

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Dr P. Krishna

*(Summary of Public Lecture delivered on 26.12.2012 —
this is an amended version dated 2.1.2013)*

Outwardly the world changes every day. The way we live, travel, dress, eat and communicate has all undergone tremendous change in the last hundred years. But inwardly, psychologically, have we changed? Physical and biological evolution with time is a scientific fact but has there been psychological evolution? Is the consciousness of the modern human being very different from that of the primitive man/woman?

Primitive human beings were divided into tribal groups and used to fight each other with bows and arrows. Modern human beings are also divided into national, religious and caste groups which now fight with guns and bombs. Has there been any time in history when we were free from war for a long period? Is not the human consciousness still beset with fear, anxiety, jealousy, rivalry, attachment, sorrow, desire and frustration? Has there been any

progress inwardly, in our consciousness?

The outer society is a projection of our inner state of consciousness. The hatred, the violence and the fear that is there in our consciousness manifests itself in all our relationships and it is these relationships which constitute society. So, has there been any significant change in society, except outwardly in the facilities we have developed out of our knowledge? Knowledge is constantly expanding as it is continually added to by each generation; and knowledge gives power, and so we have grown enormously in power. But have we grown in wisdom? Is not power dangerous without wisdom?

Our desires have multiplied, our wars have become more fierce, crime has become more rampant since we now have much more knowledge and power. So does time really help us to grow in love, peace, harmony, brotherhood,

non-violence and goodness? If not, then psychologically the *Future is Now*. In other words, the world is the way it is because we are the way we are and if we do not transform at the level of our consciousness, nothing really changes significantly.

Theosophy is therefore concerned with the transformation of conscious-

ness, not merely a change of ideas, theories, concepts or conditioning. We know how we grow in knowledge with time; but how does a human being grow in wisdom? That is the real concern of a theosophist.

The talk dwelled on all these questions and examined the role of time in our life.



It is because Adyar represents the world in miniature, that thousands of Theosophists all over the world say to themselves: 'If only I could visit Adyar!' For they feel that at Adyar they would gain that vision 'from the Centre' which would make every noble dream of theirs more real, and equip them with greater strength not only to dream but also to achieve . . .

Since 1882, when the visible Founders of the Society made Adyar the home of The Theosophical Society, a great brooding Thought has from afar permeated Adyar. This is the Thought of those Elder Brothers who are the true Founders of the Society, those great ones who have come to the threshold of liberation but renounced that splendour, in order that they may toil to bring our sad earth a little nearer heaven. Adyar is their cup through which a blessing is being poured upon the world night and day. Every tiny plant, every tree large and small, every flower, feels something of this blessing at Adyar. That is why Adyar has an atmosphere of its own.

Adyar lives and works for the world. Thrice happy they, to whom karma gives the privilege of coming to Adyar, and blessed indeed among their generation if they receive from Adyar what Adyar has to give them.

C. Jinarajadasa, 1934



THE PAST, PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

Mrs Manju Sundaram

(Summary of Short Lecture delivered on 27.12.12)

Kabir, in one of his songs says: 'How can we be one? How can our minds meet? I speak of direct perception. I say what I have perceived directly whereas you speak of what you have read in traditional writings and scriptures. Real understanding comes with direct perception.'

One of the all-time great poets, Lord Byron, has said:

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

The great mystic, the Sufi saint Hazrat Inayat Khan, has said: 'The whole life in all its aspects is one single music and the real spiritual attainment is to tune oneself to the harmony of this perfect music.' In *The Secret Doctrine*, Madame H. P. Blavatsky writes: 'Sound is the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between mortals and Immortals.' And some wise man, centuries ago, made this profound statement: 'Never does it happen that Nature says one thing and Wisdom another.'

The saints, the sages, the seers and mystics of all ages, belonging to all parts of the world, have been graced, blessed

with this 'awakening', this 'knowing', that in the great phenomena of Nature are hidden the mysteries, the truths of life — Life in its wholeness.

