

LOOKING AHEAD

In the Context of
Theosophical Society



125th Year Publication

**THE INDIAN SECTION
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Perspectives on the Ideal and Action in Harmony with the Unity of Heart and Mind

The Indian Section of the Theosophical Society completed 125 years on 1 January 2016. Under the prevailing atmosphere of the society in general, and the world, a long march of 125 years is no mean achievement for an organization which has been emphasizing on moral and spiritual regeneration of mankind, of society, and is concerned about the welfare of all living beings. It is because of the sincere effort on the part of the pioneers and former dedicated members of the Section that we celebrate this occasion. But this is not a terminus or an end of a journey. We the members have to carry on our responsibility with greater commitment. It is a great privilege to be a member of the TS and if understood in right perspective, if felt and realized rightly and deeply, then the word membership implies and suggests an activity in which knowledge is deeply linked with action. So, as a former General Secretary of the Indian Section once mentioned: "Let us not be mere members of the TS- let us be active agents for the cause of Universal Brotherhood".

The Theosophical Society, though, always has been trying to spread the noblest of ideas it has neither ever compelled people to become its members nor ever proclaimed that the members of the T.S. alone can understand, grasp and live those values and truth. In the 'Freedom of Thought' it has been categorically stated: 'approval of the Three Objects is the sole condition of membership' and that no one 'has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members'. When the General Council drafted the Text of resolution regarding the 'Freedom of Thought', they did it with implicit faith and trust in members; with great confidence in members of the T.S., that they will receive it in right perspective and with right attitude. They handed over this Text with a sense of deep understanding that the 'Freedom of Thought' will in creative and constructive ways enable the members to explore and then understand the Truth of fundamental harmony and the essential unity among all beings and help them in their endeavour to work positively towards deepening and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood. Prof. Awadhesh Pradhan of the Department of Hindi, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), while addressing our members, distinguished guests and students on the occasion of the Foundation Day of the TS, too emphasized on this essential feature of the TS that it does not seek to confine anyone's mind within the periphery of preconceived ideas and set opinions. Every one is free to explore to delve into the depths and discover for himself for whatever he can of Wisdom and Truth. Impediments and difficulties are bound to be there. Nevertheless, the strength of that trust and confidence placed in us is sure to lead us to the Summit, whatever path we tread through. Then in *that* Freedom of Thought will be the discipline and understanding of highest order.

It must be borne in mind that once a person becomes a member, once he has joined the Society, he becomes accountable to his thoughts and deeds. This certainly and undoubtedly requires a tremendous sense of responsibility, sensibility and moral conscience. This sense of responsibility, duty and honesty is derived from within. Unless it sprouts and grows from within, unless one is honest to one's own self, the actions for carrying out a responsible work, one has been assigned with, will not be spontaneous.

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

Now, the question is can we turn crisis into opportunity? Can we accept problems as a challenge? Can we take privilege as our responsibility? Let us prepare ourselves and 'Enter the Path', and help our fellow pilgrims in their preparation to enable them to tread the Path. It is extremely necessary to understand that the inner must be strong enough to be visible as the outer. Our intentions must manifest as actions. Our thoughts must be powerful enough to generate forces of transformation.

The pioneers and scholars of Theosophy have laid great emphasis on change within. Then only one can think and work in terms of Human Regeneration. And in this regard, the Motto of the TS, the Three Declared Objects and the Principles of Theosophy show the Path. The deeper one reflects and thinks on these lines greater will be the possibilities of working for one's own evolvement, for welfare of society and for the Human Regeneration at large.

Let us accept impediments and hindrances as opportunities which will strengthen the determination to channelize our energy in a positive direction. It is only through continuous correction and efforts that thought as well as practice can advance. When we will realize and become awakened, accountable and responsible for our thoughts and behaviour, there will be a positive, effective and lasting impact of our ideas and actions. We can at least make efforts in that direction with positive bent of mind.

Significant Theosophical work were initiated and done by the pioneers of the TS, and some dedicated members of the Indian Section in past, in order to spread the message of Theosophy and to strengthen the work of the Section. They succeeded to some extent. But with the passage of time when the general morale of the country is not very encouraging from the Theosophical point of view, the serious thinking members realize that much more effort is required to present the philosophy and purpose of our organization before the members as well as people in general. The time has come to assess whether there is correspondence between the ideal and action. The question is of the unity of heart and mind. It is not existing side by side but living together. So, what can be done?

Keeping all these in view a two-day seminar on '**Looking Ahead**' in the context of Theosophical Society was organized by the Indian Section on 18-19 November (2015) at the Section Headquarters, Varanasi. The theme was decided in the meeting of the National Executive Committee (in June 2015) while working out the plan in connection with the 125th year of the Indian Section. Prof. Anand Kumar, President, Indian Sociological Society, delivered the keynote address. The speakers of the seminar were members of the Indian Section as well as two Associate Professors of Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya, one Professor from the Faculty of Education of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), and one Professor from the Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU (who is also a member of the TS). Besides, we had a special talk on the subject related to the theme of the seminar in the first week of February 2016. This number includes the papers presented by the participants, the talk organized in February and a brief report of the seminar.

Apart from the participants who presented their views on the subject, I am thankful to Bro. P.S. Panchakshari, National Treasurer of the Section and Treasurer of Besant Education Fellowship (BEF); Prof. Sushila Singh, Professor Emeritus at BHU and member of BEF & TS. They both were involved in it right from the planning stage of the seminar to the preparing the list of participants. Prof. Sushila Singh prepared the report of the seminar as well. The workers at the Headquarters helped in various ways in organizing the seminar. I thank them all sincerely for their kind cooperation.

If the views presented in this number stimulate and give rise to further thought and discussion, that will be useful.

September 2016
Varanasi

S. Sundaram
General Secretary
Indian Section

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EDITOR

S. SUNDARAM

BACK TO BASICS IS THE WAY FORWARD IN TODAY'S WORLD*

By *ANAND KUMAR***

It is best of times and worst of times. It is a great civilization achievement that the human beings, in general, have learned to value freedom and justice for all beyond barriers of gender, age, race, caste, class, religion and region. There is growing universal recognition of human rights as an integral part of human happiness since the UN Declaration in 1945. Furthermore, humanity is getting more interconnected through media, market, and migration. The awareness about human interdependence is growing due to increased intensity of globalization of finance capital, labour, technology, commodities and information. There is increasing attraction about art of living and power of loving. There is a new appeal of spirituality, spiritual traditions, spiritual practices and spiritual masters beyond sects and domgas. At the same time, it is a time for concern about the prevailing trends in religion and society relations including decreasing tolerance for multi-culturality and declining capacity of truth and reconciliation. The process of 'othering' has become quite extensive. With declining significance of national sovereignty and rising value of globality, cultural spaces and markers have acquired a new significance in power relations and social dynamics.

There is 'return of religion' in public sphere and it is being used to promote identity politics and social networks with dual impact- i. Political solidarity within the faith communities across national frontiers, and ii. Distancing and violent conflicts with the other religious groups with increasing propensity of 'the local' impacting 'the global' in adverse ways. There is increase in the sources of conflict than the resources for conflict resolution. There is expanding scope for the fear of 'the others' and negativity about them than understanding the realities of multi-culturality and respect for diversities. Public sphere is expanding and exploding. Social uses of religion and other cultural markers are multiplying. It is not necessarily promoting spiritual enrichment and ethical living. It is not incentivizing goodness and compassion. Thus the world is going through a perplexing period. No one is clear about what next? Then how can we create a course for way forward? But how can we be without a way forward?

In such a complex and unprecedented context of the modern world system, any endeavour to : a) promote study of religious truths, b) remove religious antagonisms, c) extending tolerance to all by recognizing every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom, d) presenting peace as the watchword, and e) Truth as the aim needs appreciation and admiration. The Theosophical Society and the Theosophists are engaged in it since 1875. In these

* The keynote address delivered on 18 November, 2015.

** President, Indian Sociological Society

long and eventful years of global and Indian history, they have gone through ups and downs; unity and fragmentation; contraction and expansion; attacks and adoration and much more like any deep rooted social movement. But there has been an amazing continuity in the flow of ideas, functioning of the institutions and flowering of activities of the Theosophical Society through wars and peace, foreign rule and freedom, and above all waves of communalization and secularization. They have a great lineage and several icons- Dr. Annie Besant being the most shining and inspiring for generations in India and abroad.

The multi-faceted contributions of Annie Besant towards preparing India to regain her pre-eminence in the spiritual realm through social reforms, educational progress and political freedom is inscribed in golden letters in the saga of the making of modern India. The seminal contributions of the Theosophical Society and Dr. Annie Besant in the freedom movement and spiritual and political awakening of Indian sub-continent has been acknowledged by galaxy of Indian nation-builders. Her followers were among the front ranking freedom fighters, organizers and activists and later led the people as presidents, prime ministers, governors, chief ministers, educationists, judges, writers, journalists and social reformers in India after independence.

Therefore, it will be in the fitness of things to start my humble submission about ‘the way forward’ by remembering and reminding three valuable instructions of Mata Annie Besant in her last speech at the annual convention of The Theosophical Society in 1932 at Adyar:

1. Learn to trust the Divine in us. Their lies our real strength. We are Divine. Most of us are afraid to trust ourselves, but that is a great mistake.
2. The very best of us is when we pour out love to those around.
3. It is just because the world is imperfect we can learn to help. We are not perfect creatures, but let us pour out love.

It is also relevant to remember the prayer of St. Francis before taking the step into awaiting future:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness; light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console;

to be understood, as to understand;

to be loved, as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Let us also add the Serenity Prayer to these pointers about way forward which says:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;

courage to change the things I can;

and wisdom to know the difference.

It is well recognized that all human beings deserve freedom and happiness. There togetherness is possible only in a social setting which is informed by imperatives of justice, dignity and peaceful progress. There human aspirations and needs harmonise very well with the triple objectives of Theosophical Society: i. to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste and colour; ii. to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science; and iii. to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the power latent in man. But what is the state of affairs in everyday life? Are we satisfied with the level of freedom and degree of happiness? Is there growing guarantee of justice, dignity and peaceful progress?

Looking at the world around us, we get a mixed feeling. There is constant conflict between the forces of goodness and evil. When we got the news of end of apartheid regime from South Africa with beaming face of Nelson Mandela the world felt joy of justice. But when we see thousands of Tibetans trying to survive somehow in different countries with the spiritual guidance of the Dalai Lama and hear about the self immolations and imprisonment of hundreds of Buddhist monks, nuns and civilians in Tibet against seven decades of the Chinese occupation, there is deep disappointment. There was only last week a successful culmination of 25 years long journey of people of Myanmar from military rule to democracy under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi. But this week the world got horrified by the killing and injuring of several hundred civilians by Islamic State terrorists in Paris. It has been one of the wisest moves in the new millennium by the United Nations Organization to start celebrating 2nd Octo-

ber, the birthday of apostle of truth and non-violence Mahatma Gandhi, as Day of Non-violence all over the world. But is there any qualitative difference to women of the world as they continue to suffer domestic violence and sexual harassment at places of employment?

In general terms, India and world are being victimized by the practitioners of seven social sins about which Gandhi ji had warned us far back in 1925:

Wealth without work,
Pleasure without conscience,
Knowledge without character,
Commerce without morality,
Science without humanity,
Worship without sacrifice, and
Politics without principles.

If we get closer to the realities of human collectivities and their aggregate picture it may help us to give us clues to the big question about what are the missing values, institutions, processes, policies and programmes for creating a more humane condition to promote evolution of all of us to higher planes of being and becoming. Human happiness and universal harmony are facing at least five challenges in India and the world: i. chronic poverty, ii. ecological destruction, iii. unsatisfactory status of women, iv. religious conflicts and violence, and v. corrupt political system in several parts of the world.

Scholars and research centers tell us that $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world population, which is nearly 3.5 billion people, live on less than \$ 2.5 dollars a day and more than 1.3 billion live in extreme poverty with just \$ 1.25 dollars per day. Most of these resourceless humans are concentrated in the countries of South Asia, Southern Africa and South America. This includes 1 billion children in poverty where 22,000 die each day due to poverty; 750 million lack access to clean water; 800 million men, women and children do not have enough food to eat; and $\frac{1}{4}$ th of all human beings live without electricity. On the other hand, we need just \$ 60 billion dollars annually to end extreme poverty from the face of mother earth which is less than $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the income of 100 richest billionaires.

Ecologically speaking, there is no respite from pollution of air, water and soil due to unbridled industrialization even after global consensus that humans and pollution cannot grow together. Global Warming due to emission of Greenhouse gases is a common knowledge since

1990s. It has given birth to Green politics and environmental movements. But we do not see much response from the affluent classes and countries to have basic corrections in their way of life. The world is sandwiched between over population and depletion of natural resources, We are careless about waste disposal and unmindful about the responsibility of recycling waste into wealth. Loss of biodiversity, genetic engineering, ocean acidification, and ozone layer depletion are prevented to become part of global consensus due to corporate power and politics of economic hegemony of the industrialized nations. We need to wake up about the emerging public health issues as the victims are mostly resourceless, powerless and voiceless.

Let us have a look at the gender injustices prevailing around us which will give some idea about the status of women in much of the post-colonial nation states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Women are far below men in terms of access to education, health and livelihood facilities. Domestic violence has attracted the attention of law-makers after three decades of protest and pleading by women victims and social organizations. But the empirical realities about economic status, role in domestic decision making, female foeticide, dowry harassment, rape and sexual harassment at work places are horrifying in several communities and regions. Political representation remains below 14% in a country where women are 29% in labour force and nearly half in population. The resource deficit of female-headed household and vulnerability of single women remains unattended by the policy makers and governance system. India has been placed at 101 out of 136 countries in terms of Gender Gap, whereas women made enormous contribution to her political struggles and economic processes in colonial and democratic India.

The religious scene of our times is very disturbing as the drift of religions away from spiritual is dangerously growing. Today religion is becoming vulnerable to abuse by political forces who have little orders. Politics of identity and sociology of power are overwhelming common people through politicization of religious distinctions. Traditions of dialogue and tolerance are being challenged by proponents of separatism and conflict. It is disturbing because the ordinary people have paid huge price for their religious identities as the communal politicians have already been successful in splitting the Indian sub-continent in connivance with the colonial strategists on the eve of freedom from foreign rule. Truth and reconciliation about the partition of India is an unfinished task. Public education about unity of all religions and inner diversities of most of the major religious communities is an unattended agenda. India is crying for bridge-builders between faith communities. It can be achieved through inter-faith dialogues. Pooling of resources and networking of capabilities of various faith communities for meeting the needs of education, health and livelihood related services is much awaited function which can only be led by such citizen groups which believe in respect for all religions and essentiality of cultivating spirituality for the betterment of humanity.

Finally, there is growing poverty of politics in post-colonial times. Ethics and politics are divorced. Religion is being exploited for party politics. Our multi-religious heritage is fractured by the opressures of majoritarianism and minoritization in religious terms. It is helping in the politics of identity against politics of common cause and citizenship related needs. It is proving to be fuel in the fire of separatism. Corruption in election, black money in party building and crony capitalism in governance are becoming more and more acceptable. The electorate are amazed to find religious leaders of various communities getting tempted to enter into electorate politics and making full use of their traditional legitimacy to create fear and hate about the 'others' as a necessary component of their electoral strategy.

In short, the India of the vision and expectations of the freedom fighters, including the Theosophists inspired by visionaries and idealist spiritual reformers and leaders like Annie Besant, Tagore, Gandhi and many others, is being endangered by conjunction of serious social, economic, cultural and political challenges. It cannot be saved by getting into blame game or waiting for some miracle like divine intervention to come to solve it. India needs course correction through introspection and reforms. Any India centric initiative will have to identify with the responses to the above five challenges in an integrated manner through constructive ways.

In the case of Theosophical Society and others inspired by visionaries and reformers like Annie Besant, it will mean going back to the basics in terms of vision, values, and programmes. There is already a century old vision of international unity around the objective of universal brotherhood of humanity which is the need of the hour in the anxious times of economic globalization and cultural marginalization. It has the credibility of an illustrious lineage of spiritual masters with their constructive contribution in the field of promoting mutual understanding of religions in dialogical ways. Theosophist can be trusted for not demonizing any religion as they have the habit of approaching all religions with respect for their identity and dignity since their formative years in the 19th century. The secularists do not have this resource at their disposal.

There can be no place of chronic poverty in any humane society. Freedom from want was a promise of the Indian national movement. Provision of basic necessities is listed as the first need for any spiritual evolution. Poverty alleviation is already part of the national consensus in all societies from east to west. But there is need of creating an interrelation with old teachings about compassion and sharing about the victims of poverty and diseases in the personal and collective practices of seekers and practitioners of divine wisdom.

Similarly, respect and curiosity about nature and its ways is an integral part of the Theosophical value system. They have given equal status in their conceptual scheme of triangle with divinity and humans. A Theosophist will find comfort in the company of ecological economists, eco-centric mobilizations and their call for sustainable development processes and green projects.

Deprivation and discrimination on grounds of gender have been protested by the Theosophists under the inspiring leadership of Dr. Annie Besant. Their contribution in the field of women education has been pioneering. It needs a higher level of connect and cooperation to become part of the mainstream social reform movements to promote gender justice in with reference to the women of 21st century society.

Similarly, a corrupt political system after freedom is a dangerous deficit of Swaraj and self rule. It cannot be palatable to the Theosophists as it is a betrayal of the faith of idealist leaders like Annie Besant and other freedom fighters who expected deepening of bonds of ethics and politics after freedom through democracy.

Process wise, there is need to re-invent the ways of early Twentieth Century activism of illustrious path makers under the inspiring leadership of Annie Besant. It was based upon five steps- **i.** presenting and propagating a critique of the given setting and alternative vision for a better tomorrow, **ii.** It was followed by awareness building and organization for the alternatives, **iii.** It led to mobilization of public opinion through various channels including media, literature, and public meetings, **iv.** Advocacy and **v.** political interventions including civil protest and political platforms. Following the footsteps of the giants of yester-years with suitable modifications and updating will energise concerned citizens of our society. This way of collective action will bring new resources and ideas. It may solve the problem of leadership deficit also. It will certainly restore faith of spiritual people in connecting with the challenging issues and their solutions through ethical ways.

It is a difficult turn around. It is risky as there is fear of failure. But we have to recognize, as George Bernard Shaw has observed, that 'Progress is impossible without change and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything'.

Let me end my observations with a poem about recent times and our duty by poet Rajendra Rajan:

मुल्क में इस वक्त
चाहे आंसुओं से सींचो

या पसीने की धार से
अब एक भी अंकुर फूटता नहीं है
निकलती नहीं है
एक भी कोपल
इतनी खराब हो गयी है जमीन
इतनी दूषित हो गयी है हवा
इतना बिगड़ गया है वातावरण
विकास का ढोल पीटते इन बरसों में
अगर चाहते हो अब भी फूटें कुछ अंकुर
निकलें नई नई कोपलें
तो अब कुछ भी बौने से पहले
सुधारनी होगी जमीन
चलना होगा हवा के जहरीले रूख के खिलाफ
बनाना होगा एक नया वातावरण
बहुत मुश्किल है यह काम
पर यही तो है एक काम
मुल्क में इस वक्त.

