

THE INDIAN THEOSOPHIST

SEPTEMBER 2013 VOI. 111 NO. 9

CONTENTS

A STEP FORWARD	239
<i>S.Sundaram</i>	
BONDAGE IS IN THE MIND	240-243
<i>Radha Burnier</i>	
AMRUTANUBHAV BY DNYANESHWARA- NECTAR OF SPIRITUAL REALIZATION	244-251
<i>B.D.Tendulkar</i>	
THE PAST, PRESENT AND THE FUTURE	252-261
<i>Manju Sundaram</i>	
NEWS AND NOTES	262-270

Editor

S. SUNDARAM

Cover Page: **Headquarters Building, The Indian Section, Varanasi.**

Courtesy: **Bro. P.S.Panchakshari**

S. Sundaram

A STEP FORWARD

In spite of all the intelligence and intellectual faculties that man is endowed with, he has failed to bring about peace and harmony in life; to live in harmony with nature; to live in righteousness and brotherhood. It is perhaps because he has failed to channelize his creative energies, his various faculties in right direction. His limited, narrow outlook, his selfish attitude have blurred his vision, preventing him to have an unveiled perception of life in its totality resulting in discordance, discontent and disharmony.

So, what can be done to improve the existing situation? The vital question is not only a structural change. It is one of the relationships and of the minds of men. What humanistic frame of mind shall produce such an ethical environment? This is a task which cannot be the sole responsibility of selected individuals only. It constitutes a challenge for all mankind.

In order to attain lasting peace and harmony one must have a clear perception of the Reality of Universal Brotherhood and oneness of life in its immeasurable vastness and unfathomable depths. One has to have an implicit understanding of the essential unity of all life. No two things in manifestations are alike or identical or an exact replica of the other. Everything is different from everything, and yet underlying it is the one life, one essence; the deep interconnectedness and interdependence of all things, of all beings. Each one of us, as an individual is an inseparable part of humanity at large. So, human effort towards peace must begin at individual level with our individual initiative—that too voluntarily and happily. What is needed is the individual's awareness towards universal responsibility, towards creating a positive and harmonious atmosphere, that may inspire, motivate individuals to have concern not just for one's good but for the welfare of all beings.

Bondage is in the Mind

A well-known sentence in the Upanishads states that mind alone is the cause of man's bondage and liberation. Most people believe that they are bound by circumstance and act as if they are its victims, because they do not understand the forces and conditions which exist around them. The primitive man, who observed lightning and thunder, the disappearance of the setting sun and the descent of darkness upon the earth, and various other phenomena felt these were threats and that he had to placate gods, resort to witch doctors, learn incantations, erect totem poles, and do all kinds of things to avert the harm which he believed might fall upon him. The same phenomena, viewed by modern man, do not generate fear in him, for knowledge has made him understand the laws and forces at work behind the phenomena.

There is a web of forces in nature which create the conditions in which people live. They include such forces as gravity, electricity and magnetism. The man who knows how these forces work is able to predict the conditions which will be created. He can control the circumstances around him by altering and regulating the forces. Knowledge enables him to change conditions and not consider himself as a victim of those conditions.

This is the position of man now in relation to that part of the phenomenal world which he understands. Flights to the moon and communication through satellites with distant parts of the earth are ways of conquering the environment. But, man's knowledge even now pertains to a very limited field. The brilliant men who can manipulate nature and counteract the forces of gravity, etc. are also victims of circumstances in the psychological field. Ignorance makes them fearful and insecure and as enslaved by psychological forces as primitive man was with regard to physical ones. In the psychological field also, forces create the conditions, and he who would be free and fearless must understand the

laws at work. One of the three great truths proclaimed by *The Idyll of the White Lotus* declares:

Each man is his own absolute law giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

In other words, each man creates the conditions around him, his karma. Bondage is nothing but the prison-house constructed by karmic forces which each one releases. Bondage is said to be in the cycle of births and deaths, the compulsion to suffer. These are different ways of stating the same thing.

Most people believe that they can escape the consequences of their acts, mental and physical. There are some who acknowledge theoretically that it is not possible to escape the consequences of the forces which we release. But they do not really believe in this; if they did believe in karma, they would be extremely careful about everything they do, what they think and feel, their relationship to people and so on. The weakness of the belief is made evident by negligence in conduct.

It is possible to escape the consequences of one's acts in the physical world during a particular lifetime. In case a person commits theft, he may be caught immediately or his lapse may remain undiscovered for a few years. He may even get away with it during his entire lifetime. But the consequences cannot be escaped indefinitely, for though the mills of God grind slowly, they grind exceeding small. However, what is more serious is not the discovery of the theft or being put into jail, but the fact that there is an immediate consequence in the psychological field.

He who deceives another and thinks he can get away with it, deludes himself grievously. Many people cover up facts or misrepresent them in relating them to others, pretend to be other than what they are, etc. It is not uncommon to show a different face under different circumstances. All this happens because in the background of the mind, there is a feeling that one can escape. But, actually there is an immediate effect when there is any act. When there is an act of deception, it gives rise to a certain momentum in the psyche of the person. Deceitfulness becomes a form of energy which is released within. That is the immediate but invisible consequence.

There are many things in the psyche which are unnoticed. There are conscious memories and also many unconscious ones. If you meet someone whom you do not see or think about again for a few years in your conscious mind, there may be no conscious memory of that person; whether he is tall or short, dark or fair, all has faded away. Later, you meet and you 'recognize' him. That recognition means that although the conscious mind carried no memory, the unconscious mind did, and that unconscious memory came to the surface. Recognition implies comparing what he looks like now, his behaviour, gestures or whatever it is, with the past impression and knowing it is the same. All that is involved in recognition or re-cognition.

But there are memories which are deeper down. People have memories of childhood which are beyond recall, except under hypnosis or in moments of crisis.

Behind the threshold of conscious memory there is a whole area, like a hidden iceberg.

If energy is released in the psyche, the momentum may also sink below the conscious level. When there is a suitable opportunity, it will come into play. For example, when action is deceitful, as said earlier, a momentum is created, which may be hidden and dormant, below the conscious level. At some time, it turns into an impulse to do the same kind of thing. This becomes a vicious circle, a circle of bondage: the action which creates the tendency, the tendency which impels action whether it is one of deceit, fear or envy or a mixture of some kind.

In the average human being, there are innumerable tendencies pushing the person indirectly, willy-nilly, whether he knows it or not. When a person suffers from timidity or fear, every shadow makes him feel that there is a hidden enemy. When there is pride, a man imagines there is intention to offend even when a statement is innocent. Further, the unconscious mind connects the feeling with outer characteristics appertaining to another person from whom the danger or insult is thought to ensue. So, people have compulsive reactions against dark people or white people, Jews, Catholics or Protestants and against all kinds of things. Hidden momentums, tendencies and compulsions surface into the field of action not only from the recent past, but from the depths of our animal inheritance. Most people act according to that deep condi-

tioning.

When there is compulsion from within, a momentum over which there is no control, there is no freedom at all. It is the bondage which the mind creates because it is in a state of unawareness, because it does not take the trouble of finding out what is happening to itself.

The conditionings of the mind create, enormous problems — the problems of colour, nationalism, racial differences, etc. Because of the conditioning which one has undergone, one identifies oneself with family, community, religion, etc. But the mind can free itself if it sees that it is creating circles in which it gets imprisoned.

It is not necessary for anyone to be the victim of any circumstance. Instead of creating momentums of deceitfulness or fear through unawareness one can generate other energies, such as patience, affection and calmness. These arise through awareness and have a quality of stability. They are not reactions.

