

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST

NOVEMBER

VOL. 112

NO. 11

CONTENTS

A STEP FORWARD <i>S.Sundaram</i>	325-326
THE BIRTHRIGHT OF MAN <i>Radha S.Burnier</i>	327-331
REMEMBERING A FRESH MIND <i>Tim Boyd</i>	332-333
RADHAJI: FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE IN MEMORIAM <i>Joy Mills</i>	334-335
RADHAJI-OF THIS WORLD AND THAT <i>Linda Oliveira</i>	336-338
RADHA BURNIER'S CONTRIBUTION & APPROACH TO THEOSOPHY <i>P.K.Jayaswal</i>	339-344
WALKING WITH RADHAJI <i>Pedro Oliveira</i>	345-347
RADHAJI'S VISION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL WORK <i>Pablo Sender</i>	348-353
MRS RADHA BURNIER- A STAR OF THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY <i>L.Nagesh</i>	354-355
RADHAJI-ADYAR-ADI (A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP) <i>A.M. Vatcha</i>	356-357
NEWS AND NOTES	358-366

Editor

S. SUNDARAM

A STEP FORWARD

Someone asked Dr. Radha Burnier: “What do you want from life, Radha?... What is really your ambition?” Her answer was “My ambition is to perfect the art of self-discipline”.* This spontaneous statement made at the age of 28 is undoubtedly evident of Radhaji’s clarity of perception, her determined approach and attitude towards any serious responsible task/work one was entrusted with, that one ought to have. The books, articles, editorials written by her, and the talks delivered by her clearly show that Theosophy and the work of the TS for her were not merely utopian thinking, theoretical, abstract concepts but supreme ideas grounded in the very depths of truth which could refashion and transform human society into humane society at large. She considered these to be of great relevance in practical life, in day-to-day living. For her, direct, objective perception of any problem was necessary to bring about a dynamic solution to them.

Success of any movement or mission depends on several factors. But the striking and noteworthy characteristic of dedicated and committed leaders is that instead of worrying about the eventual success or failure of a mission they observe, they watch, as to how much sincere and genuine effort has been put in by the persons entrusted with the responsibility. Radhaji laid great emphasis on living responsibly. On a few occasions in her public lectures she gave examples of the financially weak and uneducated people who sometimes surprise us by their adhering to and faithfully observing certain moral values even in difficult and adverse situation. This shows that she admired those who by conviction and reason gave great importance to and emphasized on listening to the *voice within* and acting on it.

Radhaji was greatly concerned about the protection and well being of all living beings. In this connection it will be worth mentioning that a two day teachers’ training workshop for the school teachers of Varanasi was organized at the Section Headquarters in April, 2003. The workshop was aimed at making the educators sensitive towards and aware of the environmental problems that have engulfed the society. Issues like ecological footprint, mixed solid waste, air pollution, water harvesting were discussed in the course of the workshop. The teachers were encouraged to think of the problems holistically and to try and come up with solutions for these problems locally. The idea was to encourage the teachers to play an active role in the schools with children to try and combat this pollution.

The details of the aforesaid workshop were published in a magazine. We at the Indian Section Headquarters did not know about it. Radhaji sent a Xerox copy of the report and encour-

*Richard Smoley, *Quest*, Winter, 2014, p-8

aged us by suggesting to organize more such workshops. Later we had one workshop on ‘Nurture Nature for Future’ in which 80 students participated.

Revered Radhaji’s approach to life teaches us that what is required is not a casual or indifferent way of dealing with a problem or a situation but a positive and constructive attitude and outlook in order to work out an effective alternative and amicable solution. Life must mean dynamism and progress towards greater human unity as well as preservation and protection of all living beings. We must be true to the social surroundings in which we live, true to nature and must be true to our own selves.

Understanding oneself and transforming oneself is the essence of the religious life. This is the only thing that needs to be emphasized. Other things are peripheral and must be left to individual choice. Self-transformation means stepping out of ignorance about oneself to knowledge of how the mind affects all relationship and makes of society what it is. Transformation implies the elimination of self-interest and strife, and realizing that as our thoughts and activities damage society, the immoral society damages us. But when there is peace, purity and love within, society will change accordingly.

RADHA BURNIER

“Religion and the Future of Humanity”

Gandhian Perspectives,

Volume VI, No.2, Fall 1993

THE BIRTHRIGHT OF MAN*

It is a privilege to deliver a lecture named after so great a personage as Dr. Annie Besant. She was one who fought valiantly all her life for all those whose rights were ignored, even while she inspired men to perform their duty above all things. Today, we pay homage to her and her splendid work.

The primary birthright of which every human being is conscious is the right of existence, with its corollary, the right to survive. Being born and coming into existence as an individual by virtue of some unseen power or agency—be it called Nature, evolution of God—it is presumed by everyone that there is an intrinsic and inbuilt right within him 'to be'. By analogy one has to admit that all things which exist have the right to that existence. The vast variety of creatures in Nature, birds, beasts and fishes of every kind, the very earth, the mountains and minerals, subsist under a law of being, established by Nature. In recent times, the ecological consequences of his own indiscriminate actions have made man aware, though as yet but dimly, of the supremacy and inviolability of this law. In general, the human being has over-evaluated his own right to survival and development, and turned a blind eye to the corresponding right of all other species but himself. This astigmatic notion has motivated his behaviour, because he alone is able to articulate this right in his consciousness, though the right itself is intrinsic in all existent things, as much in non-human as in human being.

Following from the basic right to be, arises a sequence of other rights for which man lives and struggles: food, shelter, material possessions of other kinds, employment, the tools of labour and so forth. So serious becomes the effort to acquire these secondary means to secure the basic right—the right to live and to be—that confusion arises as to priorities and fundamentals, and the effort to find the means becomes identified with the very act of living. Most individuals and communities are concerned only with the question of procuring and establishing the means of survival for themselves, leading to clashes of interest, acquisitive pursuits, accumulation of property, competition and strife, the arms race, territorial ambitions and the multitude of conflict-engendering activities and attitudes to which the human race is sadly prone. This is the gamut of normal life, into which are built anxiety, frustration, anger, despair and insecurity.

When the necessity to establish the rights of which we have spoken is taken for granted, to meet challenges from outside which are encountered, ideologies come to be fabricated. These ideologies are the political, religious, social and economic postulates and beliefs which have rent human society for centuries into many fragments. They may assume the guise of concern for the total well-being of all peoples, but they mostly seek to protect and preserve the rights of one

*Besant Lecture delivered during the 100th International Convention, Adyar, 1975.

class of people only, and end up in crystallizing a privilege-structure which becomes the establishment with vested rights, automatically denying the rights of those who do not 'belong'. Thus every ideology and belief is the seed-bed of rebellions and revolutions with which human history is strewn.

In simpler societies, man is less aware of his rights and, therefore, much less involved in the competitive currents that prevail so strongly in a sophisticated society and culture. The vast masses of Indians, living nearer the soil, have been traditionally gentle, docile and unaggressive because of their simple approach to the problem of existence. They may be misled into some agitation, but are not themselves clamorous of rights. The more sophisticated people are, the more insistent they become of their rights. The range of their demands increases in many directions. Thus the consciousness of rights widens into demand for the right to a religious faith, to follow customs and practices of one's choice, to maintain religious traditions, and so forth.

The consciousness of the right to many of these things implies the right to freedom. The concept of freedom thus synthesizes all rights. Belief and freedom, contradictory though they may be in essence, are linked together by the fact that underlying the right to believe is the right to freedom. Similarly, freedom of faith and belief may appear to be different from the freedom to speak or write on social or political questions. These also, however, are based on man's awareness that he must be free. Thus, the demand for rights has underlying it always a claim for freedom.

This awareness is both a conscious perspective and an instinctive movement. Freedom is inherent in life: no creature embodying life rejoices in anything but freedom. If freedom of movement, of growth, of transformation were suppressed, there would be no life, but death. Freedom exists as part of life, the freedom of the tree to grow, the flower to blossom, the bird to fly, the tiger to roam the forests, of man to think. Although man may not recognize in the flow of life the action of that freedom, it exists all the same with as great a validity in others as in him. He presumes that he has a greater right because of his superior intelligence. He is conscious of existing at a different dimension by virtue of his pursuit of art, science or philosophy. But, on the other hand, his mind is only one part of his existence. It is an instrument which fails to comprehend the diversities of the world in an integrated whole. It is that same mind which produces atom bombs and manifests itself in acts of cruelty and violence, of which the non-human creatures he looks down upon are incapable. Viewed from the criterion of specialized capacity, it could be said that the ant is superior to man because it has a greater social consciousness, or the migratory bird is superior by virtue of its unerring sense of direction.

Though man may not be justified in attributing to himself an overriding superiority, it remains a fact that it is only man who apprehends as a value the freedom that exists as an inherent part of life. Life holds within itself a truth or truths which exist irrespective of whether they are perceived or unperceived. The truth of freedom exists in nature, though it is not apprehended by the plants and animals, despite the fact that the life within them embodies that quality of freedom.

The actuality of truth is not dependent on whether someone perceives it or upon the opinion he has of it. But when truth is perceived, there is the realization of that truth as a value. There is a difference between a thing existing in Nature, and it being recognized as a value. Beauty exists, but is not a value to the animal or the bird which manifests beauty in its own form, yet is not aware of it. However, when the same beauty is felt by man, to him the truth of beauty has the impact of a value. Therefore, value is an essentially human apprehension, and the question of rights arises when values are perceived.

In the gradation of values and the elimination of the lesser for the greater values, the human mind discovers itself. It instinctively perceives that the enduring values are the greater values, and thus the factor of time is linked with the question of value. Timeless truths are absolute values, and man's highest concept of Godhead has been in terms of the absolute values he has perceived as inherent in life such as freedom, happiness, beauty and goodness. Ultimate Reality has been envisaged as that value which comprises within itself all other values, namely Absoluteness itself. That Absoluteness is the Brahman of Indian philosophy, the Nirvana of the Buddhist, timeless, measureless, divisionless, which can be expressed only in negative terms, for any positive attribute would only denote a fragment of the total Absoluteness.

The possibility exists for man of realizing the fundamental truths of life as values, because these values and truths are inherent in his own consciousness, that consciousness being intrinsically united with life.

Man's true birthright is the quality of consciousness with which he is endowed, and its unfoldment. The other rights, to which he clings so desperately, are those which he has inherited from his past and which he has to transcend psychologically if he is to assume his true human dimension. This consciousness is the only thing of which he is aware directly. The many objects which he cognizes are perceived only through their reflection in his consciousness and therefore only indirectly. Knowledge is thus inherent in consciousness. All the ultimate values are potentially within that consciousness, to be known and realized in full, when there is an unfoldment of the powers of the consciousness. In full realization, therefore, of its own potentialities, it is said to pass into the state which is the quintessence of absolute values, described by the Upanishads as one without birth, death or decay, changeless, free and blissful.