TOWARDS A FINER AND TRUER SPIRITUAL VISION

By *SUSHILA SINGH**

“No one can write about my life because it has not been on the surface for men to see.”

Sri Aurobindo

Literary critic Prema Nandkumar has opined that India has a natural turn towards spirituality. From the time of Lord Buddha to Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda there has been a marked line of renunciation amongst Indians. For the survival of humanism in the world and evolution of the self and consciousness this renunciatory spirit needs to be fostered and continued. This spirit is the zeal for sacrifice and service in Theosophy, also pronounced as its prime objective. Sri Aurobindo is seen as a power out of the ordinary like a star that dwelt apart. People who met him felt there was mystic fire and light in his eyes, penetrating into the beyond. It is believed that Sri Aurobindo probably saw heavenly visions. After meeting him in his Ashram on 29 May 1928, Rabindranath Tagore noted:

At the very first sight I could realize that he had been seeking for the soul and had gained it, and through this long process of realization had accumulated within him a silent power of inspiration. His face was radiant with an inner light and his serene presence made it evident to me that his soul was not crippled and cramped to the measure of some tyrannical doctrine which takes delight in inflicting wounds upon life.¹

Rishi Aurobindo was looking for the possibility of that spiritual space wherein realization of Truth will be complete. This he saw through that rhythmic speech which, as the Veda puts it, rises at once from the heart of the seer and from the distant home of the Truth, - the discovery of the word, the divine movement, the form of thought proper to the reality which in the words of James Cousins “lies in the apprehension of a something stable behind the instability of word and deed, something that is a reflection of the fundamental passion of humanity for something beyond itself, something that is a dim shadowing of the divine urge which is prompting all creation to unfold itself and to rise out of its limitations towards its Godlike possibilities.”²

Ultimate evolution is the goal and the poetic consciousness can be one path towards that. The Rishi poet writes, “Speech, the expressive Word, has such a summit or absolute of the expressive Word, a perfection which is the touch of the infinite upon its finite possibilities and the seal upon it of its Creator.” (*FP 313*) Word that was perfected in the Vedas by its

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inspired singers can be called *Mantra*, Aurobindo says. In this sense the term *Mantra* is extended to all such perfected expression – speech that has a supreme or absolute power. “The Mantra is the word that carries the godhead in it” and can perpetuate the miracle of the supreme utterance. (*FP* 313).

Towards a vision of spiritual perfect future Sri Aurobindo shows a path: “At present the human mind is occupied in passing the borders of two kingdoms. It is emerging out of a period of active and mostly materialistic intellectualism towards a primary intuitive seeking to which the straining of the intellect after truth has been brought in the very drive of its own impulse by a sort of slipping over unexpected borders. There is, therefore, an uncertain groping in many directions some of which are only valuable as a transitional effort and, if they could be the end and final movement, might land us only in a brilliant corruption and decadence. There is a vitalistic intuitivism sometimes taking a more subjective, sometimes a more objective form, that lingers amid dubious lights on the border and cannot get through its own rather thick and often violent lustres and colours to a finer and truer spiritual vision.” (*FP* 303). There is possibility of a finer spiritual evolution for Aurobindo. Discussing the place of reason in the supreme design, Sri Aurobindo said that under the influence of materialism the west tries to confine man to his material part and denies divine origin and destiny. Focussing on the intellect in Vedanta, he said, “God in man is the whole revelation and the whole of religion When India remembers the teaching she received from Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Madhva, when she realizes what Sri Ramakrishna came to reveal, then she will rise. Her very life is Vedanta.”³

Those who touch the higher realm of spiritual consciousness marvel at the glory of creation. Swami Vivekananda, when he was fifteen years old experienced God’s wondrous creation and he would be surrounded by a glowing light as he went to sleep. Prema Nandkumar writes that the great Tamil poet Subramania Bharati who was an admirer and also translator of Swami Vivekananda had this experience in mind when he wrote ‘The Lord’s Bounty’:

Many a joy hast thou devised, O Lord!
Through the play of consciousness in matter
You have designed this wonderful universe;
These myriad multi-coloured worlds
You have structured in terms of beauty.
High above the worlds of our seeing
You have reared the Temple of Bliss;

And you have taught us too the way to scale it

Relying on the Love Divine.⁴

An indication of the path ahead for humanity is seen in William Blake's art and vision. As an artist and mystic poet Blake is seen as 'revolutionary visionary and a visionary revolutionary'. Blake viewed the political and social upheavals of his day as a cosmic battle between life, manifested as energy, and Death, manifested as restriction. Blake's life and work pose a warning of the dangers in the world perceived as mechanism and man as a mere cog in the industrial design. In his own time, it is not surprising that he was labeled as insane. Blake as a spiritual visionary seeks through his art to renew, radicalize and release human potential, energy and imagination from the limits of laws, inequalities and the 'single vision' of the rational mind. An independent thinker, he found his way of resisting the orthodoxies of his and envisioning the dawn of the 'New Age'. This is not to take Blake as anti-intellectual, Blake's writing celebrates the intellect as part of humanity's rich potential. The child in his poem 'The Schoolboy' longs to sit in Learning's Bower: "I love to rise in a summer morn./ When the birds sing on every tree;/But to go to school in a summer morn./ O! it drives all joy away;...." He severely criticizes the restrictive form of intellectual activity and the institutionalization of learning represented by repressive schooling.⁵

Blake's yearning for freedom from the repressed potential appears in his poem 'Eternity':

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the Joy as it flies
Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

The poem can be read as a prayer for freedom and spontaneity.

"The access to higher consciousness is the purpose of human evolution, and non-violence is the means to access the higher consciousness", says A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in his book *Transcendence: My Spiritual Experiences with Pramukh Swamiji* (2015). Reminiscing his childhood in Rameswaram, he finds three distinctive personalities standing out before him. They are: Pakshi Lakshmana Shastrigal, who was a Vedic scholar and head priest of the famous Rameswaram temple; Rev. Father Bodal, who built the first church on Rameswaram Island; and his father, who was an imam in the mosque. Apparently contrasting figures, the three friends discussed various problems faced by people and trying to find solutions while enjoying the morning cup of tea. Much later in life, those conversations reminded Kalam of the

beautiful long-standing unity of religions and cultures. Such inter-religious dialogue and meetings and arriving at an understanding, he believes is needed today more than ever.

Kalam writes in his book that he has been blessed with some great teachers at different stages in his life and his father is one to start with. His father taught him, he remembers, that one's life is like a vessel or an instrument and that one needs to take with one hand and has to give back with the other. "There is only one light, and you and I are holes in the lampshade," His father would say. Kalam records his father lived a simple life as it unfolded before him but never lost sight of the underlying divinity. Throughout his life, he tried to emulate his father in this regard. His life experiences validated the teaching Kalam received from his father and grew up to believe that all human beings carry divinity inside themselves, and that this realization can lift us out of confusion, misery, melancholy and failure, and indeed guide us on the path ahead.

Dr. Brahma Prakash became his other teacher when Kalam worked as a young engineer with him. He learnt from him that how tolerance of other's views and opinions is essential in building teams and accomplishing tasks that are beyond the individual's capacities. He taught him that life is a precious gift, but it comes with responsibility. With this gift, one is expected to use one's talents to make the world a better place, to live an ethical and well-balanced life, and to prepare for the spiritual life, which is eternal. Kalam acknowledges that his life transformed working with Dr. Brahma Prakash: "Kalam, if you see this world as mean and rude, it will interfere with your concentration. Negative thinking is similar to carrying twenty bags of luggage on a trip. This baggage will make your trip miserable, and progress will be slow."

With Professor Satish Dhawan, Kalam worked as a project director learnt the art of leadership that a good leader takes the responsibility for the failures of his team, but gives the credit of his success to his colleagues. Kalam was overawed with this teacher's academic accomplishments. When he asked him the secret of his brilliance, the answer was: "Academic brilliance is no different than the brilliance of a mirror. Once dust is removed, the mirror shines and the reflection is clear. We can remove impurities by living pure and ethical lives and serving humanity and God will shine through us."⁶

Later, I met Jain muni Acharya Mahapragya, who made me realize the affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in mortal existence. He taught me that our consciousness is the birthplace of our ethics. He said, 'We know something is right when our consciences are clear. Our consciences are our true friends'. Together we wrote *Family and Nation* and articulate two steps to the process of listening to our conscience – to become self-aware so that we can connect to our conscience, and to act on what our conscience says.

His ultimate teacher, however, emerged in Pramukh Swamiji whom he met by chance or divine destiny, Kalam was visiting Bhuj to review the rehabilitation work after the earthquake. There he met one disciple of Pramukh Swamiji who asked Kalam a question: “After the detonation of the first atomic bomb, Robert Oppenheimer remembered the Gita: Time I am the shatterer of the world. What came to your mind after you detonated India’s first atomic bomb?” The reply that came from Kalam was: “The energy of God does not shatter, it unifies.” And then Kalam was introduced to the spiritual leader Swamiji who was an unifier of all energies towards regeneration for his disciples.

Realization dawned on Kalam. He became aware of the basis for divine life is recognizing that the eternal spirit is the inhabitant of the bodily mansion: “That all those living on this planet Earth – around me, away from me, in my country, in other countries; even other species and vegetation and minerals – are all different forms of a great unity.”

He became aware of the oneness in nature, that one noble material keeps weaving new garbs. But the question remained in his mind whether this constant weaving is for the good of humanity. Kalam records his spiritual experiences but the most important for him was the profound communication of consciousness between him and Pramukh Swamiji. In a flash the vision of a harmonious world was before him which could end the struggle between happiness and unhappiness, and peace and war. Kalam realized that the impossibility of a harmonious world can be realized only through the guidance of the Divine and seeing unity in all creations. A harmonious world begins with a harmonious inner world. Scientist Kalam clearly elucidates four steps towards this finer spiritual future. These are: first, search in the right place, remove the dust, open your inner eye and see your destiny waiting for your effort to be realized; second, social service; third, through a vision of fusion science and spirituality; and the fourth, creative leadership. Thus, Abdul Kalam’s vision offers a possibility towards building a peaceful and prosperous world, where all civilizations coexist harmoniously and accommodate each other.

Finer spiritual realization in Swami Vivekananda, Sri. Aurobindo, Jiddu Krishnamurti A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and before them in Mme Blavatsky, Annie Besant and many others led to believe and expound that man is a mortal body or a mind in appearance only but is a divine soul in reality, a spirit, pure and immortal, the master of matter and mind. The purpose of human life is to manifest this divinity through every thought and action – the path to truer ascendance. The following Morning Prayer composed by Guru Nanak beautifully captures the bliss of communion with the Almighty:

There is One God

He is the Supreme Truth.

He, the Creator.
Is without fear and without hate.
He, the Omnipresent,
Pervades the universe.
He is not born,
Nor does He die to be born again.
By His grace shalt thou worship Him.
Before time itself
There was truth.
When time began to run its course
He was the truth.
Even now, He is the truth
And evermore shall truth prevail.⁷

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3. *Bande Mataram*, 22 February 1908.
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THE FUTURE OF THEOSOPHY*

By P. KRISHNA**

Introduction

We must distinguish between Theosophy and the Theosophical Society. Madam Blavatsky said in *The Theosophical World*, Vol. 3 (1938):

“Theosophy is divine wisdom – the wisdom religion – the very essence of philosophical and theistic inquiry. It is of the greatest antiquity and is the source of every religion. Theosophy is not a religion, but religion itself, the one bond of unity which is so universal and all embracing that no man (as no speck – from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and the atom) can be outside its light.

Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of universal truth, love and wisdom, reflecting its radiance on earth while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflection. It was formed to assist in showing to men (and women) that such a thing as Theosophy exists and to help them ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities. It has no wisdom of its own to support and teach. It is simply the storehouse of all truths uttered by the great seers, initiates and prophets of history and of pre-historic ages”.

Accordingly, the founders of the society prescribed the motto for the theosophical society: “There is no religion higher than Truth”. This means Theosophy, like the laws of Nature, stands for universal and eternal truths and a true theosophist is one who is in quest of realizing these truths and thereby coming upon greater and greater wisdom. These truths, like the laws of Nature have no future since they are eternal and universal. They do not change or develop with time. What has a future is the Theosophical Society, depending on how we, the members of the society, grow in our wisdom.

Knowledge and Wisdom

Wisdom is different from knowledge; it cannot be acquired like knowledge from books or lectures which impart ideas and an intellectual understanding. Intellectual understanding changes our opinions but it does not transform our consciousness. By reading about what the

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Buddha said and what other scholars have written about what he said, one can become at best a Professor of Buddhist philosophy but the Professor is not the sage. The Buddha came upon a consciousness that was free from all sorrow, conflict and negative emotions and thus flowered in love, compassion and non-violence. The Professor does not have such a consciousness. Theosophy, as a religious quest, is a quest for the transformation of consciousness and that requires self-knowledge, which is the key to wisdom.

The Buddha in the East and Socrates in the west pointed out more than two thousand years ago, the need for self-knowledge which is the perception and discrimination of what is true and what is false. Such perception ends all illusion thereby ending all disorder in consciousness. Socrates stressed the fact that there is only one virtue and it is order in consciousness. To come upon such order one has to end all disorder which arises from illusions in the mind and illusion can be ended by discerning what is true from what is false. Therefore the quest for wisdom is synonymous with the quest for truth, which is the essence of Theosophy.

One must distinguish here between the knowledge of the truth and the realization of that truth. The knowledge of the truth acts on our ideas but not on our consciousness. It is the re-discovery of the truth, through one's own explorations and perceptions that ends illusion and transforms consciousness. By illusion is meant something our mind takes to be true which is not a fact of Nature; it is merely a construct of thought which has been accepted as true. It also means one may be giving a lot of importance to something that has very little importance. We acquire these illusions from the environment in which we grow, which is different for different individuals. It is these illusions that divide us as we are often attached to them and call them "my religion" or "my culture" or "my values".

The mind is thus conditioned differently in each individual and unless we question our own conditioning and examine it we do not discern what is fact from what is illusion. Socrates therefore stated, "An unexamined life is not worth living" and Madam Blavatsky said, "The mind is the great slayer of the real. Let the disciple slay the slayer"!

Truth here does not mean an accurate description of what took place or a logical conclusion; it comes into existence when a consciousness perceives 'what is', namely the fact, without any distortion. This requires freedom from our conditioning since the conditioning colours perception and distorts it. The perception is then holistic and not from a particular point of view.

The Nature of our Illusions

What is the nature of our illusions? At the most superficial level these are superstitions which create a lot of un-necessary fear and which go away even with scientific inquiry which is

a purely intellectual inquiry. Deeper than these are cultural illusions. These include religious beliefs, casteism, nationalism, attitude towards persons of the opposite sex, value-judgments, preferences of food and dress' etc. These vary from culture to culture and produce likes/dislikes which in turn lead to groupism, division and violence. Only by observing this process operating in oneself and understanding how it creates division can one free oneself from division and discover brotherhood of humanity. So long as this process of attachment to one's own culture, religion, nationality and values continues in our consciousness, the concept of universal brotherhood of humanity remains only a belief or opinion held by the mind and never becomes a fact. Therefore, to be a true theosophist one must free oneself of this divisive process in oneself. When this is done, differences are perceived only as differences and do not create division as they do not produce feelings of like and dislike.

Deeper still are illusions which psychologists call complexes. A man who has been deceived in love can generalize from that experience and become a woman-hater. Fear of authority, hierarchy, feelings of hurt and flattery all belong to such psychological illusions. They give rise to fear, anger, hatred, jealousy and a host of other negative emotions. It needs deep inquiry into oneself to perceive these illusions as illusions and end them, so that the mind is free of such negative emotions and becomes peaceful.

Deeper still lies within us the feeling of being a separate individual, which sages point out is also an illusion. The Buddha, after exploring his own consciousness, said, "Thinking exists but the thinker is not found". It is our identification with our own body and memories that produces this illusion of being a separate self. Only sages who have gone so deep in their quest as to liberate themselves from even this illusion are said to be truly illumined beings, liberated from the limitations of the ego.

So this quest for self-knowledge runs very deep. The sages are telling us that just as there is causation in Nature which science studies to discover the laws of Nature, there is also causation in our psyche. The negative emotions which create disorder in our consciousness arise from illusions in our mind. They can therefore be ended by ending the illusions through the quest for truth. When one sees the falseness of an illusion for oneself, the illusion ends and so does the corresponding disorder in our consciousness. This learning is very different from the accumulative learning of knowledge. Self-knowledge is therefore a process of unlearning the false. The difficulty is that the mind that is in illusion is not aware of the illusion because it considers that to be the truth. So it is important to doubt every conclusion, every opinion, and learn through self-observation whether it is based on facts or on some construct of thought which has not been questioned. That requires approaching oneself afresh with a learning mind.

Each one of us has within our consciousness both the personal self which is the result of our personal experiences and environment in which we have grown and also the universal

capacities of awareness, inquiry, love and compassion. It is important to go beyond the limitations of the personal self and explore what is true and what is false through impersonal awareness, attention, observation and intelligence, Madam Blavatsky writes, “The personal self is the creature of its environment and the slave of physical memory”.” The knowledge of the self (kama-manas, the brain-mind) is based on memory and on the past. That which we call ‘character’ is the result of genetic characteristics; experiences lived in our contact with the world, family etc. The individual is conditioned also by culture, hormonal function and by tendencies accumulated in previous lives”. “As physical man, limited and trammled by illusions cannot reach the truth by the light of his terrestrial perceptions we say He has to know himself, that is acquire the inner perceptions which never deceive before he can master any absolute truth. Absolute truth is the symbol of the eternity and no finite mind can ever grasp the eternal” (Collected Writings Volume 9 p.39).

Conclusion

This then is the real work of a member of the Theosophical Society if he is to become a true Theosophist. The first step in this learning is to be aware of the limitations of the personal self within us and not to identify oneself with it. It is this identification and attachment to the personal self which constitutes the prison of the ego in which a human being is trapped. It is the greatest barrier to the quest for truth because it makes the mind into a personal lawyer always defending me and the mine. It is not really in quest of truth, but is seeking satisfaction and victory for the personal self. It is the root cause of all disorder in consciousness and therefore in society.

Dora Kunz, one of the past Presidents of the Theosophical Society of America, said in 1955:

“There are thousands of members of the T.S. but there are very few Theosophists. It is very easy to sign a piece of paper and say you want to join the T.S. and that you believe in brotherhood; but brotherhood is something we should live instead of talking about it. The T.S. is a testing ground for brotherhood. It is the place to let ourselves grow, to let ourselves understand that we are not to be dogmatic, to let ourselves learn to get along with one another whether we like one another or not. You must be willing to have differences of opinion; you must be willing to stand the acid test, even if you are called names”.