Through watchfulness and care exercised in daily life, one can begin to realize what is the state of freedom. Within the mind, there is the possibility of both bondage and freedom. One has to pray to no god, find no priest, to free oneself but only discover what is deep within. The Bhagavadgītā speaks about the stable man who is non-dependent because circumstances do not have power over him. That is what all human beings have to learn. By active watchfulness, one can cease to be the victim of conditions and a source of spiritual energy.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, July, 2013)

When desires and their cause (which is ignorance) are overcome, then the bond between cause and effect and the vitality which supports the object of desire will be dispelled.

Patañjali

Amrutanubhav by Dnyaneshwara – Nectar of Spiritual Realization

Dnyanadeva, popularly known as Sant Dnyaneshwar Mauli, lived in Maharashtra, towards the end of 13th century A.D. He is the first and foremost poet philosopher in Marathi literature. Five centuries prior to Dnyanadeva, Shankaracharya campaigned against superstitious ritualism and advocated doctrine of renunciation. As a result, ritualism declined, but its place was taken by widespread worship of multiple deities, including practice of animal sacrifice offered to inferior deities. Dnyanadeva has described various social customs and religious practices prevalent in those days. There were around two thousand performances, involving a large number of deities propitiated.** Daily people used to spend hours in such activities, finding justification for them in quotations from Shruti, Smriti and Puranas. Dnyanadeva has very severely criticized this degenerated, perverted form of Vedic Religion, alongwith various sects of Jain, Lingayat and Mahanubhav followers. Dnyanadeva has described them as ‘very incarnation of ignorance’. He has criticized the so-called gurus and disciples, indulging in such activities, comparing them with prostitutes, with doors open to all.

Dnyaneshwara’s spiritual lineage belongs to Nath Cult and Warakari Bhakti Marg. The great-grandfather of Dnyanadeva was initiated by Gorakhnath and his disciple Gahirinath initiated Dnyanadeva’s grand-parents and his elder brother Nivruttinath, who initiated Dnyanadeva. His grandfather and father were regular visitors and worshippers of Pandharpur Vithoba. It can be said that Dnyanadeva, in association with other contemporary Maharashtra Saint Namadeva, established the present Bhakti cult in Maharashtra.

Dnyanadeva’s father, Vitthalpant was a householder married to

* National Lecturer, The Indian Section, Theosophical Society.

** *Chaturvarga Chintamani* by Hemadri.

Rukmini, but, with his heart yearning for self-realization, he left home, went to Kashi and became a Sanyasi. However, when his Guru, knowing his family background, ordered him to go back and fulfil his householder’s duties, Vitthalpant returned to Alandi to join his deserted wife. The orthodox brahmins of Alandi were angry with this behaviour of a Sanyasi. They ordered excommunication of Vitthalpant and caused severe harassment and persecution of the family. Four children were born to Vitthalpant and Rukmini – named Nivrutti, Dnyanadeva, Sopan and Muktabai. Due to excommunication, the family had to stay outside the town, rejected by all. When Vitthalpant appealed for atonement, he was advised to renounce this world and for the sake of family’s happiness Vitthalpant ended his life by drowning himself in holy waters of Ganga. But this also failed to alter antagonistic attitude of Brahmins towards the family. They laughed and ridiculed them as children of a Sanyasi. All children suffered this cruel, unbearable injustice and insult with great patience, tolerance and courage. Surprisingly, none of them developed any ill-feelings and bitterness towards society in retaliation.

Dnyanadeva happened to meet at Pandharpur a great devotee philosopher Namadeva. They became intimate friends and Namadeva became a great apostle of Warakari cult and together they travelled to Kashi and to all the holy places in Northern India, delivering their divine message. When back to Pandharpur, they were greeted by galaxy of saints – Goroba Kumhar, Savata Mali, Chokha Mahar, Parisa Bhagwat – belonging to all castes from Brahmins to the untouchables. From there, all accompanied Dnyanadeva to Alandi, where Dnyanadeva entered *Sanjivan Samadhi* and put an end to worldly life at tender age of 21 years. He delivered Dnyaneshwari – an exhaustive Marathi commentary on *Bhagwadgita* just when he was 15. His original, independent literary works include *Amrutanubhav*, *Changadeva Pasashthi*, *Haripath*, *Namana* etc. which he composed in a short span of just six years. Out of deep love and compassion for illiterate, ignorant masses, he adopted simple, beautiful Marathi language so that his message could reach all. Dnyanadeva is regarded with great reverence by his devotees as Dnyaneshwar Mauli (mother). Dnyaneshwar, as the name aptly suggests, was a great genius.

Great learned scholars, known for their spiritual living and insight, such as late Prof. R.D. Ranade, Prof. Sonopant Dandekar, Mr. L.R. Pangarkar, Dr. S.D. Pendse and so many others have spared no words in

Great learned scholars, known for their spiritual living and insight, such as late Prof. R.D. Ranade, Prof. Sonopant Dandekar, Mr. L.R. Pangarkar, Dr. S.D. Pendse and so many others have spared no words in appreciation of Dnyanadeva's outstanding contribution to the world treasure of spiritual thought. Dnyaneshwari – also known as *Bhavartha Dipika* – is his most popular commentary on Bhagawadgita. It is considered as a rare piece in the treasure of Marathi literature. No wonder, this book was selected by the UNESCO for translation into English, French and Spanish for worldwide circulation and propagation of its universal message. His religious lyrics (*Haripath-Abhanga*) are spontaneous outpourings from his heart, inspiring deep devotion among his devotees, giving them unique experience of bathing in the waters of ever refreshing *Bhakti-Sudha*, nectar of pure-devotion.

Among all his works, *Amrutanubhav* is an expression of his own self-realization. At the outset, Dnyanadeva himself declares that this work is based on his direct perception and not on any ancient text. He is held in very high esteem for his philosophical pursuit of Ultimate Reality, as lucidly expounded in *Amrutanubhav*. With great articulation, he has presented his theory of *Purna Advaita* (Perfect Monism).

Vedanta philosophy is interpreted by different schools in different ways – Monism of Shankaracharya, qualified monism of Ramanujacharya, dualism of Madhavacharya, pure monism of Vallabhacharya and the like. Interpretations of philosophical concepts are guided by a system of six out of the ten prevailing pramanas. Pramanas are the means of ascertaining right knowledge. Popular amongst these are:

- i) *Pratyaksha* (Sense perception)
- ii) *Anuman* (Inference)
- iii) *Shabda* (Verbal testimony of sacred texts)
- iv) *Upaman* (Analogy)
- v) *Arthapatti* (Presumption)
- vi) *Anupalabधि* (Non-apprehension)

All the four schools of philosophy mentioned earlier accept *Shabda-Pramanya*, particularly testimony of Vedas. To Shankaracharya, only Vedanta texts reveal true and ultimate nature of Reality. However, Ramanuja, Madhav and Vallabha schools accept *Anuman* (Inference)

and *Pratyaksha* (Sense perception) also as reliable sources of knowledge in ascertaining the nature of Reality. Upanishadas, Bhagawadgita and Brahmasutras, which together are referred to as '*Prasthan-Trayi*', are generally regarded as authority in ascertaining nature of Brahman. Some schools also rely on texts like *Mula-Ramayan*, *Mahabharat*, *Pancharatra Agama*, *Alwar Prabandhas* etc. Fundamental texts are the same, but interpretations based on them vary widely, leading to emergence of different schools.

With this background, it will be interesting and also illuminating to study Dnyanadeva's own independent approach and vision of the Ultimate Reality. It is not based on intellectual interpretation of authoritative texts or application of various Pramanas mentioned earlier. In this context he says, "It is not¹ because Shiva or Krishna has said this, that we say this. We would have said it even if they had not said it." To him, different Pramanas are of no avail in revealing nature of Ultimate Reality. Reality is self-evident and self-illuminating and needs no external proof. The so-called Pramanas (valid sources of knowledge) are themselves illuminated by this reality. We see different objects in sunlight; those objects do not reveal the sun. The various so-called proofs presuppose self-luminous reality and do not really prove or throw light on its existence. The light which illumines all² other things, does not require anything else for its perception.

