. The youngest Sahadeva representing the domain of rightful discrimination says, 'I have to resist that'. Nakula representing the power and beauty of knowledge says, 'I have to adhere to that'. Arjuna asserts, 'I must have self-control'. The mighty Bhima asserts, 'I am strong'; and Yudhishthira has the right knowledge to assert, '**I am calm even in war**'.

These are the qualities necessary for the ascent of consciousness, from body-consciousness to soul-consciousness. Hence Draupadi rightly belongs to all the five brothers as their spouse as all the five of them together represent 'perfection' or apotheosis. Yajnaseni represents the otherwise dormant divine life-force known as Kundalini Shakti which when awakened unites with various aspects of discriminatory intelligence. This live electricity called Kundalini when properly oriented in meditation rapidly traverses the powerhouse of Karma.

## NEWS AND NOTES

Mr. Tim Boyd has been elected as President of the Theosophical Society for a term of 7 years from the date of assuming office.

### **Bengal**

#### **Eastern Zonal Conference of TS & TOS**

Eastern Zonal Conference of the Theosophical Society and the Theosophical Order of Service was hosted by the Bengal Theosophical Federation from 28 Feb. to 2 March 2014 with Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary, Indian Section of the Theosophical Society, as Chief Guest and Dr. T.K. Nair, National Secretary, TOS India, Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, Convener of EZC, Assistant General Secretary of T.S. Indian Section; Mrs. Manju Sundaram; Prof. K.P. Sarkar, Bro. Chittaranjan Sinha, President Bihar Federation and Bihar TOS Region, Bro. J.N. Patowary, President TOS Assam Region and National Committee member of TOS India as guest speakers. Justice Shyamal Sen, former Governor and Chairman of Human Right Commission, Govt. of West Bengal, attended the programme on 1 March 2014 as a Chief Guest and gave a brief but very illuminative talk. Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya attended all the programmes from 27 February to 4 March with the guest speaker and participated in the discussion. A souvenir was published and distributed among delegates with folder, notebook and pen.

On 27 Feb. 2014, Bharadwaja Lodge organized a meeting for a talk of Mrs. Manju Sundaram on 'Bhakta Kabir' where 51 learned persons interested in Theosophy were present. It was a unique programme which inspired some non-members to join the Theosophical Society.

On 28 Feb. the first meeting of EZC started in the afternoon along with 131<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of BTS with Bro. Hemendu Bikash Chowdhury, President BTS, on the Chair and Bro. Sundaram, Dr. T.K. Nair and Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya on the dias. Bro. Gautam Nandi, Secretary, BTF, conducted the meetings at BTS hall. The theme of the conference was "Wisdom and Service". After prayers of all faiths the conference was inaugurated by Bro. S. Sundaram by lighting candle in front of the portrait of HPB and paying homage to Radhaji by offering flowers to her portrait.

Bro. Hemendu Bikash Chowdhury, President BTS, welcomed all the guest speakers, delegates of Assam, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and TS & TOS members. Representatives of different Lodges and Federations conveyed good wishes and greetings for the success of the conference. Bro. Ratan Das, Secretary, BTS, presented Annual Report and the future plan, Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya spoke in brief about the glorious history of BTS and contribution of Sri Naren Sen, Editor of Indian Mirror Patrika and Sri Peary Mohan Mitra, a scholar and well known person, in founding BTS on 6 April 1882 which was the 1<sup>st</sup> Lodge in East India. Manishi Hirendra Nath Dutta founded the Bengal Theosophical Federation in 1920 with Lodges situated at Assam, Bengal and Orissa and did commendable work in propagating Theosophy in this zone. Bro. S. Sundaram gave an illuminative talk on the theme of the conference. The meeting ended with vote of thanks followed by get together.

On 1 March the first session started with invocation to unity. Bro. Chittaranjan Sinha presided over the meeting. After introductory address by the convener Bro. Pradip Mahapatra and greetings from Lodges/Federations, representative of four Federations spoke on the theme "Wisdom and Service". Mrs. Manju Sundaram was the main speaker of this session who enthralled the audience by the content of her presentation. Bro. T.K. Nair, Sis. Vinodini Goenka also gave valuable talks.