Theosophy demands such a commitment to the quest for truth beyond the personal self. The future of the Theosophical Society depends on how committed its members are to this quest. The truths of Theosophy are eternal, therefore they have no future; it is our future and that of our society which depends on how far we are able to realize those truths in our life.

LOOKING AHEAD

By *SHIKHAR AGNIHOTRI**

Looking ahead is a subject which deals with the very existence of someone or somebody or in this case the TS, because we are in a changing world. Everything is changing within and without. So, this is to be constantly looked into, to remain relevant to the contemporary needs and requirements but not at the cost of diluting the teachings, instead making them more appealing to the prevailing times, taking the help of intuition if possible.

But we cannot look ahead without giving the due attention to the past. Because the past is the basis of the present and the present is the seed for the future. From the past I want to emphasize on the aim with which the TS was founded. Not in the terms of its objects but rather the approach that is to be taken. And a very good expression of that I read in the foreword to the small but valuable booklet by the name of “Five Messages” by HPB to American Section. It says Theosophy commands us to work for Humanity: that service is of a particular character; its nature is spiritual; the method whereof is two-fold:

Firstly, to watch the steps of erring humanity and erect signposts against certain pitfalls.

Secondly, to hold aloft the beacon light of Instruction which cheers the weary pilgrim and inspires him to make his very own the Power which is Peace, and the Service which is Joy.

We all are trying to do this by using the various resources available which include writing articles in the newspapers, arranging lectures for the public and college students etc. Apart from that most of us by this time are aware of the fast pace with which the technology of the modern science has over run our lives. We are becoming so used to it that we just cannot imagine our lives without it. Observing the changes that are taking place in our surroundings the first thing that I feel that can better our effort in propagation of theosophy and which is already being done is, as much use of technology as possible. Because today it is much more convenient for a person to read an update on a social net working site or e-mail rather than taking time out for a two day or three day study course, for which may be he gets time only once a year. For a few weeks now we have been posting the synopsis of our lodge meetings on the social net working site. And believe me it does have its effects. It serves two purposes. Firstly,

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the members who could not attend the meeting also can read the synopsis and at least get an idea about the subject. Secondly, those who are not yet members but who are interested in such subjects are also attracted to study.

At the national and international level we have already seen a considerable development in this direction. The Indian Section now has a webpage which is very informative and suggestive with details of all the Federations, the magazines, the books and upcoming events etc. And this is most astonishing effect of the technology, if properly used, that it tends to develop in us, among the members of different geographical areas, a sense of connectedness, a sense of family which is the real source of strength of the Society. Previously it used to happen only during convention or a study camp or through letters that members from different areas happen to meet or communicate. But now everyone is just a click away and no doubt it does make the bond of friendship stronger by removing the ignorance about the other, ignorance that breeds hesitation.

But is that enough? Yes it is true that by making Theosophy more visible by various means it is possible to give a ray of hope to those who have developed their mental faculties to some extent and have faced or facing their share of highs and lows in life and looking for answers.

But there is a greater challenge when it comes to those, who although having a religious bent of mind do not think that such teachings can be implemented in daily life by an average householder. That, it is the work designated only for some great souls and we are here just to worship them. It is this mentality that we have to fight, within and without, because it does not allow us make a whole hearted effort. This comes up very often during the day-to-day conversations that emotions like anger, irritation, greed, etc. are part of human nature and cannot be got rid of. Why this mentality has become so common? Basically there is a tendency of the mind to compare itself with its surroundings and when the mind sees the majority going in a particular direction it assumes that to be the correct path and to make the matter worse it does not find any real life examples in its immediate surroundings.

In this case, the work as a theosophist is all the more difficult because unlike some other organizations, there is no uniform set of rituals or way of greeting by which a theosophist can be recognised which is also the beauty of the TS as it has carefully kept itself free from any creed. At the same time it is the test that a theosophist has to solely depend upon his behaviour or character to convincingly convey his words. Because this behaviour or character is not just limited to the lodge or the campus of the TS. It extends far and beyond. It permeates each and every aspect of our daily life. And it is the behaviour and character of a person which is perceived first by the surrounding people.

We may say that this is nothing new. We have been doing this for long. I too think the same. But I am sure we all understand that there are no short cuts to this work. And it is in this “sincere effort making” process that one develops patience and perseverance, hope and strength, love and wisdom, which begins to reflect outside in the form of various efforts and in its turn strengthens the organization.

Many of us here may assert this fact by their personal experiences that when we begin to work on ourselves, with every step that we take ahead we see someone asking for assistance from the step that we left behind. For the simple reason that One life pervades all and all units of consciousness have this inherent thirst for Growth, and if there is a little bit of progress made at some unit, the other unit is automatically directed towards it. That is my understanding of the statement, “where there is honey, the bees will come.”

And this is the only way to fight this pessimism or inertia that ideals are for worshipping and not for living. And it can start right where we live, whatever situations we are facing. This attitude completely removes the doubt that what is the value of my effort as a member? That is why I wish to include the following statement by Col. HSO. He says:

“I wish that everybody in the society could realise how certain it is that those Great Brothers who are behind our work keep a vigilant eye upon all of us who with a pure heart and unselfish mind throw our energies into it.”

I do not think we can ask for any more persuasion about the significance of even a small effort made with an altruistic attitude for the society.

Another kind of inertia that very often overcomes us as a member is that it is the job of the office bearers, whether at the federation or the section level to do everything. Yes, it is true that the growth of a unit depends a lot on the enthusiasm and ability of the office bearer but each and every effort, however small, by any member bears an equal significance because it is not the President or the Secretary of the TS or a Section that comes in a day-to-day contact with the people. It is the members like you and me who are the ambassadors of the TS. So we can very easily estimate the amount of responsibility that lies with us as an individual that how we would like to represent Theosophy and the TS in our surroundings and here comes the importance of a lodge.

My personal view is that although the headquarters whether national or international have a significant role to play as a nucleus by being a source of inspiration and vitality but a lodge is that organ of the society which deals with the immediate surroundings on a day-to-day basis.

Although everyone is not destined to work at the headquarters due to individual karma the very same karma gives us an opportunity to work with similar zeal and enthusiasm in our lodges, if we are willing.

A lodge is that nucleus which is the very source and a channel of subtler forms of energies and without a doubt a blessing for that society or area. So, an effort is to be made consciously to have more and more of such vital nucleuses. We may think that easier said than done. Of course it is not easy. A lot of effort has to be put in. And here comes the role of the lodges which are old enough who can give birth to new ones, not as a replacement but as a supplement. It is not any quick fix or short cut that will offer us to strengthen us as an organization. In the words of HPB to WQJ in 1888:

“The multiplication of local centres should be a foremost consideration in your minds, and each man should strive to be a centre of work in himself. When his inner development has reached a certain point, he will naturally draw those with whom he is in contact under the same influence; a nucleus is formed, round which other people will gather, forming a centre from which higher influences are directed.”

To give an example I feel that ten centres with seven members each is much more beneficent, than having one centre with 70 members. On the first look it seems that a gathering of 70 members at one place is a lot better than seven members because we all are aware of how the power of thought increases geometrically with the number of people. Very true. But on giving it a deeper look we can easily make out that due to various deterrents like old age, lack of conveyance, timings, traffic, travelling time etc. out of that 70 only 10-15 are able to attend the weekly study meetings on a regular basis. The rest of the logic becomes very clear that if there are more number of centres, strategically located, may be not a society building, the meetings can be done at some member's home on a rotational basis, which is very practical, we would be able to deter the deterrents that we just talked about and not only the number of members attending the study will increase but also it will make its influence felt in that area as well.

There is one more aspect to this effort of ours. And that aspect is Motive. What is the motive behind doing all this? Because being the students of theosophy we all know that it is the motive which is the real weaver of karma, whether individually or collectively as an organization. So how are we looking ahead? Are we looking ahead as a CEO of a company does? That is, how to make more and more profit. Profit in this case, being the number of members. Or I want to do this because “I” am related to this organization and in which case “I” is more important than the teachings promulgated. If that is the only purpose, then it may not be enough.

How can that be, if the essence of theosophy is altruism. Is this not a better motive; “to bring theosophy to more and more people whether or not they become member. To bring the light of theosophy to the souls caught in between the brutal materialism and exploitative spiritualism.” Also not because “I” am related to the society but because it is the right thing to do because the TS was founded as a channel for diffusing the knowledge of Theosophy and student of theosophy can very easily identify that the teachings and principles of Theosophy are ALL INCLUSIVE. And only that which is all inclusive could offer a solution to any possible situation which is called a problem in any aspect of life of an individual, society, country or the planet. If that, selfless devotion to the cause of theosophy be the motive then we generate a force beyond the mental plane which practically moves unopposed and which as per the law of retribution will bring its consequences. The consequences which will not only be positive but also long lasting.

As far as the membership is concerned I feel there will always be sufficient embodied souls to continue the work of the TS who by their karmic link, whether to the society or the teachings, will get attracted towards it and many of us may be having the real life examples how someone just saw the board of the theosophical lodge, contacted the right person and very soon became a willing student of theosophy.

Last but not the least, working together for some social cause also tends to bring the members closer and TOS is really an asset in this. So ideally I feel that with every TS lodge either there should be a TOS group as well or if not a formal group then at least the TS lodge should engage in some TOS activities. Because then as a group we try to make theosophy a living wisdom which makes the bond stronger among the members.

We all can and are contributing in this effort, whether by sharing our time or finances, by giving a lecture, by writing an article, by acts of charity, by spreading the theosophical literature, by attending a study class, by starting a study centre or a lodge, by meditation or by any other means available.

And very clearly this has been stated by HPB:

“The future of the TS will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion and last but not least, on the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those members, on whom it will fall to carry on the work.”

जीवन की चुनौतियाँ और हमारा दायित्व

शिव कुमार पाण्डेय*

गीता में कृष्ण ने अर्जुन से कहा कि, 'ऐसा भी नहीं है कि तुम और मैं पहले कभी नहीं थे और ऐसा भी नहीं है कि तुम और मैं भविष्य में नहीं होंगे।' कृष्ण जीव की शाश्वतता की ओर संकेत कर रहे हैं। किसी संसारी की तरह मोहग्रस्त हुआ प्रश्नकर्ता अर्जुन कोई और नहीं हम और आप हैं। चेतना की ऊँचाई पर चढ़कर प्रश्नों का उत्तर देने वाला कृष्ण और कोई नहीं हम और आप हैं। कृष्ण को भगवान का दर्जा देकर हमने उन्हें अपने से अलग किया अन्यथा वह अलग कभी थे ही नहीं। जीव की यही शाश्वतता सदा अस्तित्व में बने रहने की अभिलाषा बनकर उतरती है। हम कभी मरना नहीं चाहते। पर क्या हम सचमुच कभी मरते हैं? हमारी समस्या रस्सी (रज्जु) नहीं है, रस्सी में सर्प देखने का भ्रम हमारी समस्या है। हमारी समस्या शरीर की मृत्यु नहीं है हमारी समस्या वह भ्रम है जो हमने शरीर पर स्वयं को आरोपित कर रखा है और जब शरीर नष्ट होता है तो स्वयं को नष्ट हुआ समझते हैं। स्वयं को कृष्ण से अलग समझना और अपने शरीर से तादात्म्य बनाये रखने का दृष्टिकोण हमारी मूल समस्या है। एक हिटलर की व्यक्तिगत सोच विश्व की समस्या बन जाती है। एक न्यूटन या आइन्सटाइन की सोच विश्व विज्ञान के जन्म का कारण बन जाती है। समस्यायें बाहर से कुछ भी प्रतीत हों पारिवारिक, सामाजिक, दैशिक या वैश्विक, मूल में मनुष्य के रूप में वह इकाई है जो सभी समस्याओं का कारण है।

सी. जिनराजदास ने अपनी पुस्तक *Practical Theosophy* में लगभग एक सदी पहले लिखा है – आधुनिक राज्य स्थूल रूप से सियारों एवं भेड़ियों के समूह से कुछ अधिक भिन्न नहीं होता। पशु समूह का मुख्य उद्देश्य शत्रु के आक्रमण से रक्षा एवं खाद्य पदार्थों का सरलता से प्राप्त करना ही रहता है। वही उद्देश्य आधुनिक राज्यों का भी है। इस समूह नीति के अनुसार ही राष्ट्र का संचालन होता

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है। नियम भंग करने वाले अपराधी को सुधार के उद्देश्य से नहीं बल्कि अन्यों को आतंकित करने हेतु दण्ड दिया जाता है।

हम लोग इस पर विचार नहीं करते कि उसने अपराध किया ही क्यों? अपराध की ओर, दुष्कर्म में उसे प्रवृत्त करने वाली परिस्थिति का उत्तरदायित्व किसका है? गरीब मनुष्य का जीवन असफल है; वह सभ्यता का त्याज्य अंश समझा जाता है और हम यह कभी नहीं पूछते कि उसकी गरीबी का उत्तरदायित्व किस पर है? सेना और युद्धपोत आधुनिक सभ्यता के अंग हैं और जो राज्य अन्य राज्यों के समान अपना विध्वंसक सामर्थ्य नहीं बढ़ाता, वह खतरे में है। राज्य के तीनों अंगों शासन, प्रशासन और पुलिस की दृष्टि में व्यक्ति एक पशु है जिसका दमन करना राष्ट्र कल्याण के लिए आवश्यक है। अपराधी, दुष्कर्मी और नियम भंग करने वालों से पुलिस की मैत्री है। जब हम थिओसॉफी के तथ्यों को राज्य की समस्याओं पर लागू करेंगे तब मालूम होगा कि थिओसॉफी का दृष्टिकोण इससे कितना भिन्न है।

एक शताब्दी से ऊपर का समय बीत चुका है तब भारत पर विदेशी शासन था। आज स्वराज है, तो क्या परिस्थितियाँ बदल गई हैं? कृष्णमूर्ति कहते हैं: 'हम मानव लाखों वर्ष पहले जैसे थे वैसे आज भी हैं – असीम रूप से लोभी, ईर्ष्यालु, आक्रमणशील, जलनशील, चिंताग्रस्त और निराश – खुशी और स्नेह के क्षण तो बस कभी-कभी। हम घृणा, भय और भद्रता के अजीब मिश्रण हैं, हम हिंसा और शान्ति दोनों हैं। बाहरी तरक्की तो बैलगाड़ी से जेट विमान तक की हो गई है लेकिन मनोवैज्ञानिक रूप से व्यक्ति बिलकुल नहीं बदला है। किसी गुरु, किसी पुस्तिका, किसी पंडित, किसी पुरोहित, किसी दार्शनिक, ईश्वर या किसी मुक्तिदाता के पास इसका उत्तर नहीं है। कोई भी इस प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं दे सकता – सिवाय खुद के और इसीलिए हमारा खुद को जानना परम आवश्यक है।' वे कहते हैं, "जब आप अकेले होते हैं तो स्वयं से साक्षात्कार करते हैं। तब आप जो हैं आपके सामने आ जाता है और हम पाते हैं कि हम भीतर से खोखले, मंद, बेवकूफ और कुरूप हैं। चिंता और अपराधभाव से ग्रस्त एक क्षुद्र, निकृष्ट और बदतर घटिया प्राणी हैं।" वे कहते हैं 'मेरा अस्तित्व स्वयं की सीमा से सिमटा हुआ नहीं है। मेरे अस्तित्व का फैलाव मेरे संबंधों में है, लोगों के साथ मेरा संबंध, वस्तुओं

विचारों और स्थलों के साथ मेरा संबंध। जब मैं लोगों के साथ अपने से बंधकर एवं बाहरी चीजों के साथ अपने संबंध का अध्ययन करता हूँ तभी वास्तविक अर्थों में स्वयं को समझना आरम्भ करता हूँ। अपने चारों ओर घटती सभी घटनाओं के लिए स्वयं को उत्तरदायी समझते ही सभी समस्यायें समाप्त होने लगती हैं।'

समाज जीवात्माओं का भ्रात संघ है और ईश्वरीय जीवन का एक मूर्त स्वरूप है। प्रत्येक समाज में विकसित और अविकसित जीव होते हैं। दोनों को एक दूसरे के लिए स्वार्थ त्याग करना चाहिए, यही विश्व बंधुत्व का नियम है।

आज दुनिया में पर्यावरण, आतंकवाद और जनसंख्या वृद्धि का संकट है। जनसंख्या वृद्धि के कारण गरीबी बढ़ रही है जो नैतिक पतन, अपराध और दुराचार का कारण बनती है। क्योंकि एक गरीब के लिए जीवित रहना ही महत्व रखता है। बहुत ही कम लोग यह अनुभव कर पाते हैं कि समस्या का वास्तविक कारण मनुष्य के मन में है।

राधा बर्नियर ने कहा कि, 'मेरे विचार में इस आंतरिक चुनौती की ओर ध्यान आकर्षित करना ही थिओसॉफी का कार्य है जो बाह्य परिस्थितियों से निपटने से कहीं ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण है।'

उन्होंने कहा कि यदि मानव मन परिवर्तित न हुआ तो क्या समाज स्थिर रह सकता है? महात्माओं के एक पत्र में कहा गया है कि 'प्रत्येक छोटी या बड़ी बुराई का मूल कारण मनुष्य के कर्म में है और प्रकृति में मनुष्य ही एक ऐसा प्राणी है जो अपनी बुद्धि से कार्य करने में स्वतंत्र है।' बाहरी चुनौतियाँ हमने उत्पन्न की हैं क्योंकि हम अपने आप को राष्ट्रों, समूहों और विभिन्न श्रेणियों में बांट लेते हैं और किसी एक समूह का अंग बन जाते हैं। वे महात्मा आगे कहते हैं 'इनके लिए न तो प्रकृति और न कोई परिकल्पित देवता दोषी है बल्कि स्वार्थपरता से विकृत मानव स्वभाव है। इन थोड़े से शब्दों पर अच्छी तरह विचार करो' – यह चेतावनी थी थोड़े से शब्दों पर अच्छी तरह विचार करो। थिओसॉफी कहती है कि समस्या की जड़ मन की स्थिति है। यह एक सत्य है। हममें से प्रत्येक के जीवन में किसी न किसी प्रकार की कठिनाइयाँ

आती ही हैं। परिवार में और व्यवसाय में संघर्ष, निराशा, कुछ पाने की लालसा और न मिलने की कृण्टा होती ही रहती है। प्रत्येक व्यक्ति में विभिन्न प्रकार के विक्षोभ उठते रहते हैं परन्तु वह अपने मन के बजाय वातावरण को अपनी व्यक्तिगत समस्याओं का कारण मानता है। इसलिए वह सदा परिस्थितियाँ बदलने का प्रयास करता रहता है, या फिर परिस्थितियों से दूर भागता है या फिर दूसरों को दोषी मानता है। वह खुद को ठीक करने का प्रयत्न नहीं करता। संसार के सभी राष्ट्रों और लोगों के हित एक दूसरे से जुड़े हैं इसलिए किसी भी समस्या का समाधान आंशिक नहीं हो सकता थिओसॉफिकल दृष्टिकोण व्यापक होना चाहिए।

एच.पी.बी. ने कहा, 'मनुष्य के मन में उसके अंतर्बोधों को जागृत रखना हमारा कर्तव्य है।'

दुनियाँ में अनेकों क्रान्तियाँ हुईं; युद्ध हुये, सभ्यताओं का उदय और अंत हुआ। अनेक व्यवस्थाओं ने जन्म लिया और उनका भी अंत हुआ। बदलते रहना जगत का स्वभाव है। हमारे देश में लोकतंत्र है। विद्वान लोग कहते हैं कि यह सबसे अच्छी व्यवस्था है। क्या इस लोकतंत्र का प्रत्येक प्राणी सुखी है ? क्या लोकतंत्र सभी चुनौतियों का उत्तर है ?

