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CONTENTS

A STEP FORWARD <i>S.Sundaram</i>	167-168
ON <i>THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE</i> <i>Tim Boyd</i>	169-172
BE HUMBLE, IF THOU WOULDST ATTAIN TO WISDOM <i>G. Dakshina Moorty</i>	173-180
HUMAN HAPPINESS <i>U.S.Pandey</i>	181-188
NEWS AND NOTES	189-200

Editor

S. SUNDARAM

A STEP FORWARD

The recent earthquakes in Nepal, Bihar and at some other places caused a great damage in terms of loss of life and property. People there are overwhelmed with shock and grief. The Government and a few others immediately responded in a positive way to help them and in order to improve the condition in those affected areas.

People of India, and people in other parts of the world as well, did unite on several occasions in past to help the victims of natural calamities. This shows that the tendency to help and the feeling of compassion and cooperation are inherent in mankind and they arise during a crisis such as earthquake, flood, famine, war and so forth. How can more people be encouraged and mobilised to take positive steps during such adverse situations?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama once explained Love as ‘compassion in action’ and ‘to care with concern’. ‘Love is a sense of caring with respect and responsibility’.

How can compassion, the basis of service and understanding be generated? How can compassionate attitude be developed?

Service is not mere action. It is not merely a relief work. It is not ameliorative programme or a routine work. It is not even an act of charity. One does service because it is his spontaneous expression of love, care and concern. People with such a state of mind alone are able to see things as they are and as they can be. Service includes within its fold feeling, goodwill and a great sense of responsibility. The significant aspect of service is that it demands complete identification with the sufferer(s). Then only one can have compassion – which will prompt him ‘to feel for others’ and do something to relieve them from their misery. The civic, moral and spiritual character of society can be strengthened through service, cooperation and love only.

We have to ask ourselves – how can we generate, promote and strengthen the spirit of selfless service? How can one rise above narrow considerations and live a dedicated and unselfish life? How can the bonds of brotherhood be strengthened? How can we live in harmony and sense of oneness with *all beings*? Every individual will have to look into himself and find out ways to awaken, sensitivity, sense of awareness and the sense of urgency for a cause. In this regard, self-inquiry and introspection can help and guide us to develop a sensitivity of consciousness so that one feels the intensity of pain of the other person.

Dr. Annie Besant mentioned in one of her talks:

As service becomes our habitual attitude to everyone whom we meet we shall gradually find that everyone is profoundly interesting and that the giving of service is the greatest joy in life.

It is said that the Theosophical life involves three actions: study, meditation and service. By study, we learn the important facts of life. By meditation, we incorporate what we have learned into our inner selves. By service, we give back to the world the fruits of what we have learned and incorporated inwardly. Without the last step, the first two lead nowhere.

John Algeo

ON THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE*

This is the 92nd South India Conference, but for me it is the first South India Conference that I have attended. It is very good for me to be here. I have travelled quite a long way and just arrived yesterday at two o'clock in the morning. On my way I had a good deal of time to think about our time together, about the meaning of this work that we are doing, and our study of *The Voice of the Silence*. Part of my travel here involved four fascinating conversations with four different people in four different places along my route.

The first of those conversations began with the gentleman who picked me up at my home in Wheaton, Illinois. His family was from Pakistan. When he found out that I was coming to Chennai he became very animated, because little did I know that the captain of the Indian cricket team is from Chennai. Cricket would seem to be far removed from thoughts of *The Voice of the Silence*, but the man spoke with such passion about his interest and involvement in this sport, that our forty-minute drive to the airport passed extremely quickly. When I return to the US I am going to meet with him again, so that he can teach me more about this wonderful sport.

The second conversation occurred while waiting in line at the airport. A young woman was standing next to me. She had just arrived from Hawaii and was on her way to Germany. She has two jobs: in Hawaii she teaches in an experimental school, and in Germany she works as a pastry chef. She was passionate and felt thankful for such a rich and diverse life. Somehow she has managed to combine these two different activities. She has found that her mission in life during her travels is having the opportunity to connect with people around the world. This inspired her. Although she had no exposure to Theosophy, she felt that she was an old soul.

* Inaugural address delivered at the 92nd South India Conference, Adyar, 2 April 2015.

The third conversation, and probably the best, was with the woman who sat in the seat next to me on the airplane. She was a very simple woman from a tribal village in Algeria, northern Africa. She spoke no English or other easily recognizable language; I neither spoke nor understood any of the things that she said, and yet we had a conversation that lasted for almost half an hour, during which the overflowing sense of kindness that she displayed towards me was communicated so profoundly. Without the benefit of language she spoke eloquently. She patted my face and smiled, I helped her figure out her seatbelt — simple things.

The fourth conversation took place on a bus on the way to the final plane coming to Chennai. The woman seated across from me, as it turned out, was born and raised in the neighbourhood where I grew up in New York City, went to a school that we competed against in New York City, moved to Chicago, where I had moved, and now was on her way to Chennai to work on building teams of people in the corporate world.

All of these were encounters that seemingly had nothing specific relating them to Theosophy or to the inner work that we do. They could be seen as mere chance encounters. However, I left those conversations having been impressed by each of these people whose paths crossed mine. All of us were in motion, headed mostly to different places in the world, but somehow in those moments that we were in each other's presence we connected and changed each other, maybe only slightly, forever. It made me think that the nature of the human experience is exactly this matter of making impressions. From moment to moment we impress the quality of our consciousness on the world that surrounds us. To the wise, these impressions are very deliberate and necessarily helpful. To the unwise, we make our impressions by reactions — unthoughtout, undisciplined, uncontrolled. Probably most of us have some mixture of wisdom and its absence.

One of the purposes for the reintroduction of the wisdom of Theosophy in our time has been to try to elevate the nature of these impressions that we are continually making on the world and on ourselves — to re-establish humanity in the role that it uniquely plays in the economy of Nature.

As Theosophists, who have had the benefit of exposure to the wisdom teachings of Theosophy, we can identify what have been described as the three gems of the Theosophical world. Three short books that have been part of the history of our movement and that seem to be a very clear expression of the nature of the Theosophical life.

The three books are *At the Feet of the Master*, *Light on the Path*, and *The Voice of the Silence* — the last of which we will be considering during this conference, but nothing stands in isolation. In the Theosophical literature we have many books that are richer than these three in terms of information, concepts, and descriptions of the inner workings of the world in which we live. But somehow these three seem to epitomize Theosophy as a path and a way of living, and why? The value of these books is that they are practical, they say something that can be practised and applied. This is where their wisdom lies.

The word ‘practice’ is used frequently in various different contexts. I will share something mundane that occurred to me, but that had repercussions on my own thought. A number of years ago I was traveling. This time I was going to visit Niagara Falls, a beautiful spot standing on the border between Canada and the United States, one of the natural wonders of the world. I was arriving in the late afternoon from the Canadian side, which lies to the west of this great river. When I got to the Falls they were more beautiful than they had been described. The scene was powerful and all-encompassing for all of the senses.

It was a sunny day. As I stood at the river’s edge looking into the Falls with the sun at my back, the water surging over the edge, and the plume of spray rising out of the falling water, everywhere I looked in the water I saw beautiful rainbows. Directly across on the other side of the river there were other people also standing, also looking at the same water, the same spray. What occurred to me at that time was that on the other side they saw the spray, but because of the position of the sun in relation to where they stood, they saw no rainbows. It was only those who were standing on the side of the river where I was that beheld this particular vision of Nature. At that moment, I realized what it is we try to do in our practice. What we see is determined by how we position our consciousness. Practice is the systematic attempt to position our consciousness in order to properly perceive this world, and the worlds beyond the one we inhabit.