If change were presumed to exist in it, then the question arises as to who perceives the change. It is that perceiver which is the essence of consciousness, the knower, the spirit or *atma*. If the consciousness as the knower is denied, who denies? If it is doubted, who doubts? The doubter and the denier are consciousness itself. By reaching back to the true subject, in whom there is no objective counterpart, only pure subjectivity, the substratum of consciousness is reached. Everything seen, remembered, doubted, denied, etc., even though it be in the insubstantial realm of concepts, is of the nature of the object. It is the seer, the knower beyond all these, who is the true subject, in whom there cannot be absence of knowledge, for it is of the very stuff of knowing-being consciousness and knowledge itself-called variously *cit*, *prajana*, *samvid*, etc, etc. It is absolute intelligence.

The word 'man' is derived from *man*, 'to think'. Thinking is but a small part of the total consciousness of man. Watching the sea, the waves, the sky and stars in silence, is also to be conscious. To feel, to rejoice, etc., is another aspect of it. In thinking and feeling, including the many aspects and manifestations of thought and feeling, there is remembrance, the consciousness of something, the object, however subtle or tenuous its shape is. In self-awareness, as normally understood, there is also the perception of an objectified selfhood, but in the total self-awareness of the spirit, there is the objectless subjectivity, which is intelligence in its true sense. Thus consciousness in its purity is free from objects and attachments to them, unsoiled, intangible—that is, pure subject, self, spirit. Therefore, man is essentially a spiritual being, a pure intelligence.

Many, in countries such as India, will agree with this and deny that they are lesser than the *atman*. But at the same time in their daily life they all act as if they are composed only of material substance, their consciousness being to them a mere appendage. The conduct of the Advaitin who affirms the reality of undivided absolute consciousness, and that of the Dvaitin who accepts the duality of spirit and substance, is the same. Both he who affirms the transcendental and he who swears by the phenomenal afford the primary place only to the latter. Race, sex, colour, nationality, etc., do not pertain to consciousness, and yet what passions are excited by the superimposition of these factors upon the nature of the true man, who is of the essence of consciousness!

To every man, his mind and consciousness seem different from that of others, but, in fact, consciousness in one, not divided, for it is founded on that value which is Absoluteness. The appearance of division is the result of the objects, to which the consciousness attaches itself, and are not part of its own nature. When the eye is oriented towards objects, it sees many things; Diversity is the apparent nature of the universe. But diversity exists for the perceiver only because that which sees is one. When differences of colour are noted, such as blue, red and green, there is but one eye which sees them. If there were many eyes and each saw one colour, there would be no perception of diversity. The perception of diversity has thus been held to evidence the unity of the seer, which is consciousness. The Upanishads declare that the seer is one and one only. The mind also is multi-faceted and diverse. It takes the aspect of fear, hope, lust, desire, doubt, etc., but that which observes the changing mind is one.

The perceiving intelligence and the divided mind have been compared in the Upanishads to two birds on a tree. One eats of the fruits and the other looks on. The fruit is the pain and pleasure of worldly existence. The mind, which is active in consuming the fruit of pleasure, is continually entangled and modified. It is not the Self within. If so, it would be one thing one time and another thing another time, while everyone instinctively knows that the Self within is a consistent factor. The bird which watches, not partaking of the fruit, is true seer or subject. Being quiet, it reflects the truth even as still waters reflect what is. To realize the pure subject is freedom from modifications, a state of stillness. Such quietude implies freedom from the pairs of

opposites, of which the *Bhagavad-gita* speaks. The pursuit of pain and pleasure is modification, as also are the assertion and negation of the mind. In all assertion or its opposite, in every pursuit, the knower limits himself to the known. It is only when nothing is asserted, concluded, objectified and the consciousness is empty of content, that it is free intelligence, a free manifestation of life and truth.

H.P. Blavatsky said, 'Self-knowledge pertains to knowledge and not to self'. This statement refers to pure knowing or seeing without motive, for motive is modification and limitation. Motivation is the expression of the self. To be free of motive is to have strength and righteousness, for it denotes freedom from becoming. It is a state of pure existence, to find which means ceasing to struggle and achieve. Man's notion that by struggling and achieving he can ensure his existence is a delusion, for that existence as pure knowledge or consciousness is a truth which needs no props.

(Courtesy: *In Honour of Dr. Annie Besant*, Indian Section, TS, Varanasi, 1990)

When the mind becomes purified like a mirror, Knowledge is revealed in it. Care should therefore be taken to purify the mind.

SRI SANKARACHARYA

TIM BOYD*

REMEMBERING A FRESH MIND

THE first time I saw Radha was in New York City in November of 1975. At that time more than a thousand theosophists from around the world had gathered for the centenary celebration of the founding of the Theosophical Society. I have an image in my mind of a poised, thin woman with dark hair, dark intense eyes, wearing an elegant saree. She was seated at the dais in the grand ballroom of the Sheraton Hotel along with John Coats, Dora Kunz, Rukmini Devi, Joy Mills, and other TS luminaries of the time. She was the General Secretary of the Indian Section. I had joined one year earlier.

In my recollection of the evening a number of speeches were given, probably she gave one. After the formal programme closed she was introduced to our group, who had come from Chicago. I remember how keenly she listened as we described the things we were doing and trying to do. At that time Radha did not know any of us, and many people were competing for her attention. What comes to mind about that first meeting is the sense that she was fully present. There was no feeling that her attention was wandering over the crowd, or to the next thing she would say, or person she would greet. It made an impression on me. In a box somewhere at home I have a photo of that moment.

For many years after that I would see her briefly on her regular visits to the US. Whenever she spoke I would come to hear her. She did not speak like other Theosophical lecturers I had heard. I deeply appreciated her depth of thought and originality of expression. Although it is probably superficial, I also appreciated the fact that she generally spoke without referring to notes. She would look into the eyes of her audience, me included, and make a connection. She communicated a sense that she knew what she was talking about. Although I never got a chance to tell her, years later, when I became a speaker for the TS in America, her way of presenting and the depth of connection she was able to establish greatly influenced my own approach to public speaking.

In brief meetings over a period of years we got to know each other. My regard for her grew. Although it is a normal desire to want to be near to people of wisdom, there is a certain value in the kind of distance and periodic meetings that characterized our encounters. The person that she was and the things that she would speak about had time to settle in, to be observed, and tested with time. Invariably in that process new depths of meaning revealed themselves.

On one of her visits I scheduled a private meeting with her. She invited me to meet in her room at the Olcott National Headquarters. I had some feeling of hesitancy about this meeting. In the past when we met we always talked about aspects of the TS work, its people, ideas, and events. This time I needed to speak with her about a personal matter. A mutual friend had

*International President, The Theosophical Society.

encouraged me to seek her input. The subject was one that I knew would be challenging for a conventional mind. We sat and exchanged such pleasantries as Radha permitted, then dived in to the matter at hand. It turned out to be one of the most refreshing exchanges I can remember having with anyone. Frankly speaking, the freshness of her thinking and willingness to step beyond outmoded traditions surprised me. From that time onwards the scope of our sporadic conversations deepened significantly.

In her final years my official role in the TS in America was becoming more prominent. I did not have any idea that she was aware of my changing role, but from time to time people returning from Adyar would tell me about meetings they had with her in which she made some favourable mention of me. It was something that was both humbling and reassuring. It made a deep impression. The impressive part was the awareness of how deeply she was in touch with the affairs of the society worldwide, and how much she cared about its life and future.

In 2012 she came to the US for the last time. By this time I was President of the TSA. At the international convention in December of 2011 I had invited her to come to Olcott on this visit. While at Olcott she would visit with me in my office. All other appointments were cancelled. She felt a need to talk in detail about her concerns for the TS, about the problems faced in various countries around the world, about the nature and requirements of her position as President. It was a far-ranging conversation that took place in installments over a series of days. She was as lucid as ever, but her energy level had declined. After an hour, or a little more, we would adjourn and get back together when she had rested. She left with both of us knowing that this had been her last visit.

Now my days are spent living the life she described, facing the concerns she struggled with. I sit in the chair she occupied for so many years, at the desk where she wrote and thought. I feel blessed to have known her in the way that she let me, and to have grown in her shadow working for the TS. One of the great good fortunes of how I came to know her is that she left me with no pressure to fill her shoes. That would be impossible. She was an original who dared to discover, and live a path unique to her. The greatest homage we could pay is not to try to follow in her footsteps, but to create our own — just as she did.

(Courtesy :*The Theosophist*, October-November,2014)

JOY MILLS*

RADHAJI: FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE IN MEMORIAM

THE year was 1966. The place: the Kongresshaus in Salzburg, Austria. The occasion: the Fifth World Congress of the Theosophical Society, the first such event to be held following the Second World War. More than 1200 members from around the world were gathered to hear the leading dignitaries of the Society: the President, N. Sri Ram; Vice-President, James S. Perkins; the Chairman of the European Federation, John Coats, who with a remarkable team of workers, had organized the Congress; Geoffrey Hodson, Rukmini Devi Arundale, Clara Codd, names so familiar to all present; and also among the speakers, the General Secretaries of some forty National Societies.

Such was the time, the place, the circumstances of our first meeting, Radha and I. She was General Secretary of the Indian Section, while I was General Secretary (National President) of the American Section. Radha was already well-known not only as the international President's daughter, but for her many accomplishments, including as a premier dancer of Bharata Natyam and her role in Jean Renoir's classic film, *The River*. In addition to the several lectures featured on the World Congress programme at Salzburg, there were also a number of meetings that brought all the General Secretaries present together to exchange views on matters of significance to the welfare of the Society; a publishing conference, a consultative meeting of the General Council, as provided for in the Society's Rules, and so on. Such smaller gatherings at the Salzburg Congress were wonderful opportunities to come to know my colleagues on the Society's governing body and particularly to appreciate views different from mine.

The following year, 1967, saw my first visit to Adyar and the renewal of a friendship with Radhaji that was to endure for a lifetime, as I came to know her more fully. Mr Sri Ram's passing in 1973; the consequent election that brought Mr John Coats to the Society's presidency; the latter's nomination of me as International Vice-President, resulting in my six-year residency at Adyar — a succession of events that also served to bring Radhaji and me into closer association — all to be followed by her accession to the presidency in 1980. There continued to be frequent journeys to Adyar for General Council meetings, as she had named me one of the Council's 'Additional Members', and in her role as President of the Krotona Institute, there were her visits to Krotona, where I had become resident following my vice-presidential years. On several occasions of my visits to Adyar, she invited me to stay in her home there, Parsi Quarters as it is known, always so comfortable while affording opportunity for so many conversations and exchanges of ideas.

Ms Joy Mills was for many years International Vice-President of the Theosophical Society.

Memorable, of course, are the more intimate conversations, the sharing of views on the Society's welfare, her deep concern for the maintenance of Adyar as the Society's World Headquarters, her plans for its further utilization while still maintaining its unique beauty and ambience. She was concerned too for the wise, albeit frugal, use of the Society's funds as she gave attention to the gradual improvement of Adyar's facilities. I do believe she knew every tree, every bush, every creature that stirred, on the estate. How many walks (with some effort I managed to keep up with her pace) we had taken together around Adyar, she often showing me places of which I had been unaware or pointing out some tree totally unknown to me! She knew the compound in all its wildness and its tameness in a way that no one who had not been born and grown up on the land could ever know it; the very roots of Adyar were in her roots!