Four Mahavakyas (Great Vedantic statements) contained in different Upanishadas reveal the nature of Brahman. They are:

- a) *Tattvamasi* (Thou art that), Chandogya Up. VI 7.8
- b) *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman), Bruhad. Up. I 4.10
- c) *Ayatma Brahman* (This self is Brahman) Atharva – IV
- d) *Prajayanam Brahma* (Knowledge is Brahma), Aitareya V – 3

Many of the Indian schools of philosophy have relied on same or all of these Mahavakyas in support of their doctrines. Dnyanadeva, however, does not seem to have felt such a need to rest his vision of Ultimate Reality on secondary supports.

Dnyanadeva's theory of *Chidvilas* or play of Buddhi or pure intelligence can be regarded as his visionary approach to the process of manifestation of the Cosmos. Shankaracharya's theory of illusion popularly known as Maya finds no place in Dnyaneshwara's unique approach, though his views on Monism or Advaitism are not substantially at variance with those of Shankaracharya. Dnyanadeva does not view God as a phenomenal manifestation of the Absolute. He considers God Himself as the Absolute, inclusion of the principle of Plurality. He does not formulate the concept of Maya as a cause of illusion, nor does he view the world as illusion. To him, Cosmos is not a mystery of Maya or illusion but an expression of Divine love and joy. Consequently, his pathway to God is not one of ascetism, but a path of loving devotion and selfless activism.

Dnyanadeva emphasizes that it is the power of the Almighty that is at the root of and reflects in manifestation of the world, not the result of the power of Maya. Incidentally this approach resembles Kashmir Shaivism. Dnyanadeva further perceives the Power of God identical with Power of Love. In his view, the triple aspect of God appears as love, power and wisdom. Love occupies the central or primary position and power and wisdom are its secondary aspects. Since he does not make any distinction between the Absolute and the God, he does not consider Love as an attribute of God, but Love as God Himself, which in fact is the source of all creation. This Love is infinite and is a substratum of the Universe. As a result, there is a tender, divine benediction over all the things and beings in the Universe. He says, "Not a blade of grass comes into existence, without the waters flowing from the fountain source of Universal Divine Love". Dnyanadeva describes this Divine Love as *Akrutrim Bhakti* or natural devotion, devotion that has not an iota of artificiality. He compares this with the meeting of river-waters with ocean waters, mingling-merging-uniting together, with joy and bliss. Flavour of such a pure love and devotion, binds the devotee with the deity, beloved with the lover. It is in tie of pure love that we find supreme value³ The love that Dnyanadeva refers to is love in its purest form, that springs and wells up in the heart of Divinity and is not comparable with personal love between individuals. It is this highest love which Dnyanadeva must have experienced or realized in his highest state of Samadhi and which he presented in the form of *Amrutanubhava* – the nectar of realization.

Dnyanadeva's revelation can uplift one to the heights of consciousness reached by the seers of the Upanishadas, in their intense quest to experience the nature of Ultimate Reality. In the history of Indian Philosophy, Dnyanadeva has a distinct place of honour for his independent journey on the spiritual path, which led him to his destination. Throughout his journey, he is quite modest and remains indebted, not only to his Gurus, but to all those who have journeyed the Path before, which is quite evident in his early compositions, particularly the Dnyaneshwari. Towards the end of his journey, as we have seen from *Amrutanubhava*, he came to his own independent conclusions, without hesitating to differ from those whom he followed.

Study of his spiritual journey invariably reminds one of the journey of Gautam Buddha of the distant past and of J. Krishnamurti of the recent past. All the three were moved by the suffering of the world. None of them accepted the authority of the scriptures or any other Pramanas, and insisted on direct perception of Truth. They were never content and never allowed anyone to be content with secondary proof. This never had a smell of contempt, disregard, disrespect towards any authority but an unquenching quest to bring light to every aspiring soul, with an object of uplifting the whole of humanity eventually.

All the three have also held pure impersonal love as the most important factor if not the only factor in spiritual developments. J. Krishnamurti, in his first book *At the Feet of the Master* has identified Love as the most important qualification on the Path, replacing *Mumukshutva* or Liberation by love. Love and compassion are the supreme virtues in the teachings of the Buddha. For Dnyaneshwara, God is love personified. For him, it is Love Divine that manifests as *Iswar-Leela* or Play of the Almighty.

As already mentioned, Dnyaneshwara's own spiritual experience and philosophical insight reflect in his compositions. He refutes theories of dualism of Sankhya & Nihilism of Buddha. He has strongly argued against the theory of *Adyanavada* based on illusion. The word *Avidya* itself means⁴ that which does not exist. So ironically, he says that to destroy a thing which does not exist is like breaking the horn of a horse or plucking flowers from the sky⁵.

Reality is often described as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*-Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. According to Dnyanadeva, these are only our modes of apprehension, not the thing in itself. The triad of Sat-

Chit-Ananda denotes only one Reality – just as lustre, hardness and yellowness together appear as Gold or viscosity, sweetness, fluidity together appear as Nectar or whiteness, softness, fragrance together appear as camphor⁶, so are *Sat- Chit-Ananda* – together nothing but one reality. Reality is beyond knowledge and ignorance. Sun is neither illuminated by another light nor covered by darkness. Similarly, Reality is neither brightened by knowledge nor darkened by ignorance.

Dnyanadeva says that Reality cannot be called as existent or non-existent. It does not mean that there is nothing but a void. The words being and non-being do not apply to Ultimate Reality. Reality is a pure knowledge, beyond relative knowledge and ignorance. *Sat-Chit-Anand* only indicate negation of their opposite. Thus Reality is beyond both, *Sat-Chit-Ananda* and their negatives and does not mean that it is *Nihhit*.

Dnyanadeva has also shown the positive aspect of Reality. Knowledge of Reality is not like knowledge of any external object, but a matter of immediate experience. Ultimate Reality is a pure consciousness – the substratum of subject-object relationship. Pure consciousness manifests itself in manifold aspects of the Universe. This pure consciousness is self-evident and self-established. No other proof is required to prove it, not because it is a blind assumption or a working hypothesis but because it is a pre-requisite of all proofs. This self-illuminating reality and its self-awareness form, as it were, a twin which gives birth to the Universe. These two are distinguishable but inseparable. The Ultimate Twin in the form of knowledge and its self-cognition are referred to as God and Goddess by Dnyanadeva. This twin is *Nirhpadhika* (without limitation) and is the cause of the Universe. Reality manifests itself in its two aspects as the Knower and the Known. The one Reality experiences itself naturally and there is eternal union in pure existence, which is pure knowledge and its pure self-cognition. This leads to eternal spontaneous bliss. Thus Reality manifests itself and experiences its own delight.

Dnyanadeva has a peculiar conception of Purusha and Prakriti, having an important bearing on his philosophy. Upanishadic concept of Cosmogony presupposes existence of Purusha alone in the beginning, who due to lack of delight arising out of loneliness, makes his self fall into two and Cosmos emerged. But in Dnyanadeva's conception, there is no lack of delight but there is overflow of delight which appears in

the form of Universe. Nature of Prakriti in Upanishadas is different from that of Goddess of Dnyanadeva. Upanishadas describe Prakriti as a creative power, responsible for misleading individual souls. On the other hand, Goddess of Dnyanadeva is the affectionate mother of the Universe. In Vedic doctrine, Purusha is a passive spectator and Prakriti dances before him, evolving everything out of herself. According to Dnyanadeva, the God and Goddess are like the lover and the beloved. But the lover and the beloved are not two, but one, their love being as deep and intense, that they swallow each other and again emit. Thus they are two aspects of but one Reality. The two compliment and complete each other and cannot remain without each other. He describes this as a sweet union of love and expanse of the whole Universe is not enough for their play, although they happily stay even in a tiny atom. Each is a life of other and not even a blade of grass is created without their association⁷.