To the extent that we embrace the teachings within these three gems, we alter the point of view from which we see the world. Each

one of these three great works had different authors. Jiddu Krishnamurti as a thirteen year old boy was the author of *At the Feet of the Master*, the last of these three books to be written. *Light on the Path* was written first by Mabel Collins. *The Voice of the Silence* was the last book written by H. P. Blavatsky, just two years before she died. We can better appreciate where these books stand in terms of the stages along the path which they address if we look at the first page of each book — the dedication page. It tells a profound and specific story about the author’s intention for the book.

The words of dedication in *At the Feet of the Master* are: ‘To those who knock.’ These are those who stand outside the entrance to the Temple of Wisdom and make a sound at the door in their request to be allowed in. The dedication of *Light on the Path* is much longer: ‘A treatise written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern Wisdom and who desire to enter within its influence.’ It is dedicated to those who are ignorant of a particular approach to Reality, but who are sufficiently aware to sense a great value ‘within its influence’. Probably the shortest dedication is that of *The Voice of the Silence*: ‘Dedicated to the few.’ This is not a book for popular consumption or one intended for the broad public, but the one that HPB described as for ‘those few real mystics within the Theosophical Society’. She further said that this book would surely speak to their needs. This is the hierarchy of these particular books. They all lead us along a path that goes in a specific direction, and they culminate in this work that we will be considering in our time together: *The Voice of the Silence*.

Humanity has a very specific role in the economy of Nature. The human element is a transformative one. No other aspect of the natural world has this capacity that humanity does. It is something that we develop through practice. Ultimately, practice leads to a point where practice is not necessary. It takes great effort to become effortless. These works are intended to guide us to stand up and fulfil the role that we are here for as individuals, but, more importantly, as that organ within the greater body that is described as humanity.

I am happy to inaugurate this study that certainly will be productive of wonderful things, and I look forward to inaugurating a 93rd, and maybe even a 100th, South India Conference.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, May 2015)

BE HUMBLE, IF THOU WOULDST ATTAIN TO WISDOM**

Introduction

We see flower plants grown flanking by the House Gates. Have we ever given thought to what a great sense they make? –They stand there and whisper to the visitor a humble gesture of welcome as one is led on the path into the House.

In the same spirit, let me treat you to a parable, from Swami Shanthananda Puri's collection of *Stories on Meditation*, before beginning my talk. The story is of Sanathana Goswamy and his sense of humility.

Parables, as you know, have a potential of making abstract thought intelligible to human mind.

Sanathana Goswamy was a great devotee of Swami Mahaprabhu Chaitanya. He lived in the Holy Brindavan with his nephew Jiva Goswamy. They both were great Scholars well-versed in the Scriptures. Jiva Goswamy was his uncle's disciple, too.

It was a way of promoting learning in those days, for Scholars visiting Kings' Courts to prove their eminence by inviting Assemblies of local Pundits to challenge his wisdom or accept his authority and acknowledge his pre-eminence.

Once, a Pundit from Bengal came to Brindavan with such a challenge, to the Scholars of Brindavan. Almost every other Pundit of the region surrendered and admitted the Bengal Pundit's eminence. Sanathan and Jiva were scholars too, to the core. When Jiva Goswamy got the message of the Pundit his uncle had been out of the kingdom.

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** Text of the Short Talk delivered at the South India Conference held on 3-4 April 2015 at Adyar.

So, Jiva himself took a decision to take the Pundit's challenge and combated the latter in the Assembly. Within just a short while, the Pundit was defeated and Jiva Goswamy put the Pundit to insult by taking away his credentials and tearing them to pieces.

When Sanathana Goswamy returned home, he was informed about what all happened during his absence. No sooner did he come to know of this, Sanathan Goswamy packed up his belongings in order to leave the Kingdom. Jiva Goswamy was perplexed. Sanathana Goswamy, when asked about his sudden and harsh stance explained to his nephew:

“I am an unworthy Guru who has not been able to impart to you the value of humility and so not fit to remain in Brindavan anymore. What did you gain by putting a co-scholar to shame and disgrace?..... A spiritually evolved person will neither take offence nor will he give offence or openly insult anybody making another unhappy. He alone is the beloved of the Lord.”

Beauty of Humbleness

Such is the beauty of humbleness. *Be Humble, if thou would'st attain to wisdom* – the focus of my talk, here. *The Voice of the Silence* portrays a Master's instructions to the Neophyte (Aryasanga of the Esoteric Buddhism) to Lanoo - one who has taken the path of wisdom. The Master continues: '*Be humbler still, when wisdom is attained*'

There's a Sanskrit verse which goes like:

*Vidyâ dadâti vinayam;
Vinayât yâti paatratâam;
Paatratvâddhanamâpnoti
Dhanaddharmam tatah sukham*

Education is no education unless it has instilled in the student the quality of humbleness. Humbleness is indeed, the true characteristic of the wise as we have seen in the parable of Sanathana Goswamy. Aryasanga goes on to explain further to the Lanoo:

- *Be like the ocean which receives all streams and rivers. The ocean's mighty calm remains unmoved; it feels them not – a lesson in self-articulation*
- *Restrain by the divine, thy lower self. Restrain by the eternal, the divine - a lesson in self-abnegation*
- *Aye, great is he who is the slayer of desire; still greater is he, in whom the Self divine has slain the very knowledge of fear - a lesson in self-sanctification*
- *Guard thou the lowest, lest it soil the higher - a lesson in self-purification*

A Bunch of qualities

Humbleness is not just one quality; it is a bunch of qualities that go together to make an honourable person. It is the opposite of *personal pride* that attaches to many other vices, such as selfishness, self-aggrandisement, self-delusion, aversion, indifference to learning, disregard of others, constriction of mind, aloofness, impatience, irritability, turning away from one's duties and responsibilities, so on and so forth.

The Master tells to Lanoo:

- *'Shun praise', for he says, 'praise leads to self-delusion'. One's body is not the self and the Self has no body. Therefore in the realisation of one's true self, one should not be affected by praise. And in the same breadth, the Master says:*
- *'Self-gratulation, O disciple, is like unto a lofty tower up which a haughty fool has climbed. Thereon he sits with prideful solitude and unperceived by any but himself' – self-importance, indeed shuts a man away from the world.*

It is not only pride that is to be avoided, but also one's own under-estimation.

- *'Shun ignorance and like-wise shun illusion' – ordains the Master; for, ignorance deters the mind and illusion blocks it altogether.*

Patience and Perseverance

Then, there are the elements of *patience* and *perseverance*.

- *'Have patience candidate; as, one who fears failure courts no success' and,*
- *'Have perseverance as one who doth for ever more endure'*

Perseverance and patience are necessary in the path to progress for nothing can be expected to happen instantaneously. Every process has a period of gestation, of gradual development, step after step, and in due time.

Humbleness in speech and action

Humbleness shows out itself in one's speech and action, both. Humility, in deed and speech, is the touch stone of wisdom that marks the truly learned. Here is a small anecdote from Ramayana told by the Mother of Aurovillae, in her *Tales for All Times*. Rama went around in search of Sita after she was eloped by Ravana. When he comes to the kingdom of Monkeys and Bears he gets to know through Hanumana that Sita was kept in the island of Lanka, the land of Ravana. Rama's army had to cross the ocean. Rama comes to the ocean and prays to the Ocean King:

“Great sea, I beseech you; let my army pass”. The Ocean King doesn't respond. Rama waits for three days and then takes his bow and arrow and shoots an arrow deep into bosom of the ocean. The Ocean King springs out and falling at the feet of Rama and begs: Great Lord, forgive my sin. I am like my kin of the air, earth and fire. We are heavy and slow, so accustomed to power that we cannot answer at once... Do what seems good to you”.

