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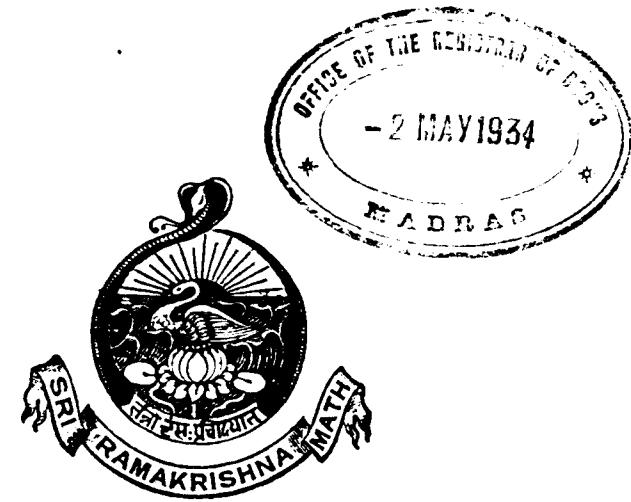
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting
strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XX]

APRIL, 1934

[No. 12]

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

यो न पूरयितुं शक्यो लोभः प्राप्या कुरुद्वह ।
नित्यं गम्भीरतोयाभिरापगाभिरिवोदधिः ॥
न प्रहृष्यति यो लाभैः कामैर्यश्च न तृप्यति ।
स लोभः सह मोहेन विजेतव्यो जितात्मना ॥
दंभो ब्रह्म निन्दा च पौशुन्यं मत्सरस्तथा ।
भवन्त्येतानि कौरव्यं तुघानामकृतात्मनाम् ॥

Covetousness, O best of Kurus, is like the ocean that can
never be filled by the constant discharge of even innumerable
rivers of immeasurable depth.

But that covetousness, which is never gratified by acqui-
sitions and satiated by the accomplishment of desires, should ever
be conquered by a person of cleansed soul, along with the folly
which invites the heart to the unrealities of the world.

Pride, malice, slander, crookedness and base rivalry are
vices, O descendant of Kuru, that are to be seen in persons of
uncleansed soul under the domination of covetousness.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLVIII, 12, 13 and 15)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

By his mere will or touch the Master could awaken spiritual energy in others; an instance—the incident on the first of January in 1886.

IT was the first of January in 1886. A little more than two weeks ago the Master had been brought from Calcutta to a garden house on the North of the city, belonging to Sreejut Gopal Lal Seal, son-in-law of Rani Katyayani. This change of place was according to the advice of Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar. The doctor's idea was that the atmosphere of the locality of this garden house, being much purer than city atmosphere, might effect some improvement as regards the Master's cancer. A few days after this shifting, Dr. Rajendralal Dutta came to visit the Master and prescribed Lycopodium (200) which showed some good result. But, nevertheless, since his coming here he had never come down from the first floor or walked about in the garden. On this day as he was feeling much better, in the afternoon he expressed his desire to take a short walk in the garden. Hence the devotees were specially in a joyous mood.

Swami Vivekananda was at that period imbued with an intense spirit of renunciation. He had given up all desires for worldly welfare and was living with the Master and going through various practices

under his guidance for God-realisation. Whole nights he was spending under a tree by the side of a fire, deeply engrossed in meditation, prayer and study. A few others also, as for instance, Gopal the junior, Kali (Swami Abhedananda) and so forth, were assisting him in these practices by supplying the necessary things and engaging themselves too in prayer and meditation according to their respective capacities. The lay disciples, busy as they were in their worldly affairs, could not remain with the Master at all times. But they would come as often as they could make time and spend a day or two with the Master occasionally. Moreover they arranged for food and other necessities for those who had devoted themselves entirely to the service of the Master. It being New Year's Day, there was public holiday. So, many of the devotees now assembled in the Cossipore garden.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon. The Master with a loin cloth and a thick shawl, both with red borders, a shirt, a cap with a flap covering the ears, and his usual slippers on, came slowly down the steps and after having a look at the down-stairs hall, went out through the western gate for a stroll along the garden walks. Some of the lay disciples saw the Master thus going and followed him with great delight.