Eastern Zonal Business meeting was held at 2.30 p.m. on the same day. Common matters for propagation of Theosophy in East Zone were discussed in details and it was decided that Utkal Federation will host the next EZ conference in Feb. 2015. Dates and tentative programme will be circulated in advance.

Second session of EZC along with 94<sup>th</sup> Convention of BTF was held at BTS Hall at 4 p.m. on 1 March 2014 with Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya on the Chair and Bro. S. Sundaram, Bro. Pradeep Mahapatra, Prof. K.P. Sarkar and Justice Shyamal Sen as guest speakers.

The meeting started with Universe Prayer followed by one minute silence and opening song by Jaba Guha Thakuratha. Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya in his brief welcome address highlighted the glorious past tradition of Bengal Federation, Bro. S. Sundaram spoke on "Wisdom & Service" which was highly appreciated by the audience. Prof. K.P. Sarkar

spoke on Modern Science and Spirituality. Representatives of Lodges conveyed good wishes and greetings followed by presentation of annual report by the Federation Secretary, Bro. Gautam Nandi. The Chief Guest justice Shyamal Sen attended the meeting in spite of his sick health. He said we are passing through crisis. There are corruption, conflicts and violence everywhere. The women are not safe. Under these circumstances the members of the Theosophical Society can play important role by living ideal life. After the meeting one act play titled ‘Karna Kunthi Sangbad’ was presented by members of BTF under the direction of Sis. Arati Nandi.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Bro. Nibaran Mahato took all the delegates and members to the garden house of Shaik MD. Zaki at Barrackpore by a deluxe bus where programme of TOS was organized. After tea the meeting started with Universal Prayer. National Director, TOS-India, presided over the meeting with Bro. S. Sundaram, Mrs. Maju Sundaram, Prof. Supriya Munshi, Shaikh Md. Zaki, Bro. S. Ravinder Singh and Bro. J.N. Patowary on the dias. In all, 102 members attend this conference.

Bro. Shaikh Md. Zaki, President TOS-West Bengal, welcomed all the guest speakers, delegates and members of different TOS groups. Thereafter Regional Secretary of Assam. Bro. Anil Kumar, Prof. Dr. Raj Kishore Prasad of Bihar, Bro. R. C. Patnaik of Orissa and Bro. Gangaram Hazra of West Bengal presented their Annual Reports and future Plan.

Dr. T.K. Nair, National Secretary TOS-India, while delivering his lecture, expressed his pleasure by seeing the well attended Zonal Conference for the first time. President and Secretary of all Regions were present with other members except President of Orissa Region who could not attend due to old age. Bro. S. Sundaram, Bro. J.N. Patowary, Prof. Supriya Munshi, Mrs. Manju Sundaram spoke nicely on the theme of the conference which were applauded by all the members. Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya appreciated the team work of TOS West Bengal. Bro. Gangaram Hazra having very responsible post of Govt. of West Bengal found time to meet TOS workers and donated money for TOS. Bro. Shaikh Md. Zaki has formed a new TOS group in memory of his Late Mother Gul Begam. Charter of Gul TOS group was handed over to Sis. Saira Zaki who accepted it with great honour and expressed that she

will work for this group as she served her mother-in-law. Membership certificates of three TOS life members were given and one new life member was enrolled. Prof. Supriya Munshi, Director of Gandhi Museum, Barrackpore, expressed his will to join the Theosophical Society. It was a purposeful programme and it's venue, a beautiful garden with flowers of different types was a unique one. The session ended with vote of thanks by Bro. S. Rabinder Singh, Vice-President of TOS West Bengal. Bro. Debabrata Dutta, Secretary Sripath TOS Group, organized a Blood Donation camp on this day to commemorate the EZC at Khardah and sent 3 blood donors at the meeting and they were felicitated for their noble action. Financial assistance was also given to them for their education.

New born TOS Group i.e. Gul TOS group served good lunch to all the delegates and members with care. After which the bus returned to BTS Hall with delegates and members for the concluding programme.