Lord Rama realised the delicacy of the situation where the capabilities of Ocean King was limited by Nature. Rama smiled and said “Tell me how my army may cross over your realm of waves and storms”

The Ocean king opens up his heart and reveals: “My waters will bear on their chest the rocks which your soldiers will throw on them and in that way a bridge will be built between India and Lanka”

Humbleness is not just a feeling or attitude; it is also of one's approach, both in speech and in action. Here is yet another allegory from Mother's *Tales of all Times* that touch upon these aspects:

In Japan, there is a tradition that flower artists come to every house daily with the skill of arranging flowers. The Master of the House brings a tray with some flowers, a pair of scissors, a knife, a little saw and a beautiful vase

The flower artist is undoubtedly skilled in the art. However, he says to the Master of the House:

'Sir, I cannot make a bouquet beautiful enough for such a beautiful vase'

'I am sure you can' says the Master and leaves the room.

Left alone the artist sets to work absorbed in cutting, snipping, twisting and tying until a beautiful bunch of flowers fills the vase - a delight to the eyes!

The Master and his friends enter the room; the artist stands meekly to a side and gently murmurs, 'My bouquet is too poor, let it be taken away'

'No', replies the Master, 'it is splendid!'

To one side of the table near the vase, the artist has placed the scissors. He means by this that if there is any flaw any one can take the scissors and cut away whatever offends the eye.

The artist has indeed done a fine piece of work, but he would not dream of exalting its merits. He is conscious he might have made mistakes. He is modest. He does not boast and his behaviour is polite, pleasing.

The flowers in the vase are beautifully arranged and our eyes are delighted. But it is for us to praise the work and not for the artist.

'Sir Issac Newton: a zealous scientist who studied nature in-depth and came out with astounding discoveries: the Law of Gravitation; effect of the sun and the moon on the tides; the dispersion of colours into a rainbow band and many more wonders of Nature.

One day a lady spoke to Newton about his learning and knowledge, with sincere praise. And Newton was quick with his gentle response:

'Alas! I am only like a child picking up pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of truth'

Do we think less of Newton because he compared himself to a little child? No; we honour him for his Modesty.

On the contrary, we laugh at people who boast in vain.

Modesty is humbleness

One day Prophet Mohammed was at a Meeting place where many people had gathered and there was not much room to sit. So he sat with legs folded under him. An Arab of the desert was also present who knew that Mohammed was a great Leader of the Masses. He felt surprised that the Prophet who was supposed to sit like a Lord upon the throne was seated crouched on the floor. So, he asked the Prophet: 'Is this the way to sit?' Mohammed answers him coolly: 'Verily, Allah has made me a humble servant and not a proud King'

It is said of the Prophet that he was willing to ride on an ass while prouder men were content only to ride on horses.

The greatness of *humble speech* is expressed in a Sanskrit verse flowing thus:

Keyurani na bhushayanti purusham, hârâ na chandrojjwalâh

Na snânam na vibhushanam na kusumam, nâlankrita murdhajâh

Vanyekâ samalankaroti purusham yâ sanskrita dharyate

Kshiyante khalu bhushanani satatam, vagbhushanam bhushanam.

Humble use of knowledge

Charles Spurgeon, 'Sacred Space' columnist in the Times of India, has this to say, rather wittingly:

"Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool greater, so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom"

There is a small story relevant to the context: A certain farmer had an antic grandfather clock in the parlour of his house. It had worked for more than a century ceaselessly and accurately.

The clock asked his Master, once thus: ‘Master, I have been working without a stop all these years and don’t I deserve to take rest and stop ticking for some time?’

The wise Master thinks for a while and responds: “My good clock, your complaint is not justified. You are forgetting that between each tick you had a second’s rest.”

Two Paths to wisdom

The Master essentially warns the neophyte of true and false learning. To one who is entering the pursuit of wisdom it eventually comes to choosing the right path. The neophyte should hold his mind clear to separate the truth from falsehood; the important from the unimportant; the Doctrine of the Eye (intellectual recognition) and the Doctrine of the Heart (spiritual recognition). Let us turn a bit to the Quran.

We open the Quran and at the Head of the Chapters of the Sacred Book we see the words ‘News’. By ‘news’ our minds jump to thoughts of politics, cinema, accidents, rapes, murders, robberies, cheating, wars, fires, floods, funerals, weddings, divorce, concerts, exhibitions, what all and what not of paid columns. The Mother in her *Tales of All Times* speaks of Mohammed, the Prophet thus:

‘The Prophet Mohammed was neither a frivolous person who took pleasure in news of evil deeds, nor a gossip who taught nothing noble’ and sights from the beginning of the chapter on “News”

In the name of the Allah!
The Compassionate, the Merciful
Of what are they speaking together, of the great news?
Are they disputing about it?
No, but they wish to know
Surely, they will know.
Haven’t we made the earth a bed?
And the mountains as tent-pegs
Were you not created in pairs?
And have we not made you sleep for your rest?

And made the night for a mantle?
And the day to earn your bread
And built above you the seven Firmaments?
And set their a burning light
And made showers of water fall from the brimming clouds
To bring forth grain and herb everywhere and gardens thick with trees

Thus the Prophet kindled hope in the hearts and the minds of men and women, speaking of the greater things that teach man how noble is the world of life. What a difference to learn, from the Eye and the Heart! One should train his mind to ignore news that are not worth hearing and repeating, but gather other that are worth hearing and repeating. Man’s power lies in this wisdom.

Humbleness in service

The Master then points, of a humble person, that one should be servile and dutiful, all the time, unmindful of pleasure or pain.

‘Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe’ and more firmly, ‘and close thy mind to pleasures and to pain as well’.

Because, the man, who does his daily routine well, will soon be trusted by the higher ones and such are eagerly wanted by those who guide the destiny of mankind.

While occupied in service, the Master instructs the student:

“If sun thou cans’t not be then be the humble planet. Aye, if thou art debarred from flaming like the noon-day sun upon the snow capped mount of purity eternal, then choose, O neophyte, a humbler course”

Conclusion

Being humble is to live in humility, being dictated by one’s higher nature. I have not the audacity to say I ‘know’ all that I’ve shared with you, here; they are the *Golden Precepts* picked for our instruction by Mdm. Blavatsky, whom we all hold in reverence. I have shared in all humility, only what I have heard from her and gathered from others.

HUMAN HAPPINESS

The very purpose of human existence seems to be to seek happiness. Whether one believes in this religion or that religion, men are seeking something better in life. Very motion of life is towards happiness.

What makes us happy? Why some people are happier than others?

People desire and work very hard to get all that the world considers necessary for a happy life, yet none of these things can make us really happy. There is increasing realization that getting the desired object or reaching desired goal, or more wealth or gadgets, may give us only temporary happiness, but lasting happiness still eludes us. Human relationship has changed radically. One finds that today more people are unhappy due to lack of meaningful human relationship than due to any other reason. In the consumerist culture, some people try to fill the void by turning to objects that would define one's identity through possessions, while others turn to drinks and drugs. It is our self-centredness that has alienated us from others.