थिओसॉफिकल सोसायटी वर्तमान विश्व के संदर्भ में कुछ महत्वपूर्ण बातों की ओर संकेत करती है कि केवल बाह्य परिस्थितियों से निपटना पर्याप्त नहीं है। बाह्य चुनौती मन की आंतरिक स्थिति का परिणाम है। मनुष्य में परिवर्तन के बिना समाज में परिवर्तन नहीं हो सकता। यह परिवर्तन दृष्टिकोण का व्यापक होना है। अभी तक समस्याओं के हल इसलिए असफल रहे हैं क्योंकि वे विभाजित मन से उत्पन्न होने के कारण आंशिक थे। आमतौर पर ऐसे हल सामयिक, समूह विशेष के हित के लिए होते हैं। इसलिए ये हल सर्वग्राही नहीं होते। आज की समस्याओं के लिए व्यापक दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता है जो थिओसॉफी प्रस्तुत करती है।

आज हम यहाँ भारतीय शाखा की 125वीं वर्षगाँठ के उत्सव के मंच पर खड़े हैं। हम सतह पर रहकर कोई बात नहीं कर सकते। हमें सतह से ऊपर उठना होगा।

मैं समझता हूँ कि यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति नहीं है कि जो कुछ भी हमारे सूत्रधारों और अगुआकारों ने विश्व को दिया है वह आज भी वर्तमान सन्दर्भ में उतना ही हितकर है। हम पहले हैं जब हमने धर्म, विज्ञान और दर्शन का समन्वित स्वरूप प्रस्तुत किया। हम पहले हैं जब हमने विश्व में फैले अन्धकार के बीच रोशनी की एक किरण प्रदान की। कुछ लोग नासमझी में **Classical, Traditional** पारंपरिक कहकर थिओसॉफिकल साहित्य की उपेक्षा करते हैं पर मैं यह कहना चाहूँगा जिन पुराणों को हमने कपोल कल्पित व्यर्थ की कथा कहकर घर के किसी कोने में फेंक दिया था उन्हीं पुराणों में से विष्णु पुराण को मैडम ब्लावत्सकी ने लगभग 139 बार अपनी सीक्रेट डाक्ट्रिन में भिन्न-भिन्न संदर्भों में उद्धृत कर नवीन दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत किया है। हमारे ऋषियों ने सामयिक मानवीय चेतना के उन्नयन के लिए जो कुछ भी, जैसा भी, कभी प्रस्तुत किया था उसे शेखचिल्ली की कहानियाँ कहकर फेंका जाना हमारा दुर्भाग्य है। इसी प्लेटफार्म से डा. एनीबेसेन्ट ने कहा था कि हमारे पास हीरे हैं जिन्हें हमने पत्थर समझकर फेंक रखा है। जब हम अपना मार्ग तय करने के लिए आज विचाररत हैं तो उन उपादानों का आधार बनाया जाना आज भी हितकर है और आगे अभी सदियों तक रहेगा जब तक मानवता वह लक्ष्य नहीं प्राप्त कर लेती जिसे हमारे सूत्रधारों ने हमारे समक्ष रखा है।

ऐसा भी नहीं है कि प्रश्नों का समाधान अर्जुन के पास नहीं था परन्तु जब तक अर्जुन कृष्ण से अलग रहेगा तब तक उत्तर कृष्ण के ही पास होगा। कृष्णमूर्ति ने प्रश्नों के भीतर घुसकर रास्ता ढूँढ़ने के लिए कहा जो मन समस्यायें पैदा करता है उसका समाधान उसके पास नहीं है। मन के पास समाधान हो तो समस्या ही क्यों पैदा करे। इसलिए कोलम्बस ने बड़ी सुन्दर बात कही – **Let us sleep on the problem.** (समस्याओं पर सो जाइये) कहने का अर्थ है कि जिसका समाधान जागृत चेतना के पास नहीं है उसका समाधान गहरी चेतना के पास अवश्य है। हम जीवन की चुनौतियों से भागते हैं और कुछ लोग हैं जो चुनौतियों को स्वीकार ही नहीं करते बल्कि अनजानी चुनौती से जूझने के लिए तैयार भी रहते हैं। थिओसॉफी के तीन मूलभूत सिद्धान्तों और तीन महान सत्यों को बिना आधार बनाये हम अपनी सोच नहीं बदल सकेंगे।

(1) एक सर्वव्यापी, नित्य, असीम तथा अपरिवर्तनीय है जो अभिव्यक्ति से बौना हो जाता है। (2) जगत आवर्तिता (periodicity) के सिद्धान्त पर चलता है। (3) सभी जीवात्मायें उस एक मूलभूत विश्वव्यापी आत्मा की चिंगारी हैं जो एक आवश्यक तीर्थयात्रा के लिए अपने स्रोत से निकली हैं। तीन सत्य हैं : (1) आत्मा के विकास और वैभव की कोई सीमा नहीं है। (2) जो जीवन सब में व्याप्त है वह नित्य है उसे केवल अनुभव किया जा सकता है और तीसरा (3) मनुष्य स्वयं अपना न्यायकर्ता है दण्ड और पुरस्कार को देने वाला।

इसलिए हमारे चिंतन का 'कैनवस' परिदृश्य बड़ा होना चाहिए, हम टुकड़ों में इन्हें नहीं देख सकते। अपना मार्ग खोजना है और समस्याओं का समाधान पाना है तो कुछ मूल बातें हैं जिन पर मैं सबका ध्यान, आकर्षित करना चाहूँगा। पहला – सोसायटी के वे उद्देश्य हैं जिन्हें लेकर 1875 में थियोसॉफिकल सोसायटी की स्थापना हुई थी। थियोसॉफी का आन्दोलन इतना समृद्धशाली है कि प्रायः सामान्य मन मस्तिष्क उसे स्वीकार करने को तैयार नहीं होता। जो ईर्ष्या, द्वेष, भय में जीने को ही जीवन मानते हैं उन्हें भ्रातृत्व की बात कैसे रुचिकर लगेगी। बाड़ों को, परिधानों को, रीति रिवाजों और परंपराओं को जिन लोगों ने धर्म समझ लिया है वे कैसे सब धर्मों के प्रति समभाव रख सकेंगे और वास्तविक धर्म को समझ सकेंगे।

जब शंकराचार्य आये तो उन्होंने 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि', 'तत्त्वम्सि' कहकर एक बार पुनः संकेत किया कि 'भ्रातृत्व कोई अवधारणा नहीं एक सच्चाई है। उपनिशदों के ये महावाक्य इस तथ्य को इंगित कर रहे हैं कि मैं तुम और वह एक दूसरे से भिन्न नहीं हैं। जीव-जीव में भेद एक आरोपित भ्रम है, माया है। मेरी आत्मा, तुम्हारी आत्मा, मेरा मन, तुम्हारा मन, जैसा कोई सच नहीं है। एक विश्वात्मा, एक वैश्विक मन ही वास्तविकता है। धूल के कण में, हीरे जवाहरातों में, महकते फूलों में, चहकते पक्षियों में, झरनों में, पहाड़ों में, कुलांचे भरते हिरनों में, दहाड़ते शेरों में, मेरी आंखों में, मेरी बातों में, तुम्हारी आंखों में, तुम्हारी बातों में सब जगह है तो सिर्फ वही एक। विराट परिदृश्य पर पैनी नजर पड़े तो भिन्नता के अद्वितीय सौन्दर्य में एकत्व का बोध जगे, बुद्ध की विपश्यना जगे। बौद्धिक ज्ञान भले ही इसे काल्पनिक दर्शन की संज्ञा दे पर अंतर्प्रज्ञा कहती है

यह व्यावहारिक दर्शन है जो सभी मनुष्य का लक्ष्य है और देर या सबेर सभी को इसे प्राप्त करना ही होगा। विश्व बन्धुत्व सभी चुनौतियों का सरल उपाय है परन्तु विश्व बन्धुत्व को प्राप्त करना स्वयं में एक चुनौती है।

बोधगया में निर्वाण प्राप्ति के पश्चात भगवान बुद्ध के हृदय से निकले उद्गार कितने मर्मस्पर्शी हैं। कहते हैं – ‘बिना रुके अनेक जन्मों तक संसार में दौड़ता रहा। गृह (काया) का निर्माण करने वाली (तृष्णा) के कारण बार-बार जन्म लेता और दुख भोगता रहा। हे गृहकारक (तृष्णा) मैंने तुझे देख लिया है (साक्षी हो गये हैं) तू फिर घर नहीं बना पायेगी। तेरी सभी कड़ियाँ भग्न हो गई हैं। गृह का शिखर गिर गया है। चित्त संस्कार रहित होकर शुद्ध हो गया। तृष्णा का क्षय हो गया।’

बुद्ध कोई व्यक्ति नहीं है – बुद्ध एक सोच है जहाँ संस्कारों और तृष्णाओं का क्षय हो चुका है। जहाँ ‘मन’ अपनी दीवारें तोड़कर वैश्विक मन (universal mind) के साथ एक हो चुका है। हिटलर कोई व्यक्ति नहीं था एक सोच थी जिसने हजारों प्राणों की बलि दे दी। गौतम कोई व्यक्ति नहीं एक सोच है, देवदत्त एक सोच है। एक प्राण छीनता है दूसरा बचाता है और एक मानक स्थापित करता है कि मारने वाले से बचाने वाले का अधिकार ज्यादा है। *गुरुदेव चरणेषु* में जे. कृष्णामूर्ति ने उद्धृत किया है कि संसार में दो तरह के लोग हैं एक जो ईश्वरीय योजना के साथ चलते हैं और अच्छे कार्य करते हैं और दूसरे वे जो विपरीत चलते हैं और विसंगतियाँ पैदा करते हैं।

सोच गौतम को बुद्ध बनाती है, कृष्ण को भगवान बनाती है, कबीर को संत बनाती है। कोई भी व्यक्ति हो वह अपनी सोच का परिणाम है। सोच बदली जा सकती है तो संसार बदला जा सकता है। संसार सोच का परिणाम है। सैकड़ों देवदत्त मिलकर जिस समाज की रचना करेंगे वहाँ ईर्ष्या द्वेष का ही साम्राज्य होगा और अनेकों बुद्ध जिस समाज का निर्माण करेंगे वहाँ करुणा का ही आधिपत्य होगा। सोच ‘ऊर्जा’ है और ऊर्जा को पदार्थ में बदला जा सकता है। विज्ञान भी यही कहता है पदार्थ और ऊर्जा दोनों एक हैं। इसलिये सोच से नया शरीर, नया मन, नया मस्तिष्क बनाया जा

सकता है। नई चादर बुनी जा सकती है। मनुष्य को स्वतंत्रता है कि वह देवदत्त बने और ईश्वरीय योजना के विपरीत कार्य करे या फिर बुद्ध बने और ईश्वरीय योजना के अनुरूप कार्य करे।

अब समय आ गया है कि हम यह केवल स्वयं ही न समझें बल्कि इसका प्रचार भी करें कि मनुष्य के जीवन में प्रारब्ध जैसा कोई सच नहीं है। सिर्फ एक ही महा-प्रारब्ध है जिसका प्रारूप हम सब की आत्मा में अंकित है। तीन सत्यों में से एक इसी ओर संकेत करता है कि हमारी आत्मा के विकास की कोई सीमा नहीं। थिओसॉफिकल सोसायटी में होने का यह भी अर्थ नहीं है कि हम स्वयं को संसार से अलग करके यह दर्शाएँ कि हम कुछ विशेष हैं और लोगों से भिन्न हैं। संघर्ष, विवाद और भ्रान्ति की अस्तव्यस्तता के इस संसार में थिओसॉफी ज्ञान के प्रकाश का एक अविचल प्रवाह है जो अपने साथ सुख, शान्ति और उन्नति का एक आश्वासन लेकर आयी है। समस्याओं को चाहे जितना रूप दें, नाम दें या वर्गीकरण करें सबके मूल में हमारा अपना स्वार्थ ही है। चुनौतियाँ चाहे जिस क्षेत्र में हो वैयक्तिक, पारिवारिक, सामाजिक, देशिक या वैश्विक। प्रमुख बात तो यह है कि हम उनका सामना किस प्रकार करते हैं डरकर या डटकर। आज चारों ओर दुःशासन तो बहुत हैं जरूरत सिर्फ कृष्ण की है।

‘नीरव नाद’ (*The Voice of the Silence*) में दो मार्ग बताये गये हैं एक मार्ग है मोक्ष का और दूसरा मोक्ष के त्याग का। मोक्ष के आनन्द का त्याग ही हमारी सोसायटी के कर्णधारों का मार्ग है और वही हमारा भी। थिओसॉफी कहती है कि मनुष्य का मनुष्य के प्रति कर्तव्य है जिसे हर दशा में पूरा किया जाना चाहिए। यदि ऐसा न किया गया तो अगले जन्म में वह आध्यात्मिक रूप से दिवालिया हो जायेगा। *The Secret Doctrine* में कहा गया है कि यदि हम अपने पड़ोसी को पीड़ा देने का विचार त्याग दें तो संसार का दो तिहाई पाप स्वतः समाप्त हो जायेगा।

THEOSOPHY AND THE MAKING OF INDIA AS A NATION

By RACHNA SRIVASTAVA*

The Theosophical Society has been working relentlessly for the past 125 years in India with its motto of '*Satyannasti Parodharmah*'. The motto which was lived by Dr. Annie Besant, who gave up so many comforts of her life; easier and known paths of life to embrace paths unpursued; who gave up her family, even her country, in pursuit of the Truth.

It is very apt for us as members of the Theosophical Society to introspect and reflect on the course of action so far and from here to our future path and goal.

Lately there has been a lot of discussion on tolerance and intolerance in India, allegations and counterallegations have been levelled against each other by the two groups. It was all politically motivated or not, in the wake of Bihar elections, we cannot and need not go into this debate but what comes out of this whole drama is the idea that are we again Marathi, Gujrati, Tamil, Punjabi and Bihari and not Indian? The question that Dr. Besant had raised almost 100 years ago is still looming large over us. The question was, "where is the man who says: "I belong to India, she is my motherland and her interests are mine".

With Dr. Besant's this question I begin my paper. Through this paper, we would try to find some answers to a few key questions:

1. What is nation and nationalism?
2. Isn't India a Nation?
3. What are the challenges that India faces as a Nation?
4. How theosophy addresses these challenges?

Let us now deliberate upon the first question what is a nation and nationalism and what goes into the making of a nation.

Nationalism is a feeling. It's a way of corporate living and thinking. It is an abstract idea which knows no physical boundaries. Swami Vivekananda defined nationalism and freedom as arising from an understanding of self that stresses universality of religious experience. Swamiji's views on nation and nationalism can be summarised in these words – 1. The strength

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of nation is in spirituality. 2. Each nation represents one theme in life. 3. Common hatred or love unites a nation. 4. The ability of nations depends on the goodness of man, and 5. Nations must hold to their national institutions. According to J.S. Mill the roots of nationalism are nurtured by people who share a common identity in the form of historical memories, pride, humiliation, pleasure and regret attached to common incidents of past.

A nation is a social concept used to designate larger groups or collectives of people with common characteristics attributed to them including language, traditions, customs, habits and ethnicity. It is a cultural-political community that has become conscious of its autonomy, unity and particular interests. A nation is not a casual conglomeration but a stable community of people. It is formed as a result of lengthy and systematic intercourse, as a result of people living together generation after generation. It is formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.

Nationalism is a shared group feeling seeking independence for its culture and/or ethnicity that holds that group together. It is a belief/or political ideology that involves an individual identifying with or becoming attached to one's nation. It involves national identity by contrast with the related concept of patriotism which involves social conditioning and personal behaviours that support a state's decisions and actions.

Two major bodies of thought address the causes of nationalism:

1. The modernist perspective describes nationalism as a recent phenomenon that requires the structural conditions of modern society in order to exist.
2. The primordialist perspective describes nationalism as a reflection of the ancient evolutionary tendency of humans to organize into distinct groupings based on an affinity of birth.

The modernist interpretation of nationalism perceives that nationalism arises and flourishes in modern societies that have industrial economies which are self-sustainable, have a central authority capable of maintaining unity, have a centralized language or a group of languages.

In simple words, we can say that nationalism is a way of corporate living and thinking. This is what makes it different from state. While state is a physical entity which has a territory with people living in it, and a sovereign government ruling over it. Nation is an abstract entity, nationalism is a feeling which can be seen only through the actions of the people sharing the common feeling.

Swami ji's views on nation and nationalism that were earlier mentioned have some very important postulates for us when we attempt to answer the second question which is: 'Isn't India a nation?' Strength of nation is in spirituality. Common love or hatred unites a Nation. Nations must hold to their national institutions.

No, India was not a nation till the middle of 19th century. It was not a cohesive society. It was divided into several states ruled by various dynasties. British rule with its exploitative policies brought Indians on a common platform. Just as Swami ji had said common hatred or love unites a nation. India became a nation united by common hatred against British policies. The measures adopted by British government in India to facilitate its own rule brought Indians together, face to face with each other and people realized that they have common sufferings and the root cause of their suffering was the foreign rule. Rail, postal services, education brought Indians from north to south and east to west together. They became part of a garland joined by the thread of nationalism. Till 1947, India was not a State, as it did not have a sovereign government but it was a nation. It was made into a nation by reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore, Gokhle, Tilak, Gandhi and Dr. Besant and Theosophy. These reformers evolved an idea of an Indian past to meet the British challenge.

To quote Dr. Annie Besant "scepticism and materialism had eaten out the life of the nation. The crowds of the so-called English-educated class were followers of Huxley, Mill and Spencer, and had entirely forgotten their own literature, were contemptuous of the past and hopeless of the future." She says that people had lost national spirit and she was told that India was dead, while Dr. Besant was saying that India was not dead, but sleeping. Owing to the efforts of Great Social Reformers of 19th Century, India became a Nation but in post-independence this feeling of nationalism was fractured. While earlier India was nation but not a State; post-independence India became a State but was no longer a Nation.

Dr. Besant in her two articles – 'The Work of the Theosophical Society in India' and 'Theosophy and the Raising of India', compiled in the book *The Birth of New India*, makes an apt diagnosis of what ails Indian nationalism and suggests the corrective measures too. What she said almost a hundred years ago, still holds true. We will discuss this under question four in more detail.