Sreejut Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda) and other young men, tired with their whole night vigil, were taking rest in the small room adjoining the hall. Seeing the devotees following the Master, Sreejut Latu (Swami Adbhutananda) thought it unnecessary to proceed with him any further. So he turned back and engaged himself in cleaning the Master's room and sunning his bedding, etc. with the help of another young man.

Of all the lay disciples Sreejut Girishchandra had the intensest devotion in those days. Once the Master told the other devotees in high appreciation of Sreejut Girish's unparalleled faith, "Girish's faith has exceeded all measures. Hereafter people will be struck with wonder at the sight of his high spiritual attainments." Impelled by his strong faith and devotion Girish would thenceforth always look upon the Master as God Himself incarnated on earth for the salvation of humanity and publicly express his belief before one and all though forbidden by the Master to do so. Girish too was present on that day. He was engaged in conversation with Sreejut Ramchandra Dutta and some other lay disciples under a mango tree.

The Master, surrounded by the devotees on all sides, was slowly proceeding along the spacious garden path towards the gate when in the midway he saw Sreejuts Ramchandra and Girish by the roadside under the shade of the mango tree and thus addressed Sreejut Girish,

"Hallo Girish, what have you seen (about me) that you talk about so glibly (that I am a divine incarnation and so on) before anybody and everybody?"

Though thus interrogated all of a sudden, Girish did not waver in the least in his faith. With great reverence he stood up and coming near the Master on the road, knelt down at his feet and said with folded palms and choking voice, "What more can my humble self speak of Him whose glory even the great sages like Vyasa and Valmiki failed to exhaust with their description?" At this uncommon faith of Girish, the heirs all over the Master's body stood on end and his mind soared up to high spiritual planes; he was merged in Samadhi. Girish too, mad with joy at the sight of the divine glow on the Master's face, began to sprinkle his body again and again with the dust from the Master's feet with repeated shouts of 'Glory to Ramakrishna.'

Meanwhile the Master's external consciousness partly reappeared and with a divine smile on his face he looked at all the devotees present and said, "May you all have illumination! What greater blessing can I give unto you?" This assurance of redemption made the disciples quite beside themselves with joy. Some began to prostrate themselves before him, others to offer flowers, and some others to touch his feet. When the first man who thus touched his feet stood up, the Master passed his hand over the devotee's chest from the bottom upwards

with the blessing, "Let there be illumination!" The second, the third, the fourth—all the disciples present were thus blessed with his touch one by one. This brought about a unique revolution in their thoughts. Some began to laugh, others to weep, some to meditate, and some others, themselves filled with joy through the grace of the merciful Master, began to call aloud the other devotees that they might also come and partake of this divine grace. Surprised at this loud noise and the shouts of "Glory," the monastic disciples left their rest or work in hand and hurried to the spot to find the devotees thronging round the Master and behaving like lunatics, and at once understood that the same divine power that would appear in the Master at Dakshineswar out of mercy for particular individuals, was again manifested that day before the whole gathering for showering his blessings on all of them together. By the time the monastic disciples reached the place the Master reverted back to his usual mood.

The experiences of the Devotees in consequence of the Master's Touch

Later, on inquiry it was known from the lay disciples regarding their realisations at that time, that some felt a sort of intoxication like what one feels under the influence of hemp, and a sense of joy along with it; while others had a vivid perception within themselves of the Divine Form which they used to

meditate upon every day without ever being favoured with Its vision. Some perceived some unique current of energy proceeding upwards, as it were, and simultaneously with it, a feeling of delight. Some others saw a sort of light, never experienced before, whenever they closed their eyes, while their minds were filled with a sense of bliss. Though the visions, etc. of each of the devotees differed from those of the others, all of them had a common experience of being permeated with divine bliss. Not only that. They all knew equally well that these unprecedented mental changes and realisations were produced by the Superhuman Power residing in the Master, which was transmitted to them through the physical touch. Among the devotees present, there were a few whom the Master refused to touch with the remark, "Not now." On that day of universal rejoicing these people alone felt themselves unlucky and miserable.*

It was beyond anticipation when the Master would bestow his divine touch and on whom

This fact also was revealed by this incident that there was no knowing when the Divine Power would manifest Itself through the Master and for whose sake. It is doubtful whether even the Master himself could foresee it when in his usual mood.