Here we are not dealing with transient or sensual happiness but durable happiness or fulfilment at desire/mental level. The word 'Happy' is derived from the Icelandic word 'happ', meaning luck or chance. The transient type of happiness may depend on chance but happiness being talked about requires definite ways of functioning of desire and mental faculties by proper training of mind. Here mind does not refer merely to psyche; it includes intellect and feeling, heart and mind (astral body along with lower and higher manas).

Success may result in a temporary feeling of elation or tragedy may result into a period of depression but sooner or later our overall level of happiness tends to migrate to a certain base line. The psychologists call this process as adaptation. This principle operates in everyday life. What determines this characteristic base line and whether can it be

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modified? Some say that individual's characteristic base line of happiness or well being is genetically determined, at least to some degree.

Landmark twin research from Minnesota, USA, found that roughly fifty per cent of differences in happiness from one person to another are genetically determined. We are always going through hills and valleys, but our DNA is responsible for our overall general attitude or what is called "happiness set point" (or characteristic baseline). Ten per cent of difference in happiness levels is influenced by life circumstances and environmental factors which keep changing, says Sonja Lyubomirsky, the happiness researcher at the University of California, Riverside. The remaining forty per cent of difference in happiness levels can be taken care of by intentional change in four key areas: family, community, work and faith.

This means that besides innate character towards less or more happiness, it can be achieved or enhanced by training of mind.

By bringing about a certain inner discipline, we can undergo a transformation of our attitude, our entire outlook and approach to living. We may begin by identifying those factors which lead to happiness and those which lead to suffering. Then gradually eliminate those factors which lead to suffering and cultivate those which lead to happiness. Such personal happiness when found can manifest in one, a simple willingness to reach out to others, to create a feeling of affinity and goodwill even in briefest encounter.

A life based on seeking personal happiness need not and must not be of the nature of self-centred or self-indulgent. In fact, surveys have shown that unhappy people tend to be most self-focused and are often socially withdrawn, brooding and even antagonistic. Happy people, in contrast are likely to be more sociable, flexible, creative and able to tolerate life's daily frustrations more easily than unhappy people. And most important they are found to be more loving and forgiving than unhappy people.

Researches show that happy people exhibit quality of openness, a willingness to reach out and help others. Search for happiness offers benefits not only for individuals but for the family and society at large.

In a research work, when asked about their own well-being, people in their 20s rated themselves high. Then there is decline as people get sadder in middle age, bottoming out around age 50. But then happiness level increases, so that old people are happier than young people. The people who rate themselves most highly are those who are in the age-group of 82 to 85. It is called U-Curve by psychologists. The reason of older people being happier than the middle aged seems to that with aging, the people get steadily better in handling life's challenges. In middle age, they are confronted by stressful challenges and they find it difficult to control. While older people lose memory they also learn that most setbacks are not the end of the world. Anxiety is the biggest waste in life. If one knows that he would recover, he can save time and get on with it sooner. So even in young and middle age, by avoiding anxiety, seeing better aspect of the life situations, and considering challenges as opportunities unhappiness can be reduced and happiness increased.

The Happiness is determined more by one's state of mind than by external events.

Mind factor can be applied to enhance the level of happiness. Our moment to moment happiness is determined by our outlook, it has very little to do with our absolute condition but it is a function of how we perceive our situation, how satisfied we are with what we have.

Our feelings of contentment are strongly influenced by our tendency to compare. Constant comparison with those who are smarter, more beautiful or more successful than ourselves, tends to breed envy, frustration and unhappiness. But we can use same principle in a positive way by comparing ourselves to those who are less fortunate than us and by reflecting on all things we have.

One's level of life satisfaction can be enhanced simply by shifting one's perspective and contemplating how things could be worse.

We should serve other people, other sentient beings. If not, at least refrain from harming them. For our life to be of value, we must develop good human qualities -warmth, kindness, compassion. Then our life would be meaningful and more peaceful. If one develops compassion, he will not feel lonely. Within all beings there is seed for perfection but compassion is required to activate that seed. Merit is to be acquired by

practicing acts of kindness, generosity, tolerance etc. and conscious restraint from killing, stealing, lying, sexual-misconduct etc.

The still-ongoing Grant study launched at Harvard University in the year 1938 confirmed that having a loving childhood predicts happiness in adulthood. "The secret of happiness is giving and accepting love" because people need to establish meaningful connections with other people in order to truly feel joy, says George Vaillant, director of the Grant study from 1972 to 2004. He observes that it is not possible to feel any of the positive emotions such as joy, faith, hope, love, gratitude, which lead to happiness, without establishing contacts.

Factors necessary to enjoy a happy and joyful life are good health, material goods, and friends and so on. All these factors require dependence on others- and /or other peoples' efforts and cooperation-interconnectedness. We should try to develop close contact with everybody. Intimacy promotes both physical and psychological well beings.

The key lies in not being dependent on others, and yet continuing to remain connected with other human beings- achieving a balance between independence and interdependence.

The community that one builds around oneself, primarily one's friends, can help boost one's happiness. "All the happiest people have close relationship"- But research has also shown that happiest people tend to think of others, not just about themselves. Lonely people with no confidence tend to be unhappy, but surprisingly, it has been found that today, with increased dependence on technology and telecommuting, more people are isolated. To be happy, one should focus on the good in other people and in one's life.

Work provides meaning and purpose to life and hence is very closely tied with happiness. If we are observant and reflective enough we have a chance to convert ordinary moments of life into *eureka* moments, like Archimedes, who jumped out of his bath naked, to propound the Theory of Displacement, or like Newton, who arrived at the Law of Gravitation when an apple fell on his head. We can find inspiration in smaller things of life, if we have an observant eye and a mind that is questioning, reflecting, discussing and understanding.

Relationship based on compassion, affection and mutual respect as human beings will be more durable.

Development of compassion is integral part of spiritual path. Compassion can be defined in terms of state of mind that is non-violent, non-harming and non-aggressive. It is a mental attitude based on the wish for others to be free of their sufferings and is associated with a sense of commitment, responsibility and respect towards others. Genuine compassion should be free from attachment. It is based on others' fundamental right and aspiration rather than one's own mental projection.

Our attitude towards suffering becomes very important because it can affect how we cope with suffering when it arises. If we can transform our attitude towards suffering, adopt an attitude to tolerate it, then we can do much to help counteract feelings of mental unhappiness, dissatisfaction and discontent. The root causes of suffering are: ignorance, craving and hatred. These are called three poisons of mind. Ignorance means fundamental misconception of the true nature of self and phenomenon.

The wish to be free of suffering is the legitimate goal of every human being. It is the corollary of our wish to be happy. Thus it is entirely appropriate that we seek out the causes of our unhappiness and do whatever we can to alleviate our problems, searching for solutions at all levels-global, societal, family and individual. It is our suffering that is most basic element that we share with others, the factor that unifies us with all living creatures. But as long as we view suffering as unnatural state, an abnormal condition that we fear, avoid or reject, we will never uproot the causes of suffering and begin to live a happier life.

We also often add to our pain and suffering by being over-sensitive, over-reacting to minor things, and sometimes taking things too personally. To a large extent, whether one suffers or not depends on how he responds to a given situation.

To any problematic situation we should analyse our own contribution. This will reduce destructive feeling of 'unfairness' to us which is source of so much discontent in ourselves and in the world.

As products of imperfect world, all of us are imperfect. Acknowledging our wrong doings with a genuine sense of remorse can

serve to keep us on right track in life, and encourage us to rectify our mistakes when possible and take action to correct things in future. But we should not allow our regret to degenerate into excessive guilt with continued self-blame and self-hatred.