Now we come to question number three – What are the challenges that India faces as a nation today?

As the topic of the Seminar suggests, we can pause for some moments and reflect upon

the past but must march ahead with a firm stride to make the present and future better. So very briefly we will point out the challenges before Indian nation and focus more on diagnosis and right medicine for the ailment. So, the challenges, as we can all see, before nation building in India are – communalism, regionalism, intolerance, economic disparity, casteism, lack of morality, political and financial corruption, lack of good governance and some external factors like terrorism. These factors have led to the decay and degeneration of Indian Nation. What can be the corrective measures, what to do to make India a strong Nation. Why after more than 65 years of Independence, of the making of India as a State, we have to ponder upon this question of Indian Nationhood. We have a common language, a constitution, a sovereign government, yet that consciousness, that social structure is lacking which evolves a State into a Nation.

Let us now come to looking ahead; to how can theosophy contribute to the making of India as a Nation.

Dr. Annie Besant in her two articles ‘The Work of Theosophical Society in India’ and ‘Theosophy and the Raising of India’ had very succinctly diagnosed as to what caused India’s decay as a nation and what Theosophy can do and was doing in this regard. I find this analysis still relevant, so I present it before you as a path, as a plan for the present Theosophical Society to walk upon, act upon.

We all know that ancient India was a mighty nation, prosperous and wealthy, with arts and manufacturers, with the practical science of life, with lofty intelligence that gave India its mighty literature and philosophy, its marvellous spiritual treatises. Alongwith mighty religion and magnificent intelligence, there was a vast material prosperity. This material prosperity was so great that even after centuries of invasion and conquest, India was a wealthy nation, so wealthy that, to use the words of Phillimore, “the droppings of her soil fed distant nations.”

The three pillars of India’s nationhood were – religion, intelligence and material prosperity. The three elements even today form the basis of nationhood. However, just as in ancient India, in modern India too, these pillars have decayed, have taken downwards step. Out of these three, spirituality was the first to step downwards. And then, learning, lofty ideas lost their originality. There was a decay of creative intelligence. And with this, intelligence of the nation too lost, its creative power, originality, its inspiration. The third step was in the gradual loss of material prosperity. Her arts, no longer fostered by religion and intelligence, gradually lost their beauty. Her industries no longer guided by keen intelligence gradually grew weaker. And with these decayed the material prosperity of the land.

As Dr. Besant says, “Such are the three steps of the national decline. First, spirituality, second, the higher intelligence; and third, material prosperity. If India is to rise again, if she is to stand high among the nations, how shall that be conducted? By retracing the past, by remounting the past steps in order. She must begin by reviving the spirituality, the root source of all. Then she must build and revive education and when spirituality is re-established, when education is wisely chosen and wisely directed, then the restoration of the national prosperity is inevitable”.

As long as religion was mighty, the nation flourished, when religion decayed, the nation decayed. The reason behind this is not emotional but rational. Then, the question arises – what is the fundamental truth of religion? It is the Unity of the Self. One Life in All. With this realization only, a nation can live and grow. It brings with it the readiness to subordinate, private interest to the common good, the readiness to sacrifice oneself for the sake of the larger self of the nation. You can not have a nation, when the members of the nation do not recognize that the country has greater claim on them than any narrower circle.

When each man thinks for himself, fights for his own ends, follows his own aims, seeks his own interests without regard to the common interest, that nation is a dying nation. The men who live only for themselves are slaves. No liberty is possible until character is built and man’s sense of duty to the country rules supreme. That sense, the civic virtues grow out of religion, the religion which recognizes, the unity of all, and that nation is a single body and that if one organ is suffering, the whole of the body must inevitably be suffering. This notion of suffering of man as the suffering of all, forms the very basis of the idea of universal brotherhood, one of the basic tenets of Theosophy; and of Nation building.

Theosophy is always teaching the value and essential identity of all religions. At present the various religions separate Indians into more or less hostile camps; Theosophy with its message of peace, can bind them into one. Within Theosophy followers of all religions meet as brothers. Each remains faithful to his religion but respects that of his neighbour. The friendship of all religions which is essential for the making of an Indian Nation, is already present in Theosophical Society. All religions have one origin and one goal; this Theosophy is ever proclaiming and proving. Theosophy instead of seeking to ignore religion, strengthens each man in his own faith and fills him with love and respect for that of others.

A nation can be built only through man making/character building. Nationalism and freedom arise from an understanding of self that stresses universality of religious experience and spiritual awakening. The basis of Indian culture is acceptance of good in all religions. From time immemorial, India has accepted with open arms people of all religions, races and cultures.

This is why we call Indian culture an amalgamation of all cultures. The nature of Indian nationhood can be defined not only by secularism but by acceptance. There is a marked difference between having tolerance towards all religions and accepting them. Ours is a society where Sufis and Bhakti saints have brought in a cultural acceptance for each other. Every religion aims at making man a better human being because humanity is the supreme religion. When nature's best creation man came into being (best because only man could evolve his infra-rational consciousness into supra-rational and global consciousness and could thus survive despite being physically weaker than other species), there was no religion or caste or language. Man created language, religion and caste for his own convenience and forgot the real reason why *he* was created. This indulgence in self, caused social disharmony and discrepancies and human beings were divided. An understanding of the real meaning of religion and spirituality is essential to reaffirm Indian nationhood and to move it ahead on the path of development.

Spirituality doesn't mean renunciation of world. Spirituality is transition from egocentric and rational consciousness to a supra-rational and global consciousness. The aspiration or quest for a higher global consciousness beyond the rational mind and the scientific and systematic approach to realise this higher consciousness in the individual and the collectivity is the essence of spirituality.

The Vedas and Upanishads contained ancient Indian spiritual traditions. The architects of Indian civilization tried to communicate this higher knowledge to all people through religion and social organization. But this attempt failed somewhere in the middle and could not reach its goal of giving a spiritual direction to human life and spirituality and religion were reduced to dogmas. The need of the hour is to rediscover and reshape religion and spirituality and apply it to the whole of the individual and collective life. A belief or philosophy which is only materialistic cannot lead to the making of a nation. If a Nation is to sustain itself, it must have a philosophy as its basis which leads to the well being and progress of mankind.

In this age of globalization, more and more people are seeking a moral and mental anchor to sustain themselves in this fast pace society. They are searching for their identity which can be provided by nationalism, religion and spirituality. As such, there is need to give more emphasis upon the right meaning of religion. The real essence of India's religion and spirituality is in the observance of love, service and sacrifice and renunciation. Swami Vivekananda used to say that if you worship an idol it is religion but if you feed a hungry man, if you help a fellow being; then you are real human. To see God in others and worship that God is true religion.

Another area where Theosophy has been contributing and can do even more for Nation-

building, is the area of education. Religious and moral education is the fundamental for the building of individual and national character. As such, the object of education should not be to merely pass examinations, but to evolve the mental faculty, to make man a reflection of divine intelligence. India needs both scientific and literary education. A nation owes to its scientific knowledge, its commercial and industrial growth.

If India has to regain her greatness she has to come back in terms with her spiritual legacy and again produce men of characters. We need an education system that not only polishes us from outside but also from inside. A system which flushes out our animal propensities and helps the human within us to grow towards divine. A system which helps develop the *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* elements in men. First manifests as service to fellow human beings; second as beauty and harmony; and third is conscious will power, strength of fearlessness. And fourth characteristic essential for human beings is wisdom, intuition and discerning intellect. These four characteristics make man different from animals and make him realize not only '*Dharma*' but also '*Swadharmā*'.

This realization of '*Swadharmā*' should be the purpose of education. '*Swadharmā*' towards Nation, society, fellow human beings and to oneself or to go even further, teach the human beings to live as human beings together on a finite earth, as long ago J. Krishnamurti had envisioned and then the search for an abstract ideology could cease.

Education is the most vital resource of Development. The quality of life of a nation depends on the quality of education given to its young minds. Education is the tool which helps unravel the knowledge which is ingrained in soul. As Albert Einstein had said, "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school." The purpose of education is realization of self. The pillars of education as prescribed by Dr. Annie Besant are literary education, technical education, religious, mental, moral and physical education. A child is a consciousness born in a new body. This consciousness may be wiser than people older in age. As such education should be chosen carefully. The task of the teacher is to help a student realize his consciousness. This can be achieved only through purity and concentration.

Education should not be commercialized because then it is reduced to a business where student is paying fees and teacher is selling his skill. In the present education system there is lack of inculcation of good habits which gradually take the form of individual's character. Education should be a harmony of Vedant and Science. Religion (religion of brotherhood) should be the backbone of education. This education would eventually make self-confident and self-realized man and such a man as this sees his own reflection in fellow beings. This education will make man self-reliant.

The discord of our current system of education from the ideal is glaringly conspicuous. Our aim should be nothing less than producing strong, believing, vigorous young men, sincere to the backbone, with not only great physical strength but tremendous mental strength and with a large heart ever ready and eager to serve the fellow beings as the aspects of God.

Education would lead to material prosperity but this prosperity should not lead to economic inequality. Again religion comes to our rescue. We should not forget 'one life in all'; Unity with self and universal brotherhood which our religion teaches us. The practical problems of life can be solved with the help of the deeper truths of religion. For this reason Theosophy emphasizes upon religion, upon education and when these two things are done rightly, material prosperity follows.

No nation can be strong unless it has men of noble characters, who are patriots, who are lovers of their land. Nation building through man making should be our gospel, the *mantra* to make India a strong nation.

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EDUCATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF LOOKING AHEAD

By *ATUAL BHATNAGAR**

The Indian Section of the Theosophical Society has completed a hundred and twenty five insightful years and it is looking ahead. Dr Annie Besant had cautioned once that “there is a danger in every society which existed long enough to become what it was not intended to be and follow the world in its follies and useless thought”. This looking ahead is both an act of aspiration as well as introspection and also an act of realignment to realize the Theosophical Society’s three objectives. It is an aspiration to outreach the humanity to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. This is a time to introspect the progress made by the Theosophical Society and its members in meeting the challenge to understand the process and means to achieve the primary objective “Universal Brotherhood without distinction.” Universal Brotherhood is a state of consciousness. It is to observe how people see the world and think about it. It is being able to sense from moment to moment how the other person feels. It is the ability to tune-in with concern for others and be ready to help.

The present day world situation is replete with insecurity, both physical as well as psychological because of greed of some and distrust amongst individuals at larger scale. Industrial, technological and scientific success stories abound from all quarters. At the same time, incompetency to understand, recognize and lethargy in eagerness to remove physical, material and psychological suffering of others is widespread. There is also an increasing cacophony of irresponsible chatter. It is the time to recalibrate our thoughts and actions and look ahead not with an attitude of being judgemental. The act of Looking Ahead is to be with an attitude of an affectionate learner.

The current scenario of the world with its fast paced extinction of indispensable flora and fauna along with depletion of natural resources, and the dismal state of the humanity is a result of incomplete understanding of how and to what we are related to. Our education models excel in imparting and teaching skills to survive but fail miserably in making individuals understand and learn to live. Throughout the history of mankind, there have been several experimentations with education. These can be broadly classified as Education to be a good worker, Education to be a good citizen and Education to be a good person. A good worker education model implemented standardized schooling to create punctual, hard working, obedient workers for capitalist economic growth, defined by productivity and monetary prosperity. A lot of public schooling today is still like this. The idea of good citizen and education model based on

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this concept goes back to ancient republics of Indian subcontinent and Greeks. The goal was to form students into responsible, empowered, thoughtful citizens. Loyalty and responsibility are desirable traits of this model. The third model of education attempts to teach ethics, conduct and brotherhood to the students to develop into good persons.

There are few striking similarities in all these extant educational models. All of these models have an authoritarian attitude of teaching and instruction. The individual or a child has no say in expressing what education is, and why there should be education. It is all preconceived and implemented without provision for a change. In some instances, where reforms have been suggested, and fortunately few of them being adopted, are well short of the desired outcome. The reason being that the reforms suggested and incorporated, address only the ways of improving the effectiveness of an education model, exclusively. There is tolerance to little or no space at all for free thinking and genuine enquiry. The educational models try to teach Science, Humanities, Technology, and Medicine but stay shy of religion. Religion has been largely misunderstood and misused to serve ulterior motives of some individuals and groups. It will not be out of place to remind ourselves the motto of the Theosophical Society “There is no religion higher than Truth” and observation of J. Krishnamurti that “Truth is a pathless land”. Truth is ultimate and limitless. It cannot be taught, it cannot be acquired. It cannot be defined and memorised. The moment we try to define, we set boundaries. It no longer remains the Truth. However, Truth can be felt. Values like compassion, gratitude, freedom and excellence cannot be taught but they can be felt. The educational models misunderstood human values to be skills which can be taught or talents which can be honed. This largely restricted overall growth of mind and love within the boundaries of space and time. J. Krishnamurti had observed “To live is to be related”. The understanding of the true relation of oneself with itself, with nature, with humanity is the purpose of human life. This simple fact has been ignored by the education models and educationists world over. There is very little or no effort made by the educational models to observe and understand the mutual relationship of Science, Technology, Medicine and Humanities. These are still taught in strict compartmental regime. All so-called models of education have little to do with education, and are only teaching skills to the best of their abilities.

Education has been close to the hearts of TS founders and great deal of sustained and insightful effort and path breaking work has been carried out by TS. Dr Annie Besant had opined on Education -

“We are all rough stones that need to become perfect ashlar so that we can assume our proper place in the Temple of Humanity. We are base metallic lead that needs to

be transformed into incorruptible gold by an alchemical process of sublimation. Such change cannot be imposed from without. Such change is not a matter of instruction by building something into students ('instruct' is from Latin, meaning 'to build in'). It is rather a matter of true education or of leading students out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of true knowledge ('educate' is from Latin, meaning 'to lead forth')".

The work of the TS is to become an instrument, a tool, to lead forth, to educate. Thus education is integral to the act of looking ahead. Exploring and learning together throughout the process. J. Krishnamurti has explained in clear terms that :

“.....Education is to equip the child and individual with the most excellent technological, scientific facts, right sense of understanding of relationships within and without, a highly developed aesthetic sense. The purpose of education is to allow the individual discover the complete human being in itself.....One who is ready and keen to examine its inward being and has inward understanding, has capacity to explore and to go beyond it, and who is good in what he does outwardly.....Education is to help the student to love the thing he is doing i.e. doing things with clarity, efficiency and affection.”

Members of TS and persons involved in educating tender and young minds should have attitude that of a learner. The educator must be full of feeling to share. A mindfulness that both the educator and child are learning together, they are going through this unique experience together. As J. Krishnamurti had said once “The child and I are already in a state of communication. He is going to learn because he has confidence in me.” Before attempting to educate the child, one has to study the child. Dr Annie Besant advised:

“To the Theosophist each child is a study., and instead of imposing his own will on him and supposing that age and size of body give right to order and dominate, he tries to discuss through the young body the features of the indwelling owner, and to understand what the Ruler immortal is seeking to achieve in his new kingdom of flesh. He endeavours to aid the indwelling Ruler, not usurp his throne, to be an advisor, a counselor, not a master. He treats him/her with tender reverence.”

Each child should receive an education suited to develop his/her particular and individual faculties. The child or a university going individual will open up to show its uniqueness in an environment that is affectionate and understanding. An authoritative air around the teacher gets the child or the individual feel intimidated and cocooned.

The process of education involves three steps- Embrace, Engage and Allow. The first step- Embrace, should be creation of Loving kindness classroom environment. A warm, supportive atmosphere, in which there exists a feeling of safety, of being supported and cared about, of closeness and connection. The affection of the educator towards the students should be that of a mother having for her child. The educator encourages the same attitude among the students. Such a classroom culture provides best atmosphere for learning, both cognitively and emotionally. The second step is to Engage the child or individual by presenting facts on a subject as proposals and encourage an inquiry into them. The educator may have to devise ways to present the facts without diluting or distorting them, which may draw attention and interest of the child. Let the child explore the various facets of the fact and also discovering the interrelationship of it with other facts and disciplines. This way the child comes to know the freedom and interdependence of thoughts, facts and things with each other. The engagement of this nature brings about clarity in perspective of things and in one's activity. The third step is to Allow the child to see and think out of box pertaining to issues and facts of a subject, allow the student to become endowed with sensitivity to people, their emotions, their sufferings, and simultaneously to observe oneself in a much deeper and lucid manner.

The progress of the student is to be keenly observed by the educator and a record may be kept for future reference. The educator should not get tempted to instill or force down competition and comparison into the student. The element of competition inbuilt in examination brings the worst out of us, distorting our personalities, making us more selfish and unnecessarily aggressive. The advice of J Krishnamurti on this is worthwhile to heed:

“Real learning comes about when the competitive spirit has ceased. The competitive spirit is merely an additive process which is not learning at all. One of the ways to see this truth is to see the truth of not comparing. Help the student to see very clearly, convey to him the urgency of the feeling, do not try to convince him, influence him, do not talk to him in terms of condemnation, in terms of agreement, persuasion. Show the student the fact. Establish the fact. Once you have established it, then a right relationship between the student and yourself exists.”

डॉ एनी बेसेन्ट की शिक्षा का सिद्धान्त “सा विद्या या विमुक्तये”

शान्ता चटर्जी *

उपनिषदों में विद्या के प्रयोजन की चर्चा करते हुए कहा गया है कि, विद्या वह है— जो मुक्ति के लिए हो, जो मानव मात्र को उसकी कठिनाइयों से मुक्ति दे सके। यहाँ मुक्ति शब्द का अर्थ केवल दार्शनिक या आध्यात्मिक नहीं है, मुक्ति शब्द का अर्थ उसके शाब्दिक अर्थ से है, उसके विस्तृततम रूप से है। विद्या ही वह एकमात्र साधन है— जिससे मनुष्य हर प्रकार की बाधा से निकलकर विकास कर सके। मुक्त हो सके अस्वास्थ्य से, निर्धनता से, जड़त्व से, असंयम से, उसके अन्तर के ईर्ष्या-द्वेष से, उसमें छिपे हुए पशुत्व से, मुक्त हो सके परतन्त्रता से।

डॉ० एनी बेसेन्ट की शिक्षा का सिद्धान्त भी इन्हीं उद्देश्यों को शिक्षा की आधारभूत आवश्यकता के रूप में स्वीकार करता है। उन्होंने केवल अक्षरज्ञान या सूचनाओं के संग्रह को शिक्षा का उद्देश्य नहीं माना था। उन्होंने कहा था — ‘हमारा जीवन एक संगमरमर की शिला है, जिसे तराश कर पूर्ण मानव बनाना है।’ विशेष रूप से जब उन्होंने भारतवर्ष में भारतीयों के लिए शिक्षा व्यवस्था का चिंतन किया तो इसी प्रकार सर्वांगीण विकास प्रदान करने वाली शिक्षा की आवश्यकता प्रदान की।

“हमारा उद्देश्य है— भारत के हजारों पुत्रों को प्रशिक्षित कर पूर्ण मानव बनाना। स्वतन्त्र भूमि के स्वतन्त्र नागरिक होने के योग्य बनाना।” भारत भूमि की सन्तानों को भारत के अनुसार ही शिक्षा देना चाहती है, उनकी दृष्टि में भारत की सबसे बड़ी विशेषता उसकी धार्मिकता, उसकी आध्यात्मिकता ही है।

यह तो सत्य है कि, भारतवर्ष में ‘धर्म’ शब्द पर चर्चा तो बहुत होती है परन्तु वर्तमान समय में धर्म पर चर्चा करने की आवश्यकता क्या है? इसके पक्ष और विपक्ष में विचार रखे जाते हैं। एक विचार धारा ऐसी है जो धर्म को ‘जनता की अफीम’ मानता

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है। विश्व के क्षुद्रतम उपन्यास के रूप में इस विचार धारा के वाहक “मृत्युशय्या में ईश्वर” इस वाक्य को स्वीकृति देते हैं। दूसरी ओर कठोर रूढ़िवादिता, प्रतिशोधस्पृहा, विश्व पर शासन करने की लालसा से खड़ा हो रहा है ऐसा वर्ग, धर्म की अपनी परिभाषा बनाता हुआ, इसमें से क्या वास्तविक है? क्या स्वीकार्य है?