* These persons too were on another day favoured in the same way by the sacred touch.

TO THE ASPIRANT AND HIS CRITIC

When the means to union have been steadily practised and when impurity has been overcome, enlightenment takes place, leading up to full illumination.

(Yoga Sutras)

Prevention of Duping

MANY people are under the impression that a life of meditation is a mere show, a pretence whose underlying motive is a desire to become the object of the reverent gaze of the public and secure from them a reputation for piety with the utmost ease. To arrive at such a conclusion is quite natural when one's contacts with religious men have been restricted to particular groups or types, and when, in the few cases in which closer observation and scrutiny became possible, the veil of holiness was often seen to slip down revealing the dissembler beneath. Dissemblers there have been, and there will be, in every walk of life as long as there is a chance of gaining much from a society which happens to be credulous and chooses to remain so in spite of repeated experiences of being exploited. The only unfailing remedy to purge society of impostors in the religious line is for society itself to acquire an intellectual grasp of the essentials of religious practice and learn to recognise which of the persons moving about or staying within its jurisdiction lead a life of genuine spiritual endeavour. Till general education progresses to such an extent, dupers are bound to flourish; but the evil can be minimised if, instead of condemning meditative

life itself, the already educated members of society would make a thorough study of the principles of mind control, realise its possibilities in the case of proper aspirants and make effective arrangements to see that society as a whole is benefited as individuals evolve with the facilities provided.

Where the Critic may Err

It has to be borne in mind, however, that all cases where the mantle of holiness has appeared to slip down need not necessarily be instances of fraud. For it is quite possible for slips to occur not merely in the case of the raw beginner in spiritual life, but also in the case of persons who have been long "in the field" and whose persistent inner struggles to achieve self-mastery have been rewarded with a fair measure of success in many of the items of daily conduct. Habits of a long-standing character have enormous power of resistance; and even the most well directed attempts at overpowering them cannot achieve victory *on all fronts* as quickly as the aspirant himself or his critics may desire. It is thus perfectly possible for a person who is endeavouring to attain complete mastery over his mind in half a dozen directions to find himself occasionally slipping in one of them while his vigilance, kept ablaze all the

time, is powerful enough to burn up the resistance offered by the rest. If a critic, unable to fathom the depths of the struggle within such an aspirant and to appreciate the conquests being effected by him, happens to scan only the horizon in which the slips are occurring, he is sure to commit the grievous mistake of branding the heroic soul a fraud. Criticisms, to be fair, must in all such cases, be based upon observations carried on sympathetically over a sufficient period of time, and embrace not merely the slips and the intervals between them but also the battles won and the resistance overcome in each. The experienced eye can readily see the manly efforts the sincere put forth to quell their mental storms, and does invariably translate its criticism into words of encouragement, if not of benediction, to relieve the excessive strain entailed by the struggles.

Depression Misinterpreted

Often, too, in spite of unwavering sincerity and vigilance on the part of the aspirant, there do come to him periods of what may be called "depression" characterised by an apparent lack of interest, and it may look as if he has given up the quest for ever. Nay, the behaviour may be in such striking contrast with the previous declarations and attitude of the man that the undiscerning critic may even be deluded into the conclusion that he had never been a seeker at all. But this outward expression of indifference, this standstill, in most cases turns out

to be the result of "permanent settlements" being accomplished deep down in the recesses of the aspirant's personality. The very conception of a "spiritual" as opposed to a "worldly" life, that gave him the initial impulse to embark on a course of arduous struggles, was the direct outcome of a new sense of values that dawned on his mind. He thought, perhaps, that a life of prayer and of service like the one which, he believed, was led by some saint whom he had either met or read about, would be the source of greater satisfactions to him, of greater "bliss" or "ecstasy" than he felt himself enjoying at the time. This would no doubt constitute a stimulus of sufficient strength to start him on the spiritual path; but certainly it would not be enough to make him understand forthwith all the implications of genuine "prayer" and of "service". A period of steady practice, however, is bound to bring about an expansion of his awareness and to make it so subtle as to enable him to discover new meanings in situations and actions which he had hitherto been regarding as "common" and devoid of any spiritual worth. He might, for example, realise that many of his dealings with his neighbours had all along been conducted on a basis of indifference or of scorn, flagrantly contradicting, though unwittingly, the mood he was trying to keep up during the moments of his daily religious practice. Such a realisation must set up a variety of