So as the years passed, whether our meetings were few or many, whether those meetings were at Adyar or Krotana or at subsequent World Congresses — New York in 1975 or later ones in Nairobi, Sydney, Brazil — at events in Europe or at the American Section's Headquarters, there was always a sense of reunion, a joy in meeting again and our friendship deepened. It was not that we always agreed on issues touching on the Society's welfare but that we shared a common goal in considering the question: what is in the best interests of the work of the Society?

Friendship, I have come to believe, needs two important elements: a willingness to listen to each other and a respect for each other's views. These attributes were always present whenever Radha and I met and discussed questions concerning the well-being of the Society. We might well agree to differ in response to some question that arose at a meeting of the General Council, but we listened to each other and always there was a respect for the answer each of us had to the issue before us. It was not a matter of winning an argument, but a recognition of the need for reaching a deeper understanding, perhaps a compromise, perhaps an acceptance of a viewpoint not previously considered. What was important was the Society's welfare, its alignment with theosophical principles, its "true-ing" with theosophical ideals.

While the central focus of most of our conversations through the years concerned the well-being of the Society, its International Headquarters, and the health or otherwise of its many national sections, there were many other topics to engage us — Radhaji and I — in discourse. Both of us were avid readers, interested in the state of the world as well as in diverse subjects on which theosophical principles could certainly shed light. So our discussions ranged far and wide, from politics to economics, from education, alternative modes of healing, cultural ideas, to vegetarianism, veganism, science, and on to environmentalism and beyond.

So now, dear Radha, it is not farewell, but fare forward, until we meet again.

(Courtesy :*The Theosophist*, October- November,2014)

LINDA OLIVEIRA*

RADHAJI OF THIS WORLD AND THAT

ON 31 October 2013 the Theosophical Society lost its longest serving President. Mrs Radha Burnier was many things to many people, and the various tributes during the 2013 International Convention brought out so clearly her impact upon lives around the world. She exemplified a possibly unparalleled dedication to the Society and its work until the time of her passing.

I had the privilege of having a direct association with Radhaji from 1981, while living in the United States at the time. Much later, during a visit to Adyar in 1998, she generously gave an hour or so of her time to show me around one side of the compound. At that time, her deep concern for the International Headquarters and its many departments was transparent. Our paths crossed quite a few times over the years, culminating in an unforgettable experience of working in close proximity with her at Adyar between early 2009 and late 2011.

No doubt many TS members considered Mrs Burnier to be not just their President, but their spiritual leader. One could speak of her qualifications, as well as the many activities allied to TS work in which she was involved, along with the various honours which were bestowed upon her. One could also speak of the esteem with which she was held in high echelons in India, and the many individuals she quietly helped. However, these things seem to be almost superficial in terms of her deeper life. There is no question that her personality was at times difficult to understand; indeed, she had her detractors over the years. While expecting a certain standard from herself and from those with whom she was closely engaged, Radhaji could also be remarkably accepting of perceived deficiencies in others.

Mrs Burnier had around her an abiding aura of strength, deep contentment, and oftentimes an atmosphere of undeniable holiness. One did not have to be especially sensitive to feel this and to be affected by it. At times it could pour forth like a sudden wave of beneficence.

Radhaji demonstrated repeatedly in her talks and her writings a relatively rare fusion of heart and mind. On many occasions this was reflected in a superior kind of Wisdom, which made itself known in different ways. She had a deeply confident certainty about various matters, including what is implied in leading a Theosophical life. She also kept alive the spirit of serious reflection and open-minded enquiry in the TS, preserving an approach which is vital in order to prevent the Society from being superficial, narrowing down, or — even worse — morphing into some kind of cult.

Her diverse interests in numerous areas of life were amply demonstrated in the anthology of her 'On the Watch-Tower' articles which was published in 2009 in *The World Around Us*. The articles are divided into various topics. Some of these are: Theosophy and the TS; Notable

*Vice-President, Australian Section, TS

Theosophists and Other Personalities; the School of the Wisdom and Adyar; Brotherhood; Ethics; Freedom; Love; Religion, Science and Technology; Maturity of Mind; Progress; Civilization; and Women. Perhaps the book deserves to be better known, being a rich record of twenty-seven years of thoughtful observations on life through the lens of an extremely well-travelled international TS President.

The Spiritual Life and the Path

Radhaji's outlook on the spiritual life, the Path, and related matters were set out clearly in her slim volume, *No Other Path to Go*. Her views naturally impacted on how she lived. For example:

Transcending the worldly life means to be internally free from demand, to be content with what comes unasked, whether it is joy or sorrow. To ask and be satisfied in getting what is asked is the way of the world. Not to ask for anything, whether of karma, of God, of other people, and remain content with whatever is, is the sign of an unworldly nature. (p.8)

On one occasion it was interesting to observe her sitting for a fairly long period at an airport quite content, while keenly observing those around her, including a very small child. She remarked upon the child's carefree play and self-expression, which were so obvious due to an absence of those social filters and that self-consciousness which are typically assumed by older children and adults.

Contentment suggests simplicity, a unique type of elegance. Many of us unduly complicate our lives in myriad ways. Mrs Burnier's demeanour, her appearance, her home, and her person were simple, but certainly not simplistic. These were pared back to what she considered essential. Such a life presumably stemmed from a mind possessed of an unwavering quality — not in the sense of excessive rigidity but, rather, a mind possessed of a feeling for what is really important in life.

Perhaps it was partly her own reluctance to focus on the personal, or to ask for things for herself, which helped mark Radhaji as having an unworldly nature. Indeed, a marked 'other-worldliness' seemed to envelope her at times.

Over the years, retreats which she led demonstrated not only her ability to draw inspiration from many sources, but also her own unique and penetrating in-sights into Life. At such times she was a particularly strong conduit for those influences which were not of this world.

One particularly challenging statement in *No Other Path to Go* reads:

True renunciation is not a single dramatic act. It is the daily wiping away of the thoughts, motives, and memories which are of the world — the little desires to dissemble, the unkind impulses, the small attachments, the recalling and remembrance of pleasure, and so forth. (p.9)

Some would revel in such philosophy; others would shy away from it. Radhaji simply

embraced it. She did not speak often of the past, and seldom of small attachments. Perhaps any more abiding attachments which she had related to things such as the welfare of the Theosophical Society and the other humanitarian pursuits with which she was involved, her beloved pets (of which she had some half dozen at the time of her passing) and the International Headquarters at Adyar.

Our challenge is to meaningfully fill a certain void, which was felt quite keenly for some time after Radhaji's passing; indeed this process is under way, with new energies making themselves felt in the fabric of the TS along with the election of our new International President, Mr Tim Boyd.

The life of Mrs Radha Burnier was one of careful restraint, as one could see in her immediate surroundings. Yet she also seemed to possess a quality of spiritual fullness and fulfilment which comparatively few of us are able to enjoy. May she have a well-deserved rest. Finally, to quote a well-known phrase from one of Those who were behind the formation of the Theosophical Society, an apt spirit towards her life on our part would be: 'Ingratitude is not one of our vices.'

(Courtesy :*The Theosophist*, October-November, 2014)

Responsibility involves restraint . This has been briefly and impressively pointed out in short and highly meaningful words by the I^o Upanishad, which proclaims that the entire universe is the dwelling of One Supreme Power and therefore restraint is called for in our attitude towards all that exists in the cosmos.

RADHA BURNIER

Presidential Address

129th Annual Convention of T.S.

26 December, 2004

*P.K.JAYASWAL**

RADHA BURNIER'S CONTRIBUTION & APPROACH TO THEOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION

The contribution and approach of each President to Theosophy has been unique, depending on the world situation and the need of humanity during the period of his incumbency.

The Founder President Col. H.S Olcott devoted his energies to organizing the Society, while HPB acquainted the western world including the scientific community with the Ancient Wisdom (Theosophy). They together worked for the revival of Buddha's teachings. The President drew attention to the uplift of the down-trodden. His successor Annie Besant combined propagation of Theosophy in more intelligible manner with labouring for restoration of India's dignity through political emancipation and modern articulation of Her ancient scriptures. The Besant Spirit sums up her influence on the Society as a whole. Bro. G.S, Arundale had to face the turmoil in the Society because of Krishnaji's radical approach. The Society passed through intellectual and emotional churning. His message to the Society was Together Differently. Bro. C, Jinarajadasa focussed on Beauty and latest scientific approach to elucidate the nature of Theosophical truths. Bro. N. Sri Ram moved to the mystic plane of wisdom and importance of inner transformation. Bro. John Coats gave impetus to young Theosophists and threw light on the changing trends of human civilization towards integration at super-mental level.

Dr. Radha Burnier hit the nail by striving for Human Regeneration towards ushering in the Brotherhood of Humanity. She presented spirituality in a manner which reflected the impact of Krishnaji's teachings. Her energies were directed towards all that is holy, compassionate and brotherly.

An attempt has been made in this article to present her views on the basis of her Watch - Tower Notes and various other publications.

THEOSOPHY

Radhaji emphatically reiterated HPB's original statement that Theosophy is at the heart of all religions and the Society will prove to be the cornerstone and foundation of future religions of humanity. She emphasized time and again that Theosophy should not be confused with Occultism which seems to have become the focus of modern religious outfits. She pointed out that Theosophy is intended to leaven the human mind which has to be enabled to be deeply aware of Life being an indivisible whole. It is striking to observe that her choice for the 2013 Convention New Mind for New World very clearly brings out the future direction of the Society's work. Theosophy lays bare materialism and dogmatic beliefs and provides holistic understanding on the plane of Buddhist consciousness which underscores the vitality of the first Object of the TS: Universal Brotherhood.

*Director of Studies, Indian Section, TS.

Radhaji highlighted the realization that when self-discipline purifies the body, mind and the whole of our nature, and when our daily life expresses the supreme principle of harmlessness, then Grace descends. No one need ask for Grace; It rains down on all who live the right kind of life.

THEOSOPHICAL WORK

The basic work of the T.S is the spiritual regeneration of the world by the regeneration of individuals. Our programmes must be related directly or subtly to humanity's need to awaken.

The great challenge which is encountered by members is to learn the true meaning of universal brotherhood and practise it without the authority of a scripture or a prophet to everybody in line.

Theosophists have pioneered in many fields. They have now to show the way to the awakening of a new mind for a new world.

Lodges and Groups do have the freedom to work on themes of particular interest to them, but the freedom must be exercised within the framework of the Society's character and structure. It is only through an intelligent understanding of theosophical principles and their propagation that the Society at large will appreciate the uniqueness of TS which is not based on authority and fundamentalism.

WISDOM

Human activity is now largely animal nature instigated by an unenlightened mind. Theosophy teaches how every ordinary human being can perfect himself.

Wisdom comes to those who seek the Eternal and catch a glimpse of the Divine Plan, for it illuminates the whole field of the unfoldment of divinity through the processes of manifestation. The Divine Plan cannot be analysed and assessed by the finite mind which has to break out of its own periphery to attain Para Vidya transcending Aparā Vidya. Wisdom enables one to practise brotherhood which springs from the indivisibility of Life. The wise are those to whom people come naturally, as bees come to honey.