Shiva is always accompanied by Shakti like wind and motion, gold and lustre, fire and warmth ... Like light and its refulgence, God and Goddess of Dnyanadeva are two aspects of Supreme Being, inseparable from each other. For these are necessary for origination of the Universe. Both of them create macrocosm as well as microcosm. The Unity, intimacy and inseparability of the two is understandable when we understand God as pure consciousness and Goddess as its self-cognition. Dnyanadeva names them as *Swasamvedya Atmarupa*⁸ (Self-cognizing Itself). In his another composition, *Changadeva Pasashti*, Dnyanadeva has described how the reality manifests itself in the triad of knowledge, knower and known. He refers to this triad as *Samvitti* – pure knowledge in which the Reality perceives Itself.

Referencens :

1. i jh f'koa clk JhoYyHka ckrfyya ; skrip ykHka ekuwrrags ykHka u cksyrkghAA
- 2- Eg. kksfu Lo; a cdk'k ; Fkka vki .k. ka ns[kko; ka fufeRr gk okpksu; ka utghp eka
- 3- *God and the World*, by T.M. Forsynth, page 146.
4. vfo | k ; sksukoA eh fo | ekufp uOga gs vfo | kfp LohkkoA I karrI BA
- 5- ?kVkp sukghi .k QkMj xxukph QyarkMA I f'k; kpa ekMA f'kak I q'kAA
- 6- dkarh dkrBU; dudA frugh feBkuh , dA nto xkMh fi ; v[kA fi ; v[k ph tshAA
- 7- th gh , d , dkoh. ka udk ts r'. kkpfg fuekz ka
ft ; snk's thoik. ka ft ; k nk'skAA
- 8- Å; uekft vk | ka onifrik | ka t; t; Lol ds | ka vkrE: i kAA

The Past, Present and the Future**

MOST of us would remember the beautiful, profound verses that we find at the end of the book *At the Feet of the Master*, and also in the text of ‘The Ritual of the Mystic Star’ — lines which are recited at the time of Invocation:

Waiting the Word of the Master,
Watching the Hidden Light;
Listening to catch His orders.
In the very midst of the fight;
Seeing His slightest signal
Across the heads of the throng;
Hearing His faintest whisper
Above earth’s loudest song.

These powerful words have inspired and impelled one to explore the wide expanses and delve into the depths of the subject: The Past, Present and the Future. These lines have helped one immensely in looking at it — anew, afresh, in a different light, a different dimension altogether.

Let us mark the words: *Waiting* — waiting the word of the Master — i.e., waiting to *hear* the Word of the Master; *Watching* the Hidden Light . . . ! Every line stresses on Watching, Listening, Seeing and Hearing, and obviously, it is not just the literal meaning of the words; it is not seeing or hearing in the ordinary sense, with one’s physical, sensory organs that they speak of; they hint at something much deeper, wider, higher. It is ‘seeing’ beyond what is seen and hearing beyond the ordinary sounds. These words and lines encompass all the deeper, finer intuitive faculties which bring one to the understanding of the Essence of Reality, that is beyond the limits and comprehension of intellect, be

* Member, Kashi Tattva Sabha, Indian Section, Varanasi.

**Talk delivered at the International Convention, Adyar, in Dec. 2012.

yond logic and reasoning. It is perception, entirely at a different plane.

Sanskrit, it is said, is the language of the gods, and music, the universal language as also the language of the Universe. These two powerful languages have helped one in many a way in perceiving and understanding the depths and dimensions of life in its myriad hues.

In all the languages of the world there are certain words and expressions which have profound connotations, enshrining in themselves the deepest of truths, the eternal truths. *Darsan* is one of these vibrant words.

The words *philosophy* in English and *darsan* in Sanskrit are accepted as synonymous with each other. The word *darsan* is derived from the root *drs* to see, to observe, view, vision, perception. So, *darsan* is neither an intellectual speculation, intellectual sport or pastime, nor a maze of arguments. It is direct perception (*pratyakshânubhuti*). It may also be a transmission of spiritual perception or vision, when Reality, the Truth, the whole phenomena await unfoldment before a sensitive, receptive being. The deeper one delves, the subtler become the meanings. It is, perhaps, like the profound resonances that linger long after the bell is struck. Those who are receptive, are able to hear the last resonance fading and merging into the vastness, into that all-pervading sound (*nâda*) from where it emerged.

The well-known Vietnamese Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh, tells a very illuminating story in his book *Cultivating the Mind of Love*:

This is a story about a man named Meursalt, who is in prison. In his cell one day, Meursalt was able to touch life . . . Lying flat on his back, he looked up, and through a small window near the ceiling, he ‘saw’ the blue sky for the first time in his life. How could a grown man see the blue sky for the first time? In fact, many people live like that, imprisoned in their anger, frustration or belief that happiness and peace are only in the future. Meursalt had three days to live before his execution. In that moment of mindfulness, the sky was really there and he was able to touch it. He saw that life had meaning and he began living deeply the moments that were left for him. The last three days of his life became *true life*.

On the last day, a priest knocked at his cell door to extract a confession from him, but Meursalt refused. Finally the priest left, frustrated. At that moment Meursalt described the priest as someone who lived like a dead person. Meursalt realized that it was the priest who needed to be saved, not he. He further says: 'If we look around, we may see people, who are like dead persons, carrying their own "dead bodies" on their shoulders. They need to be touched by something — the blue sky, the eyes of a child, an autumn leaf . . . so they can wake up . . . anything can wake us up to life' — *right here and right now*.

This is what *darsan* means, in its deepest of meanings — waking up to life — *right here and right now!* This is what 'seeing' is, not in fragments, but in entirety — seeing the whole with one's whole being. This moment of 'seeing' is the now, is the present, having nothing to do with seconds, minutes, hours or days; with past, the present or the future. It is the moment that enshrines *the all*, the moment that has in it the *eternal now*. This moment of seeing brings about a new awakening, a new awareness; this 'seeing' itself is understanding. These moments of perception are perhaps the moments when reality can be seen — *in a flash!* It is in these vibrant moments that the mist that masks one's perception, disappears, and with which comes the clarity of vision, an unblurred vision of the vast expanses of Nature and Life. We all must have experienced this: The sky is darkened as the storm approaches and one is unable to see anything; then all of a sudden the thunderstorm breaks, with flashes of lightning — and then, in that flash of lightning one sees everything; things close by and also the distant. This moment of seeing is — *being into it*. This seeing is not a gradual process; it is instantaneous. There is this beautiful word, again in Sanskrit, *unmesha*, which means light, flash, and also, opening, expansion, awakening. So, the 'flash of lightning' itself is *the awakening*.

This 'seeing', this vision, though complete in itself, yet always has so much more to convey, to express, to unravel, and herein lies the beauty of creative vision that penetrates into the immeasurable, the unfathomable, and brings out all that is ever true, good and beautiful.

Tagore, in his inimitable style says:

The light that fills the sky

Seeks its limits in a dewdrop on the grass!

And also:

True end is not in reaching of the limit

But in a completion which is limitless.