वस्तुतः जब उन्नीसवीं सदी के उत्तरार्ध में आधुनिक विज्ञान की शिक्षा भारतीयों को मिली उस समय से भारत में और अवश्य ही उसके पहले से ही पश्चिमी देशों में यह वितर्क प्रारम्भ हो गया था कि— धर्म और विज्ञान में क्या सत्य है क्या स्वीकार्य है। क्योंकि विज्ञान प्रत्यक्ष है, प्रायोगिक है, अग्रगामी है, जीवन को सुखमय बनाने का साधन है। दूसरी ओर धर्म अप्रत्यक्ष है, वैचारिक है, पश्चाद्गामी है। विज्ञान के सिद्धान्त धर्म का समर्थन नहीं करते हैं।

इसलिए माना जाने लगा कि – वैज्ञानिकों का बौद्धिक होना आवश्यक है, धार्मिक होना आवश्यक नहीं है। क्रमशः बुद्धिजीवियों में धार्मिकता से दूरी रखने या धर्म का विरोध करने की एक परम्परा सी बनने लगी। इसलिए आवश्यक हो गया कि धर्म के तार्किक एवं बौद्धिक स्वरूप, को उसके वैज्ञानिक आधार को समझा जाय।

‘आचार –प्रभवो धर्मः’ अर्थात् धर्म सदाचार से उत्पन्न होता है। धर्म केवल विचारों के समष्टि नहीं है। धर्म व्यक्ति का सम्पूर्ण आचरण है, जीवन की प्रक्रिया है, धर्म को किया जाता है, जिया जाता है। जिस प्रकार प्रयोगशाला में सिद्ध होना विज्ञान की विश्वसनीयता है, धर्म की भी उतनी ही विश्वसनीयता उसकी प्रयोगधर्मिता पर निर्भर है, प्रयोगों का परिणाम है।

यहाँ धर्म शब्द का प्रयोग अवश्य ही भारतीय धर्म अर्थात् सनातन वैदिक धर्म के अर्थ में किया गया है। सामग्रिक रूप से सनातन वैदिक धर्म वह रिलीजन (religion) है जो युक्तियों (reason) पर आधारित है। युक्तियों की क्रमबद्धता ही किसी ज्ञान को विज्ञान या Science बनाता है। यदि विज्ञान के सिद्धान्तों की सत्यता— जैसा की समान्यतः समझा जाता है, केवल प्रयोगों से सत्यापित होने पर निर्भर होता तो वह प्रयास

एवं गलती (trial and error) की एक लम्बी क्षुंखला मात्र होती। वस्तुतः गणित एवं तर्क का आधार ही विज्ञान की वैज्ञानिकता है।

वही चिन्तन पद्धति एवं तार्किक विश्लेषण धर्म का भी आधार है, धर्म न तो कुछ तर्क रहित आडम्बरों की समष्टि है और न केवल बौद्धिक व्यायाम। भारतीय दर्शन एवं धर्म-युक्तिपूर्ण चिन्तन एवं आचरण का समन्वय है, यहाँ विचार एवं आचार एक दूसरे के पूरक हैं, परिपोषक हैं।

श्रीमती बेसेन्ट ने भी एक सर्व सामान्य हिन्दू धर्म को मानव मात्र को जोड़ने वाली दृढ़तम कड़ी माना है। उन्होंने देखा कि एक हिन्दू धर्म में नाना प्रकार के धार्मिक विश्वास हैं। विविधता में मानव की अनमोल खजाना भरा पड़ा है। वस्तुतः ऐसी कोई मानव सभ्यता या संस्कृति नहीं है जो धर्म के बिना विकसित हुई हो, हर मानव सभ्यता के विकास का विज्ञान उसके धर्म में निहित रहा है। मिस्र, चीन, ग्रीक या फिर सुदूरवर्ती अमरीका की प्राचीन "इन्का" सभ्यता हो सर्वत्र धर्म ही विज्ञान और विकास का पहला सोपान रहा है। श्रीमती एनी बेसेन्ट ने इसे समझते हुए भारत के लिए हिन्दू धर्म की शिक्षा की आवश्यकता को माना है। हिन्दुत्व ही वह मिट्टी है जिसमें भारत का मूल है। क्योंकि हिन्दू धर्म में प्रत्येक मानव का स्वतन्त्र स्वधर्म है।

स्वधर्म कहने पर प्रश्न उठता है— स्वधर्म क्या है? प्रत्येक व्यक्ति, प्रत्येक वस्तु की जो आत्मगत विशेषता है वह उसका स्वधर्म है। स्वधर्म उसके स्वभाव में निहित होता है— जिसे विकसित किया जा सकता है— लाया नहीं जा सकता है। घट का स्वधर्म जल को धारण करना, पशु का स्वधर्म है चार पैरों पर चलना, मनुष्य का स्वधर्म है— गुरुत्वाकर्षण के विपरीत पृथ्वी पर सीधे खड़े हो कर मानसिक शक्तियों का चरम विकास करना। केवल मात्र भोजन, निद्रा, शारीरिक सुख स्वार्थ की पूर्ति मानव का स्वधर्म नहीं है। इसीलिए कहा गया है—

स्वधर्मं निघनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

पशुत्व से देवत्व की ओर यात्रा करना ही मानव का स्वधर्म है। आधुनिक विज्ञान भी इस तथ्य को स्वीकार करता है। आज का जो विकासवाद का सिद्धान्त है उस पर विचार करने से यह सिद्ध होता है कि विकास का अर्थ चेतना का विकास है, शरीर या शारीरिक शक्ति का विकास नहीं है। जैविक विकास के सिद्धान्त में माना जाता है— प्राकृतिक कारणों से उत्पन्न प्रोटीन या एमिनो एसिड के अणु को घेर कर जब कोई आवरण बन जाता है तो वही सरल एक कोशिकीय जीव बनता है। वही सजीव और निर्जीव के बीच की कड़ी बनता है। प्राण का प्रथम अस्तित्व है। उसी से एक कोशिकीय जलीय जीव (अमीबा) के रूप में जीवन का विकास होता है। यह जीवन परिस्थितियों के अनुकूल— दीर्घजीवन, और संख्या में वृद्धि करने के लिए स्वयं को परिवर्तित करता है और कालान्तर में अनेक जीवों में विकसित हो जाता है। पहले छोटे छोटे हरे शैवाल से स्थलभूमि में वनस्पति जगत् के रूप में, फिर जलचर, स्थलचर, नभचर अनेक प्राणियों के रूप में और अन्त में मानव के रूप में विकसित होता है। यह कहा जाता है कि यह सारा परिवर्तन परिस्थिति से समायोजन, भोजन, दीर्घ जीवन और संख्या वृद्धि के लिए होता है— तब प्रश्न उठता है जब यह प्राण वृक्ष अर्थात् बरगद, देवदार, शाल, ओक के रूप में विकसित हुआ है तब उसने पाया कई शताब्दियों का दीर्घ जीवन और बीजों के रूप में सहस्रों की संख्या में वृद्धि — यह सब कुछ, फिर भी वह आगे क्यों परिवर्तित होता रहता है ? क्यों विकसित होता है मानव के रूप में, जिसका न तो जीवन ही उतना दीर्घ है, न उतनी जीवनी शक्ति, संख्या वृद्धि की क्षमता भी उससे तो कम ही है। न तो आत्मरक्षा का कोई आवरण है, न आक्रमण का कोई अंग। फिर भी प्रकृति के द्वारा मानव को “योग्यतम जीने के लिए” (Survival for the fittest) कैसे माना गया?

निश्चित रूप से वैज्ञानिक यहीं कहेंगे कि मानव का मस्तिष्क सर्वाधिक विकसित है। चेतना का विकास ही जीवन का विकास है। यही धर्म का, धार्मिक शिक्षा का उद्देश्य है, यही विज्ञान और वैज्ञानिक शिक्षा का उद्देश्य है।

एक अन्तिम बिन्दु का उल्लेख करना अभीष्ट है, जहाँ पर विज्ञान और अध्यात्म Physics और Metaphysics एक ही रहस्य को अलग अलग भाषा में व्यक्त करते हैं। रावर्ट ओपनहेइमार , जिन्हे परमाणु बम के जनक के रूप में जाना जाता है, उन्होने परमाणु के आधार के अन्तर्गत इलेक्ट्रान की गति और द्वैध चरित्र को समझाते हुए ईशोपनिषद् के मन्त्र का उद्धरण दिया है।

इलेक्ट्रान कभी फोटन, सूक्ष्मकण जैसा व्यवहार करता है, कभी तरंग जैसा, इलेक्ट्रान का तरंग जल की तरंग गति जैसा नहीं है। जल के कण अधिकतम दबाव बिन्दु से ऊपर या नीचे हट जाते हैं और दबाव कम होते ही अपने स्थान पर वापस आ जाते हैं— नये दबाव उत्पन्न करते हैं और उनसे संलग्न जल के अणु को ऊपर या नीचे स्थानान्तरित करते हैं। इस प्रकार तरंग आगे बढ़ता है जल कण वहीं रहते हैं। परन्तु इलेक्ट्रान अपने परिपथ में तरंगायित होता है। अर्थात् परमाणु के केन्द्र या नाभिक की परिक्रमा करते हुए अपने परिपथ में जिस बिन्दु पर उसकी उपस्थिति सर्वाधिक सम्भावित होती है। उसके बाद के बिन्दुओं में उसकी उपस्थिति की सम्भावना क्रमशः कम हो जाती है, पुनः एक स्थान पर उसकी होने की सम्भावना सर्वाधिक होती है। दो उच्च सम्भावना वाले क्षेत्र के बीच में निम्नतम सम्भावना का क्षेत्र होता है। अर्थात् एक निम्न सम्भावना वाले क्षेत्र को पार किये बिना ही दूसरे क्षेत्र में पहुँचता है या होता है। इस स्थिति में यह कहा नहीं जा सकता है कि वह यहाँ है या यह यहाँ नहीं है। यह स्थिर है या गतिमान है। ईशोपनिषद् में कहा गया है—

तदेजति तन्नैजतेतदुदूरे तदन्तिके

तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य वाहपतः।।¹

अर्थात् वह (सूक्ष्मतम तेजः) गमन करता है और गमन नहीं करता है। वह दूर स्थित है और वह निकट स्थित भी है। वही समस्त जगत् के (मूलकण के रूप में) आन्तरिक आधार है वह इस जगत् के जागतिक नियमों के बाहर होता है।

आस्ट्रियन वैज्ञानिक फ्रिटजोफ काप्रा (Fritjof Capra)²—

कहते हैं— शक्ति एवं वस्तु, कण एवं तरंग, गति एवं स्थिति, अस्तित्व एवं अनस्तित्व,— ये परस्पर विरोधी शब्द या विशेषण या धारणायें है परन्तु यही विरोधाभासी स्थितियाँ ही आणविक भौतिकी के मूल आधार हैं। उपादान है।

भारतीय अध्यात्मविद्या सृष्टि के इस मूल तत्व को "प्रकृति" के नाम से कहती है, उसके सवरूप का विवेचन भी इलेक्ट्रॉन के इस रहस्यात्मक स्वरूप के समान ही प्रतीत होता है।

सन्नाप्यसन्ना प्युभयात्मिका नो
छिन्नाप्यछिन्ना प्युभयात्मिका नो
भिन्नाप्यभिन्ना प्युभयात्मिका नो
महाद्भूतानिर्वचनीय रूपा।

अर्थात् वह प्रकृति (या माया) न तो सत् है, न असत् और नही दोनों का सम्मिलित रूप। न (जगत्) से भिन्न है न अभिन्न, न उभयात्मक, न खण्डित है, न अखण्डित और न ही दोनों का सम्मिलित रूप, इसलिए यह अद्भूत और अनिर्वचनीय है।

भौतिक विज्ञान के एक नवीनतम अनुसन्धान पर भी ध्यान दिया जा सकता है।³ जिसमें न्यूट्रिनो नामक मौलिक कणों की बात कही गयी है। ये तीन प्रकार के कण होते हैं— जो साथ उत्पन्न होते हैं इसलिए इन्हें सिस्टर पार्टिकल्स (Sister Particles) कहा जाता है इनकी विशेषता या फ्लेवर (Flavour) होते हैं — वे परिवर्तित होते रहते हैं। अर्थात् वे एक दूसरे के फ्लेवर में आ जाते हैं। यह अवधारणा भी भारतीय दर्शन में प्रकृति के तीन गुणों की अवधारणा से साम्य रखती हैं। सत्व, रजस, तमस् ये गुणत्रय सदैव साथ रहते हैं, एक दूसरे को उत्पन्न भी करते हैं, अभिभूत भी करते हैं।

अन्योन्याभिभवाश्रय जनन मिथुन वृत्तयश्च गुणाः ।।⁴

यह वैचारिक साम्य यह दर्शाता है कि भारतीय धर्म एवं अध्यात्म दर्शन उन्ही बिन्दुओं या विषयों का विवेचन करता है विज्ञान भी वही पहुँचता है। कहा भी गया है—

यत् सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं

तदयोगैरपि गम्यते

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च

यः पश्यति स पश्यति।।⁶

जो सांख्य— अर्थात् सैद्धान्तिक ज्ञान के द्वारा प्राप्त होता है— वही योग अर्थात् प्रयोगों के द्वारा भी प्राप्त होता है। आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान और वैज्ञानिक ज्ञान में बाहर से भेद रहने पर भी आन्तरिक विरोध नहीं है।

अब एक विचारणीय बात यह है, आध्यात्मिक चिन्तन की ऐसी प्रगति जो ऐसे वर्तमान प्रगतिशील वैज्ञानिक सिद्धान्तों के समकक्ष रखा जा सकता है — कैसे प्राप्त हो सकती है। केवल मननचिन्तन और तार्किक विन्यास के द्वारा क्या सृष्टि के मूल विज्ञान को जाना जा सकता है? इस प्रश्न का उत्तर अवश्य ही डॉ० एनी बेसेन्ट के जीवन में खोजा जा सकता है। उनका निःस्वार्थ कर्म जीवन ही इस प्रश्न का उत्तर है। कर्म की परिशुद्धि के बिना बुद्धि का परिष्कार और सत्य की दृष्टि नहीं आती है। कर्म की परिशुद्धि के बिना केवल बौद्धिक व्यायाम शब्दों का जाल तो बहुत लम्बा फैला सकता है परन्तु सिद्धान्त और प्रतिसिद्धान्त में उलझता रहता है। किसी अन्तिम सिद्धान्त तक नहीं पहुँचता है। इसीलिए कर्म को ही ज्ञान सिद्धि का एकमात्र साधन माना गया है।

यह कर्म उपर से देखने पर तो दो प्रकार का प्रतीत होता है— लोकोपारक और आत्मोन्नाति कारक। परन्तु आत्मोन्नाति के बिना, अपने दोषों के निराकरण बिना, अपने गुणों के जागरण के बिना मनुष्य पशुत्व के धरातल में ही रह जाता है, उसे स्वधर्म की प्राप्ति नहीं होती है। स्वधर्म साधन के बिना लोक जीवन में उसका हस्तक्षेप कल्याण दायक नहीं होता है।

इसलिए डॉ० बेसेन्ट ने प्रारम्भ से ही बच्चों को चार प्रकार की शिक्षा देने की आवश्यकता बतायी थी— शारीरिक शिक्षा, बौद्धिक शिक्षा, धार्मिक शिक्षा एवं नैतिक शिक्षा। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए पाठ्यक्रम भी बनाया था। परन्तु वर्तमान समय में केवल बौद्धिक शिक्षा को केन्द्र में रखकर पाठ्यक्रम बनाये जाते हैं। यह पाठ्यक्रम सूचनात्मक होता है रचनात्मक नहीं। यह भी सत्य है— कि सभी शिक्षण संस्थाओं को पाठ्यक्रम बनाने का अधिकार नहीं है। उन्हें शिक्षा परिषदों अथवा विश्वविद्यालयों के पाठ्यक्रम को ही अपनाना पड़ता है, जिसमें धार्मिक एवं नैतिक शिक्षा का स्थान नहीं रहता है। परन्तु डॉ० बेसेन्ट जिस प्रकार की धार्मिक एवं नैतिक शिक्षा देना चाहती थीं उसे पाठ्यक्रम के बाहर विशिष्ट आयोजनों के माध्यम से दिया जा सकता है। धार्मिक एवं नैतिक शिक्षा ही विद्यार्थियों को भविष्य में इस स्वतन्त्र देश का धार्मिक और नैतिक, विचारक एवं कर्मठ नागरिक बना सकती है।

सन्दर्भ—

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THOUGHT: THE MOST POWERFUL MEDIUM

By B.K. KAILASH*

I vividly remember the opening remarks in the first ever talk I attended in the Annie Besant Hall at the Indian Section HQ, delivered by our revered guide and leader Radha ji, as she opened with remarks:”**Do we know - what we know?**; (Again repeated) **Do we know? What we know;**”

And this day, having been discoursed with wonderful Theosophical Mysteries, it has struck me that it may be a grand idea to practically implement these theoretical revelations into our real life. If you recall your college days, there used to be Practical sessions in the Science Laboratory after the theory classes. So Brothers treat me as your Laboratory Assistant of this *Séance Laboratory*.

Candidly, let me share with you that we are going in for - *Nothing new but revisiting the areas known, but not travelled*.

To start with, let’s together read out the algorithm in your hands:

‘Every one of our thoughts is pregnant with the power of the spirit which brought it into being, that power is constantly at work. Knowing this, each one of you has the possibility of becoming a benefactor of mankind; by projecting your thoughts into the farthest reaches of space, you can send out messages of light to help, comfort, enlighten and heal others. He who undertakes this work knowingly and deliberately, gradually penetrates into the mysterious arcana (Mysterious) of divine creation.’