conflicts in the sincere aspirant, conflicts which can cease only when a "re-assessment" has taken place and he overcomes all hesitation to bring his accustomed responses within his widening spiritual vision for analysis, modification, neutralisation or sublimation. It is a pity that this period of "labour" and inactivity preparatory to the birth of a new outlook, is often misinterpreted and classified as the product of an irremediable spirit of laziness or an unpardonable shirking of normal responsibilities. In a sympathetic atmosphere, on the other hand, with kind suggestions lighting upon him like the gentle dew upon the blades of grass, the aspirant gets over this period of "confinement" in an amazingly short time, and emerges with a broadened heart and a greater readiness to serve.

Defects of the Aspirant

It is of course not the critic alone that is liable to go wrong in his estimate, for the chances of blunder and pitfall are much more in the case of the aspirant himself. Indeed almost all the failures in meditative life are due to maladjustments on the part of the aspirants, and not unoften to their ignorance of the main principles of mind control. For many the immediate occasion for resorting to a life of prayer and meditation may be some domestic calamity or some bereavement which shook them rudely out of their habitual outlook and made them painfully conscious of the Higher Power that shapes all human ends. A good number of these that

"labour and are burdened" would undoubtedly work upon this initial experience of the transience of earthly pleasures and utilise all subsequent incidents to purify their motives until the quest of Truth dominates other aims in life, and pervades their entire inner being, as incense does the House of God. But we do find that in a fair number of cases the enthusiasm gets spent up after a few days of manful endeavour, and in spite of "protesting" much, they slowly succumb to the silent pulls exerted by old loves and old hatreds upon the as yet unrecognised strands of their personality. The old passions, choked as it were by the newly risen hankering for self-purification and driven to stand at bay and fight for their very existence, appear as though pooling their resources and bent upon making a desperate effort to re-establish their once undisputed sway. Unable to locate the source of this fresh resistance, and not having acquired the skill to overcome it by systematic steps, many an aspirant finds himself compelled to revert to his old habits and to extend his eager hand once again across prickly contacts of the earth for a few cooling drops of enjoyment to sprinkle upon his overwrought nerves. It certainly gives some consolation to think that all is not lost, and that a rude shock or two more from nature would invariably fan into flame the covered-up embers of the previous spiritual struggles. But for the present, at any rate, the mood has changed and

the man has to that extent failed. Thus failure comes when the strength of initial emotions subsides and the aspirant has let slip the opportunity to analyse his personality, take stock of its contents, and, like any wise man of business, get rid of the undesirables and procure more of the desirables.

Imaginations and Contact of Thought-forms

For, success in meditative life does not differ from success in other spheres of human activity in respect of the thoroughness with which the right steps are to be ascertained and applied as occasions arise. The strange consequences of attempting exercises in meditation without understanding and trying to set right the defects of one's mental equipment have been beautifully illustrated by Mrs. Bailey in her valuable book, *From Intellect to Intuition*, to which we referred some time back. In a chapter entitled "The Need for Care in Meditation" she speaks of how students often misinterpret the phenomena of the lower mind and tell, for instance, of a "rapturous encounter with the Christ or with some Great Soul, who appeared to them when meditating, smiled at them," asked them to be "of good cheer," and so on and so forth. "They thrill to the event," she adds, "they record it in their diary, and they write joyously to me that the occurrence is a most momentous happening in their lives." She then adds a significant remark, "It may be, if they