The poet, the painter or the sculptor, all have the vision of their poetry, picture, or the piece of sculpture within their own being — as a whole; and when one begins to write or paint or sculpt, one just begins from any point, giving expression to one's feelings, emotions, poetic imageries and intuitive perceptions. In a lyric or a song, a poem or a painting, the rhythm or metre, the emotional perception, the creative perception and their expression, all are blended into one; they flow simultaneously, together, and not one after the other — they cannot! So, there always is the movement in the present. The song, the poem, the painting, blossom from moment to moment. Song and words just flow, the brush just meanders spontaneously, every expression springing forth from the fountain within. In fact, the painter lets the painting create itself, the poet lets the words find their own rhythm and expression and the song too in the hands of a creative singer, is free to caress the melody it loves.

As with the poet or the painter, so is it with the one who looks at a beautiful painting, or enjoys reading a beautiful poem, or admires a lovely statue. One does not enjoy a painting piecemeal or music in fragments; one enjoys it as a whole. The most beautiful landscape paintings by John Constable or Turner may be within the limits of the frame, but they certainly give the feel, the vision, of the limitless. One *feels* the force, the energy, the beauty and vibrancy of colours, the many moods of Nature, as one looks deeply at a painting. The exuberance, the serenity, the play of light and shade, the still skies, the gale, the storm — all that the painting depicts, touches the core of one's being. The painting takes one into its fold, allowing one to *be* a part of the landscape! When one really 'sees' the marvellous dawn, one does not see it just *passively*, one does not see the beauty and light as a casual spectator; one shares in the light, one feels the light, one is enwrapped in the light. It is a unified vision, nay, a complete vision, in which reality is not isolated, dissected, fragmented.

According to the ancient, traditional faith of the Hindus, the Veda-s are considered to be texts not written or composed by humans. They are supposed to have been directly revealed by the Supreme ONE. That is why they are known as *sruti*, what is heard or revealed or perceived. The many sages or *rshi-s* to whom the Vedic hymns are ascribed, are, therefore called *mantra-drshṭa*, the seers of the hymns, and not *mantrakarta*, composers or writers.

A lot has also been said about Revelation, that is, the Vedic Revelation. What is it, really — this Revelation? It perhaps has nothing to do with just the activity of the brain, nor is it some narrow intellectual speculation. It surely hints at the unfolding of something immense, something very vast and deep.

A wise man made this profound statement more than a century ago:

Never does it happen that Nature says one thing and wisdom another.

The seers, the mystics of all ages, belonging to all parts of the world, have been graced, blessed, with this ‘awakening’ to the mysteries, the truths of life, Life in its wholeness. It is all about seeing and hearing, not just that which is visible or audible on the physical plane but seeing, hearing, feeling, observing, beyond that.

To the great seers and creative beings were revealed all the Eternal Truth of Nature and Life, the immutable Laws of Life. It was their keen inner vision, their deep insight, that let the mysteries unfold, unveil themselves, splashing all the Divine Beauty and Splendour around.

The Vedic Seers saw, with wordless wonder and delight, the marvels and mysteries of Nature, of the Universe. They observed with great joy, the splendour of dawn and dusk; they also observed how the changing seasons follow each other — the spring, the summer, the rainy season, the autumn or fall, and then spring again. They saw, they heard, they felt, the whole of Nature breathing, swaying, dancing, to the sounds struck or unstruck, to the sounds of the Silence, a constant cycle of changes and counterchanges, going on ceaselessly, unendingly. They were dazed, wonderstruck one moment, awestruck at another, and found

their whole being bathed in sheer Bliss — at yet another moment! They felt, within their hearts, an intense stirring, a chord having struck deep within. Failing to contain within, the ecstasy, they just burst into hymns and prayers! It was the irresistible joy of beholding something extraordinary, it was the joy of being blessed with the revelations of the immutable laws that govern this Universe, it was the joy of being awakened to the inherent harmony, rhythm, tremendous order and regularity which hold this Universe intact. And the hymns were not just meaningless utterances or outbursts either. They were the impelling, spontaneous expression born out of the deep sense of gratitude, reverence, sense and feeling of surrender and submission to the Power, the Energy, the Intelligence, that are behind all this manifestation. This is what Revelation is all about. In *this* seeing, in *this* hearing, is that awakening to the reality of all things, the awakening of the awareness of that Supreme Consciousness that abides in all. This is just the pure awareness of the Presence of that *one in all*.

We all must have seen and heard the sound of the wonderful musical instrument known as the *tānpura*, which is used for accompanying a singer and also other instruments. The four strings of the *tānpura* are tuned in different notes, but once they are tuned to perfection, the different notes, blending with each other, merge into that ONE VIBRANT NOTE, emanating endless resonances. One then hears the ONE deep sound which has in it all the cosmic vibration. One does not isolate, separate, one note from the other— one cannot. The notes, the *svara-s*, surrendering their individual entity, merge into that ONE INDIVISIBLE NOTE.

Every musical note is independent, complete and perfect in itself, but no single note creates music; it may be a beautiful note but it cannot be sung or struck alone, for ever. It is the eternal melting of one note before another that creates a song. The fulfilment of each note lies in surrendering, losing completely, its own entity to bring about music; dying every moment, as it were, for the sake of the eternal, for the sake of the whole. There is neither anything as past nor anything as future; there is only that endlessness of movement. It is dying and being reborn every moment and so living anew every moment.

Music is a revelation; a revelation, loftier than all wisdom and all philosophy.

These are the significant words of none other than the all-time great composer, musician Ludwig van Beethoven!

The seers come to the understanding, with their intense perception, that the laws of music *are* the laws of Life itself: the law of harmony and rhythm, the law that brings about balance and the sense of proportion. They are awakened to the reality that behind this great phenomena of Life, there is movement, motion, vibration. As is music, so is Life! an endless movement, a stream ever-flowing, ever in flux. It is this movement that causes day and night, sunrise and sunset, the rising and falling of waves — which we comprehend and label as time, which, in reality, is Eternity.

There is a beautiful song by Kabir, in which he talks about the ocean and the waves. The waves of the ocean are the ocean itself. They are but one surf. When the wave rises, it is water; when it falls, it is still water. Tell me, where is the distinction? Just because it has been named 'wave', shall it cease to remain the Ocean? It is really the different levels of being, different planes of manifestations and forms that make them appear as different from each other. Life is no different from this; there is just Eternity — with no shores, no horizons and no boundaries. We, on our physical plane of existence have fragmented the eternal into what we name as time. We, for our convenience, for our day-to-day living and activities, measure our lives, segment our lives linearly, chronologically, dividing them into seconds, minutes, hours, days, as also yesterday, today and tomorrow, as past, present and future. In the depth of all this is the Infinite, the endless flow of Eternity.

As the great Sufi saint Hazrat Inayat Khan says:

The art of music is the exact miniature of the law working through the whole Universe.

The musician, while tuning his instrument also tunes his soul, his inner being, and with it is also the attunement with the listener, with the atmosphere. And then, the moment the first note is struck, something amazing happens. The instrument, the singer and the listener cease to be there as different entities. There is neither the singer, nor the listener, nor even the consciousness of all this. What remains is the flow of

wholesome music, in all its pure freedom. These are the dynamic moments when the Creative Energy is in action — in its effortless, spontaneous flow, leaving behind, dissolving the narrow self; the ego, the individual consciousness, all is lost into nothing; music just flows on — unhindered. No one *makes* anything happen — everything happens on its own — smoothly, in complete accordance with the universal law and harmony. The singer does not cling on to the music — he cannot. He just readies himself, his whole being, to fulfil the demands of music. There is that state of losing, letting go of one's narrow self, transcending one's rational, dissecting self, and being thus, one with the source of Music. All the great musicians of all ages and times, would not have been able to create such sublime, divine music had they not lost themselves in Music. It is a state which Sufis call *Fanâ-al-Fanâ*, to die before one dies! And so, to dwell in the Eternal.