The closing programme started with Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya on the chair. Bro. J.N. Patowary, Bro. Chittaranjan Sinha, Bro. R.C. Patnaik, Bro. Pradeep Mahapatra and Bro. T.K. Nair in their concluding remarks appreciated the performance of this conference. Bro. S. Sundaram gave a short but illuminative key note lecture. Bro. Gautam Nandi in his concluding talk thanked all those who extended their helping hands to make the East Zone TS/TOS conference a success.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March a beautiful programme was organized by Sundarban TOS group and Besant TS Study Centre at Sandeshkhali Island. Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya attended the programme with Bro. S. Sundaram, Mrs. Manju Sundaram, Bro. T.K. Nair, Bro. J.N. Patowary and three members of TOS West Bengal. After Breakfast at Dhamakhali Guest House, Bro. Dinababu Das, Secretary of TOS group, Study Centre, took the guests with other office bearers to Sandeshkhali on a govt. boat. It was a pleasant journey for the new comers. The guests were felicitated with bouquet and scarf and sweet and polite words. More than 100 learned persons of the Island including BDO, Headmaster and Doctor attended the programme and assured their help to propagate theosophy and to extend their help for the work of TOS in other Islands of Sundarban.

The meeting started with Universal Prayer followed by short talks by Bro. J.N. Patowary, Bro. T.K. Nair, Sis. Manju Sundaram, and Bro.

S. Sundaram. Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya presided over the meeting. Bro. Prabir Bose President of Besant Study Centre gave welcome address and took the guests to their Tailoring Training Centre which is equipped with 30 machines to provide employment to the poor women of the rural areas. Then Bro. Paresh Chandra Bose, President of TOS group took them to Radha Burnier Memorial Hall which is under construction. The name plate was unveiled jointly by Mrs. Manju. Sundaram and Mrs. Pratima Bhattacharya. The General Secretary of TS, India, Bro. S. Sundaram was the Chief Guest who expressed his pleasure by seeing the Tailoring Unit and half built Radha Burnier Memorial Hall at a remote place in West Bengal. He said that the Indian Section has decided to name Bhowali Centre in Memory of our beloved International President Dr. Radha Burnier in May 2014 whereas you have already inaugurated your noble project in her memory.

Sweaters and study materials were distributed to poor students. Fourteen TOS members applied for membership of the Theosophical Society to make Besant Study Centre an active TS Lodge, 10 new Life Members of TOS were enrolled. The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Bro. Dinabandu Das. While returning from the Island they arranged a short boat journey for the guests to show the beautiful scenes of Sundarban.

On 4 March 2014, Siddhartha TOS group celebrated its 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in a pandal near Annie Besant Hall with justice S.S. Ganguly on the Chair. Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary Indian Section of TS was the Chief Guest and Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya, National Director TOS, India, as Guest of Honour, Bro. Dr. T.K. Nair, National, Secretary, Bro. T.N. Patowary National Committee member TOS India. Bro. S. Ravinder Singh, Vice-President TOS West Bengal were the special guests. The presence of Ven Dr. D. Rewatha Thero, former General Secretary of Mhabodhi Society and President of BTS and other honourable monks enriched the programme to a great extent.

The meeting started with Universal Prayer followed by opening song by Jaba Guha Thakuratha. Ceremonial reception was given to all guest speakers with bouquet and scarf. Ven. Dr. Buddhapriya Mahathera welcomed all the guest speakers and members most warmly. Bro. S. Sundaram, Dr. T.K. Nair, Bro. J.N. Patowary spoke nicely on 'Service' expressing their appreciation for its activities such as orphanage, chari-

table dispensary, school and training of meditation to the children.

Bro. S. Sundaram in his illuminative speech said-taking care of the orphans, giving them food, shelter and proper education with love and compassion is noble work which the TOS group with the SUSW mission are doing. Ven Dr. D. Rewatha Thero said- "The founder of the Mohabodhi Society of India was a great Theosophist. I also had the opportunity to work for Theosophy with Bro. B.L. Bhattacharya and I hope both the Theosophical Society and Mohabodhi Society will work together to serve the humanity". He also assured his help for the work of TS/TOS if required. Justice S.S. Ganguly also appreciated the activities of this group and mission for the welfare of orphans and needy persons. Bro. Ajoy Bhattacharya and Sis. Sanjukta Dutta, two renowned Radio/TV artists of West Bengal, presented a short Musical programme which was highly applauded by all the audience. The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Bro. Amal Krishna Indu, Secretary, Siddhartha TOS Group, Sis. Asmita Sinha Barna, President of this group played important role to make this programme a success. A colourful souvenir was published to commemorate this occasion. It was a very successful and inspiring programme.