Hatred can be greatest stumbling block to development of compassion and happiness. If we learn to develop patience and tolerance toward our enemies, then everything becomes much easier- our compassion toward all others begins to flow naturally. It is the very struggle of life that makes us who we are. And it is our enemies that test us with the resistance necessary for growth.

Studies have shown that anger and hatred to be significant causes of disease and premature death. Anger, rage and hostility are particularly damaging to the cardiovascular system. These emotions are considered major risk factors in heart disease at least equal to or perhaps greater than the traditionally recognized risk factors such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. Need to reduce anger and hatred through the cultivation of patience and tolerance cannot be overemphasized. Minimizing hatred is like internal disarmament. Patience and tolerance act as specific antidote to anger and hatred.

Feeling of discontentment and/or narrow mindedness lead to extreme behaviour. Possibility of achieving happiness by eliminating our negative behaviours and states of mind and making positive changes in oneself is very much there. We should reduce our anxiety and worry. If there is solution to the problem, there is no need to worry. If there is no solution, there is no sense in worrying either.

The closer one gets to being motivated by altruism, the more fearless one becomes in the face of even extremely anxiety-provoking circumstances.

Spiritual Dimension

People can rely on religion (faith) and spirituality to become happier partly because following spirituality often involves belonging to a like-minded group, and thus connection with people. Hope, trust, forgiveness, and awe, are the emotions which lead to well-being or happiness, and are generally associated with religion and spirituality. Lasting contentment can be ours if we look for it at the right place.

General antidote is insight into ultimate nature of reality. It is essential to appreciate our potential as human beings and recognize the importance of inner transformation. This should be achieved through a process of mental development. This is to have a spiritual dimension in our life. True meaning of spiritual practice- it has to do with the development and training of one's mental state, attitude and psychological and emotional state and well being. One should not confine his/her understanding of spiritual practice in terms of some physical activity or verbal activity like doing recitation and chanting. True spirituality is a mental attitude that one can practice at any time.

Contemplation on fundamental nature of Reality and subjects such as impermanence, our suffering nature and values of compassion and altruism is useful. The basic spirituality i.e. basic human qualities like goodness, kindness, compassion, caring are essential for happiness. This requires understanding love in its deepest sense.

Love is difficult to be defined. One definition of love and perhaps the most pure and exalted kind of love is an utter, absolute, and unqualified wish for the happiness of another individual.

Inner discipline is the basis of spiritual life. It is the fundamental method of achieving happiness. Inner discipline requires combating negative states of mind such as anger, hatred, and cultivating positive states such as kindness, compassion and tolerance.

True happiness results when even for a few moments we forget ourselves, because then we are able to establish contact with our higher nature-God within. When we are admiring a painting or listening to good music or observing a sunset, we do forget ourselves during those moments. We sometimes experience this bliss when we become successful in meditation. We also experience this happiness when we forget ourselves in helping others or in doing good works without any self-interest. So long as we are searching for happiness, we are bound to be unhappy. But when we cease to make happiness our goal, we shall definitely have it as a kind of by-product.

A happy life is built on a foundation of calm, stable state of mind. The practice of inner discipline can include formal meditative techniques

that are intended to help stabilize the mind and come to the calm state. Develop stillness of mind by observing underlying nature of mind.

The practice of Dharma, the real spiritual practice, is in some sense like a voltage stabilizer. The function of a stabilizer is to prevent power surges and instead give you a stable and constant source of power.

Meditation- Following meditative practice would be helpful.

Determine that "I will maintain a state without conceptual thoughts". Withdraw your mind inward. Don't let it chase after and pay attention to sensory objects. At the same time don't allow it to be so totally withdrawn that there is a kind of dullness or lack of mindfulness. Maintain a very full state of alertness and mindfulness and then try to see natural state of your consciousness- a state in which your consciousness is not affected by thoughts of past nor is it affected by thoughts of future like your hopes and fears. But try to maintain a natural and neutral state. Initially you may feel a kind of absence or vacuity. However as you slowly progress and get used to it, you begin to notice an underlying clarity, a luminosity. That is when you begin to appreciate and realize the natural state of mind.

To begin with first do three rounds of breathing and focus your attention on breath, just be aware of inhaling, exhaling and then inhaling, exhaling-three times. Then start the meditation.

Only in complete unselfish love and giving, one can experience the unearthly joy, the fragrance which springs from within, which is like no earthly fragrance.

References:

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2. The Art of Happiness- a dialogue by Howard C. Cutter with Dalai Lama

NEWS AND NOTES

Assam

Buddha Poornima Day was observed at the Headquarters of Assam Theosophical Federation on 4 May 2015. The meeting was presided over by Bro Dharendra Nath Chakravarty, President of the Federation. Bro Anil Baruah, Secretary of the Federation, explained the object of the function and highlighted teachings of Lord Buddha and their relevance in modern times. The chief guest of the meeting, Dr Amiya Mohan Das, encompassed in his brief scholarly speech salient features of Buddha's life and his teachings. He also referred to the efforts of H.S. Olcott in bringing about some reforms in Buddhism as then practised by the Buddhists of Sri Lanka and some other South-Asian countries. Bro. Nagendra Chandra Dutta, Sister Pranita Sarma, Bro. Amulya Goswami and Ramesh Chandra Deva Sarma explained the significance of the Day. In his Presidential address, Bro. Chakravarty emphasized that Buddha was the first revolutionary thinker of the world.

Buddha Poornima Day was observed at Bhaskarjyoti Lodge on May 3, 2015, with Sister Pranita Sarma in the chair. Bro. Nagendra Chandra Dutta, Federation Lecturer, spoke at length about the significance of the day making special reference to *The Light of Asia* and the 'Buddha Carita' by poet Aswaghosa. He also explained what Sir Edwin Arnold meant when he said "Om, AMITAYA! Measure not with words, the Immeasurable....." Bro. Dutta also dealt with several other aspects of Lord Buddha's teachings. Sister Arunima Barua gave brief account of Lord Buddha's life and analysed how the Lord could win the hearts of the multitudes by his simplicity, compassion, love and generosity.

White Lotus Day was observed at the office of the Assam Theosophical Federation on 8 May, 2015 following the guidelines issued by the Indian Section Headquarters many years ago. Dr Kunja Medhi presided over the meeting. Floral obeisance was offered at the portrait of Madam Blavatsky. Bro. Ramesh Chandra Deva Sarma recited some *slokas* from Gita while Bro. Nagendra Chandra Dutta read out the selected

portions of *The Light of Asia*. Bro. Raghunath Choudhury recited a portion of *The Voice of the Silence* (Fragment iii .The Seven Portals). Prafulla Chandra Goswami, a retired Principal of K. K. Handique Sanskrit College, spoke at length on the significance of the Lotus as given in the Scriptures. He paid warm tributes to Madam Blavatsky, the co-founder of the Theosophical Society.

Near about twenty members of Sundarpur Lodge assembled at their stipulated venue on 4 May and observed the Buddha Poornima Day with due solemnity. Bro Naren Bora, Secretary of the Lodge, explained the significance of the Day as discussed in Theosophical literature. Sister Santana Dutta also threw light on Buddha's life and teachings portrayed in the Theosophical works. Sister Dr Kunja Medhi delivered a talk on the significance of the 'Mahamangala Sutta' while covering various aspects of philosophical thoughts of Lord Buddha. Sister Bina Hazarika narrated Lord Buddha's appearance on the Buddha Poornima Day in full view of the members of White Brotherhood and other leading luminaries. Bro Prasanna Kumar Phukan spoke about merits of contemplation with a special reference to "Bipasana" as practiced by the Buddhists.