handle it right and learn its lesson." But has the student really seen the Christ? By way of reply she tells us that as the creative imagination of the student slowly unfolds, it often becomes possible for him to see just what he desires to see, even if it is not there at all. Due to his eagerness to make rapid strides in meditation and due also to the strenuous efforts he puts forth, he has probably become awake or aware upon what she calls "the psychic plane," the plane of vain imaginings, of desires and their illusory fulfillments. "Thoughts are things" and the world of illusion has in abundance thought-forms not merely of the Christ but of many other great and revered Teachers, built up by the loving thoughts of devotees down the ages. The aspirant, "working through his own psychic nature (the line of least resistance to the majority), contacts one such thought-form, mistakes it for the real, and imagines it saying to him all the things he wants said." After quieting his brain, he has gently slipped across the border into a psychic or negative condition in which the imagination slowly begins to function on the basis of the latent desires with the result that he seems to hear the magnificent words of recognition for which he has been yearning. This example is closed by her with the interesting comment that even if the students are so advanced and so highly evolved as to win the privilege of making such a contact, "the Master would not waste His time and theirs by

patting them on the back and pronouncing high-sounding but inane platitudes. He would improve the brief moment by pointing out some weakness to be eliminated or some constructive work to be undertaken."

World Teachers to Come

Often the latent ambition of the aspirant, when unsublimated, assumes gorgeous attire and struts forth before the world with a show of pomp and grandeur. It is not uncommon to find some aspirants declaring, for example, that during the solemn hours of their meditation, a "Force" outlined to them a great work that they had been chosen to carry out, perchance a new message that they were born to give and to which the whole world was to listen, or an invention by which humanity as a whole was going to be benefitted in the future. "Gladly," says Mrs. Bailey in a humorous vein, the aspirant "grasps the mantle of the prophet, and with unshaken belief in his capacity, his ability to influence thousands, even if he is relatively impotent to influence those around him at present, he prepares to carry out his divine mission." Let us listen to her remarks and watch the sequel. "In one year," she says, "three 'World Teachers' who have been studying meditation in some school or other, made application to the group with whom I was associated. This they did, not because they wanted to carry their meditation forward, but because they felt they would be happy to have them

'feed' into the group some of the many hundreds they were to be instrumental in saving. I had to decline the honour, and they disappeared, and nothing has since been heard of them. The world still awaits them. Of their sincerity there is absolutely no doubt. They believed what they said. Neither is there any doubt of their being hallucinated. All of us are in danger of being deluded in just the same way, when we start to meditate, if the discriminating mind is not on the watch, or if we have a secret longing for spiritual prominence, or suffer from an inferiority complex which must be offset."

Inspired Writings

Another effect of meditation, and a prevalent one in these days, says Mrs. Bailey, has been the tendency to flood the world with so-called inspirational writings. "Men and women are busily writing automatically, inspirationally and prophetically, and giving to the public the result of their labours." Issuing from diverse interior sources, they yet appear curiously alike; "they indicate a lovely aspirational spirit"; and though, of course, they tell nothing new they show remarkable similarities to the writings of ancient mystics. Some contain prophecies, too, as to future events—"usually dire and dreadful, and seldom, if ever, of a happy nature"—foretelling great and immediate cataclysms capable of frightening the world. "Their name is legion" and certainly they "carry much comfort to the writer and make

him feel he is a great and wonderful soul." Whether what they record is good or bad, comments Mrs. Bailey, whether happy, "which it seldom is", or unhappy in character, and whether they generate fear and foreboding, "it is all psychic stuff" and in no way "indicates the revealing quality of the soul." Mrs. Bailey should not be misunderstood as denying the possibility of a few of these sincere aspirants having made a "real contact with the soul." They have perhaps had a flash of its omniscience but are swept off their feet by the very wonder of the vision and knowledge which, as it were, they "stumbled upon". They have a grossly exaggerated estimate of their capacities. Their brain is totally unable to "measure up to requirements"; there are aspects of their life "upon which the light may not shine; there are secret faults which they know but cannot break; there is the desire for fame and power; there is ambition." Hence "they crash through their failure to see the personality as it is."