The singer is never tired of singing the same mode day after day; the painter is never tired of painting the same landscape again and again. Every time, they look at it, feeling it afresh, with new inspiration and new vitality. It is that sense of deep devotion, dedication, surrender and worship with which a devotee offers oblation to the morning sun rising from the depths of the horizon — every morning! And as the singer and the painter enjoy their music and painting, so do the listeners and those who look at the painting. They share in the beauty of the music and the landscape painting with a new vision, full of wonder and delight. It is in no way bound to the images and memories of the past, anchored to the shores of the past or the future. They just tune themselves to the music of the Universe. There is the complete, unconditional surrender of their individual entities to the Great Music, to what *is*, to what is seen or heard or felt in *that* moment. There is this spontaneous understanding of and being in the reality of the creative moment.

In this 'seeing' itself is the dawning of the awareness of the Unity, the Oneness and the endless flow of that Harmony, that Music, which is beyond the limitations of time and space, beyond thoughts and concepts.

This deep seeing and listening, with a heightened alertness, attention and enhanced receptivity, brings about a new understanding, a new awakening to what is, to the present, free from the fetters of time-past and future. One, then, lives a life which is not static, not

stagnant, but a life ever fresh, ever new and ever sacred.

In the tranquil moments of contemplation, reflection, one comes to the understanding that one has to 'see' life as a whole, as one — and oneself, in no way separate from the ONE. One *is the whole*. In a musical instrument, the single string, the single note, has to be in complete, perfect consonance with all the other strings and notes. One discordant note, one untuned string — and *music* pays the price. So, one, as an individual, has to be in complete consonance, or as Inayat Khan said, in 'at-one-ment', with the indivisible whole. One wrong deed, one selfish thought, one selfish motive, one callous, destructive move, one insensitive, thoughtless action — and *the very existence, very life* is the price! One can hardly evade, escape, this truth.

And here one comes again to the lines one began with:

'waiting the Word of the Master.... watching the Hidden Light....'
When is one able to watch the Hidden Light?
To hear the faintest whisper? To see the slightest signal?

It is when one readies oneself with absolute alertness, undistracted attention, awareness, penetrating perception, that one is able to hear the faintest whisper and see the Hidden Light. It is deep sensitivity, heightened receptivity, that enables one to hear, to see into, and to see beyond.

The deeper one sees *into* life, the wider *life* opens itself to one.

It is when one is intensely, passionately, alive to every moment, fettered neither to the past, nor groping in vain for something labelled as the future — that is the state, the moment when one abides in the present, the present that is alive. The present is in the *moment* and in the *movement*. It is then, in the living moment, that one sees the Infinite; in just a glance one sees, one touches, the Infinite skies; it is then that one hears the music in the *silence between two notes*. It is this vibrant centre that one dwells in. One is then blessed with the clarity of vision, with an insight that reveals to one all that was veiled till then. In that living present moment is right perception, right response, right action, right step. One no more finds oneself standing at the crossroads, in a fix, in a conflict of choices; one no more wavers between choices, alternatives, options, compromises. Then the step taken is the right step and in that very step *is* the step ahead.

Every step, then, is complete in itself, is a destination in itself; every step is the sacred centre of pilgrimage and every step is that unique compass which *directs* one to the Realm of the Eternal, the Infinite.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, April 2013)

There is music in the sighing of a reed,
There is music in the gushing of a rill
There is music in all things, if men had ears
This earth is but the music of the spheres.

-LORD BYRON (DON JUAN)

NEWS AND NOTES

Assam

Buddha Poornima was observed at the Federation Headquarters, Guwahati, on 25 May. The meeting was organized by Silver Jubilee Lodge and attended by several members of different Lodges. Bro. Raghunath Chowadhury, Secretary, ATF, explained the purpose of the meeting. Bro. Amal Kumar Goswami, guest speaker, spoke in detail about the significance of the day. Bro. D.N. Chakravarty, President of ATF, explained the Eightfold Path of Lord Buddha and said how the Buddha's concept of Love is the most relevant and needed ideal to be followed in the modern world. Only love and harmony can transform the situation faced by the present day world.

Buddha Poornima was observed by the Lodges and District Coordination Committees at Nalbari and Jorhat as well.

The 13th Nagendra Narayan Memorial Lecture was held at Kaliram Baruah Girls High School, Guwahati, on 26 May. It was organized by Pragjyotishpur Lodge. Bro. Raghunath Chowdhury presided over the meeting and Prof. (Mrs.) Gita Chowdhury of Cotton College delivered the talk on 'Self-realization and Higher Life'. The souvenir published for the occasion was released by Dr. B.K. Das, Principal of Pachim Guwahati College at Dhorepur.

The Foundation Day of Gandhia Theosophical Lodge of Nalbari was celebrated on 15 June at Jibananda Jyotis Vidyalaya's hall. Bro. Gokul Chandra Deka, President of the District Coordination Committee presided over the meeting. Bro. Achut Chandra Misra, a retired Professor of Nalbari Sanskrit College spoke on this occasion and explained the Indian Wisdom as mentioned in the teachings of Vedas and Upanisads. The learned speaker related his theme with Theosophy. The talk was followed by discussion and question-answer.

Pragjyotishpur Lodges is having study classes on five days in a week. Nine other Lodges of the Federation too have been regularly organizing weekly study class.

Sister Nalini Roy Baruah of Nalbari District Coordination Committee passed to peace on 8 June.

Bro. Khageswar Goswami of Santipur Lodge passed to peace on 30 June.

Bombay

A meeting was organized by Blavatsky Lodge to observe Wesak Poornima. Bro. Keki Palkhiwalla explained the Three verses which were taught by Lord Buddha to a boy Chatta. He added, Buddha's question 'is your house clean?' i.e. are physical (earth), astral (water), mental (air) and spiritual bodies of man clean? *Tapas* of soul is a fiery test of purification. Be watchful of thoughts, words and action... only such persons can inspire others to become spiritual'.

Bro. Princey Mehta, with power point presentation, gave a talk 'Understanding a life before Incarnation or Birth, an entire Karmic perspective'. It was held at Blavatsky Lodge on 31 May.

The Annual Open Meeting of Maitreya Round Table was held on 26 May. Mr. Russi Toddywalla and Mr. Mahadev Desai, former Chief Knights of India, addressed the Round Table on this occasion. Knights, Companions and Pages also shared how Round Table had inspired them to lead a life with morals and ethics.

Bro. Keki Palkhiwalla's talk on 'The System of Seven: A Miracle in Manifestation' was held at Blavatsky Lodge on 7 June. With cosmology he explained how out-breathing of unmanifested Lodgoi created the sevenfold manifestation. From the Handout which was distributed, Bro. Palkhiwalla explained in detail about 'The planets & Seven Principles'.

Shanti Lodge celebrated its 67th Charter Day on 20 June. Sis. Khorshed Mistry, President of the Lodge, in her opening remarks paid tributes to seven Founding members of the Lodge. It was followed by a programme of devotional songs. The programme concluded with the recitation of the Universal Prayer.

Bro. H.K. Sharan conducted a meeting on 'Meditation' at Blavatsky Lodge on 21 June. He shared the thought of J.Krishnamurti as explained

in the latter's book on Meditation. The members attending the meeting were also encouraged to share their own views on the aforesaid subject.

Bro. H.K. Sharan delivered a talk at Blavatsky Lodge on 'Dhammapada'. It was held on 28 June. Besides, he conducted a meeting on 'Letters from the Masters of The Wisdom-First series' by C. Jinnarajadas. It was held at Blavatsky Lodge on 12 July.

Bro. Anirudh Desai, Life Member of Vasanta Lodge passed to peace on 7 June.