That raises a simple but mysterious query, *what is a thought?* As revealed by CW Leadbeater, *Thought is the most powerful weapon, most equitably distributed to each one of us, irrespective of our social background, religious background, gender background, geographical background etc etc*. So, once again the question comes what is a Thought? Let us recall the implication of our Ritual recital; “*Mansa, Wacha, Hastabhyam*” (Thought, Words & Deeds). These three words used by Hindu Religious Teachers, actually imply as *three* types of actions that we unceasingly perform viz; Actions performed through Mind, Words and Physical body, with their power in the descending order. While the actions performed by Physical acts and Speech have short term results/gravity, the Karmas performed through Thoughts are ever Long-lasting and most grave, we’ll see how. But the question again appears as to what is a Thought? Okay let’s resolve this through envisioning our Body Constitution that Theosophy has so well explicated. We have our physical body that

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comprises of gross matter; we have our Astral body of subtler matter that comprises of our emotions (lower & higher) and then we have our Mental body of still subtler matter that comprises of our thoughts. Theosophy has also revealed us that all these are, in reality, the Vibrations of different Dimensions. Well Brothers & Sisters, right now we'll not get trapped with the words used to explain the phenomena, but envision it by keeping an open mind or unconditioned or empty mind as J. Krishnamurti advised.

So, what is a Thought? Well, dealing very simplistically, whenever and whatever we think, a portion of our Mental matter starts vibrating at a designated vibration. It becomes a living body comprising of Mental matter with specific vibrations. Incidentally Thoughts are of three kinds, Thought Forms, Thought Entities and Thought Elementals. We'll not go into the details, may be some day later, but right now it'll suffice to understand that by creating a Thought we have actually created a living body that has *life, directability & effect*. That's interesting, but how? We are all part of the boundless Mental Ocean; this Mental Ocean incorporates innumerable mental bodies including yours & mine. So the thought that I generate, instantly ripples around in the Mental Ocean, like the ripples created by a stone thrown in a pond, and evaluates itself with every mental body encountered it and produces a result. How? In the process evaluation, if the vibration of the evaluated mental body match, the subject is further augmented in that aspect and if they do not match, it tends to trigger or initiate similar vibrations. Let's see a practical example; an extremely simple statement as "Mr X is a corrupt person", has the connotations as:

We now know that this thought is a living body of vibrations picked up from the Mental Matter of the originator. It has life, direct ability & effect. So this Thought Body instantly ripples and reaches the object i.e. Mr X. It now compares its vibrations with those in the mental matter of Mr X. If the vibrations match and resonate, it enhances the vibrations of Mr X, thus aggravating the element of corruption in Mr X. So it makes Mr X worse than before. But suppose, the vibrations do not match or just match in periphery, it will induce its vibrations and tend to make Mr X's mental matter prone to its acceptance. In either case it will aggravate Mr X, as also simultaneously ripple in the entire Mental Ocean and compare itself with every mental body. It shall carry out the same task of comparison & effect. Not only that, since the originator has originated this thought, he has the exact vibration of the thought and thus the thought will boost his vibration and make him stronger in the particular aspect of the thought.

Do we notice that very simple negative thought "Mr X is a corrupt person" has triggered such a severe aftermath; On the other hand if it were an opposite thought, say "Mr X could be an honest person", all actions discussed shall be reversed?

Still chaotic could be; imagine continuous gossips, that so ignorantly are indulged in, generate how enormous maladies. Any wild and slandering statements like "these police chaps are so & so" or "Our politicians are so & so" are actually making the named people that,

which we think of them. And it is not left at that, the entire manifestation of every being is also affected in the process.

We now know that every Thought is *my Action* and this Action *becomes a Cause* which invariably has *an Effect*. That is the Law of Karma, an absolutely immutable law.

Here's an extract from "The Mystery of Life and How Theosophy Unveils It", by Clara M. Codd:

"We know that our actions are affecting the world and others all the time. They must affect them in one of two ways. Either they are helping the happiness and progress of all, or they are hindering them. If our words and our deeds have helped and cheered, some time, somewhere, help and encouragement will come back to us. If they have been unhelpful, selfish, cruel, they will return bringing frustration, tragedy and pain. They will come back to us through the medium of other people, who are thus unconscious agents of the Law which says that whatsoever a man sows that he shall also reap, and learn by the reaping....."

We, thus, need to be consciously aware that working with thoughts can open up extraordinary possibilities that no other activity can ever provide. Did I say something?

Universe is echoing your thoughts.

You are receiving whatever you are sending.

Make sure you send what you want to receive in life.

I shall wind up with an extract from The Book "*Power & Use of Thought*" by CW Leadbeater;

Hundreds and thousands of people possess within them latent germs of evil — germs which may never blossom and bear fruit unless some force from without plays upon them and stirs them into activity. If we yield ourselves to an impure or unholy thought, the wave of force which we thus produce may be the very factor which awakens the germ and causes it to begin to grow, and so we may start some soul upon a downward career.

So Brothers & Sisters do we realize that with the revelations of today's talk, how close we are to the Third Object of our Society that reads; "To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man". Connecting this with the Third Aim of TS, I shall leave it up to all of us to investigate further this extremely useful, powerful, **latent unexplained law of Nature "Thought"**, the most powerful medium, most equitably distributed to each one of us, irrespective of our background, social, religious, gender, geographical etc.

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

By *T.K. NAIR**

Let us see what HPB had said about altruism:

“He who does not practice altruism; he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or a poorer than himself; he who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother Theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defense as he would undertake his own—is no Theosophist.”¹

Then, she mentions:

“A cup of cold water given in time to a thirsty wayfarer is a nobler duty and more worth, than a dozen of dinners given away, out of season, to men who can afford to pay for them. No man who has not got it in him will ever become a Theosophist; but he may remain a member of our Society all the same. We have no rules by which we could force any man to become a practical Theosophist, if he does not desire to be one.”²

The word Service also means sacrifice, sacrifice for the benefit of others. “The manifestation began by an act of Divine Sacrifice”. It is by an act of sacrifice by the Absolute, the Universe is formed. He limited Himself to a ring pass not and manifestation begun. “The nature of that sacrifice is seen by us as consisting in the assumption of limitations of the matter by the Immaterial, in the veiling of the Unconditioned in conditions, in the binding of the Free within bonds this manifestation of life is only possible by its limitation, that these mark out the conditions of its evolution; and that just as life become manifest by the taking of forms, so by the breaking of forms after forms and assuming new ones does life continually evolve. . . . We see that the form is always decaying and always being renewed, and that the life can only find possibility of manifestation by thus taking fresh matter continually into its decaying form, and thus preserving it as the vehicle of manifestation. Life can evolve only by thus continually grasping after unappropriated matter, and appropriating it for the building up and renewing of its form. It is by the sacrifice of the Solar Logos that the Solar System continues to exist. By Himself burning, He gives heat, light and energy to His system.”³ It is by the mere presence of the Moon that the tides are experienced on earth and this tide benefits the inhabitants in a number of ways. Down on earth all creatures are living for the service of others.

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Let us take the example of a plant say a mango tree. It produces many sweet mangoes. All of us have tasted it. Not only we human beings but animals like squirrels, monkeys, birds, insects and very many creatures eat it and survive on the fruits of the trees. But have you ever heard a mango tree eating mangos? Never. It produces mangos not for itself but for others.

While producing mango it absorbs CO₂ from the atmosphere, and give out Oxygen. CO₂ is a poisonous gas. If the level of CO₂ is increased the result is global warming and melting of ice in the polar region thereby increasing the level of water in ocean and flooding may part of the world. We know if Oxygen is not there no plant kingdom, animal kingdom and human kingdom in short no life can exist for more than 2 minutes. The trees absorb and preserve the energy from the Sun for the benefit of the living creatures on the surface of the earth. It protects the passerby from the scorching heat of the Sun. It is not the end. It is home for many birds and animals and though not directly for human beings also. Can you imagine a house without wood? All these things a tree does are not for any reward or for any personal gain. What a great service! Similarly the river provides drinking water for the living creatures but it never drink water. It is serving others. This way we can find very many examples in nature. On the earth we can find many human beings also. They lived as a Theosophist for a Theosophist lives not for himself but for others. People like Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, Abraham Lincoln in the political field, Mother Theresa in the humanitarian field. H P Blavatsky, H S Olcott, Dr. Annie Besant, Bishop C W Leadbeater, are not strangers to us. They lived just before us.

“Form is limited, life is unlimited. Therefore the form lives by taking and life grows by giving. Just in proportion as we empty ourselves of all that we have, is there room for the divine fullness to flow in, and fill in more than we were ever filled before. Renunciation is the secret of Life as appropriation is the secret of form.”⁴

From the standpoint of form, the aspect of sacrifice is the breaking up of forms, which feels the life withdrawing from it; and so we come to think of sacrifice as an act of pain. This is because we identify ourselves with form. “But when we begin to live the life of spirit, the life which recognizes the One in the manifold form, then there begins to dawn upon us the supreme spiritual truth, that sacrifice is not pain but joy, is not sorrow but delight, that which to the flesh is painful is bliss to the spirit, which is our true life.”⁵ “Having risen to that great height when all selves are known as one, the different forms is all his own, He knows himself in each, . . . all are parts of himself. . . . That is the true Peace and that that alone is wisdom. To know the Self alone is the spiritual life, and that life is joy and peace.”⁶ If we could catch for a moment a faint glimpse of the Spiritual Life, we could understand the worthlessness of all that man accounts as precious. The Law of Sacrifice, which is the Law of Life and the Law of Joy and the Law of Peace, is summed up in the Mahavakya “Tatwamasi”. Once we have realized even just for a moment the unity of self we will have no repulsion to any of our brother, no hate, no jealousy for we will find in him the Same Self though different in form.

As he realizes this and knows that the only value of the body is to be a channel of the higher, to be an instrument of that life, he slowly and gradually rises above all thoughts, saves the thought of unity, and feels himself as one with the suffering world. Then he feels that the grief of humanity is his grief and sees through all differences the underlying One Self. Similarly, as you and I do not recognize the difference between one and other, but feel the unity of life and know that that life is same in all and in that proportion shall we live the Spiritual Life. Nothing less than this is spiritual, nothing less than this is wisdom, nothing less than this is real life.

How can we make this real? Only by daily acts of renunciation in the little things of life, only by learning in every thought, word and action, to live and love the unity; and not only to speak it, but to practice it on every occasion, by putting ourselves last and others first, by always seeing the need of others and trying to supply it, by learning to be indifferent to the claim of our own lower nature and refusing to listen to it.

We talk of the great renunciation. It is not done in one day. They were made over and over again in the hundreds of lives. They were made by the constant practice of the small renunciations of life, by continual pity, by constant daily sacrifices in common human life. We can also make Great Renunciations if we begin “in daily life, in our hourly dealings with our fellows. . . . It is not a single deed that strikes the world with wonder which makes true discipleship. . . . The life of the disciple is lived in the home, is lived in the town, is lived in the office, and is lived in the market place amid the common lives of man.”⁷

Thus it is seen that only by service, the activity of the TOS, one can raise his morality and spirituality, and thereby realize the Truth, that He is in everything and everything is in Him.

So, Dr. Annie Besant, in 1908, declared as follows:

“The TS Order of Service

“A number of members of the TS feeling the wish to organize themselves for various lines of service, to actively promote the first object of the Society, I hereby constitute an order, to be called “The TS Order of Service”, under the constitution of which Leagues may be formed for any special purpose on which a group of members is agreed, the objects and bye-laws of such Leagues to become valid, as constituted under the order, after approved by the Central Council. The following constitution is tentative.

“The Central Council shall consist of Fellows of the TS only, and shall have its seat at Adyar. It shall have as its chief officer the President of the TS; or someone appointed by him.”⁸

TOS is a philanthropic institution, established to serve without any distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour, nay, to serve all living beings.

In 1936, at the Geneva World Congress, Mr. Jefferey Williams was appointed the first International Organizer of TOS.⁹ The first Leagues of Order were formed in India for such objects as Social Brotherhood, National Education and Abolition of Child Parentage, but in 1919 many of them became dormant.¹⁰

Before independence, Bro. Jamshed Nusserwarji from Karachi was the chief brother for India. In 1941, the Order was suspended in India.

In 1947, after Independence, the Order was revived in India at the International Convention in Varanasi, under the Presidentship of Bro. C. Jinarajadasa.¹¹ During the annual convention in 1965, in the general meeting of the TOS, when Radhaji was the General Secretary of the Indian Section, it was decided to reorganize the order all over India and bring all activities of philanthropic, social and altruistic types carried on by individual members and by Lodges under the banner of the Theosophical Order of Service and take-up new activities.¹²

The President of the Theosophical Society is ex-officio President of TOS. The National Directors are appointed by the TOS President in consultation with the leader of the TS in the country concerned. TOS gives utmost importance on a harmonious working relationship with the Theosophical Society. In India there are instances where TOS members have formed T S Lodges. One such was inaugurated by our then Acting President. It was also decided that TOS works should be according to the needs of the Region or place. It is not necessary that a big work should be started, but what is required is the sincerity and compassionate feeling behind it. The individuals and groups are expected to give their best. It was also decided in the General Body Meeting that we should stress on group work in which several members join hands and enter the field of activity because the individual work, however big, is not lasting, but a group work, carried on, on the ideal of the organization and dedication remains for long. Thus after 1965, the TOS work was reorganized very strongly. With the passage of time, TOS became popular among people, whether they are members of TS or not.

In India, the Theosophical Order of Service was formally established in 1976 and registered in 1977--78 as a charitable society with its Headquarter at The Theosophical Society, Indian Section, Kamachha, Varanasi-221010, with definite objects, which were further expanded:

- 1) To minimize the sum total of misery in the world.
- 2) To forget self in working for others.
- 3) To eliminate selfishness and greed and Law of market and substitute love and mutual aid as the rule of the world.

4) To live to the highest that is within us.

“The Theosophical Order of Service in India (1908), Varanasi is registered under The Registration of Societies Act 1860; vide Registration No. 803/1977-78 dt. 16.08.77, by the Assistant Registrar of Societies, Uttar Pradesh, Varanasi. The registration has been renewed up to 16.8.2015 vide their letter No. 2985 dt. 24.8.12, renewal No. 1011/2012-13 of 2012, file No. I - 38800.”

The National Committee of TOS comprises of National Director, The General Secretary, Indian Section as Ex officio member, Secretary TOS India, Treasurer, TOS India, Asst. Secretary, TOS India and four members, all appointed by the National Director.

The national units of the TOS are divided into 20 regional units and each regional unit is further divided into groups. Both the region and group have an executive committee with a president, secretary, treasurer and at least two members, elected by the general body once in every three years.

The registered office of the TOS in India is at the Indian Section HQ of the Theosophical Society, Kamachha, Varanasi – 221010. The membership is open to all people who subscribe to the objects of the order and are in sympathy with its ideals. There are three types of membership. Patron membership for those who pay Rs.1000/=, Life membership for those who pay Rs.500/= and General membership for those who pay Rs.25/= annually.

Further on sacrifice:

When I was a student of Std. IX, (1958) the physical Education Teacher of our school, injected in me patriotism, love for mother country. At that time to me the only way of serving the mother country was joining the Army. So, I told my mother that I wanted to join the Army immediately, without even completing the school education. I was the only child of my parents and my father was in business in Ceylon and was rich at that time. My mother managed to get one of my distant uncles, who was in the Army and was on leave to talk to me. He appreciated my interest in the Army and suggested that I could join the Army after graduation. I agreed. Preparatory to Army training, I joined a college where there was N C C. After graduation, I joined the Army Education Corps as Education Instructor.

After the training of six months, I was posted to 4 Bn. E.M.E. Training Centre. Secunderabad with one week leave to go home. When I saw my mother, I was really shocked. When I left her she was a middle aged woman, but now I was seeing her as an old woman. That made me think about her. I decided to sacrifice my interest to be in the Army for the sake of my mother. I applied for voluntary retirement and it was approved on extreme compassionate ground after enquiry and verification which took more than one year.

TOS activities in India:

In India workers of more than 120 TOS groups are engaged in carrying out some common and routine activities namely supply of study materials to needy students, financial help to poor students and needy patients, distribution of clothes both new and old duly washed and ironed, cold drinking water to pedestrians during summer, wood for fire during winter, medical aids to poor patients through nominated doctors, blood donation and medical camp, awareness camp, visits to hospitals, old age homes for men & women, orphanages with necessary items including fruits and snacks, supply mobility aids, sewing machines to poor women for self-employment, to run free coaching centre, charitable dispensary, yoga therapy, acupressure, pranic healing spiritual healing centre, and meditation programmes, organizing essay competition for school and college students, annual meet, birds & animal welfare, tree plantation programme, celebration of Dr. Annie Besant's birthday, Raksha Bandhan etc. and help the victims affected by natural calamities.

We are looking ahead to have both TS and TOS Lodges and Groups in all the states in India. Last year (2014) we could form a TOS Group in Jammu & Kashmir. This year we have promise of one more in Jammu and another in Uttarakhand.

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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

By PRADEEP H. GOHIL*

“Looking ahead” in my profession of management is always so exciting that I would like to share my thoughts on what I look ahead for the Theosophical Society (TS) and the members as things stand today.

The Indian Section of the Theosophical Society was Chartered on 17th November 1890. Organizationally, the Indian Section can unhesitatingly claim to have taken a big leap and developed a sizeable network of lodges in every area of our country. The work of these numerous lodges is coordinated by Federations at each state level. There are now 16 Federations across the country and about 460 Lodges actively occupied in spreading the wisdom of theosophy. The Indian Section is by far the largest section in the Theosophical world with more than 11,000 members. Efforts at propagation of theosophical doctrine and teachings are continued with vigour, with propagation and training units under each federation. Theosophical literature is brought out in larger volumes with the advent of the society’s own Publishing House at Adyar. The Theosophical work has been translated into many state or regional languages so that *Brahma Vidya* may reach to the common man & woman. Organizing study camps at various places of the Section and sending national lecturers to deliver talk and to conduct the study camp on themes related to Theosophy bears testimony to the plethora of activities undertaken by the Indian Section, towards achieving the three main objectives of the Theosophical Society and carrying the movement forward to a remarkable extent. Though questions can be raised about the quality of membership the overall picture presents a positive image of the Indian Section’s growth as an organization.

Someone can certainly question whether this is all that was expected of us over the century and a quarter? What methods were adopted to produce better quality members? Could we not have chosen better and quicker methods? However, all said and done, we cannot remain ignorant of the factor of the growth of individual consciousness. There also is the fact that the two founders were not told, by their teacher, what they had to do, how they had to bring about and quicken the growth of the Society and other desired results. However, they were distinctly instructed about what they should never do, what they had to avoid and what the society should never become. The dictate was clear- “to oppose selfishness of any kind because selfishness brings about disturbance of harmony among people”. So, the biggest challenge while looking ahead is how to further develop the individual consciousness so that universal brotherhood is actually practiced by all people of the world.