Importance of Preparatory Steps

Pilgrims travelling on the path of meditation have thus to equip

themselves with something more than mere sincerity. For as Mrs. Bailey rightly puts it, meditation can be very dangerous work and may land a man in serious difficulties. "It can be destructive and disrupting" and it can do more harm than good if a person enters upon it without a proper understanding of what he is doing and where it will lead him. Just to love God and worship Him is not entirely sufficient. It is no doubt a step in the right direction, and a very important one too, which many may not be able to take; but devotion "unbalanced by good sense and brains," and unaccompanied by a cleansing of the main strands of the personality, "leads to much stupid action and much unconsidered effort." Many are the wrong notions to be removed, not only regarding the ultimate goal of meditative life and the important landmarks on the way, but also regarding—and this is of vital importance—the qualifications which an aspirant must necessarily possess before he can expand his powers of awareness with the help of graded exercises in formal meditation. These preparatory steps we shall discuss on a future occasion.

RESISTANCE TO EVIL

By Nicholas Roerich

"**D**EPART from evil and create good", ordains the apostolic wisdom. In this short canon is contained two definite actions: "Depart" and "Create". Here "Create" does not mean only a departure. "Depart" and unfailingly "create good". The departure from evil is but half the work. But also "create", make, build well, as a counterbalance to evil. It is indicated thus tersely and absolutely to create bliss. Without action, without consciousness, without striving of the spirit, there can be no achievement and fulfilment of the covenant. But how often for the sake of self-satisfaction this vigorous and commanding covenant has been transformed into a bitter departure, inflexible in essence! If one make a departure, is the good already created? No, dear readers, would not this be too easy? For the good, it is necessary also to exert all the forces of the spirit and body. The good is not a nut demanding only a strong tooth. Not out of thoughtlessness, nor of a drowsing consciousness, shall good be created. The pastures of good must be sowed and harvested according to the covenants of the apostle in the true omnific knowledge of life. And let us raise another question: when is there more sweat upon the brow, in the time of sowing or of the harvest? The very same untiring call towards active labour is spread through all the apostolic calls. Because evil by its nature is active. It departed from good and in this departure already manifested the sustenance of activity, which means that the counterbalance must also be active.

Evil is self-assertive because it cannot otherwise attract to itself. So also must good and bliss affirm themselves, because without works, these are dead.

The apostle ordains not the battle with evil—thus exalting the enemies—but creatively to build bliss. Light does not battle with darkness but consumes it and forces it out. But for such a victory there is demanded an attacking swiftness of light. And what swiftness and irresistibility? The apostle ordains a noble resistance to evil through the construction of an act of great bliss which, like light, pierces and disperses the darkness of evil. Of course without resistance and aggressive action evil will inevitably overtake retreating bliss, because all space is full. By retreating we therefore enlarge the field of the enemy.

How then to define evil? The eastern wisdom indicates it in the following way: "The resistance to evil is manifested as one of the fundamental qualities of those who seek Hierarchy. No physical property offers resistance to evil, but the spirit and the fire of the heart create an armour before the cunning of evil. But how to understand evil? Of course, it is, first of all, destruction. But the replacing of a new and better house for a crumbling one is not destruction. Destruction means decomposition which brings an amorphous condition. Such decomposition one must know how to resist. It is necessary to find the strength of the spirit to conquer the fear which is characteristic of non-resistance

to evil. Thus let them be ready to resist evil."

As a voice of prophets wisdom forewarns: "Are there not enough earthquakes? Are there not enough disasters, storms, frosts, and excessive heat? Has not the fiery cross been raised? Have not the stars shone by day? Has not the fiery rainbow glowed? Are there not enough signs which continue to multiply? But mankind does not want to know the manifestation before the reality amidst chaos. Thus let us not insist upon a visible sign when doubt has blinded the people. But amidst the blind and deaf ones are the children of fire. To them we are sending the signs that they should discern the approach of Light."

Thus again without the realisation of what happens, without activity, we should again succumb to evil. Again we shall touch the senseless destruction with the disgusting return of amorphousness and unmanifestness. Who has the right to return into the darkness of the unmanifest that which has been manifested by the greatest creativeness? Who in the name of darkness can then extinguish the light? And was it not indicated to form and deepen one's consciousness by actions? Without consciousness how shall we understand where is bliss? Sir James Jeans has remarked that if typewriters would be given to monkeys, perhaps in a million years of unceasing and accidental thumping they would also type out a sonnet of Shakespeare. But what would be the value of this unconscious thumping?