A part of the meeting was set apart for practice of contemplation by the participants.

Bihar

The 110th Annual Conference of Bihar Theosophical Federation was held on 25 - 26 April-2015 at Samastipur. The theme of the Conference was - 'Love & Service'. Prof. C.A. Shinde, National Lecturer, Indian Section, was the chief guest and it was inaugurated by Bro. Pradeep Kumar Mahapatra, Assistant General Secretary, Indian Section.

The meeting started with Prayer of all Religions and Children's Prayer by girl students of Techno Mission School, Samastipur. It was followed by Universal Prayer. Welcome address was given by Bro. Chitaranjan Sinha "Kanak", President, Bihar Theosophical Federation. Prof. Raj Kishore Prasad, Secretary, Bihar Theosophical Federation, read out the greetings received for the occasion. Inaugural address on 'Practical Theosophy' was delivered by Bro. P.K. Mahapatra. A short talk on 'Universal Brotherhood' was held under the Chairmanship of Dr. Sharda

Charan, Treasurer, T.O.S. Bihar Region. The Speakers were— Dr. B. N. Prasad- Vice President, T.O.S. Bihar Region, Bro. B.B. Sinha, Joint Secretary, T.O.S. Bihar region, Bro. A.N. Jha, President, Darbhanga Lodge. Then, meetings of Property Committee and Executive Committee were held. A public lecture on “Love and Service” was delivered by Prof. C.A. Shinde in the evening.

On April 26 the meeting started with devotional song by students of Raj Luxmi Girls’ School, Samastipur. Then, short lectures on ‘Oneness’ was organized under the Chairmanship of Bro. P.K. Mahapatra. Speakers were- Bro.(Prof.) Raj Kishore Prasad, Secretary, BTF, Bro. (Dr.) Sharda Charan, Treasurer, TOS, Bihar Region, Sister Charvee of Samastipur Lodge, Dr. B.N. Prasad, Vice President, T.O.S. Bihar Region, Bro. A.N. Jha, President, Darbhanga Lodge. Prof. Raj Kishore Prasad’s lecture was actually a Science - Theosophy interaction lecture. He used Quantum Mechanics and Theory of Relativity to explain the subject- ‘Oneness’. It was followed by Annual General Body Meeting in which office bearers of BTF for the year 2015-17 were elected as follows:

President- Bro. Chitaranjan Sinha “Kanak”
 Secretary- Bro. (Prof.)Raj Kishore Prasad
 Treasurer- Bro. Awadhesh Kumar Das.

A public lecture by Prof. C.A. Shinde on ‘Theosophy- A Solution to Problems of Modern World’ was held in the evening. Vote of thanks was given by Prof. Raj Kishore Prasad.

Delhi

Bro. Surendra Narayan ji, former International President of the TS and a very senior member completed 97 years of his life on May 10, 2015. Besant Lodge of Delhi Theosophical Federation resolved in it’s meeting held on May 7 to felicitate him on the occasion and authorised Bro M.P. Singhal to personally go to his residence and do this honour along with a gift of a large size portrait of Lord Buddha. As such, Mr. and Mrs. Singhal went to Bro. Surendra Narayan’s home to felicitate him on May 10. He came to the living room with a gracious smile and accepted with grace and gratitude felicitations and the gift as token of love.

Karnataka

Study Camp at Bhowali

The eight days between 21 and 28 of April, 2015, presented a unique event marking a major camp for study of *The Secret Doctrine*, the fundamental source of all Theosophical Wisdom. It was the most ambitious programme of the Karnataka Theosophical Federation for comprehending the fundamental truth underlying all that exists in this visible Universe and moves steadily up towards perfection, the knowledge of which is disclosed to the *Occult Science* of Cosmic Ideation.

Thirty-five members of the Theosophical Society representing various Lodges in Karnataka participated in the study camp. It was directed by Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy, a high-ranking theosophist and President of Karnataka Theosophical Federation. The camp combined in itself, besides radiant lectures on the various chapters of *The Secret Doctrine*, *Jyothi Puja* and regular *Dhyana and Pranayama* sessions. Participant members were lent opportunity to express their ideas and learning, at the hour set aside at the end of each day’s session.

The Camp began on 20 April with the Inaugural Speech from the Camp Director with a high note covering the author’s Proem to the monumental work and how *The Secret Doctrine* was written.

The next four days were dedicated to the study of *Cosmogenesis*. Two Lectures each of one-hour duration with half-an-hour span for interaction were held each day –one in the forenoon session and the other in the afternoon session. Study of *Cosmogenesis* started with an overview of the whole Book (Book I) on *Cosmogenesis*, which took the participants through the whole compass of the work rendered by the Camp Director. He in his inaugural speech impressed on the importance and worth of studying and understanding *The Secret Doctrine* as *sine-qua-non* for righteous, complacent and Blissful living. This was followed by five discourses based on:

- Stanzas 1 & 2: The Night of the Universe + the Idea of Differentiation
- By Bro. M.S Sridhar
- Stanza 3: The Awakening of Kosmos - by Bro. B.V Thippeswamy,
Camp Director
- Stanzas 4 & 5: The Septenary Hierarchies + Fohat –The Child of the
Septenary Hierarchies -by Mrs Vanishree

Stanza 6: Our World, its Growth and Development - by Bro. M.S. Sridhar

Stanza 7: The Parents of Man on Earth - by Mrs Lakshmi Govind. Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy rendered a summing up at the close of the First Session

The next four days were spent on study of Part I of Book II (*Anthropogenesis*) beginning with a pre-view of Anthropogenesis rendered by Bro. G.Dakshina Moorthy, Vice-President of the Federation, highlighting on the practical worth and utility of studying the subject, followed by his discourse on Stanza 1.

Stanza 1: Beginnings of Sentient Life - by Bro. G. Dakshina Moorthy

Stanzas 2 & 3: Nature Unaided Fails + Attempts to Create Man – by Bro. A.C.Shriramaiah Shetty, Vice President, Bangalore City Lodge

Stanza 4 & 5: Creation of the First Races + the Evolution of the Second Race – by Bro. H. Mahalingappa

Stanza 6 + 7: Evolution of the Sweat-Born + From the Semi-Divine down to the First Human Races – by Bro. K.L. Nanjunda Shetty, Chief Lodge Organizer, Karnataka

Stanza 8 + 9: Evolution of the Animal Mammalians; the First Fall + Final Evolution of Man – by Bro. Chokka Reddy

Stanza 10: The History of the Fourth Race – by Mrs Vanishree

Stanza 11: Civilization and Destruction of the Third and Fourth Races – by Bro. S.M. Sridhar

Stanza 12: The Fifth Race and its Divine Instructors – by Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy, Director

Presentation of each Lecturer was synchronized by the Camp Director, Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy, who had also pre-arranged training of the trainers, over three weeks prior to the study camp. The lecturers were given their topics of particular deliverance and yet were required to be abreast of all other subjects to ensure uniform and consistent teaching of the component subjects. Excellent lectures were delivered

to an audience that was highly receptive. Their participation in the activities at the camp was whole and encouraging.

The message of the study was brought to surface through the origin of the Cosmos of which our Earth was designed painstakingly to provide a befitting field for involution of the Spirit from the subtlest to the dense and for evolution of Man from the densest to the subtle, in accord with the Cosmic Ideation. Theosophy has defined Man as the meeting point of the highest Spirit and the lowest Matter, along the path to the realization of the ultimate Reality. In tune with this the Divine plan and efforts of the Divine Hierarchy to set up the field in its variegated planes of matter for en-mattering the Soul and en-souling the Matter through the age-long *Kalp*s for the simultaneous physical, psychological and spiritual evolution of mankind by the seeding of sentience; devising the track for mankind through to putting it on a meticulous path of self-discovery through the various stages of human growth by netting of Races and sub-Races, were vividly given to understand through the course of the lectures.