Gujarat

Bro. Madhasudan Champaneria, former President and stalwart of GTF passed to peace on 25 June. As the President of the Federation he was the publisher of Blavatsky Lodge's President Bro. Jamubhai Dani's Gujarati book *Brahma Vidhyanu Divya Darshan*- a compilation of 35 articles of Geoffrey Hodson. Till the last he served his mother Lodge-Reva Lodge of Vadodara.

Marathi

Study of the book *Reincarnation* written by Annie Besant continued at Poona Lodge. Sis. Sumana Kale conducted it on 9 June and Bro. S.D. Burse on 29 June. Theosophy-Science meet was conducted by Bro. S.H. Vaidya on 16 June and 28 July. The study class at Poona Lodge was regularly conducted on Tuesday and Friday. The study of the book *Hidden Side of Things* by C.W. Leadbeater was completed on 2 July.

The Annual General Meeting of Poona Lodge was held on 23 June in which office bearers and members of the Executive Committee were elected for 2013-2015. It was followed by the presentation of report regarding the activities of TOS by Poona Group during the previous year. The report was presented by Bro. Sanjay Potey- Leader of Poona Group.

In the month of June English books worth Rs. 1820/- and Marathi books worth Rs. 280/- were sold.

The Theosophical Lodge at Thane had their meeting to observe Guru Pournima on 20 July 2013. 19 members were present. Due to the problem of availability of accommodation, usual school class was made

available on 20 July, though the Guru Pournima was on 22 July. Dr. Shriram Bhatkhande M.A., Ph.D. a Sanskrit scholar, retired Deputy Registrar of the University of Mumbai, who had been awarded scholarship for research on 'Gayatri Mantra', spoke on the subject. While explaining as to why it is also called Vyas Pournima, he clarified the difference between 'Guru and 'Sadguru' He gave various examples of Acharyas and saints of Maharastra making the lecture lively. At the beginning Bro. I. Bhat, Secretary, recited the Universal Prayers and Bro. Bhise, President, while welcoming the audience introduced Dr. Bhatkhande and at the end gave vote of the thanks.

Utkal

Bro. J.K. Sahu conducted a study class at Cuttack Lodge in May. The book studied was *Open Heart* written by His Holiness Dalai Lama. Prof. P.K. Das delivered a talk on 'Life & Philosophy of Mahapurasa Achutananda (Panchasakha)'. It was held on 6 July.

The members of Brabati Lodge, Cuttack, celebrated Asala Festival on 22 July. Bro. B.S. Mohanty delivered a talk on this occasion on *Sambalare Asadhi Parba* & the significance of Asala festival.

Dr. B.B. Panda, President of Utkal Federation, delivered a talk on 'Essence of Sikhism' in the weekly meeting of Bhubaneswar Lodge held at the Headquarters Hall on 7 July. The Asala festival was celebrated by the members on 22 July.

Bro. B.D. Tendulkar, National Lecturer, directed the study of Annie Besant's book *Thought Power: Its Control & Culture* at the Lodge of Sambalpur from 12 to 14 July. Then, he directed the study of *Ancient Wisdom* from 15 to 17 July.

Bro. Tendulkar directed the study of Radha Burnier's book *Human Regeneration* at Cuttack Lodge on 21-22 July.

Twelve Theosophical Lodges of the Federation are regularly conducting study class once in a week. Theosophical classics are being studied by the members.

The General Secretary, Indian Section, and his wife Smt. Manju Sundaram were invited by the Federation Secretary to Bhubaneswar in the second week of August. Smt. Manju conducted a study camp in the hall of the Federation HQ. The book selected for the purpose was *Freedom from the Known* by J. Krishnamurti. Bro. S. Sundaram delivered a talk there on 'The Essence of Revolution'. The subject of Smt. Manju's public lecture was 'Holding Ocean in a Drop'. They were invited by the Theosophical Lodge at Cuttack where the General Secretary addressed the members on 'From Individual to Indivisible' and Smt. Manju's theme was 'A dialogue with oneself'. Both the talks were followed by lively interaction.

Uttar Pradesh

Prof. Abhai Jain Spoke on 'Jain Religion-Theosophy' on 1 May at Sarva Hitakari Lodge, Gorakhpur. White Lotus Day was observed on 8 May and Bro. S.B.R. Misra and Dr. Ajai Rai spoke on this occasion on the life and work of Madame Blavatsky. Bro. A.K. Srivastava read the 17th Chapter of Bhagavadgita and some verses from *The Light of Asia*. A talk on 'Spirituality & Development' by Dr. R.P. Singh of Gorakhpur University was organized on 15 May. Bro. A.P. Srivastava's Talk on 'Yoga in Gita' was held on 22 May in which the speaker explained Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. Bro. S.B.R. Misra and Bechan Pd. Advocate spoke on 'Boudha Dharma' on 29 May.

The following activities were organized by Sarva Hitakari Lodge in June: Dr. Ajai Rai read out passages from Annie Besant's book *Revelation, Inspiration & Observation* and explained the content in detail. Bro. S.B.R. Misra, in his talk on 'Life after Death' explained astral body, mental body and causal body. Dr. R. Bagchi and Dr. Ajai Rai spoke on 'Meditation' and explained the method how to meditate. The last talk held in June was on 'Parsi Dharma'. It was delivered by Dr. Ajai Rai and Bro. S.B.R. Misra.

In view of the terrible natural disaster in Uttarakhand on 16th June 2013, Kashi Tattva Sabha, Varanasi, organized a Symposium on 2nd August, 2013 to deliberate on the subject 'Natural disasters: how much

human-beings are to be blamed for that'. 'Mahila Mandal Kashi' was invited to actively participate in the symposium. Welcoming the members of K.T.S. and Mahila Mandal and other guests, Dr. Abha Srivastava, President, Kashi Tattav Sabha, drew the attention of the gathering to the terrible natural disaster happened in Uttarakhand and opined that we as prime users of nature are responsible for these natural calamities. Four members of Mahila Mandal, namely Mrs. Rama Agrawal, Mrs. Avantika Gupta, Mrs. Shalini Agrawal and Mrs. Mudita Agrawal spoke in detail about the natural disaster by which not only India but the entire world has been devastated. They were unanimous in holding the entire human race responsible for the havoc caused by the nature. Each member was of the view that all of us are to be blamed for disfiguring the nature by our petty selfish attitude, mindless abuse of nature and total disregard towards its perseverance.

Concluding the symposium, Smt Uma Bhattacharya, member Kashi Tattva Sabha, fully agreed with the speakers and further emphasized that we human beings have created imbalance in the nature by abusing and plundering it and thus disfiguring the face of the earth because of our extreme selfishness and callous attitude. She further elaborated the fact that as our body gets diseased when we live wrongly for a long time, body of mother earth which nurtures us through the circulating currents of oxygen, the sunshine and water of her atmospheres, also suffers from disease like tsunami, earthquake, flood or draught when we abuse her with impunity. She further illustrated as how we are sending out hatred, anger, the evil into the world and the agony and rebellion they cause, all these are disturbing the magnetic force of the earth and we are seeing these terrible natural disasters, flood of fire and bloodshed. Symposium ended with a thought that we all as parents, teachers and citizens of the world owe the responsibility to preserve the nature and its resources to avoid such natural calamities.

Bro. A.H. Faridi delivered a talk at Nirvana Lodge, Agra, on 'What is Honesty? & How honest are we?' The speaker opined that the title of the talk is in the form of a question and every individual himself will have to find the answer. For this he will have to know 'Who am I?' We are generally known by our profession but are we human being or not? Evolvement of conscience and spiritual advancement is human being's progress which are important factors to be honest. Honesty is faith for which thinking and meditation are necessary requirements. This talk was held on 4 July. The other talk held in July was delivered by Bro. Gyanesh Chaturvedi who spoke on 'At the Feet of the Master'. He explained that ideas keep growing and is a continuous on going process. *Vivek* based mind makes man inquisitive and helps him to tread the path of truth. Towards the end of his talk Bro. Chaturvedi explained that Love generates the feeling to help others.