## **Gujarat**

Sanatan Lodge, Surat, participated in the Vivekanand Book Fair organized by the Surat Municipal Corporation from 23 to 27 January 2014. The President of the Lodge and the Vice-President of the GTF Shri Kantibhai Patel along with all the workers of the Lodge sold the books of Theosophy— literature in Gujarati, Hindi and English. Thus an effective and noble work of spreading the message of the T.S. was done successfully.

A day-long Shibir was organized at Ahmedabad on 9 March. It was held in memory of Revered Radhaji and to remember the late Viraben Dastur, stalwart Theosophist of Gujarat. 63 delegates from different Lodges of Gujarat attended it. The Shibir was conducted by Bro. Harshavadan Sheth. The President of Rohit Lodge Mr. Darshan Modi welcomed the delegates and informed the members about the great work of Late Vira Dastur and the importance of the yearly Shibir held in her honour.

Shri Chandubhai Pandya shared his experience of Dr. Radhaji's work and versatility, about her efforts to spread the message of the T.S. and 'On the Watch-Tower' published every month in 'The Theosophist'.

Shri Yogendrabhai Desai delineated various aspects of Radhaji's personality and her approach to life. He quoted from her book *Human Regeneration* and pointed out her pivotal role in nurturing altruistic approach in society at large.

After a short break the programme started with the devotional song rendered by Shri Upendrabhai Mehta.

Shri Jayeshbhai Desai spoke on the work and the significance of Theosophy in terms of the discussions and lectures given by Radhaji.

Shri Harshvadan Sheth shared his experience and the inspiration derived from the life and work of the departed president with the few words of tribute from Shri Prafulbhai Shah.

The vote of thanks was given by the Vice-President of Rohit Lodge Smt. Chandrikaben Nayak. The Shibir ended with the 'Shanti Mantra'.

## Kerala

Bro. P.K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, visited Kerala Theosophical Federation from 11 to 16 March 2014. He visited Sree Sankara TS Lodge, Ernakulam, on March 11 & 12 and delivered talks on "Messages from the Mahatmas" and "Developing Intuition". He visited Annapoorni TS Lodge, Alleppey, on 13-14 March and the theme of study was "Masters and their Messages" based on the book *Theosophy as the Masters See It*. He visited Trichur TS Lodge and talked on "Developing Intuition" on 15 March and inaugurated the public seminar on "Messages from the Mahatmas" and gave the Keynote Address. He chaired a panel discussion on "Concept of Mahatmas" on 16 March at Vyloppilly Hall, Thrissur.

The study classes conducted by Bro. P.K. Jayaswal were well attended and highly appreciated by all the participants. The participants were much impressed and moved by the simple way in which Bro. Jayaswal helped them for self-enquiry rather than imposing dogmas. At Eranakulam, Bro. Jayaswal briefly narrated the situations which necessitated the foundation of the Theosophical Society. The founders had to

face many difficulties and were under pressure. He explained that humanity has come to a stage where intellectual development is very fast and so also the cult of separateness. Superstition has become part of some religions. The Masters thought time has come to reveal the spiritual truth afresh. Theosophy is also called wisdom religion.

At Alleppy, the study was based on the book *Theosophy as the Masters See It* and he tried to bestow light upon the very purpose of the establishment of the Theosophical Society by the Masters of Wisdom and their true nature. The programme commenced at 5.30 pm and concluded at 7 pm on both days. The participants ardently used the opportunity by asking questions and it was followed by enthusiastic discussion.

At Thrissur, on the first day, it was an interactive session on "developing intuition". The learned speaker explained in detail about the subject and stated that "Prajna" is the real Sanskrit word for intuition. He also explained that the English word, "intuition" "is inadequate for expressing insights originating from Atma-Buddhi even though the word "intuition" is commonly used. He made it clear that only a pure mind can develop intuition.