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One thing that comes to anyone's mind while looking ahead in the context of the Theosophical Society is the concern for its very limited membership that is not growing as well as all of us would like, with new and good people not joining us in large numbers. But rather than presenting a problem before you, let me propose a few possible solutions. One thing we all need to do is to CHANGE with time. We have to accept that this is a changing world and we must at least keep ourselves tuned with it as long as it does not conflict with our objectives and the basic truths we have learnt through Theosophy. We may have to embrace some concepts and ideas that appear radical to us at first. We must continuously innovate to find practical solutions to problems like quality of membership.

Let me tell you a little bit about another international organization which practices universal brotherhood and whose motto is "Service above self". The two may not have much more in common particularly because that organization does not have a spiritual and scientific base as we have. I am talking about an organization called Rotary International whose members are called Rotarians. The new generation do not have time to travel to the place of the meeting. The Rotary International think tank met a few times at different cities in the world and decided to open E-Rotary Clubs or E-clubs in short. The members would log on their computer at a specific time and day in a week and carry out the meeting through the internet. This appealed to the young techies because they always liked the concept of service, fellowship and International brotherhood that Rotary practiced. The membership has grown to 1.3 million members in a short time from about 1.1 million in 2010.

I am just thinking that the young generation and the techies are what we also want as our members. They appreciate our objectives but have no time to attend the lodge meetings. May be we can consider starting E-theosophical Lodges or E-Lodges in short. Every week they can meet at a fixed time through their computers or mobile phones and hear our national speakers on various subjects close to Theosophy. They can participate in the discussion and get answers to their questions. Looking Ahead, E-lodges may have the potential for a significant increase in membership, mainly of the technology savvy younger generation. Let us make an improved and interactive website, organize webinars, use computers and internet for our administration.

The second thing is that more planned effort is needed for the propagation of Theosophy. We need not put any pressure on people to join TS. We have immense wealth in the form of Theosophical literature and if a systematic way for the propagation of Theosophy can be planned and worked out then we will succeed to a great extent in fulfilling our noble aspirations to reach out people far and wide. Unfortunately there is no/not much awareness about it among people in general. The propagation of ideas and our work does not prevent us from

being selective in taking members nor does it mean putting any pressure on people to join TS. Let there be many high quality awareness campaigns about Theosophy all over India and I am sure the result will be a large influx of good quality Theosophists.

If we think that looking ahead or the way ahead for Theosophy is difficult today after it has spread in 56 countries and more than a thousand Lodges with 26,351 members, imagine the condition when our founders - Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott first started the work. They visited several places in India, sometimes by bullock cart in the heat and the dust, slept on Railway platforms and on and on to generate awareness regarding Theosophy.

They found only a handful of people - may be 2 to 10 people who supported their cause. But they never complained! They kept making efforts day after day, month after month, and year after year. That is the way to make Theosophy popular. Are we doing that today? The looking ahead has to be done not only by our International President, not only by our General Secretary and the council members, but by each one of us. If that happens, the results will be great. So let each one of us start looking ahead in the context of Theosophical work and I am sure the way ahead will be clear and we will achieve our objectives.

Still looking ahead, the next thing that will be needed are funds. The contribution the Indian Section gets from membership fees is not enough to meet even the administration cost. We will have to work out ways for raising funds.

Looking ahead, we have to catch the group of people for our membership that have the longest life - that is the youth of today! We have got to organize elocution contests and debates for students all over India on subjects related to Theosophical values and objects. We can give them Theosophy Quiz and then give certificates for participation.

We can consider organizing a Theosophical Youth Leadership Army Camp and name it TYLAC for school and college going students in every Lodge every year. It can be for a duration of 2 to 3 days. The students can be trained by the experienced members on leadership in this changing world along with an introduction to Theosophy. Again we can give TYLAC certificates and I know that there will be rush of students to attend these camps. This way, they will at least be introduced to Theosophy.

Looking ahead, we need our leadership to motivate a core group of Theosophists who will mingle with the students and try to understand their aspirations and objects. They can then show them how they can achieve those through Theosophy. We need to improve our public relations which is defined as good work, properly publicized and adequately acknowledged

by people. We must also do better media management so that the reporters convey information in the media after understanding what we are.

Paul Brunton said very eloquently to the young generation:

“if you want to find spirituality you must find it whilst living in the world, yet not being of it. In other words, being inwardly detached and renounced, but outwardly living and enjoying as other people do, not held in your heart by material things, not mentally imprisoned by time, but able to renounce them at a moment’s notice. If you can do this you are free, you are no longer a slave.”

And we should look ahead to more and more members who practice this in their day-to-day life.

The only way to look ahead to permanent and real happiness is what was prescribed by Shankaracharya ‘the renunciation’ of the desire for externals in order for the ‘atman’ to be known. It sounds simple enough in theory, but practicing such comprehensive renunciation is probably the ultimate challenge for the human being.

Dr. Annie Besant mentioned another way of ‘Looking Ahead’ in her little book “The Laws of the Higher Life”. She described it as “the life of the spirit which consists in giving and not in taking, in pouring itself out and not in grasping, in self-surrender and not in self-appropriation.... the Life inexhaustible is found. Lessening our attachment to the worldly results is a great experience. Our sense of the Sacred is energized and sustained by reverence, compassion, truth, beauty, goodness, by an ability to discern what is really important and most of all, by an unshakeable sense of Unity”. Looking ahead to something like this through the Theosophical Society should be our goal.

In a short lecture delivered during the International Convention at Adyar (in 2014), Mr. Marcos de Resend said:

“Our Theosophical work has internal and external dimensions. We need group study sessions in order to deepen the understanding of the Theosophists and at the same time, studies focused on the public with simple language, easy to understand by any person, so that we may make our institution known throughout the world, drawing the attention of higher minds, as said by the Mahatmas. The affiliation of new member will come naturally if our doors are effectively open.”

We need to modernize and keep up with the transformations affecting the world and be

open to young people. However, we should preserve freedom of thought, commitment to Truth, a fraternal and tolerant spirit, unselfishness, learning and service to others. 'Looking Ahead' is 'Planning'. Ask any management expert and he will say that planning is the key to action and goal achievement. He will also add that "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail". It is also equally important that we "Plan our Work and Work our plan". If we properly plan the actions that Theosophical Society should be taking and then work out the ways to implement them, I am sure our goals will be achieved.

**Its store of snow is the hills own burden,
its outpouring of streams is borne
by all the world.**

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS

On the significant occasion of the 125th anniversary of the Indian Section, a two-day seminar on “**Looking Ahead in the Context of Theosophical Society**” was organized by the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society on November 18-19, 2015 in the Annie Besant Hall at the Indian Section Headquarters, Varanasi. The seminar was structured in seven academic sessions including the inaugural and valedictory sessions. *The Indian Theosophist*, Vol. 113, No. 10 & 11 was distributed to all the delegates and participants.

In the inaugural session, welcoming the delegates and guests and introducing the theme of the Seminar, Sri S. Sundaram, General Secretary, Indian Section, Theosophical Society outlined the aims and objectives of the Theosophical Society and said that now is the time to retrospect for all members of the Theosophical Society. We have to ask ourselves what transformation has occurred in one’s self after becoming a member. Although the total number of members of the Theosophical Society in India is 11300, this number is not a small number because any organization is to be recognized by its discipline and its inner strength. We need to ask whether we understand the responsibility of being a member of the Theosophical Society. The underlying philosophy is that Theosophical Society is not meant for fulfilling one’s individual ambitions. The goals and objectives are not achieved as long as we see all pervasive violence in society. The question is of the unity of heart and mind. It is not existing side by side but living together. If attaining knowledge is the goal, then it has to happen at the level of consciousness – transformation at the level of consciousness which can be understood as *Prajna*. The time has come to assess whether there is correspondence between the ideal and the action. We have had such members whose ideals were always manifested in their actions. An institution can be effective only when there is perfect harmony between the thought and the action (आचरण), between theory and practice. It is a continuous journey. Therefore, at this juncture, we have to introspect and analyse the achievements and also the failures. Therefore, the time is to question ourselves. He emphasized that one has to attain the inner strength.

Introducing the keynote speaker Prof. Anand Kumar, a Retired Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Sri Sundaram said that Radha ji was very much impressed when Prof. Anand Kumar spoke in this very hall (Annie Besant Hall) on the occasion of Annie Besant’s Birth Anniversary on 1st October, 2003. In his keynote address Prof. Anand Kumar talked about his association with the Theosophical Society which started when he was a young student at the Central Hindu School and he grew up under the teachings of Annie Besant, Dr. Bhagwan Das and such other thinkers. In the University, he was associated with *Angrezi Hatao Andolan*. He said that in the post-Independent India, the populace of his generation

became part of the defeated generation because the promises of the Independent India have not been fulfilled. The traditions which were established in the first part of the twentieth century were destroyed in the later part of the twentieth century. He said that we have to be committed to the freedom of others, justice to all and therefore, we have to go back to the basis. Going back to the basis is the way to move forward. What has happened in our society is increasing intolerance for multi-culturality. In this situation, no one is clear about what next and therefore, for answers we have to enter the spiritual realm of Annie Besant. We are living in a world where science is without humanity and knowledge is without character. Therefore, the principles of Theosophical Society although formulated in the nineteenth century are very relevant today for transformation of the individual. He deliberated upon the issues of poverty, environment, gender injustice, religious drifting, decreasing spirituality and politicization of religions. The answers to all these lie in the Theosophical thought because Theosophical Society has not vacated the religious space, education, health, happiness. He emphasized on the need for Theosophical movement. Although Annie Besant dissociated herself from politics, the need of the hour is to bring the Theosophical Society movement in politics. Today ethics and politics are divorced. Only Theosophical Society can bring about ethics and politics together. This is the path for us – **looking ahead**.

National Lecturer of the Indian Section Dr. S.K. Pandey spoke on life's challenges and our responsibility. He said that challenges that we see outside in the world are our own creation. He referred to Buddha, Annie Besant, Krishnamurti and Jinarajadasa. He also referred to Gita and said that we have imposed materiality on our spiritual self.

Dr. T.K. Nair, Secretary, Theosophical Order of Service, elaborated upon Theosophical Order of Service which he said is no different from the Theosophical Society and the core of the Theosophical Society is service to others. He referred to Madam Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Radha ji. According to them service also means sacrifice and the acts of philanthropy.

Session 2 was chaired by Dr. S.K. Pandey and the invited guest speakers were Prof. Harikesh Singh, Faculty of Education, BHU and Colonel Kailash, Member of Noida Lodge. Prof. Singh spoke on 'Pertinence of Theosophical Perspectives in resolving the emerging Indian crises'. He drew attention on intra-reality and inscape (*Atmchetna*). He emphasized on the cosmic consciousness and said that the issue is of Gross National Happiness. The issue is being Indian and becoming Indian. This comes under the theosophical perspective. Theosophy talks of internationalism. And the five elements of theosophy can bring about the evolution of the self. These are: realization of the cosmic truth and its practice, selflessness, renunciation, harmonization and integration. He referred to Swami Vivekananda in this context.

Colonel Kailash spoke on 'Thought' and emphasized on thought as Science and that the entire universe is comprised of our thoughts. So, the transformation can be brought about through love, peace, harmony and oneness. Concluding the session, Dr. S.K. Pandey drew attention on the practical aspects of theosophy.

The third session was chaired by Prof. Harikesh Singh. Prof. Harikesh Singh introduced the two guest speakers of the session – Sri Shikhar Agnihotri, Pragya Lodge (Lucknow) and Dr. Rachna Srivastava, Associate Professor, Political Science, Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya (VKM). Sri Agnihotri spoke on the topic ‘How to strengthen the work of Theosophical Society?’ He illuminated the audience by his ideas of how to spread the message of theosophy. He forwarded recommendations for preparing the teachings of Annie Besant. He stressed on the importance of an individual soul, even a single member of the society can add to the development of the society for drops add on to make an ocean. He also stressed on how the pastness of past seeps into the present. He referred to the power of theosophy — ‘Power which is peace, service which is joy.’ He proposed relevant strategies for spread of theosophy like the use of technology which can increase connectedness. He also suggested of more nuclei of theosophy like lodges at more strategic locations so that attending its meetings, seminars and symposia can be made easier by reducing the deterrents. Citing several theosophists and other scholars, Sri Agnihotri said, ‘... each man should try to be the centre of the world in himself’. He concluded by stressing on selflessness, earnestness, devotion and amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by the members.

Dr. Rachna Srivastava posed whether India is a nation or it is only a state. If we go into the past we find that before the advent of British rule India was not a nation. It was divided into several states. But the exploitative policies of British brought Indians together, united them into a nation. The social reformers of that time evolved an idea of an Indian past to meet the British challenge. However, after independence, despite having a common language, a constitution, a sovereign government, that consciousness, that social structure is lacking which evolves a state into a nation. The challenges before Indian nationalism are many – communalism, casteism, regionalism, religious intolerance, corruption, economic inequality, terrorism etc. Theosophy has those tools that can address these problems. These methods were given by Dr. Annie Besant almost 100 years ago, yet they are still relevant. These tools are: universal brotherhood to re-establish spirituality among human beings; *Sarvdharma Sambhav* to convey the real meaning of religion – unity with self and one life in all and education with focus upon religious and moral education which is fundamental for building of individual and national character. This will make India a strong nation with foundation stone of spirituality, intelligence and material prosperity.

The fourth session began on the second day of the seminar with two presentations, one by Prof. Sushila Singh, Professor Emeritus of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and the other by Dr. Atul Bhatnagar, IMS, BHU. Prof. Sushila Singh elaborated upon higher consciousness which is the purpose of human evolution and which can be attained only through non-violence. She discussed the vision of spiritually perfect future contained in Shri Aurobindo thought, William Blake’s art and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. She discussed the four steps for spiritual evolution namely, search in the right place, removing the dust, opening one’s inner eye and creative leadership which is essential for looking ahead.

Dr. Atul Bhatnagar focussed on 'Education as an integral part of looking ahead'. He lamented that there is something grossly wrong in the present day education. Therefore, it is essential that we unlearn. He suggested three aspects of education – (i) intention – good work for better production, (ii) good citizenship – fulfilling one's responsibility and (iii) good person – brotherhood. These three model aspects of education have not been achieved. We have gained skills but missed the goals. He also suggested for harmony and co-existence. Three solutions which are universal brotherhood, adult education which he said is the root cause of all present day maladies. In this connection he also talked of emotional intelligence, being aware of the other person and concerned or feeling of compassion. The session was chaired by Dr. T.K. Nair.

The guest speaker in the fifth session was Dr. Shanta Chatterjee, Associate Professor of Sanskrit, VKM. She spoke on Dr. Annie Besant's principle of Education in the light of Indian religion and philosophy. With numerous illustrations, she defined what is education and said for the evolution of human mind and consciousness education is as important as food for human body. She also emphasized that what is *Dharma* must come in practice and politics should be guided by *Rajdharm*. She said that morality is *sarva dharm sambhav* – to be with each and all. In present times, we have left *dharm* behind, we have become *dharmnirpeksha*. In this process, we have forgotten *swadharm*. This session was chaired by Sri Shikhar Agnihotri.

The post-lunch interactive session wherein the students and all delegates participated was an open session and the panellists were Dr. T.K. Nair, Dr. S.K. Pandey and Prof. Sushila Singh. The objectives of Theosophical Society were taken up and its relevance today was deliberated upon by the panellists. Sri Jwala Prasad Mishra, Manager of Vasant Kanya Inter Section, in his comment focussed on attaining happiness (*Anand*) and talked of the role of theosophy in it. He emphasized that this can be done by removing selfishness, study and meditation and realizing God. For this one needs to have indepth knowledge of the principles of theosophy. Colonel Kailash said that one has to enter the inner world and before that one has to remove the psychic garbage. Then only the envisioned virtuous life can be attained. He added that pain is our creation and this makes us think of what is *karma*. For coming out of pain and suffering, he said, love and justice could be the only path and the realization that 'I am creation and the creator'. Dr. S.K. Pandey added to this that without the inner strength, the concept of brotherhood cannot be realized as a reality. The question is how to enter the inner self. This can be done through love and the glimpse of the inner self. Dr. Indu Upadhyay (VKM) particularly related the idea of social concern of the Theosophical Society. She spoke of the haves and have not and said that without including those who are suffering and marginalized, universal brotherhood cannot be achieved. The idea of universal brotherhood has to be incorporated in our understanding of nationalism. Commenting poignantly and perceptively Smt. Manju Sundaram emphasized upon relinquishing the 'I' because there is no 'I' in happiness. She defined what is *anand* which is different from happiness (*sukh*). This *sukh* is momentary and individualistic but *anand* or bliss is universal. Laws of nature do not obstruct

the attainment of *anand*. So *anand* or bliss cannot be attained by going against the laws of nature. Therefore, we have to understand the universal laws and the principles for harmonious unity. And then only we can spread the message of the Theosophical Society – universal brotherhood, interdependency and inter-connectiveness.

Dr. T.K. Nair explained the idea of the unity of life and said if we understand the unity of life then there should not be any difficulty in accepting universal brotherhood. Smt. Uma Bhattacharyya spoke on the importance of experiencing unity of life and from there going on to universal brotherhood. The intervention from Sri Sundaram brought focus on study, meditation and giving back through service to society. This brings us to the path of action, he said. That is the way to looking ahead.

The Valedictory Session was chaired by Sri S. Sundaram and the valedictory address was delivered by Sri Pradeep Gohil, Member, Bhavnagar Lodge. He gave the message of renunciation and hope. The Indian Section of the Theosophical Society in the course of its 125 years of existence has had several milestones to its credit. Now is the time for a leap. The issues before us are now how to further grow the individual consciousness. This is to be done through the academics, publication, translation and national lecturers. He exhorted that the youth of today must be made members of the Theosophical Society and we should work ahead with an open and unconditional mind. He also emphasized on the six qualities as expounded by Radha Burnier – selflessness, earnestness, devotion, knowledge, wisdom and living truth.

In his presidential address, Sri Sundaram spoke on the need for understanding the underlying meaning in the theme of the seminar which leads us to ask questions and the first question is are we doing anything that we can have better future, for this we have to adhere to Radha ji's teachings that self preparation is an important step for Theosophical Society's future work. The task before us is to make the society in general (*samaj*) a better place to live in. Is it possible to establish a world with universal brotherhood? How to move in that direction unless we prepare ourselves in that direction? Therefore, the theme of the conference is very important. He said there is possibility of doing wonders even with small number of 11000 members. In this context, he referred to Arnold J. Toynbee and his idea of '**creative minority**'. The work can go on smoothly for the regeneration of India. A continuance is required in this effort. Why do we wait for some crisis to be engaged creatively? he asked. He exhorted to be strong in the present then only we can move ahead. In the process of self-preparation, he asked some very pertinent questions through a poem 'Which of these are you?' (anonymous). The poem was circulated to all delegates.

The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. T. K. Nair.