It is all about 'Seeing' and 'Hearing' — not through the physical sensory organs, not just that which is visible or audible in the ordinary sense on the physical plane, but seeing, observing, hearing and feeling beyond that. It is seeing through, seeing into, seeing deeply, wholly, and so also hearing the subtlest of sounds, the finest and deepest of resonances of the all-pervading Sound.

To the great seers and creative beings were revealed all the truths of Nature and Life, the immutable Laws of Life. It was their inner vision and insight that let the mysteries unfold, and unveil themselves.

We are all aware that man is not just a physical body — the eyes that see, the ears that hear, the body that hungers for food or water or sleep. The body does everything as a routine. But there do come some fleeting, intensely sensitive and receptive moments when the physical body very spontaneously gives way to the deeply instinctive, intuitive vision of the soul, of the spirit — to see, to hear, to feel, to perceive all that is beyond the boundaries of the physical, the external.

The singer sings the same raga-s again and again, the painter paints the same landscape again and again; but every time they look at it, they feel

it afresh, anew, with new inspiration and new vitality. 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 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 into 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 neither static, nor stagnant, nor stale, but a life — ever fresh, ever new and ever sacred. It is in this beautiful, profound and creative state of being that one is able to 'see the slightest signal' and 'hear the faintest whispers'.

NATURE: TREAT ME GENTLY

Mr M. P. Singhal

(Summary of Short Lecture delivered on 27.12.12)

The two defining challenges of this century are overcoming world poverty and managing climate change. If we cannot manage our natural resources we may fail in both. At present, there is much plundering of our planet due to greed. Nature has enough to satisfy our need, but not the greed. Proper stewardship of natural resources is a matter of planetary urgency; we have the potential either to transform the poorest countries or to tear them apart. There is a middle path: to treat Nature gently.

Someone sees a beautiful flower on a healthy plant. There can be three responses: firstly, indifference; secondly,

the propensity to pluck and smell, watch a while and throw it away; and thirdly, to have a look wondering at its freshness and beauty, appreciate it and walk away. That flower is saying: 'Don't pluck, treat me gently.' Those alone who are sensitive and know that there is life everywhere will hear that faint voice.

All sentient beings, humans, animals, fish and birds respond to the way we treat them. The law of attraction and repulsion is not confined to the realms of physics alone. It is applicable to human relationships and the whole Universe. If we treat animals gently, they respond with gentleness. It is now known that there

is no such thing as dead matter; everything has life but therefore emotions too. We must have the emotional intelligence not to hurt and instead treat all life gently.

Take out from Nature only that which is essential, keeping a balance between development and sustainability; avoid

the plundering and polluting route as far as possible. Live with Nature; use it, but gently, as we do in Adyar, the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, to preserve its serenity, beauty, purity and above all, the spiritual vibrations.

THEOSOPHY AROUND THE WORLD

The Indian Section, which is the biggest, was as usual very busy with the many activities in the lodges. The General Secretary says that if enough human beings could realize the ignorance which exists at present among human beings to distinguish between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, and the just and unjust, they will be able to see the reality. That is why in the Indian tradition stress has been laid on true knowledge as an instrument of inner freedom, to come out of the prison which is man's own creation. The TS must encourage and help members to deepen and expand their knowledge in this sense.

The 121st Indian Section Convention was held at Adyar on 27 December. The President said that members of the Indian Section have a great responsibility to live according to ethical and other important values. To live according to principles has a far-reaching effect, as shown by the lives of the Buddha, Kabir, etc. There were a number of meetings at Varanasi itself and a separate Convention was held to coincide with the Annual Convention of the TS. Before that a retreat was organized with the help of the Trika Trust in which Smt Manju Sundaram played a prominent

part. In addition to this there were North India and South India Conferences and others, which can be read about in the Annual Report of the Section. The General Secretary visited and spoke as a Chief Guest at several of these meetings and Mr M. P. Singhal assisted several of these and was the Chief Guest in the Centenary Celebrations of the Kerala and Marathi Federations. The Section received several lakhs of rupees in compensation after a part of the premises was taken over for road expansion. The Membership of the Section was 11,712 although in this Section it is impossible to give the exact figure.