In the well attended, public seminar at Thrissur, Bro. Jayaswal was the main speaker on the subject "Messages from the Mahatmas". He stated that the Mahatmas are our elder brothers and explained in detail the importance of having a reverential attitude when we talk about Mahatmas and contemplate on their sayings. He stated that there are several Mahatmas and that Theosophical Society is concerned with only two of them mainly Master KH and Master Morya. They are the real founders of the TS and they are very advanced human beings, present even now. He explained the theory of Human Evolution and the importance of the messages and teachings of the Mahatmas in this regard. He also explained about the Masters' letter regarding the channeling of the human energy into spiritual advancement of Humanity. He also spoke about the laws of evolution as seen by the Masters.

Prof. R.C. Tampi, former National Lecturer, spoke on "Path of Discipleship". He narrated the importance of the Path and the duties of the members of the TS to understand the significance of the Path and the wise words given by the Masters to tread that Path by leading meaningful daily life.

There was a question answer session in the afternoon and there was active participation from the audience.

### **Activities of our President**

Bro. S. Shivadas, President, KTF, conducted study classes at Annapoorni Lodge, Alleppey, on “Laws of Manu in the Light of Theosophy”, on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. At Anantha Lodge, Trivandrum, he gave talks on the “Path of Occultism Vol. III”, on March 5, 19, 26 and 31<sup>st</sup>. At Sree Sankara Lodge, Ernakulam, he spoke on “In the Outer Court”, on March 21.

He attended the talk delivered by Bro. P.K. Jayaswal at Sree Sankara Lodge, Ernakulam and at Annapoorni Lodge, Alleppey. Bro. Siva Das gave the Presidential Address during the seminar at Trichur Lodge.

### **Lodge Activities**

Annapoorni Lodge, Alleppy, conducted study classes on “Laws of Manu in the Light of Theosophy” by Bro. S. Sivadas, “Bharatha Darsanam” by Bro. Madhusoodhan Pillai, “Brahmavidya Panchakam” by Bro. K. M. Vasudevan and “Vidyabhyasam Bharathiya Kashchapadil” by Sis. Sheela Gopan.

Sree Sankara Lodge, Ernakulam, organized study classes on “Days and Nights of Brahma” by Dr. Viswakumar, “Masters and their Services” by Sis. A.V. Seethalekhmy, “Reincarnation” by Sis. A.V. Seethalekhmy, “Ashtanga Yoga” by Dr. Viswakumar, “J.K. Study Class” by Dr. Ajithkumar, “In the Outer Court” by Bro. S. Sivadas, “Dharma” by Sis. A.V. Seethalekhmy and “The Secret Doctrine” by Adv. Shaijn.

### **M.P. & Rajasthan**

The following programmes were organized at Vikaram Lodge, Ujjain, on Sunday in the month of April: Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed by Dr. R.S. Gupta and it was followed by a talk on ‘Where do Lord Ram Live?’ The talk was delivered by Dr. Jagdish Vijayavargiya and the content was based on *Ramcharit Manas*. Dr. K.N. Joshi delivered a talk on ‘The Relevance of the teachings of Lord Mahaveer in the present context’. Prof. Surya Prakash Vyas of the Dept. of Darma Vigyan Sankay of Banaras Hindu University delivered a very interesting, informative and thought provoking talk on ‘Kashmir Shaiva Darshan’ in which

he explained the various significant points of the philosophy of Kashmir Shaiva Darshan. On the last Sunday of the month the members of the Lodge participated in a dialogue on ‘Brotherhood is a reality’.

### **Marathi**

Study of the Theosophical Manual ‘Reincarnation’ by Annie Besant was continued on March 2, 16 and 30. It was conducted by Bro. S.D. Burse at Poona Lodge. The review of Annie Besant’s book *Theosophy and Life’s Deeper Problems* was done by Bro. Nitin Abhyankar on March 9. Bro. S.H. Vaidya conducted the Theosophy Science meet on 23 March. He discussed about the possibilities and considerations regarding the mishap of Malaysian Aeroplane.

Bharat Samaj Pooja was performed at Poona Lodge on every Sunday in March by Bro. Kaustubha Bhadabhade. This was followed by prayer of a religion, recital of OM and Healing Ritual. The Healing Ritual was conducted by Bro. Arun Deshpande and Bro. Raste.