ADYAR

Nature is said to be the garment of God, the outermost vesture of the Ineffable, which the Upanishads called THAT, and Krishnamurti named the OTHER. When we turn to THAT/OTHER as the sunflower does to the rays of the Sun, perchance illusions will begin to disperse and light will dawn in our heart. Our Adyar Estate has that uplifting atmosphere of a place to which thousands of people have been coming in a spirit of surrender and reverence.

THE CONVENTION SPIRIT

We come to Adyar to learn. That learning must not end. The spirit of the Convention goes. It's inspiration remains, teaching all of us to live in a different way and help to create a new world.

BROTHERHOOD

Universal Brotherhood is the beginning of the journey to realization of absolute Unity which is the highest form of spirituality.

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

The first Object of the Society is philanthropy. The aim of the philanthropist should be the spiritual enlightenment of his fellowmen. Philanthropy need not express itself in dramatic and recognizable acts.

ETHICS

Ethical living involves performing each action in such a manner that from moment to moment purification takes place. Ethical awareness must be made alive through enquiry, intelligent discussion and promoting a sense of responsibility for the environment and society as a whole. However slowly a new ethic must arise out of the new insights of today emanating from those who make Science an ally which validates through logic some of the perceptions of mystics and religious seers.

MORALITY

Moral penury today is a by-product of material wealth. There is no finality in deciding what is virtue or vice; everything is said to depend on circumstances; or it is assumed that there is no such thing as right or wrong.

A living morality takes birth with realization of certain fundamental truths. Life must be seen as an *impartite* whole and human destiny viewed in this perspective, and understanding of the evolutionary movement as a process of inner awakening making clear what duty is and where progress lies.

FREEDOM

Brotherhood and Freedom are as two pillars which are essential for supporting and maintaining the balance of the structure of the Society. Freedom is a state of being which is completely non-dependant, lacking nothing, asking for nothing. Inner freedom means accepting every change. It must be discovered, not achieved. Whatever needs to be brought about will happen only when the totality of conditions is right.

LOVE

If we would become one with God, unselfish love must fill our nature because He Is I've. This is the meaning of God's immanence, omnipresence and everlastingness. Love is a radiant force that sanctifies and blesses all who come into contact with it. This is the power of Love.

All that exists is essentially Consciousness. True progress must be achieved through expansion of consciousness.

KARMA

Life itself cannot be separated any more than Space. Separations will be a compulsory part of our experience in the material world until the Soul fully grasps the Truth of non-separation. The karmic lessons are repeated only because the learning is not completed. Only internal changes from self-centredness to altruism are vital. A seemingly unpleasant experience is actually a good thing, for it prods the Soul to learn the truth.

THE ART OF LIVING

The art of living is the art of loving. Creative living demands inner equilibrium and the use of higher faculties of perception, free of thought process. We must learn to turn within and regain the capacity to look at things afresh and to see them at a deeper level.

Manifestation is the play of opposites. The play is Maya. In the Everlasting there are no opposites; there is only supreme good. The Whole cannot be divided into good and bad. If it is divisible, it is not Whole. In this light, one realises that true holism involves a profound moral and spiritual transformation, a psychological state without strife, unhappiness and insecurity.

H.P.B.

She was Upasika—a trusted and true disciple. She was astonishingly generous, childlike in her innocence, full of kindness and compassion. She was farsighted because of the extreme sensitivity of her consciousness and the inflow from superior realms of all-embracing knowledge.

COL. H.S. OLCOTT

A pure spirit of altruism animated his actions. He was a leader in the very best sense of the term. He led the world towards moral and spiritual progress.

ANNIE BESANT

She was a veritable mother to all. She gave birth to Theosophical Order of Service, as she believed that loving service increases the power to know and serve.

N.SRI RAM

His brotherly attitude meant taking each person. As he is, regarding him with affection and helping him in the most natural manner and with the grace that is born of not expecting anything in return.

J. KRISHNAMURTI

The connection between Krishnaji and the TS was broken not because he left as many believe, but because members were not ready to listen to a profound message given in terms they were not accustomed to hearing.

Many felt the extraordinary power upliftment which came through him in his talks, discussions and personal conversations. He was like a flower which shed the fragrance around, not concerned with who is passing by or what passers-by think of it.

RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Life is one but it has infinite aspects and pervades endless dimensions. In so far as Science expounds what is true, it is part of Theosophy. The theosophical view of the Sacred, Ever-existing Reality is different from the God of theologians—a mind-projected God. Some frontier scientists now posit the existence of consciousness as the substratum of all existence. The concepts of Time, Matter and Space have changed. Theosophical Matter is another aspect of SPIRIT.

TRUE KNOWLEDGE

To be free from ignorance, we must learn to be free in all the innumerable, little tests of daily life. The Divine Mind alone knows when individual existence needs the experiences of manifesting in a physical body and when it needs to leave that body to assimilate the import of these experiences.

Insight and enlightenment arise from within, they cannot be equated with mental knowledge derived from an outside source. The further knowledge is not necessarily of facts and forms, may be in terms of purpose, meaning and value. One has to learn to have communion with Nature in order to obtain Her secrets. Knowledge is a boat which carries you to the other shore. It becomes an useless burden thereafter. Real asking is characterized by whole-heartedness. The process of observation and enquiry must be sustained.

MATURITY OF MIND

Steadiness, a real sense of peace and freedom from wants and fears are all characteristics of maturity. The first sign of maturity is to recognize one's limitations. Real meditation cannot be taught to others, because it is a process of awakening, an inner transformation from being to non-being from self to non-self.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A true, unconditional sense of responsibility manifests itself in an active compassion. Such altruism lightens the world's karma. Nobody is powerless to help at the mental and moral level.

CIVILIZATION

Civilization in the highest sense has yet to be achieved. Prosperity is not to be judged by gain, but in terms of righteousness. When right Government prevails, men of little virtue submit to those of great virtue.

EVOLUTION AND PROGRESS

The third Object of the T.S. is often misunderstood and is thought to be ESP investigation, psychic phenomena and so forth. What is needed is discovery at a deeper level. Spiritual powers manifest themselves as naturally as a person learns to shed selfishness. Power is energy. Consciousness is energy. Such energy is extraordinarily creative.

The Dhyan Chohans are forces of Nature: twofold in aspect: ‘gods’ of the believers and the intelligent Soul or Cosmic Consciousness which guides and directs the brute in Matter. LAW is a rational formulation for understanding natural processes, but it has a limited meaning. It cannot be applied to understand bonds and relationships at deeper levels.

Circumstances and events are compelling humanity to recognize that it has a common, inseparable destiny. From one kingdom of life to another, there is a dimensional change. The directiveness in evolution can only originate from the limitless intelligence of the Universe operating in that eternal sphere where past, present and future are one.

Mental constructs are not truths. Growth always involves diversification of the faculties latent in consciousness and their gradual revelation.

NATURE

Nature remains a great mystery. Only when human beings try reverently and humbly to become disciples of Nature and co-operate with Her plan, Her blessings will shower down on them.

Time has a different rhythm in Her plans. The ultimate Reality is Intelligence——incomparable and absolute.

The ancient seers of the Veda praised the five great Elements, regarding them as more than material substances. The gods like Agni, Varuna, Vayu and Prithvi received their gratitude and adoration. Mountains are held to be the abode of gods. The Earth is a goddess. The rivers are sacred.

NO OTHER PATH TO GO

In the light of her understanding of universal manifestation and its purpose Radhaji, like other Seers, came to the conclusion that there is only one course for a human being to follow—that of returning to the Source from where he started his journey. There are as many paths as there are individuals. There is no fixed path. That is why it is said that ‘TRUTH is a pathless land’. But the question arises: what does one mean by PATH? Obviously the footprints of the pilgrim portray his unique path which leads him to the Source.

Seekers and Seers have given accounts of their journeys. The accounts are dissimilar, yet similar. In each case there are pointers to the Infinite which cannot be measured by human minds which are finite. Since the Infinite has immeasurably multiple aspects, directions thereto are also infinitely varied but the end is the same. So that is the PATH and there is no other path to go.

HOMAGE TO RADHAJI

The best way to pay homage to Radhaji is to take forward her message and work for ushering in the New World through the instrumentality of New Mind.

PEDRO OLIVEIRA*

WALKING WITH RADHAJI

During my first period of residence at Adyar, from 1992 to 1996, I had a number of opportunities to walk with Radhaji through the compound at Adyar. Sometimes, after the working day was over, she would dispense with the President's car and walk from the Headquarters building to her house, Parsi Quarters, located at the very end of the estate. She walked briskly and while doing so she was always attentive to different aspects of the compound around her.

Walking with her was never an ordinary experience. I could see, and feel, how much Adyar meant to her and how she felt responsible for maintaining it as an *âsrama* – a spiritual centre based on selfless living and profound reverence for Nature, wherein an enquiry into wisdom and truth was naturally unfolding. Adyar was special to her not only because she was born there but, more importantly, because she understood, deeply in her heart, the meaning of the sign which hangs above the entrance to Annie Besant's room at Adyar: "Work for Adyar, the Masters' Home".

Sometimes our walks would take us to Besant Gardens, the other side of the compound across Besant Avenue. There would be meetings at the Theosophical Publishing House, visits to the Olcott Memorial Secondary School and the sapota gardens. Once she told me how when a little girl she and other students at the Olcott School, on their way home, would delight themselves into looking at the deep wells in that area of the compound. Her eyes were bright with delight when narrating such adventures of her childhood.

One special occasion happened when we walked together from a retreat which was held in Blavatsky Bungalow. She had lent her car to transport elderly members while we walked back to her house. The retreat had been intense in its depth of enquiry and reflection, and so there was very little need to talk at all. However, my mind being what it was, after some minutes into the walk, and having in mind a renewed criticism which I had read recently – repeated quite frequently since then—to the effect that the Masters had abandoned the TS with Headquarters at Adyar, I ventured to ask her the question: 'Does it not seem to you that such retreat provides evidence that the influence of the Masters is still here?' 'I have absolutely no doubt that Masters are still with us, in spite of the problems in the TS'.

On another occasion we were discussing the nature of inspiration. She said: 'It all depends on what your attitude is. Inspiration is like a vast ocean, but if what you bring is a small bucket you receive very little.' She seemed to suggest that inspiration or blessedness is all around us if we just would open our minds and hearts to receive it.

A memorable occasion happened when she told me that Mark Tully, a former BBC correspondent in India, was about to visit her in her office. She instructed me to inform the guards at the main gate to direct him to the Secretary's Office. Once there she had asked me to welcome

*Member of the TS in Australia.

him and give him some publicity leaflets about the TS and its work. Afterwards I took him to her office and she was happy to see him. He then said: ‘Mrs Burnier, the Objects and aims of your Society are so logical, rational and important to the world that I feel like standing in the busiest intersection in Madras and tell people: “Join the Theosophical Society!” So my question to you is: why do you have so few members?’ Radhaji replied: ‘Well, it is just like the human body. The body is small but the consciousness can be vast.’ Mr Tully had a broad smile on his face.