Incidentally, the trials and turbulences in the making of the self-conscious Man; the role of Divine hierarchy in moulding mankind; history of growth of mankind as disclosed to occult investigation evidenced in the volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* etc., were also brought to focus to the enchantment of the camp audience, strengthening their belief in the Theosophical Truths of Unity of all Existence and Brotherhood of Mankind

At the end of the camp feedback was taken from the participants that indicated to a high quality of training, with the participants expressing that they were immensely benefitted by the camp. They have recorded utmost satisfaction by rating every item of core activity as either 'Very Good' or 'Excellent'.

The whole Camp was organized under the auspices of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society, at Bhowali. Members felt overwhelmed by the hospitality, comfort and warmth of the treatment given to them, which again, they have graded as 'Excellent' in the feedback. After the conclusion of the two sessions Bro. B.V. Thippeswamy delivered the valedictory address at a brief evening function presided over by Bro. P.S. Panchakshari, Treasurer of the Indian Section, who was in complete charge of events being conducted at Bhowali. He expressed his admiration of the Karnataka Theosophical Federation over

organizing the 8-day long study camp on *The Secret Doctrine*, describing it as a unique attempt at enlightening the members on the most occult of Theosophical Wisdom

The campers came full of heart at the Valedictory Session to express their gratitude to the Indian Section for sponsoring the Big Event. The Camp ended with a Vote of Hearty Thanks rendered by Bro. G. Dakshina Moorthy.

Kerala

The 86th Annual Conference of the Kerala Theosophical Federation was held at Asoka Sankara Theosophical Lodge, Kozhikode on 9-10 May 2015. The theme of the conference was “Altruism - Absolute & Unconditional”. Prof. S. Balakrishna Pillai, Co-ordinator, Chinmaya Schools Kollam & Trivandrum and former Vice President – KTF, was the Chief Guest.

After flag hoisting by the KTF President, the inaugural session started with KTF Secretary, Brother P.T. Krishnadas reading out the greetings from the International President Brother Tim Boyd, Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary, Indian Section, National Lecturer Prof. C. A. Shinde, Secretaries of various Federations and Lodges. Brother Tim Boyd remarked that the Convention may be a source of upliftment to the members gathered and to the community at large. He also wished that the light and power of our Masters and all the Holy Ones pervade the gathering, and may all experience the regenerating power of genuine openness. Professor R. C. Tampi, President, Asoka Sankara Lodge, Kozhikode, welcomed the delegates. President of Kerala Theosophical Federation, Brother S. Sivadas, gave the Presidential Address. Professor S. Balakrishna Pillai, the chief guest, inaugurated the session and addressed the delegates. The keynote address delivered by the chief guest set the tone for the subsequent discussions in the conference. The chief guest concentrated on the point that Theosophy is altruism pure and simple. His emphasis was primarily on its practical applications highlighting the difference between philanthropy and charity. Applied Theosophy cannot ignore these facts and its practical application can be attempted at various levels, physical, emotional and mental. He cited examples from the lives of our leaders who could practice theosophy successfully in their day-to-day life.

There was meditation from 6 pm to 6.15pm.

A short talk on “Live to benefit Mankind” was given by Brother G Ramanathan, Vice-President, KTF. There was one hour video screening of J Krishnamurti’s talk. Advocate M. Anil Kumar, Secretary, Asoka Sankara Lodge, proposed Vote of Thanks.

The second day started with ‘Bharat Samaj Pooja’. In the first session Brother S Sivadas spoke on ‘Sow kindly Acts’ and Dr. V. P. Viswakumar talked on ‘Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain’. In the second session Sister P Shobha talked on ‘Infinite compassion – the art of Spiritual Life’ and Dr. T Krishnankutty Nair, Secretary, TOS, spoke on ‘Help, Love and Uplift each other’. He also inspired the members to join TOS to bring down the sufferings of humanity.

The theme of the conference was satisfactorily elucidated by various speakers. All the short talks focused on the teachings of *The Voice of the Silence*. No disciple can progress without practicing the lessons learned and occultism does not compromise on its tenets and rules. *The Voice of the Silence* bestow maximum emphasis on the teachings given through ages by the Most High to the serious seekers. The speakers could convey the essential teaching of the “Gem of Theosophy” that work for the self is retrogression and work for the whole is progression. The enthusiasm shown by many participants in the study of the book reveals that the idea was properly conveyed and the participants took it seriously. In the interactive session Prof. R C Tampi, Brother S. Sivadas and Brother G Ramanathan replied to the questions raised by the delegates.

Theosophical Society, Indian Section, had given Rs.2 lakhs as financial assistance for the repair work of Thalassery Lodge. The KTF President handed over the Cheque to Brother P Raghavan Nair, Secretary of the Lodge.

The Reports of 12 Lodges during the period October 1st 2014 to April 30, 2015, were presented. Reports of the Lodges from Alleppy, Ernakulam, Perinjalam, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur, Calicut, Kannur, Tellichery, Vadakara, Chovva and Kalikadavu were presented by their Office Bearers while that of Kodungallur was presented by the KTF Secretary. All the Lodges are conducting regular study classes on Theosophical subjects and have observed/celebrated Foundation day and Adayar day.

Thrissur Lodge organized a seminar on 'Love & Harmony' at Sahitya Academi Hall, Thrissur and the Chief Guest was Prof. C A Shinde, National Lecturer. Sree Sankara Lodge Ernakulam, besides conducting study classes, was very active in TOS work.

The conference concluded that Altruism is the key to universal harmony and the cure for all ills. The basic principle of altruism is that man has no right to exist for his own sake, that service to others is the only justification of his existence, and that self-sacrifice is his highest moral duty, virtue and value.

KTF Secretary, Brother Krishnadas, proposed Vote of Thanks to the Chief Guest, to the Indian Section for the financial assistance given to Tellicherry Lodge and also thanked the delegates for their active participation. He specially thanked the brothers and sisters of Asoka Sankara TS Lodge, Kozhikode, for hosting and organizing the conference in an excellent manner.

Marathi

The following members of Shrikrishna Theosophical Lodge, Jog Chowk, Dr. Annie Besant Road, Amravati have gone to peace:

	Dip. No.	Date	Date of passing
Bro. P.T. Joshi	30389	07/05/1941	29/08/2014
Bro. R.S. Pimplikar	40576	14/12/1954	not known
Bro. Raghunath V. Joshi	85530	29/07/2000	24/01/2015

Uttar Pradesh

The following talks were held at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, in the month of April: 'To live in the Eternal' by Bro. Ashok Gupta; 'What is Theosophy?' by Bro. Sandeep Srivastava; 'Theosophy & The Theosophical Society: An introduction for new members' and 'Mahatmas and Their Letters' by Bro. U.P. Pandey. Besides, Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk at Satyamarg Lodge on 'Science of Soul' on 5 April and also addressed a group of senior supervisors under training at the centre of Advanced Maintenance Technology (CAMTECH) at Gwalior on 10 April. The theme he dealt with was 'Human, Happiness in the light of Theosophical teachings'.