### **Royalaseema**

A day-long study camp was held at Bellary Sanmarga Theosophical Lodge on 20 April. The theme of the study was *Jaivika Thantra Garikeyalli Daivika Pathra*. Dr. A.I. Basavaraj Reddy, Vice-President of the Lodge, explained certain significant facts and features regarding the subject taken up for study. Bro. Sathyanarayana explained the *Sresta Jeevana Nadesuvudu Heghe*. Sis. Pushpavathi highlighted the importance of *Paramaguru Charna Sannidhiyali*. Bro. B. Madhusudhan Rao explained ‘The Theosophical Aim’. The subject of Bro. K. Raghvendra Rao Koppal was *Manava Ninmaru Neenu Thilee*. Bro. S. Ranjaiah, Secretary of the Lodge, spoke on ‘Viveka’. The programme concluded with vote of thanks.

### **Uttar Pradesh**

The following talks were held at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, in April: ‘Magentism’ by Bro. U.S. Pandey, ‘Islam’ and ‘Seven Principles’ - both these talks were delivered by Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri; and ‘The Voice of the Silence- a guide for Spiritual Path’ by Bro. A.P. Cappor.

The foundation Day of Nirvana Lodge, Agra, was observed on 6

March. The talks held at Nirvana Lodge in the month of March were: 'Self' by Dr. R.M. Malhotra, 'Detachment' by Bro. Gyanesh Kumar Chaturvedi and 'Only through Karma' by Bro. R.K. Bhatnagar.

U.P. Federation organized a study camp at Barabanki on *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence* on 5-6, April, 2014, during the 125th year of publication of these two books. About 20 members from Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow, and Barabanki participated. The study was directed by Bro. U.S. Pandey, Secretary, U.P. Federation, in association with three other resource persons namely Bro. S.S. Gautam and Bro. S.K. Pandey, National Lecturers, and Bro. K.K. Srivastava, U.P. Fed. council member/Federation Lecturer. Inaugural session in the morning of 5 April started with recitation of Universal Prayer. Bro. K.K. Srivastava, Secretary of Gyanodaya Lodge, Barabanki, welcomed the participants and speakers. Bro. U.S. Pandey introduced the books of study, mentioning about the purpose of writing these books by H.P.B., their structure and significance in comprehending the theosophical doctrine. Bro. L.B. Dwivedi, President of the Lodge, offered his greetings and inaugurated the camp.

On the first day, five sessions were organized. In the first session Bro. U.S. Pandey covered matter of chapters I (Theosophy and the Theosophical Society) & II (Exoteric and Esoteric Theosophy) of the book; during the second session Bro. K.K. Srivastava covered chapter III (The working system of the T.S.) & ch.IV (The Relations of the T.S. to Theosophy): In the third session Bro. S.S. Gautam covered ch.V (The Fundamental teachings of Theosophy), during fourth session Bro. U.S. Pandey covered ch. VI (Theosophical Teachings as to Nature and Man) and in the fifth session Bro. S.K. Pandey covered ch.VII & VIII ( On Reincarnation or Rebirth). In the evening a devotional meet was organized.

The Bharat Samaj Puja was performed in the morning of the second day. Thereafter chapter XI to ch. XIV were covered by four speakers. In the fifth session Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk on 'The Voice of the Silence- An Overview'

The concluding session was presided over by Bro. L.S.Sengar, President of Agra Lodge. Bro. U.S. Pandey covered the matter of "Conclusion" from the book *The Key to Theosophy*. Thereafter participants

offered their comments appreciating the programme and the arrangement made. On each day there was lively interaction between the speaker and the participants. Bro. Sengar made concluding remarks.

Bro. S.K. Pandey proposed vote of thanks on behalf of the Federation and Bro. K.K. Srivastava on behalf of Barabanki Lodge.

A seminar on 'Theosophy-its fundamental teachings and their practice' was organized at Rampur for west U.P. region on 18 April. In the morning, Bharat Samaj Puja was performed and its significance was explained by Bro. S.K. Pandey, National Lecturer. Thereafter seminar commenced with recitation of Universal Prayer by Bro. Hari Om Agarwal Secretary of Rampur Lodge. Bro. Tandon of Rampur Lodge welcomed the participants and speakers. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Fed. Secretary, while inaugurating the seminar introduced the book 'The Key to Theosophy', mentioning its importance and background. He also spoke about 'Theosophy and the Theosophical Society'. In the second session Bro. S.K. Pandey covered 'Fundamental teachings of Theosophy'. In the third session Bro. U.S. Pandey covered 'Practical Theosophy'. This was followed by interactive session. Bro. Hari Om Agarwal thanked the speakers and participants while concluding the programme.