Another significant conversation with Radhaji took place in her house after we had attended a ceremonial meeting. I had explained to her how I had faced difficulties in the past due to over excitement and over enthusiasm. She was very direct and to the point: ‘You must be very careful. If you are not careful the self can flare up again.’ That was her way of showing to me that both excitement and enthusiasm can just be expressions of the self, perhaps two forms in which the self employs for its self-aggrandizing agenda. After our very brief conversation I went back to my quarters trying to understand the implications of what she had just told me. Alas, I have since discovered that understanding oneself is an ongoing, hard but necessary work. And I continue to be grateful for her advice.

I also had the opportunity to walk with Radhaji in Naarden, the Netherlands, in Brasilia, and in Porto Alegre, my hometown, when I was a young theosophist, where I also served as her interpreter. There, after she had given a talk, an old lady asked her the following question: ‘Is it true that we can become invisible helpers during the night when we are asleep?’ Radhaji replied: ‘When one is helpful, one is helpful all the time.’

While talking and walking with her one could see, very clearly, that hers was not an ordinary mind. She would pause and ponder before replying to questions, and whenever the answer would come it would always address the heart of the question. Theosophical literature speaks about the differences between *kama-manas*, the personal, desire-impelled mind, and *buddhi-manas*, the mind illumined by insight, depth and an awareness of the sacred. Radhaji was one of the rare examples of the latter.

At the 1993 World Congress of the TS in Brazil a journalist from a national magazine focusing on spiritual/new age subjects asked to interview her. She agreed to it and the interview took place at the residence of a TS member in Brasilia. Perhaps in order to try and make her more comfortable in his first question he asked her: ‘Can you say something about yourself?’ Probably in his mind she would tell him something about her education, family life, the Indian culture. Radhaji’s reply was truly unexpected: ‘I am one of the very few people in the world who is seriously interested to know what the self is.’ I still remember the expression of near shock on the journalist’s face.

The same journalist, during a press conference held before the Congress had begun, addressed the following questions to Radhaji: ‘The early history of the TS presents evidence that both Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky were in contact with the Masters. I would like to know what is the nature of the present-day leadership contact with the Masters, as well as your contact, Mrs Burnier, with the Masters.’ Radhaji replied: ‘Suppose there is a couple for whom their relationship is considered almost sacred. Would they speak about it in public? The relation-

ship with a Master is much more sacred than that and therefore one does not say anything.’ The prolonged silence which followed marked the end of the press conference.

In early 1995 I accompanied her to the airport in Madras. She was leaving for Australia to participate in the centenary celebrations of the Australian Section of the TS. I had been instructed by her travel agent to contact the supervisor of Singapore Airlines as there was a possibility of upgrading her seat from economy class to business class. After screening her luggage we moved towards the airline counter. A young Indian man, impeccably dressed, approached us and asked Radhaji: ‘You are Mrs Burnier, aren’t you?’ ‘Yes’, she said, ‘how do you know?’ He replied: ‘I was a student at the Olcott Memorial High School.’ A wide smile lit her face on seeing that one of the poor students of the Olcott School had obtained a professional career in the world.

In 1992 we travelled by train to Alleppey for the annual conference of the Kerala Theosophical Federation. Throughout the journey our conversations dealt with the inspiring history of the TS, her years in Benares as the General Secretary of the Indian Section, and her certainty of the reality of the Masters’ protective influence over the Society. She also shared her recollections of her father and his wisdom and self-effacing nature. The journey to Alleppey was very educational for me, in more ways than one.

On some occasions it was not possible not to notice the subtle and spiritually charged field of awareness that existed around her. Once, while visiting her residence very early in the morning to obtain her advice on an important matter, she asked me to sit next to her while she was having breakfast. Her eyes were ablaze with *âtmâ-shâkti*, soul power, and one did not feel inclined to talk at all. Sometimes, while entering the President’s Office, one would be greeted by an uplifting atmosphere of rarefied silence and profound purpose. One very often would leave her office in a state of gathered awareness that could last for quite a while. Wherever she was, Radhaji brought a special and dignified presence, but also steady inspiration.

In 1992, when I had come to work at Adyar, she told me not to yield to flattery. ‘No matter what people say, you are what you are’, she said. Since then I thought she could as well have included in her warning not succumbing to ‘flattening’ remarks. The truth of what she said all those years ago remains with me. It was a great privilege having known and worked with her. I hope to walk with her again in not so distant a future.

The highest goes hand-in-hand with the lowest,
It is only the commonplace who walks at a distance.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

PABLO SENDER*

RADHAJI'S VISION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL WORK

Dr Radha Burnier, the seventh International President of the Theosophical Society (TS), was very aware of the problems of the world. During her 33 years leading the Society she spoke openly about the challenges facing our planet and civilization. She did not want an organization with a self-serving attitude, mainly preoccupied with its own growth and success while indifferent to the real needs of humanity. On the contrary, she envisioned a Society fully committed to helping the world, being thus in perfect alignment with what the Founders and the Masters of Wisdom had in mind during the forming years of our organization. In this article we will explore some of Radhaji's statements about the work of the TS and its members, and reflect on her views in an attempt to bring to light some of the main implications.

Our Central Work

Radhaji fully agreed with Socrates in that an unexamined life is not worth living. She frequently remarked that if we go through our day mechanically, simply reacting to circumstances, we would end up living aimlessly, without any definite direction. And she considered that this principle is applicable not only to individuals but also to organizations. Unless there is a periodical examination of the activities we organize in the TS there is a danger of inadvertently drifting away from the central aim towards endeavours that may seem easier, more pleasant, more rewarding, or that follow the general trend in our environment. For this reason, she emphasized the need for clarity in regard to the fundamental work of our Society:

If the T.S. is to be a beneficent force in the world, we must see where our work lies. We should be very clear about it, not play about with relatively unimportant things, but get to the core. If we are clear about the central work, subsidiary matters will be resolved easily in accordance with it.¹

What is the "core" of our work? It is a general understanding that the TS was founded for the service of humanity. This, however, is a vague statement that needs to be pondered over in order to become more meaningful. What kind of service does humanity need? The main human concern is that of suffering. Our actions—whether peaceful or violent, wise or foolish, religious or secular—are for the most part attempts at attaining happiness or averting suffering. But what is the primary cause of suffering? The lack of basic needs such as food, shelter, security, health care, and so on is an evident cause of grief and distress. But even those of us who have our basic needs met still suffer due to a supposed lack of enough money, power, respect, objects, information, entertainment, relationships, etc.

In her writings, Radhaji frequently examined this situation to show that the underlying cause of suffering is found at the psychological level. Even an objective problem such as the hunger in the world is not really due to lack of material resources to feed everybody. The underlying cause of it is the unequal distribution of wealth, which in turn is due to greed—both in the common citizen and the politician. And there is greed because people are confused, thinking

*Member of the TS in America.

they can attain happiness by external means. Thus, Radhaji pointed out that to help humanity efficiently the TS should address the problem of suffering at its source—the human mind and heart:

I think the work of the Theosophical Society is to point to the challenge within, because it is of much greater importance to see it and deal with it than to go on dealing with what is outside. If we do not look at the source of the problem, but only at the effects, then temporary, partial and superficial solutions are found.²

As we can see from the previous quotes Radhaji emphasized the fact that we should not get distracted with peripheral or superficial activities, but go to the core of the situation and address the source of the problems. In her view the TS was founded to become a force for transformation; to assist humanity (which includes each one of us) to produce an inner revolution that fundamentally changes how we perceive the world and how we relate to it. She remarked that “the fundamental change we are talking about is from selfishness to unity”³ and, therefore, our activities should help people move in this direction. As humanity transcends the divisive mind and begins to perceive things in terms of unity and universal brotherhood the main problems of the world will be automatically solved.

A Successful Organization

From time to time some members would ask Radhaji if she thought the TS was “successful”, given its relatively small number of members or lack of public recognition. Undoubtedly, it would be great if a large number of people saw the value of the Theosophical teachings and were inspired to earnestly work on moving from selfishness to unity. However, for Radhaji, this possibility seemed unlikely. She observed that “not many are as yet ready to become self-reliant and do the hard work necessary for having pure vision”.⁴ Thus, she always questioned the idea that the number of people we attract is an appropriate means to gauge the success of our organization. She cautioned that if this were to become our main concern, we would be gradually led to change our focus from exploring the difficult path of self-reliance and transformation to saying what most people want to hear. As she wrote:

It would be easy for the Society to attract larger numbers if it changed its aims or watered them down to suit a public eager for easy ways to realization and ready to accept a leader who is seen as a means to unmerited rewards.⁵

Many people are still looking for shortcuts to happiness, external means of transformation, or to follow somebody on whom they can put the responsibility for their awakening. This is why today there is an abundance of those who offer—or, rather, *sell*—all kinds of easy methods to become spiritual. Placing a crystal on your forehead, visualizing a certain colour, invoking some angel, and many other similar activities are advertised as quasi magical methods to attain happiness. But Radhaji warned against this kind of approach:

From a theosophical point of view, only the pseudo-gurus say, ‘You do not have to change yourself, all that you have to do is to believe me’, or even worse, ‘I will touch your forehead and you will be transported to a transcendental sphere’.

If we do not understand this, we might have the wrong kind of programmes in our Lodges.⁶

Not everything that is advertised today as “spiritual” constitutes a good Theosophical programme. If a group of members are concerned primarily with attracting more people, they will tend to organize activities centred on “popular” subjects such as angels, crystals, tarot, astrology, time travel, psychism, etc. Although some of these subjects can be presented in a way that is in tune with the Theosophical outlook, the main problem is that when the focus is on the size of the audience, these topics are typically approached in a superficial, self-serving, and many times, superstitious manner. This is why Radhaji remarked that groups should not be tempted to reproduce the kinds of programmes that are typical of the “New Age” movement:

There are, as Dr [Hugh] Murdoch indicates, bizarre beliefs at the ‘fringes of the so-called new age movements’. ... The work of the TS is not to get identified or aligned with these superficial cults and trivial activities because they are dubbed ‘new age’. It should be concerned with reaching a deeper level of understanding and the discovery of the One Reality...⁷

Radhaji was very focused on the TS being a place for serious exploration and learning to transcend the personal ego. When carefully examined, one can see that many of the New Age practices are geared towards self-aggrandizement, as for example the idea that we, as separate personalities, deserve the best and only the best; the use of the power of thought to gain material or psychological benefits; the channelling of “spiritual beings” who tell us how great we are, and so on. Radhaji once remarked that the obsession with the body, its health and beauty was a form of materialism, coinciding with Buddhist teacher Chögyam Trungpa who regarded the typical New Age spirituality as a form of “spiritual materialism”. In contrast, the Theosophical endeavour of discovering “the One Reality” requires that the individual transcends the unduly concern with the personal self.