Apart from the aforesaid two talks, Nirvana Lodge organized two meetings in July in which members expressed their views. One was on 'Youth's Energy & Society' in which the members mentioned about the various areas in which the youth's energy has been channelized for the betterment of society. In the other meeting the theme was 'The necessity of Theosophy in the modern world'. The members of the Lodge opined that Theosophy helped people to understandingly remain awakened to the truths of life. Theosophy is a way of life which prepares us to face the changing circumstances.

The Theosophical Order of Service:

The regional wing of the TOS in Assam arranges free health camp in interior villages.

The annual meeting of the Regional TOS was held on 3rd June in which handicapped persons were given tricycles wheelchairs and typewriter, etc. Some members took initiative and collected funds in order to help the victims of natural calamity in Uttarakhand. So far (till 9 July) Rs. 35,000/- were collected and sent to the Treasurer of TOS in India.

Barabati Lodge TOS Group, Cuttack distributed study materials like notebook, pencil, rubber, etc. to 219 children of Netaji Nagar Project Primary School, Saratala Primary School, Bati Sahi & Mangala Sahi Project Primary School. Study materials like slate and slate pencil were distributed to Anganwadi workers, Nuapada Mongal Sahi School.

INDIAN SECTION HEADQUARTERS

In view of the recent natural calamity devastating Uttarakhand, Kashi Tattva Sabha deliberated deeply on the reasons responsible for such huge natural disaster bringing terrible destruction to the mankind focusing on the issue, Dr. Kamala Pandey, Head, Sanskrit Dept of Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya chose to speak on "ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय" the talk was held under the auspices of the Kashi Tattva Sabha, on 16 Aug. 2013 in which she eloquently brought out how nature which is so gracious and is literally our life force is being humiliated, scullled and floundered with impunity because of our selfish attitude and extreme materialistic approach towards life. She further elucidated that we are in contradiction with resources of nature and thereby disturbing the harmonious balance of five elements enveloping the environment. These five elements in nature which are instrumental in our spiritual upliftment apart from being source of our existence on the earth, are being abused so blatantly by the society in general that the balance and serenity of the nature is getting terribly disturbed. She held the entire human race responsible for weakening the body of Mother Nature. Unable to bear the agony and abuse, Mother Nature explodes the way it did when tsunami happened in December 2004 or in the recent Uttarakhand disaster. She underlined the urgent need to bring change in our attitude and desist from indulging in such mindless act. She concluded with a hope that these small steps by each one will lead to a big leap and may help in restoring health of Mother Nature.

Continuing the series further, environment awareness programme was organized at the Indian Section, HQs on 18 Aug. 2013 which was attended by about 40 members of Green Eco Movement Society, Indian Academy of Yoga, Banaras Hindu University and people from different walks of life. The programme was conducted by the Secretary of green Eco Movement Society, Dr. R.K. Bhatia M.D. (Hom). Speaking on the theme "ॐ कर्मणो भवतु धर्मः" Dr. Bhatia insisted that everyone should resolve to plant one tree on his/her birthday and preserve it till it grows. Welcoming the members of the Green Eco Movement and the TS, the General Secretary of the Indian Section, presented the views of Gandhi and Dr. Hazari Pd. Dwivedi and said that the pioneers of the TS have always been deeply concerned about it from the very beginning. In this connection he also mentioned the theme of the song on 'Nature' composed by let Bro. M.G. Kanitkar who was a dedicated theosophist

and helped the TS in the field of the education. The theme of the song beautifully conveys the message that we all have to learn from nature to preserve, nurture and to maintain the balance of nature and harmony among all beings. The General Secretary appreciated the step taken by the members of Green Eco Moment Society who are involved in such a noble mission.

Prof. Emeritus K.P. Singh, President of Green Eco Movement Society and a member of the TS, chaired the programme and highlighted the crucial role of trees in human life. He enlightened the gathering with an amazing secret that trees emit six to seven thousand volatile organic substance apart from emitting oxygen particularly in the moving hours of the day which have tremendous influence on human beings' life mood elevation, sense of well being etc. Dr. S.P. Singh, Head of Deptt of Horticulture, spoke extensively on the importance of greenery in our life and brought out that we can enrich our environment by planting trees not only in outside areas but inside the kitchen and in our living rooms. He revealed that certain plants have the capacity to absorb gases produced in the kitchen and thus make the environment pollution free. The programme ended with plantation of about seventy plants pertaining to fruits, flowers and having herbal values in the campus area of the Theosophical Society, Indian Section Headquarters in Varanasi.

BHOWALI STUDY CAMP

We are sorry to inform that the study camps notified to be held in September 2013 in Bhowali have been cancelled due to the natural calamity in Uttarakhand.

The programme regarding the study camps at Bhowali for the year 2014 will be notified either in December 2013 or January 2014.

S.Sundaram
General Secretary

THE 138TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 138th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2013.

All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Non-members may attend by obtaining permission from the President. Requests for such permission, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation, should be sent to the Convention Officer before 15 November 2013.

REGISTRATION FEES	India	Other Countries
Members	100	US\$ 70*
Members under 21	40
Non-Members	200
No-members under 21	150

ACCOMMODATION CHARGES (SHARING)

(From 24 December 2013 to 1 January 2014 inclusive)

	India (Members)	India (Non-members)	Other Countries (Members)
Accommodation with mat	Rs 100	200
Accommodation with cot	Rs 200	450
Leadbeater Chambers (Including service, Furniture, and bedding, but no blankets)	3,500	6,500	US\$150*

(Half rates will be charged for children under ten. No charge for children under three.)

*(or Euro or Pound Sterling equivalent)

Accommodation

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

Accommodation is available for delegates from 24 December 2013 to 1 January 2014, both days inclusive, but can be guaranteed only to those whose registration and accommodation payments are received before 1 December 2013. Delegates from India requiring accommodation should send *both the registration and accommodation charges together, but not before 1 September 2013*

Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund for registration fees, but other charges will be refunded if application is received before 10 December 2013.

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

Mrs. KUSUM SATAPATHY
International Secretary



CONVENTION - DECEMBER 2013
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR, CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA

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

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

.....
Signature

Signature of applicant:
Date

North India Study Camp

The North India Study Camp at the Section Headquarters, Varanasi, will be held from 17 to 21 October, 2013. Bro. P.K. Jayaswal and Prof. R.C. Tampi, will direct the study on *The Secret Doctrine*.

Since HPB's book *The Secret Doctrine* completes 125 years of its publication in 2013, the following areas will be studied: (1) Proem & Fundamental Proposition; Relevance, (2) Occult Cosmology, (4) Book of Discovery (5) Symbology in *The Secret Doctrine* (6) History of writing & publishing of *The Secret Doctrine*.

The participants are requested to study the following books: *The Secret Doctrine* by HPB's 3 vol. Edu. & Adyar Edition, *Some Observations on the study of S.D.* by H.P.B. *Proem to the S.D.* by H.P.B., The Books of the Stanzas of Dzyan by H.P.B. *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy* by Ianthe Hoskins, *Divine Plan* by Geoffrey Barboroka,

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 16 October evening to 22 October afternoon) will be Rs.920/- (Registration Fee- Rs. 50/-; Accommodation Charges- Rs. 150/-; and Meal Charges- Rs. 720/-). Bed-rolls will be provided on extra payment. 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.920/) must be sent to the Treasurer, Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, Kamachha, Varanasi – 221010, on or before 20 September 2013. 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 2013. 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