Bro. U. S. Pandey delivered a talk on 'Evolution of man' to a group of senior citizens in Lucknow on 26 April and during the follow up interaction he introduced theosophy to them.

Sarva Hitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, organized a study camp at Bhowali on the book of Mabel Collions *Light on the Path* from 13 April 2014 to 17 April 2014. Bro. P.K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, directed the study. He not only created interest in the subject but also made the participants meditate so that better understanding and clarity can emerge.

The study class was attended by 18 members from Gorakhpur; 3 from Nagpur and one each from Lucknow and Gaziabad respectively. Most of the participants from Gorakhpur were first timer. But all participated actively and sincerely, so as to have better understanding of the subject. Every day the classes were of 5 hours, starting from 9.00 a.m. and splitted equally in pre and post lunch session. Mr. P.S. Panchakshari. Mr. V. Narayanan and Mrs. & Mr. Ganga and peon Vinod made every effort to make our stay comfortable. From inaugural till closing cer-

emony, perfect peace, harmony and spiritual atmosphere were maintained. On the last day, after the study camp an excursion to Almorah, Gandhiji Anaskati Ashram, Tagore Kutiya; Ram Krishna Mission, Baijnath Dham, Bhagshwar and Ranikhet was organized, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants.

Dr. Shakuntala Agarwal (Dip. 83027) of Samveti Lodge Pilibhit passed to peace on 24.4.2014.

### **National Lecturer**

Prof. C.A. Shinde gave a talk at a Theosophical Lodge in Delhi on 'Theosophical View of Attentiveness and its Practice.' This was held on 19 April. He spoke at Federation HQ of Delhi on 'Meditation: Why it is necessary to lead a spiritual life in modern days'.

Prof. Shinde directed the study of *The Voice of the Silence* at Dhantoli Lodge, Nagpur. It was attended by 30 members from Nagpur, Akola, Nadurba and Khamgaon.

The programmes conducted by Bro. P.K. Jayaswal in Kerala and at Bhowali have been mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

The correct Mobile No. of Bro. P.K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, is (0) 9431023559.

### **Ninety-First South India Theosophical Conference, Adyar**

The 91st South India Theosophical Conference, an annual event of the Indian Section was held at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar from 18 to 20 April 2014. The theme of the Conference was *The Key to Theosophy*. There were 145 registered participants and a few observers. The participants included five foreigners from Norway, Spain, Argentina and the U.S.A. Mr. S. Harihara Raghavan, General Manager, welcomed the participants on behalf of the General Secretary of the Indian Section. Dr. Chittaranjan Satapathy, International Secretary, inaugurated the conference. He recalled the immense contribution of the late President Smt. Radha Burnier to the South India Theosophical Conference over a long period of 51 years, first as the General Secretary of the Indian Section for 18 years and then as the International President for 33 years.

In all, there were 12 speakers including one from abroad. They covered various topics from Madame Blavatsky's book *The Key to Theosophy*, which was first published 125 years ago. Ms. K. Jaishree did the chanting at the beginning and closing of the conference and also every day in the morning. Dr. V.P. Viswakumar presented beautiful slide show one evening on the theme: 'Days & Nights of Brahma- The Bedrock of Illusion' which was very much appreciated. Mr. Sarveswarya sang a few devotional songs during the conference. Dr. A. Kannan gave the closing address after four participants gave their impressions about the conference and Ms. H. Sripriya; convenor of the conference thanked all those who had helped to make the conference a grand success.

### **Note :**

**A combined issue of The Indian Theosophist for the months of**

**July and August will be released in August, 2014.**



## **RECENT REPRINTS**

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*Maria Montessori*

A pioneer and eminent authority in the education of small children, Dr Maria Montessori explains that the root cause of the prevailing chaos in the world, particularly in the ethical realm, can be remedied only by a sane, psychical rebuilding of humankind. A change in the relationship of the adult with children is essential for such rebuilding.

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