The Section has renovated the property in Bhowali and hopes to convert it into a useful asset. The Annual Report can be referred to for further information.

The Australian Section is another large Section. A part of the Section's report concerns the stewardship of the General Secretary's office by Ms Dara Tatrav. Considering the major changes during the year, we are told that the Headquarters' office is running very well. The General Secretary, Mrs Linda Oliveira, spoke at a number of places including the National Convention in

Brisbane. The Section has a membership of 1060 including 135 national members who do not belong to any Lodge. In July a mid-year workshop was held on membership, with a focus on enhancing the quality of members and attracting new ones. The organization is not as important, they say, as it used to be. *Theosophy in Australia* was published four times in the year and the annual

Convention was held early in the year as usual with the theme 'Current Thinking in Evidence of the Third Object'. Dr Pablo Sender has been invited to tour the Section in the year 2013 and all the Theosophical centres have been functioning very well. The main source of publicity here as in other economically advanced countries was the national and local websites.

OPENING OF THE CONVENTION

About 1145 delegates from twenty countries are attending
the 137th International Convention

The Convention was inaugurated at 8 a.m. on 26 December with the Prayers of the Religions, and the Universal Prayer led by the President, Mrs Radha Burnier. The International Secretary, Mrs Kusum Satapathy, read out greetings received from overseas. The General Secretary of the Indian Section, Mr S. Sundaram, conveyed messages received from different parts of India. Mr M. P. Singhal, Vice-President of the TS, while conveying his greetings, said that 'Adyar is a place of serenity, beauty and purity, and above all of spiritual vibrations'. General Secretaries and other representatives of the Theosophical Society in various countries presented greetings from their members, as listed below:

Mr S. Sundaram, India
 Ms Sandy Ravelli, New Zealand
 Mr Jack Hartmann, Africa, South
 Mr Jan Jelle Keppler, Belgium
 Mr Marcos L. B. de Resende, Brazil
 Mrs Clarisa Elosegui, Spain
 Mrs Breda Zagar, Slovenia

Mr Saleh Noshie, Norway
 Mr M. B. Dassanayake, Sri Lanka
 Ms Dianne K. Kynaston, Australia
 Mr Kiran Shah, Africa, East and
 Central
 Ms Monica Ostelius, Sweden
 Ms Tatyana Golovchenko, Ukraine

Dr Dusan Zagar, Slovenia, and Mr Ricardo Lindemann, Brazil, were also seated on the dais.

After welcoming the gathering, Mrs Burnier delivered her Presidential Address, which included a comprehensive report about the work of the Society around the world.

MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

This year's exhibition in the Archives displays some old editions of *The Theosophist* and some works of H. P. Blavatsky. The Museum is open to delegates to view valuable landmarks in TS history.

THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF THE ROUND TABLE

The International Order of the Round Table was founded in 1908 by Herbert Whyte, and since then has spread to different parts of the world. It is a ceremonial organization where one can be admitted from the age of four. The ceremonies are based on the teachings of the great spiritual teachers of the world. Aspects of nature and the symbolism behind these also form the content of some ceremonies. There are four ranks among the members, with special qualities attached to each. A newly initiated person is called a Page (kindness); he goes on to become a Companion (helpfulness); then follows the Squire (courageousness); and finally one becomes a Knight (righteousness).

The Round Table members always have an empty chair which they salute. The empty chair symbolizes the Higher Self who is the God within or, in other words, the Ideal Man. The salute is an action involving the heart, head and hand. This means that it is the whole being that one dedicates to the service of the King.