A blind archer who shoots his arrow into the space may also sometimes get his prey, but he shall not be party to this success.

For millions of years mankind has spread the space with arrows,

but only a few of them are sent consciously in the name of bliss. And therefore instead of a crowding out of the darkness, we have disturbance and self-destruction in a greater measure. Let us acknowledge with full conscience whether mankind has lightened or solved its daily problems. Just the opposite. All are in debt, materially and spiritually, all are overmortgaged, so one cannot even establish where is the end and the beginning of this universal mortgage. Even materially people have lost account of their possessions because they have subjected them to an unlimited amount of burdens invented by themselves. Just as with a business contract in which they wanted mechanically to foresee all the conditions and amidst those overburdens they calculated five-fourths instead of four-fourths—to one whole. Without the realisation of bliss the meaning of outlines is being lost.

What then is bliss? If evil is decomposition and lethargy, then bliss must be construction, creativeness, complete understanding of general usefulness. The same wisdom ordains: "Labour, create bliss, revere the Hierarchy of Light. One may inscribe this canon of ours even upon the palm of a newborn child. Thus the beginning which leads to light is not complicated. In order to accept it, it is necessary to have a pure heart."

And still further: "I shall tell the zealots and hypocrites about treason. They regard treason only a matter of thirty shekels, but they forget that it exists in every blasphemy and slander. One should not think that a hateful word is not treason. Namely, malice is often inseparable from treason and slander. The one black tree nurtures these shameful branches. And the

fruits shall be as black as the roots of shame. It is necessary to tear oneself from the horror of malicious words."

Thus is separated the darkness of evil from creative bliss. One of the most interesting chapters in technological studies is that concerning the resistance of materials. One can easily translate these calculations into the language of human relationship and receive instructive conclusions about the vitality of resistance. Whoever wants to die shall die most easily of all. Vitality is in wholeness, in motion, in permeating the space. Permeating the space with bliss, with the sending of thoughts of bliss, we receive a cosmic support for our resistance to evil. In this magnetisation there is received an energy which grows unlimitedly, therefore bliss-creativeness is the most worthy and practical occupation. And how many possibilities, great and small, measurable and immeasurable, contain bliss-creativeness in themselves! And how many purely medicinal values the prophylaxis of bliss carries in itself! Besides, in its substance, bliss-creativeness, like progressive energy, directs us unalterably forwards. In this sacred progression, no darkness is feared.

Let us not forget that the very same apostolic wisdom which speaks about "the spirit" which consoles,

also affirms "the indignation of spirit." Without this sacred indignation the waters will not revolt and no healings will result.

Yow know that the most active safeguard at night from leopards and tigers is a powerful electric light. The spawn of darkness retreats in dread and disappears, when the flood of light is directed fearlessly into its eyes. The human heart irradiates a still more powerful light. This ray transfixes the darkness if the indignant spirit has shot it unwaveringly without grey doubts.

Swami Vivekananda, this powerful lion of Bliss and Light, explained the same resistance to evil in his exposition of Karma Yoga. His benevolent teaching is indeed a real noble stronghold.

"The deadly eye" of the Yogi is unfailing if he defends bliss. But the Yogi is not a Yogi if he falters in bliss. The chief thing is not to extinguish the "electric" light of the heart. Before its glow, all the off-springs of darkness will retire. They will retire and array against themselves everything which they prepare against bliss.

Resistance to evil will be that noble action which was ordained by the highest teaching. From the noble magnetisation of energy is born that exalted refinement which is manifested by the foundation of Culture.

UNITY OF RELIGIONS*

By Swami Jagadiswarananda

DR. Bhagavan Das needs no introduction to the Indian readers. He is a profound thinker and the eminent author of a number of books of acknowledged scientific merit. His brilliant treatise on psychology of emotions earned him fame both in India and abroad about three decades ago. Since then it has run into several editions and has been translated into French, Spanish, Dutch and Norwegian.