Individual and Collective Work

This brings us to explore another important aspect of the Theosophical work—that of Freedom of Thought. Are members not free to study and follow any teaching or approach they feel attracted to? In reflecting on this, Radhaji remarked that this freedom applies in different ways at the individual and collective levels. It is true that the individual members of the Society have freedom of thought and action within the wide field of the three Objects. But although we cannot expect everybody to be willing to live according to some particular approach, when it comes to the work of the Society the situation is different. Radhaji stated:

A lodge or section is in a different position from a member. The Lodge represents the T.S. where it is, in its own village. It must maintain the character of the Society, and not present an image which makes people mix it up with other things.⁸

As individuals we are free to follow any teacher or set of teachings. We can be very committed to the spiritual life or just exploring it out of curiosity. But as we have seen, the organization as a whole has a purpose, and Theosophical groups should strive to be a good representation of the global TS in their area. Thus, Radhaji did not think that a theosophical group is unconditionally free to organize any activities that may please its members. She encouraged them to exercise discernment when planning programmes, in reference to the Society’s central work:

Certain groups and Lodges of the Society claim the prerogative to be active along any line which attracts them, unmindful of what the organization as a whole stands for. There are many subjects which are interesting to study, but if they do not conduce to freedom from the heavy conditioning of race, tradition, environment, and so on, they are not theosophical. To be theosophical, our programmes must be related, directly or subtly, to humanity's need to awaken.⁹

When our programmes are not concerned with the inner change they become just a form of entertainment. Since a number of people like to be flattered or entertained, even superficial activities may attract a large audience. But, as Radhaji indicated, this kind of programmes is not really Theosophical.

It is important to keep in mind that our organization is an educative one, and we can be an important influence for people in how they see the world or lead their lives. So, when it comes to planning our Lodge activities we should have a balanced sense of responsibility. We should make sure that—to the best of our knowledge—we are not causing people to be misled.

A related problem Radhaji has also addressed is that sometimes Theosophical groups are turned into a body mainly dedicated to spread a particular philosophy or school of thought. Regarding this she asserted:

There can be confusion if, in a theosophical lodge or any unit of the T.S., people propagate any of the other schools [of thought]. Not because we say we are better, or that we are the only people who know.

. . . Though the individual is free, if a theosophical lodge or any other unit, federation or section begins to propagate Sai Baba or some such, this will create confusion. The public will believe that we accept him as god. If we allow Rosicrucianism an important role in a lodge, people will associate their labels with the work of the T.S.¹⁰

Radhaji's statement does not mean that a Theosophical group should not study the teachings from other schools of thought in a comparative way. But doing this is different from becoming a body to spread one particular point of view. If several individuals in a Lodge are interested in a particular teacher or philosophy and that is all they study, not only are they sending a confused message to the community as to what the TS is. They are also closing the doors to those who may not be interested in that particular approach, but could otherwise profit from being a member of the Society. Thus, when members come together, they should find out how their individual interests and contributions can align with the collective goal and character of the TS.

A Pioneering Task

Radhaji was aware that the deeper purpose of the TS is lofty and difficult to attain, and at this point in human evolution not many people are willing or able to apply the needed effort in this direction. But she thought that if we work seriously on the “cutting-edge” of spirituality, that is, on how to bring about a fundamental change in the human being, then we do not need a large number of members to be an effective force for transformation:

Although TS members are relatively few in number, if there is real earnestness in them, the world will be helped to change.¹¹

History has shown repeatedly that pioneers in any field were always a minority, but eventually produced a large effect. The idea that the TS was founded to do pioneering work is based

on some core Theosophical teachings. According to these, the next evolutionary stage (technically called the “Sixth Root-Race”) is one in which the sixth Principle, *buddhi* or spiritual intuition, will begin to develop in humanity. Radhaji was deeply aware of this and constantly pointed to the need to learn how to move in this direction:

The future welfare of humanity lies in directing energy to awaken *buddhi*, sometimes called intuition. Intuition is not a hunch; it cannot be alive so long as the personal self, which is the product of the separative mind, is active and dominant. The personal self must die and yield place to a new consciousness, if there is to be true progress.¹²

The TS was founded to assist the beginning of what C. Jinarajadasa called “the new humanity of intuition”, and Radhaji regarded that the principles on which the Society was organized make it specially fit for the task. She wrote:

With patience and perseverance, we must prepare for the dawning of the light of *buddhi* in ourselves and in humanity. The Theosophical Society is uniquely endowed to assist progress in this direction.¹³

An awareness of this exalted goal and a certain understanding of its implications are important to help us preserve the real nature of our organization and a sense of direction.

Now, one of the difficulties we encounter in this work is that we are trying to help cure humanity of a disease—selfishness—that we ourselves still suffer from. Thus, if we are not going to be “the blind leading the blind” we must learn the principles of this “soul medicine”. Radhaji remarked that the success of the TS in this task rests on its members striving to awaken the Divine Wisdom (*Theos-Sophia*) in themselves:

The vigour and usefulness to humanity of the Theosophical Society hinges on how many of its members seek to become Theosophists. . . . Only by growth in wisdom does a person earn the right to be called a Theosophist in the real sense.¹⁴

Radhaji indicated that to grow in wisdom the study of serious spiritual literature is necessary, but not enough. Study provides knowledge, and by this means we can become scholars, but *buddhi* will not awaken by the mere accumulation of information. We need to make efforts to turn the acquired knowledge into wisdom. Thus, for the study to be Theosophical it must affect our lives:

Theosophical study is not meant to be an interesting pastime, or merely a stimulation for the intellect. It must evoke awareness of the essential need of humanity, and help to make it healthy morally, psychologically and spiritually.¹⁵

Keeping this in mind is important because it will determine the manner in which we work. Members of a Lodge who are in earnest will study Theosophical and other serious spiritual teachings not simply to gain knowledge, but because they realize that a right understanding of life and of human nature is the foundation for any real transformation. But they will not be content with just studying the “recipe” for a spiritual life. They will be interested in putting the teachings into practice. By meditating on what they study and making efforts to live accordingly, they will gradually awaken the buddhic aspect of their nature. This will allow them to discover first-hand in what way the teachings can help produce an inner transformation. And then, they will have something relevant to offer to those who want to hear, and will become a source of inspiration for others to follow this path.

*L.NAGESH**

MRS RADHA BURNIER A STAR OF THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

A star twinkling in the open sky is always an object of attraction to many people. Radhaji is such a star personality in the history of Theosophical Society. She attracted many people and many lives to theosophy. Although she left for her heavenly abode, her thoughts and ideas are very much alive and making inroads into the psyche of several people who came into her contact when she was alive. I met her for the last time at Adyar during South Zone conference of 2013. I was invited to deliver a short lecture in the conference. After I finished delivering my lecture, I went to meet her in the audience. She greeted me and said with a quivering voice ——— “I have become old and I cannot do much”. I could immediately sense that she was still eager to serve the society and work for theosophy despite her physical body was ageing and failing. By then, she could not walk on her own and needed somebody to hold her and support her while walking. Despite odds against her health she used to attend the morning lectures without fail. She would sit in the front row and keenly listen to the lectures. I saw an indomitable spiritual power working through her despite her health failing slowly and steadily.

Radhaji was the seventh International President of Theosophical Society and served the society fervently as president for nearly 33 years. She took the reins after John B. S Coats and served diligently for the cause of Theosophical Society. I have heard her presidential lectures every year at Adyar during annual international conferences. I also had the opportunity to listen few of her lectures which she delivered at Bangalore City Lodge. I always enjoyed listening to her lectures. The content used to be comprehensive, her English language was simply marvelous, and her pronunciation was very clear and catchy. Her versatile delivery of lecture was always astounding. Her lectures were all impromptu and never did she use some prepared notes. Although she was a scholar in Sanskrit, she could quote a number of examples from biological sciences. She could drive home the message through relevant and apt examples. She could give such good examples especially from biological sciences that I was drawn to her lectures.

The essence of her lectures was always the topic of ‘universal brotherhood’. She always emphasized the importance of watching nature and learning lessons from how nature works. Inter-connectedness, Cooperation, Coordination and Altruism displayed naturally in the animal world and plant world always used to fascinate her. She would certainly quote few of her own observations or published research to show that the whole nature is an open system and what happens at one corner of the world can surely influence the other corner. She time and again expressed her concern about the growing consumerism and greed among people. She always advocated simple life and she herself lived a simple life.

*National Lecturer, Indian Section, TS.

Radhaji wrote continuously the section 'On the Watch Tower' for 'The Theosophist' magazine. All those articles are compiled systematically and published as a book titled as '**The World Around Us**' by the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar. I have been profoundly influenced by those articles. In one of her articles on TOS she says ——— "Indifference to the suffering of others is a negative form of self-centredness and proof of the absence of self-awareness". These words are so apt in the present era where people live only for themselves and lack sensitivity to the suffering of others. The public apathy and insensitivity to atrocities and heinous crimes committed on vulnerable population is a clear indication of what Lord Shri Krishna said in Bhagavad-Gita as '**Sin of Omission**'. Radhaji was rightly drawing our attention towards such a sin. A theosophist may not indulge in crime, but his duty does not end there. He needs to fight for the rights of oppressed and suppressed. He has to alleviate their pain and agony.

In her deliberations Radhaji would inevitably say ——— '**Unity is the nature of existence and brotherhood is its manifestation**'. It reflects the first object of Theosophical Society. The theme of unity was always her favourite and she would approach that theme scientifically, philosophically and religiously in her lectures. At times her lectures appeared as though tailored for intellectuals but she would never miss common man for she would give several examples from day to day life. She was a keen observer and an ardent learner. She narrates an incident in one of her lectures to demonstrate practicality of universal brotherhood. A small girl of 5 to 6 years age was found roaming in the Adyar campus. She carried a small child on her waist all the time. The child was a boy around 1 or 2 years old. Looking at her lean and thinly built body Radhaji asked the girl — "Is he not heavy for you to carry everywhere?" Immediately the answer came from the girl ——— "How can he be heavy for me, **he is my brother**"

If the whole humanity begin to think the way that small girl thought, many of our modern world problems can immediately be solved. Although the girl gave the answer specific to her context, Radhaji could draw the expansive comprehension of her words. Such examples oft quoted by Radhaji use to keep everybody fascinated. '**No Other Path to Go**' is another very impactful book by her which open our eyes to the only path of inner progress. I found a very dedicated, diligent and committed soul of Theosophical Society in Radhaji. She will remain always in our hearts as unforgettable star.

Love is an endless mystery
for it has nothing else to explain it.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

A.M. VATCHA*

RADHAJI-ADYAR-ADI** **(A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP)**

My first visit to Adyar was in 1945-46, just after the end of World War-II. I was an eight year eager and enthusiastic boy and was there to spend my summer holidays from school with my brother Jamshed and sister Dolly. We stayed with my maternal aunt Mrs. D.R.Dinshaw, who worked in the Editorial Office under four Presidents- AB, GSA, CJ and NSR. My aunt was the first to occupy Shantikunj (First floor) after it was got from the naval authorities. It was a spacious and airy flat on the beach, it seemed as though we were living on a ship.

Jamshed knew Bro. N. Sri Ram's family very well- Vajra, Radha, Vasant as they all went to Besant School together. Once my aunt went to visit Bro. NSR's mother and she took me with her. I remember being served tea by her in a silver tea-set, the first I had beheld. Then my aunt asked Mrs. Bhagirathi Sri Ram, Radha's mother, if I could go and see Radha practising Bharatnatyam at her house. Very soon we went there and I was thrilled to see Radha practising in full dancing costume and with accompaniments. The little boy was charmed by the beauty, grace and talent displayed. That was my first acquaintance with RSB. Little did I know that it would lead to many a meeting spread over 68 years.