The activities of the Round Table include ceremonies, philanthropic work, study, gatherings, trips and cultural programmes.

On 25 December 2012 the Round Table members performed the Sri Krishna Ceremony at the Headquarters Hall.

On 1 January 2013 the Adyar Lodge will host a reception for the delegates to the International Convention and others at 3.00 p.m. at the Adyar Theatre. Tea will be followed by a cultural programme by members of the Round Table, young theosophists and delegates to the TS Convention. The play to be performed is 'The Vision of Sanjaya'.

THE RITUAL OF THE MYSTIC STAR

The Ritual of the Mystic Star was created in 1911 at the behest of Dr Annie Besant, by Bro. C. Jinarajadasa. The five points of the Star stand for Power, Beauty, Wisdom, Love and Joy. The complementary professions are Judge, Craftsman, Scientist, Healer and Servant. Together with the Thurifier and Starbearer, there are twelve participants. The Ritual highlights the important teachings of the great World Teachers and other Messengers of the Great White Brotherhood, each teaching

marked by lighting a candle and pledging one's faith in the name of the messenger of truth. The invocation to the Master of The Great White Lodge is the climax of the Ritual, and is marked by lighting the tallest candle in the centre. The Ritual concludes by invoking the 'Powers that be', asking for peace in the world.

The Ritual was held at the Headquarters Hall on the evening of 26 December, the glow from the candles irradiating the entire atmosphere.

THE BHARATA SAMAJ TEMPLE

The Bharata Samaj Association was formed in 1921 under the direction of Dr Annie Besant. J. Krishnamurti felt that the Hindus should have a puja in which the congregation could also participate. The Association works to spread Hinduism, devoid of superstition in thought and action, and uses only the essential

mantra-s. Both men and women conduct the puja and people of any religion may participate in the worship.

The Temple in Adyar is called Jyotir Alayam or the Temple of Light and was consecrated in 1925 by Krishnaji.

The puja is performed every day at 6.00 a.m. as the sun rises.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT THE CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

The Liberal Catholic Church is a form of Christianity open to Theosophical ideas, including reincarnation. The Church welcomes all who reverently and sincerely approach its altars, erecting no barriers in the standards of dogmatic belief.

The foundation stone of the Church in Adyar was consecrated in 1925 by Bishop C. W. Leadbeater and the building itself by Bishop G. S. Arundale in 1936. Ever since, regular services have been held according to the prescribed rites.

Christmas Services: The Midnight Holy Eucharist was celebrated at 11 p.m. on

Christmas Eve by the Rt Revd Ricardo Lindemann. *The Nativity of Christ as a historical fact but also as a symbol of His possible birth today in our hearts . . .* was the core message of his sermon to the congregation. He was assisted in the service by the Priest of the Church, Revd P. J. John. The Holy Eucharist on Christmas Day was celebrated by Revd P. J. John, who recollected in his sermon the events from *the Coming of Christ to the Birth of Christ*. He was assisted in the service by the Server, Lusia.

Prime, the morning Office of the Church, is being held every day at 6.30 a.m.

ZOROASTRIAN FIRE TEMPLE

Zoroastrians worship only one God — Ahuramazda. They revere all the five elements of Nature, but Fire is considered to be the most powerful and purest, and the purifier of all things. Fire, considered to be the son of God (Ahuramazda) and venerated as the sacred symbol of God, is kept burning in the temple day and night. Worship of Ahuramazda takes place by offering sandalwood to the fire. Fire Temples are of three kinds: Atash (fire) Behram, Atash Adaran and Atash Dadgah. The highest and most sanctified Atash Behram in India is in Udwarda, Gujarat, where the fire brought by Zoroastrian migrants from Iran 1300 years ago is still alive. Our Zoroastrian Temple in Adyar belongs to the category of Atash Dadgah.

Printed at the Vasanta Press, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India