The members of Sarvahitakari Lodge, Gorakhpur, met on every Wednesday in January & February, 2015. The following activities were held there during these two months: Dr. S.C. Tripathi gave a talk on 'The relevance of Gita' emphasizing on three paths: Wisdom, Service and Devotion. A question-answer session was held on 14 January. Dr. Ajai Rai delivered two talks- one on the importance of Makar Sankranti and the other on 'The valuable contribution of Dr. Annie Besant in India's Freedom Movement & Her pleas for Swaraj'. Besides, along with Sri Raghurajji, he spoke on 'Modern Education and Spirit' in which he explained Dr. Besant's contribution in the field of education and the way she emphasized on the physical, moral and spiritual growth of Indian youth. The subject of Bro. S.B.R. Mishra's talk was 'Shiva the Eternal Energy'. Dr. Ishwardas, Sri Raghurajji, Dr. Bagachi and Dr. Ajai Kumar spoke on different types of Meditation in a programme of short talks held at the Lodge on 25 February.

Bro. A.K. Srivastava (Diploma No. 62536), President of Sarvahitakari Lodge, passed to peace on 12 April, 2015.

The Annual Meeting of Kashi Tattva Sabha was held on 24 April, 2015, in which office bearers for the year 2015-16 were elected.

Dr. Vijai Shivapuri (Diploma No. 89849) passed to peace on 31 March, 2015. She was a member of Besant Education Fellowship, President of the Managing Committee of both Vasatn Kanya Inter College as well as the Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya at the Indian Section Headquarters. She was the guest speaker at the Section HQ on the occasion of Dr. Annie Besant's 164th birth anniversary in which she spoke in detail about the work done by Dr. Besant in the field education, especially for women's education.

National Lecturer

Bro. S.S. Gautam, National Lecturer, addressed the executives of the Wanakbori Thermal Power Station, Godhra, Gujarat on 1st April 2015. The theme of presentation was 'Promotion of Spiritualism at Workplace'. Presentation was in the form of a power point programme, which pointed out that every man has a potential to become a responsible, duty oriented and productive person if he is invoked to put highest within him in practice. The concept is based on the fact that everyone in his highest and purest form is the highest in the world known in different religions with different names. The factor which makes a man attached to his

duty is spiritual factor in him. If this factor is promoted both among employees and the employers the workplace will become a path of spiritual attainment. The executives were proposed the programme by which the employees may be inspired to touch their highest in the short intervals provided for meditation in a calm place. The practice of lateral brotherhood can be promoted by practicing brotherhood at physical, emotional and mental levels. The concept of understanding oneself and others was suggested to avoid conflict which arise due to ignorance about inner truths hidden in man. The lecture was attended by 50 senior executives of the power station.

A talk on 'Thought Power and its use' was delivered by Bro. S.S. Gautam on 10 April for the gathering of about 50 participants consisting of employees of the Regional Labour Institute, Faridabad, and the representatives of various industries. The talk was delivered with the help of a power point projector. It was followed by discussions and question & answer session related to the theme of the talk.

Bro. S.S. Gautam was invited by the organizers of the study camp at Gwalior to present three chapters of the book, "The Ageless Wisdom of Life" by Clara M. Codd. The chapters given to him were:

1. Sex relations in the light of occultism;
2. Invisible hosts; and
3. Evolution of animals.

South India Conference

The 92nd South India Theosophical Conference was held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, on 3-5 April 2015. The conference was on HPB's book *The Voice of the Silence*. The Easter Conference, as it is also otherwise known as, was inaugurated by the International President, Mr. Tim Boyd. He exhorted the members present to fulfil their roles as individuals and help in the growth of humanity. Bro. S. Sundaram, General Secretary of the Indian Section, welcomed the gathering. He stressed on the need to perceive clearly head-learning and soul-wisdom without succumbing to inaction. Prof R C Tampi, Director of the School of the Wisdom, spoke on 'The mind is the great slayer of the Real'. In all, 130 members registered for this conference. They were from different parts of South India including Tamilnadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telengana and Rayalaseema. A few delegates were from Orissa and Mumbai as well. The proceedings spanned over three days. Eleven speakers drawn from the various regions spoke on various sub-themes drawn from the little book by HPB. The closing address was by the Interna-

tional Vice-President Dr C Satapathy. The deliberations ended with the Vote of Thanks by the convener Ms H Sripriya and chanting by Ms K Jaishree. The conference helped the participants to connect with one another and to have an insight into the mystical book.

Indian Section Headquarters

The White Lotus Day was observed at the Section HQrs on May 8. After the Prayers of All Faiths Smt. Manju Sundaram, Smt. Uma Bhattacharyya and Dr. Jannvi Tandon read out excerpts from *Bhagavadgita*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and *The Light of Asia* respectively. These were followed by short talks delivered by Dr. Abha Srivastava and Bro. S.Sundaram on the significance of the Day.

Poor people were fed in the morning for which the members had donated money.

Study Camp at Lucknow

U.P. Federation is organizing a two-day study camp at Lucknow on 25-26 July, 2015 on the book *Viveka-Cudamani* (English translation by Mohini Chatterji). The study will be conducted in Hindi. Members of U.P. Federation and also other Federations are welcome to participate.

Accommodation and food to members coming from outside Lucknow will be provided from evening of 24 July to afternoon of 26 July. Such members may advise their names latest by 10th July to any of the following contact persons and would pay Rs. 300/- per person on arrival at Lucknow. Bro. Vipul Narayan, Secretary, Satya Marg Lodge- Mob. 9415864998; Bro. B.B. Lal, Secretary, Dharma Lodge- Mob. No. 8004388090; Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Secretary Pragya Lodge- Mob. 9839912070.

Gone to Peace

Mrs. Manjula Ben Bakshi (Diploma No. 37314) of Rajkot Lodge passed to peace on 29 March 2015.

Bro. Tarachand Jain Bakshi (Diploma No.) of Jaipur Lodge passed to peace.

Bro. Suresh Chandra, (Diploma No. 85592) of Besant Lodge, Delhi Federation, passed to peace on May 11, 2015.

NORTH INDIA STUDY CAMP

The North India Study Camp at the Section Headquarters, Varanasi will be held from 17 to 20 October, 2015. Bro. Tim Boyd, International President of the TS, will direct the study on **THE THREE OBJECTS**.

The participants are requested to study the following articles:

‘The Purpose of the Society’s Objects’ by Joy Mills,

‘The Three Objects’ by Rohit Mehta,

‘Our Objects’ by Hugh Shearman,

‘The Objects and their Relevance to the Theosophical Life’
by John Algeo, and

‘The Universal Brotherhood of Humanity’ by Edward Abdill.

The aforesaid articles can be found at the following website:

<https://www.theosophical.org/the-society/3-objects?>

Registration will be made on the first come first serve basis. Members of the Theosophical Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Registration Fee, Accommodation Charges, and Meal Charges per person (from the evening of 17 October to 12.30 am. on 21 October) will be Rs.950/- (Registration Fee- Rs. 50/-; Accommodation Charges with Bed Roll- Rs. 150/-; and Meal Charges- Rs. 750/-). A few special rooms will be available for Rs. 300/- during the camp (for only 20 persons).

Give details of arrival departure, Phone/Mobile No./E-mail.

Due to some unavoidable reasons the applications of non-members will not be entertained in this camp.

The Registration Fee, Accommodation & Meal Charges (Rs.950/) must be sent to the Treasurer, Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, Kamachha, Varanasi – 221010, on or before 5 October 2015. Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund of Registration Fee. But Accommodation Charges and Meal Charges will be refunded if application for refund is received before 10 October 2015. The participants are to be present at all the sessions of study. Late joining or early leaving of the camp will not be permitted.

S. Sundaram
General Secretary