I have spent several happy summers at Adyar, till I got a job as lecturer at a private college in Hyderabad, and then I became a member of the T.S. Bro NSR admitted me at Adyar during the early 1960's and RSB was also present. Thereafter I have known RSB as the very able and efficient director of the Adyar Library and Research Centre, bringing to bear all her erudite scholarship in Sanskrit and English.

Then RSB went on to be the General Secretary of the Indian Section of the T.S. in Varanasi. At one convention there I was particularly impressed to see RSB, adapt herself to the cold :walking bare foot on the paths of the campus. As General Secretary RSB brought to bear a sense of responsibility for Theosophical work. Travelling, speaking and writing she never spared herself and worked selflessly for the work near to her heart. Being born and brought up in Adyar, and being the daughter of President NSR, RSB had many opportunities open to her and she took them all in stride and did wonders with her T.S., and Masonic life. Once someone remarked that RSB was lucky to have such advantages and opportunities as she had and RSB said that there was nothing like "luck" - - all has to be worked at and earned.

The handbook of the T.S. RSB brought out is a very helpful piece of practical and instructive work for the T.S. members. Travelling all over India, RSB spread theosophy everywhere, Founding Lodges, reviving and buttressing many Lodges.

*Former President of Hyderabad T.S. Lodge.

**ADI denotes Mr. A.M. Vatcha's first name Ardshire

Travelling abroad I attended the World Congresses at Salzburg in Austria in 1966 and in Nairobi, Sydney & Rome, the centenary of the T.S. at New York in 1975, the H.P.B. centenary of *The Secret Doctrine* in England, at all of which RSB was present. I have heard her talks at Adyar, Varanasi, Mumbai, Guntur, Hyderabad, Pune, Nagpur, Patna, Chhabra, Kakinada and at other places.

At RSB's Inauguration as President in Adyar in 1980, I was present and wished to see the presidential ring given to her on the occasion. She at once removed it from her finger and placed it in my hand. – the most treasured moment in my life. Ever since I have attended all the conventions presided over by RSB. In the later years when I was walking with difficulty, invariably RSB gave me a lift in the car either herself driving or a driver. Once at a lunch at her residence at Parsee Quarters, I appreciated a particular potato dish and RSB said that she had thought I would like it – what a considerate host. Not only that but she insisted on driving me back to L.B.C, as it was a very hot afternoon.

When I was initiated into Free –masonry, RSB was present. Also when I got higher degrees RSB, was present to guide, advise and inspire. RSB and I were two representatives for India at the Centenary of modern Masonic movement that was held at Paris. I have also had the privilege of attending the Indo-Pacific Conferences at Karachi and Singapore presided over by RSB.

Speaking about old days at Adyar, I reminded RSB, as to how we went boating on the Adyar River. And she mentioned the fact that her brother and mine had themselves made the boat – this was unknown to me.

I feel honoured that the last place RSB visited in India was at Hyderabad at the centenary of T.S.Lodge building and stayed at my residence.

During the convention presided over by RSB, I saw her sitting in a green sari and told her I had not seen her in green, and took a picture of hers which I feel is the best one of RSB. Also I have a unique picture of RSB and her husband, Raymond Burnier, looking over their marriage license in 1951. In October 2013, I was at Adyar for the study camp and met RSB in her office, where she signed some papers regarding the President's house in Juhu, Mumbai, permitting a part of it to be used by the Besant Montessori School founded by my cousin M.S. Tehmina Wadia, of which I am a trustee. That was the last I saw RSB, just a few days before her passing. We were at Chennai airport waiting to board the plane for the Indo-Pacific Conference at Bali, when we got the news of her passing away - In truth, a unique relationship.

When I was at Bhowali attending a T.O.S camp, I was resting at about 4 p.m., I had a dream. RSB was sitting at a small table with another lady, and as I was passing by she signaled to me and informed me TIM BOYD has won the election. I informed K.Shiva Prasad about it, who was sharing my room. Within half an hour, Bro. Panchakshari informed us that TIM BOYD had been elected President – do such relationships ever end?

NEWS AND NOTES

Bombay

Shanti Lodge celebrated Navroze on 14 August 2014. Mrs. Meher Contractor in her address to Brethren on 'The Perfection- Khordad Yasht' and 'Fravashi' said: Zoroastrian Prayer 'Khordad Yasht' is recited to invoke blessings of 'Khordad Ameshaspand' (a Feminine Deity) especially when one is facing challenges and difficulties in life. It is associated with the element 'Water' which brings 'Aabadi' (prosperity) to all creations. A person, who has chosen the Path of Righteousness (Ashoi) is helped to tide over difficult times. 'Fravashi' is an essence of the Divine Energy of Ahuramazda. It is an individual and personal guide to the soul on his way to perfection & immortality. It is through Fravashi that one seeks guidance from Ahuramazda and the soul progresses spiritually to attend union with Ahuramazda

On 21 August, Mrs. Ratamai Peer shared her personal experiences based on real life incidents to convey 'Good Thoughts and Benevolent Results'.

Obituary: Sis, Rafia Abdul Ali, Life Member & President of Centenary Lodge passed away on 9th September 2014. This gentle lady with great commitment served TS and spread Theosophy over 62 years. She was an inspiring spirit and anchor of Centenary Lodge and re-started the study of *At the Feet of the Master* and *Talks on the Path of Occultism*- Volume No.1 After serving BTF as Lodge Representative for years, only a month ago she named Sis. Razia Ali in her place to carry on the Centenary Lodge work. May her soul be blessed with Eternal peace to carry on noble work on Higher Planes.

M.P. & Rajasthan

Dr. R.S. Gupta performed Bharat Samaj Pooja at Vikram Lodge, Ujjain, and spoke on 'Gayatri Mahamantra' on 7 September. He explained the significance of this Mantra and its effect on our physical body. The other talks held at the Lodge in September were 'The Voice of the Silence' delivered by Dr. Ashok Kaul. He explained the Three Halls as described by HPB in fragment one. Sri Anna Bhau Kotwale spoke on 'Guru Tattva Darshan' and explained the importance of guru in every field of life. The meeting of the General Body of Vikram Lodge was held on 28 September in which office bearers and members of the Executive Committee were elected.

Besant Lodge of Jodhpur and Theosophical Order of Service Annie Besant Group of Jodhpur jointly organized a programme on 1 October to celebrate the 167th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Annie Besant. They celebrated it as *Vishwa Jan Jagaran Diwas* and it was attended by 75 persons. The function started with the Prayers of All Faiths. Prof. Prabhavati Choudhary, Director of Madhusudan Ojha Shodh Prakostha & Head of the Sanskrit Department, J.N.V. University, Jodhpur, was the chief guest. In her talk she mentioned service to mankind as the most sacred service which leads to the path of spirituality. She emphasized on the need to internalize the qualities of Dr. Besant's life and to practice them in daily life.

The special guests of the function were Dr. M.M. Bhandari, former Director of Agriculture Research Institute and Mr. F.M. Golani, an engineer. They emphasized on true commitment for the service of needy people.

Dr. Kamal Mahnot, President of M.P. & Rajasthan Federation and also regional President of TOS (Rajasthan) described Dr. Besant as a practical theosophist, social reformer, political leader, activist for women's rights, excellent writer and a powerful orator.

Mr. M.K. Sharma described Dr. Besant's life as 'a true inspiration for mankind'. Mr. Babulal Vyas highlighted the important incidents of Dr. Besant's life and described her as a true spiritual leader with immense mental, physical and spiritual powers.

The aforesaid talks were followed by a variety programme presented by a group of students from Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 1, Army, Jodhpur. All the participants (students) who recited poems, rendered songs and were in dance-drama were given certificates and token prizes.

The programme was conducted by Bro. Ramesh Joshi, Secretary of the Theosophical Lodge, Jodhpur and the vote of thanks was given by Mr. Manorama Sharma, Secretary, TOS (Jodhpur). Then the members and the guests visited the stall where Theosophical books and literature were kept for sale.

Rayalaseema

The *punyatithi* of Dr. Annie Besant was observed by Sanmarga Theosophical Lodge of Bellary on 20 September. Bro. S. Channabarsappa, President of the Lodge, spoke on this occasion on the various facets of Dr. Besant's life and the way she worked for the revival of spiritual values- especially in India.

The 167th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Besant was celebrated by Sanmarga Lodge on 1 October. Bro. S. Ranganath Setty, Secretary of the Lodge, was the speaker on this occasion. He spoke on Dr. Besant's contribution in elevating human life especially the spiritual aspect of life. She is admired for her role in reviving of Indian tradition, and for her work in the field of education- especially education of the girls and people belonging to weaker section.

Utkal

Shyama Prasad Trust Memorial Study Class and Public Lecture were held from 12 to 16 September at Bhubaneswar.

Bro. S.S. Gautam, National Lecturer, directed the study on *The Voice of the Silence*. He introduced the book through Power Point Presentation. The study class was well attended and appreciated by the members.

The members of Bhubaneswar Lodge celebrated the 60th Annual Day of the Lodge at the Federation Hall. Bro. S.S. Gautam delivered a talk on this occasion on 'The Theosophic Life'. Bro. Ashok Pattnaik presented the Annual Report of the Lodge and Bro. B.B. Palai presided over the meeting.

Bro. B.B. Palai delivered a talk at the Federation Hall on 'Contribution of Annie Besant to the T.S. & India'. This was held on the occasion of the *punyatithi* of Dr. Besant.

The members of Cuttack TOS Group distributed pencils, notebooks and chocolates to the children of Satsang Nodal School Cuttack.

Study class on Theosophical classics are being regularly conducted at the Theosophical Lodges of Cuttack, Puri, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur.

Uttar Pradesh

The following talks were held under the auspices of Kashi Tattva Sabha during September & October:

‘The significance of education and the role of teachers with regard to peace’. The talk was delivered by Dr. Kalpalata Pandey of Kashi Vidyapeeth. Dr. T.K. Nair, National Secretary, TOS, spoke on Madame Blavatsky. Besides, a symposium on ‘Self-dependency & Freedom: Our Responsibility’ was organized in which students of different institutions expressed their views.

Bro. K.V. Chaturvedi was to deliver a talk on ‘The Pioneers of the Cultural Tradition of Agra’ at Nirvana Lodge, Agra, on 4 September. As the speaker was not keeping well, his paper on the aforesaid subject was read out by Km. Upasana Pandey. The terms culture and cultural heritage were explained and it was clarified that history and culture are complimentary to each other. Significant aspects and literary figures of different periods were described in brief.

The other talks held at Nirvana Lodge in September were as follows: Bro. Gyanesh Chaturvedi spoke on *The Voice of the Silence* on 11 September. The speaker gave various details about the content dealt with in the book.

The subject of Dr. S.P. Singh’s talk was ‘Truth & the Unknowable’ It was held on 18 September. He explained the significance of language (style of expression) and also explained about relativity. Bro Singh concluded by saying that experience cannot be restricted within the limitations of words.

The Secretary’s Annual Report was presented before the general body on 25 September.

The Diamond Jubilee function of Mahila Dharma Lodge, T.S. Allahabad, was inaugurated on 20 September by Smt. Sharmila Chatterji, the first lady of Allahabad (wife of Commissioner Badal Chatterji, life member of Anand Lodge and (TOS) The function was presided over by Dr. Nikhat Begum noted writer and poetess. After the prayers, tributes were paid to the founder of the Lodge, Smt. Kunwar Taimni, and greetings from Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary, Indian Section, and others were read out by the Secretary Smt. Alpona Bose. Smt. Veena Saxena, President of the Lodge, presented 75 years’ history of the Lodge. She remembered the founder and other dedicated members of this Lodge in three parts. First: Mrs Taimni and Smt. Vimla J. Prasad: Second, Smt. Manorma Saxsena and Mrs. Kamla Lakhtakiya and Third, Mrs. Gayan Kumari Ajeet, Ex. President and now Patron of the Lodge.

A large number of members and guests attended the function.

“Hindi Diwas” was observed on 14 September in which Chief Editor of *Adhyatama Jyoti*, Smt. Gyan Kumari Ajeet, was honoured with *Vagvindavar Samman* by Bharti Parisad Prayag, Akhil Bhartiya Sanskriti Sanskar. Sri Kesrinath Tripathi, Governor of Bengal was the chief guest.

TOS

Seva Sangam TOS group Allahabad has sent Rs. 5000/- to P.M. Relief Funds N. Delhi for J/K Relief work.

Radha Burnier Universal TOS group distributed 85 lunch packets to children on the occasion of Nav Ratri. Noida Centre donated Rs. 1100/- for books to be distributed to children and Rs. 5000/- to a school for buying uniforms for the students (Allad. Centre). Lunch Packets for 112 children were distributed in a Poor Home (Giridih. Jharkhand Centre). It was organized by Smt. Ajanta Secretary of R.B.U. TOS Group, Allahabad.

Dr. Annie Besant's birthday was celebrated on 1 October at Anand Lodge, Allahabad.

Deviational Songs were rendered by some members and talks were delivered on Dr. Besant's contribution in various fields.

National Lecturer

A study camp was organized by the Utkal Theosophical Federation in Bhubaneswar from 12 to 16 September 2014 under the auspices of Shyama Prasad Memorial Trust. About 25 persons participated in it. The camp was conducted by Bro. S.S. Gautam. Federation has the power point projector which made the studies more effective. The power point presentations of English and Hindi versions of the verses for *The Voice of the Silence* were displayed and discussed with the participants. All the verses could not be completed during the study, yet from verse no. 1 to 200 were covered during these five days.

The Bhubaneswar Lodge celebrated its annual day on 13 September 2014 in the auditorium of Utkal Federation. Bro. S.S. Gautam was the chief guest and he delivered a talk on 'Theosophical Life'. The audience was invoked to take heed of various theosophical facts and use them in various walks of life. The sincere faith on the theosophical teaching can transform the life of a man into that of saint who has peace, perseverance, patience and deathlessness in his life.

Bro. S.S. Gautam addressed a gathering of senior officials of an Industrial Establishment in Bhubaneswar on 17 September. He explained the purpose of life and ensured that the thoughts of these objectives are not lost while conducting the various activities of life. Need for using discrimination in every walk of life in order to choose the higher in the place of lower and constant culture of will power by adhering to the their own selections should be continued.

Indian Section Headquarters

The 167th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Annie Besant was celebrated at the section HQ, Varanasi, on 1 October, The function started with the Prayers of All Faiths. Dr. Abha Srivastava, President, Kashi Tattva Sabha, spoke on this occasion on how personal suffering made Dr. Besant realize of universal compassion and the way she worked. Dr. Abha concluded by saying that one should keep making effort to move from self-centeredness to selflessness.

Dr. T.K. Nair in his talk mentioned about Dr. Annie Besant's concern for various matters in order to improve the overall situation of man and society. In this regard, Dr. Nair also mentioned about the various activities seriously undertaken by Dr. Besant.

**THE SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
Adyar Chennai 600 020, India**

**November 2014-February 2015
The Purpose of the School of the Wisdom**

The aim of the School of the Wisdom is to enable the individual to cease from being one who gives his intellectual adherence to a particular school of philosophy, and become one who learns to survey the problem of life directly by himself or herself. The essential search is to discover life as it is, life being inseparable from consciousness.

The School of the Wisdom aims at bringing each student to survey things '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.

The aim of all studies in the School of the Wisdom is not the perfection of the individual but to enable the individual to use every faculty of his or her being for 'lifting a little of the heavy Karma of the world'.

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.

1 to 12 December 2014

Theme: Self-Transformation and the Spiritual Life

Director: Mr. Vincente Hao Chin Jr.

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

Recommended reading:

The Process of Self-Transformation by Vincente Hao Chin Jr., *The First and Last Freedom* by J. Krishnamurti, *The Key to Theosophy* by H.P. Blavatsky, *Mysticism* by William James (The chapter on Varieties of Religious Experience), *Understanding Mysticism* by Rich-

ard Woods, *The Science of Yoga* by I.K. Taimni

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

5 to 16 January 2015

Theme: The Science of Theosophy: Foundation and Practice

Director: Ms Tran-Thi-Kim Dieu

Theosophy is often criticized as a syncretism because it is difficult to be defined. The sessions of the School of the Wisdom will prove that Theosophy is a science based on a foundation and proven by experimentation. The two series of courses include:

For the first week: a presentation of the concepts of Spirit, Matter, and Consciousness, an exploration into the capacities of Mind such as Intuition and Intelligence, resulting in Universal Ethics, Meditation and Silence; for the second week: a deeper exploration into the matter of Meditation and its practices, the understanding of Feeling and Thinking and the application of Ethics which is the principal condition for discovering one's own Dharma; all this implies a Change of Paradigm which preludes happiness.

Recommended reading

The Round of Experience, by Hugh Shearman, *Life's Deeper Aspects* by N. Sri Ram, *Yama & Niyama* by S. S. Varma, HPB's *Meditation Diagram*, *Meditation: its Practice and Results* by Clara Codd.

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 since 2009. 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.



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

Please fill in BLOCK CAPITALS and send this form to the Secretary of the School of the Wisdom, The Theosophical Society, after obtaining the recommendation of the General Secretary of your Section or a well-known member.

Name:

Date of Birth:

Nationality:

Address (in home country):

Email:

Telephone No.

Occupation (if retired, former occupation):

Date of Joining the T.S.:

Diploma No.:

Section / Federation / Branch to which attached and whether now in good standing as a member: Breif History of Activities in the T.S.:

Mention Briefly any other Activities (allied movements or any other humanitarian work):

Duration of stay in Adyar:

.....

Term:

Applicant's
Signature

Date of Application:

.....
Recommendation

Recommended by:

Signature

THE 139TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 139th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2014.

All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Non-members may attend by obtaining permission from the President. Requests for such permission, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation, should be sent to the Convention Officer before 15 November 2014.

Registration Fees	India	Other Countries	
Members	100	US\$ 70*	
Members under 21	40	...	
Non-members	200	...	
Non-members under 21	150	...	
Accommodation Charges (Sharing)			
(From 24 December 2014 to 1 January 2015 inclusive)			
	India	India	Others Countries
	(Members)	(Non-members)	(Members)
Accommodation with mat	Rs.100	200
Accommodation with cot	200	450	...
Leadbeater Chambers (including service, Furniture, and bedding, but no blankets)	3500	6,500	US\$ 150*
(Half rates will be charged for children under ten. No. charge for children under three.)			
*(or Euro or Pound Sterling equivalent)			

Accommodation

Factors considered in allocating accommodation are active membership, health, age, priority of registration, size of family, etc. Rooms and bathrooms cannot be made available for anyone's exclusive use. Non-members and young persons should be prepared to stay in dormitories. No special facilities can be provided for members who are ill or for women with babies. Mosquito nets and bedding will not be available. No kitchens are available. Ordinary medical attention will be available for minor complaints but there will be no provision for serious or infectious illness. Such cases will have to be shifted from the compound.

Accommodation is available for delegates from 24 December 2014 to 1 January 2015, both days inclusive, but can be guaranteed only to those whose registration and accommodation payments are received before 1 December 2014. Delegates from India requiring accommodation should send both the registration and accommodation charges together, But not before 1 September 2014.

Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund of registration fees, but other charges will be refunded if application is received before 10 December 2014.

All communications and remittances should be addressed to the Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020. Remittance by bank draft, duly crossed, should be made payable to the Treasurer, The Theosophical Society, but sent to the convention Officer. Money Orders should be sent only to the Convention Officer. No cheques other than those drawn in Chennai will be accepted. Please provide your details in the Convention form.

International Secretary

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST, November./ 2014 / 365



Convention - December 2014
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR, CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA
Email: 2014adyarconvention@gmail.com

[To be filled in Block Capitals and sent to the Convention Officer. Non-members and those intending to attend the convention for the first time may please obtain a recommendation from the General Secretary of the Section concerned or from a well known member.]

1. Name:.....
- 2.Nationality:.....3. Date of Birth.....
- 4.Address (in home country):.....
- 5.E-Mail:.....
- 6.Phone/Mobile Number:.....
- 7.Occupation (if retired, former occupation):.....
- 8.Date of Joining the T.S.....9. Diploma No.....
- 10.Section / Federation / Lodge to which attached and whether now in good standing as a member:
- 11.Proposed duration of stay in Adyar:
From:.....To:.....
- 12.Details of person(s) accompanying:-

Sl.No.	Name	Age	Member (Y/N)	Relationship
13. Special Request, if any:.....
14. Recommended by

Signature

Signature of applicant:

Date:

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Radhaji's Answer to a question raised during the Congress of the TS, Sydney, 2001)

RB. In case the questioner wanted information about theosophical education in a more formal sense, that is, in schools and colleges, perhaps I could do no better than mention some principles that Annie Besant, who did wonderful work for education, laid down in the early part of the twentieth century.

In India alone there were more than forty schools which she started or inspired other people to start. In all these schools she attempted to give a comprehensive education of the kind that John has already mentioned, education which would develop sensitivity, refinement of the emotions, intelligence, intellect, a sense of responsibility to the social and natural environment and so forth.

This was done through teaching children right attitudes in sport, not to be concerned with whether one has won or lost, but to accept the defeat or the success in the right spirit; through contact with nature; through practice of the arts; through lessons which develop the intellect, and, above all, through the example and affectionate relationship between the teachers and the students. A number of very dedicated members of the TS in those days gave up their jobs in order to become teachers in theosophical schools.

One of the principles she laid down was, that there must be no fear in the school; students would then trust their teachers. The educative process must proceed in an atmosphere of affection and cooperation. George Arundale, one of Dr. Besant's close associates in the educational work, succinctly stated their aim thus; 'Education for life, not for livelihood'.

The educational process goes on throughout life, but it becomes self-education later on. So it is most important for children to learn how to learn, and that is part of theosophical education, learning not just skills, but learning to understand life.

Once when Krishnaji was asked what was important in education, he mentioned three things; a global mind, the universal mind that we speak of in the Theosophical Society; developing a true religious spirit; and being sensitive physically, emotionally, intellectually and so on, which means freedom from self-interest. Intelligence develops not by inculcating ideas into the child but helping the child to enquire and bring out the latent intelligence within.