Dr. Das has deeply penetrated into modern western thought as well as ancient eastern wisdom and has the remarkable dexterity of interpreting the profound wisdom of oriental seers into the scientific language of the West. His brilliant erudition, charming style and lucid manner of expounding subtle problems of Hindu metaphysics have been very highly spoken of by M. Andre Chevrillon and other western scholars. The present book on the unity of religions is the enlargement of a magnificent paper read before the First All-Asian Educational Conference held in Benares.

The author in the present book has wonderfully succeeded in discovering identities of thought in the great records of human experience in different languages and has proved with apt quotations the essential unity of apparently conflicting religions. From a comparative study of the scriptures of the world he has

brought out the striking similarities of religions and has shown that they have the self-same fundamentals or common bases. But as we are blinded by the outer forms and externals we have maximised the non-essentials and so have lost sight of the underlying harmony. In fact their agreement is real and eternal whereas the disagreement is apparent and temporary.

The first fundamental of religions is that their promulgators, as we know from their scriptural assurances, admit with one voice that they are continuators and fulfillers, and not destroyers and innovators. They are lineal descendants of generations of Seers and what they live and teach is universal and not the monopoly of any race or religion. The same Truth has been revealed according to time, place and circumstance by different prophets in different ways. Hence the difference of forms and ceremonies, names and words, but the ideas meant are the same in all. Even the names of God in different religions have the same signification. Mahadeva, Allahu Akbar, Ahurmazda, Ensof, Jehovah,—all mean etymologically the same thing. Christian Religion, Hindu and Buddhist Dharma, Mahomedan Islam or Mazhab, Chinese Tao or Zen, Japanese Kami-no-michi all convey the same meaning. All teachers have warned their followers to eschew extremes and practise the golden mean. That is what we know

as Buddha's Majjhim Patipada, Mahavir Jin's Anekantvada, Confucius's Doctrine of the Mean, Krishna's Yukta or balanced method, Mahomed's Non-extremism and so on. The Middle Path is the shortest and easiest spiritual path that leads to Truth, Science, Veda, Haqiqat, Gnosis, Marifat, Jnana or Peace or whatever other appellation one may give it.

Another common factor of religions is the belief that man is in essence one with God and that Nature is God's nature, the unchanging Self's everchanging garment. God has forgotten Himself into man and man must remember himself into God again. Man is 'particularised God' and he has to realise himself as the 'all-including God.' Jiva is the denial of Brahman. Khudi is the imaged reversal of Khuda. Demon est deus inversus. Satan is inverted God. The finite is the forgetfulness of the Infinite. The path of Pravritti or descent has been caused by the superimposition on our true nature of an illusive coat, the removal of which is the path of ascent or Nivritti. Hence religion is a matter of involution or return journey to God who is our "Home" and is primarily based on world-weariness or Home-sickness.

Another important truth is that of rebirth corresponding to and linkable with the scientific view of evolution and phylogenesis. Hinduism and Buddhism explicitly affirm this while Semitic religions indirectly accept but they nowhere deny it. Christ said that the Prophet Elijah had come again as John the Baptist. Maulana Rum says, "Like grass have I grown over and over again; seven hundred seventy bodies have I seen, those of mineral, vegetable, animal and man." Sufis generally believe in rebirth, rijat and irtiga.

To them reincarnation as man is naskh; as animal is maskh; as vegetable is faskh; as mineral is raskh. All religions unanimously proclaim the doctrine of Karma or the scientific law of cause and effect. As we sow so we reap. Virtue and merit are rewarded; vice and sin are punished some day, somewhere, sooner or later, here or hereafter. Rebirth is the logical conclusion of this doctrine.

The next great truth affirmed by religions is that there are other worlds and planes of being, such as Swargas and Narakas, Jannats and Jahannums, paradises and purgatories as well as Devas and Asuras, Faristas and Malayak, angels and devils, etc. Hindu Yoga, Muslim Suluk, Christian mysticism, Buddhist Zen and other esoteric cults recognise three principal bodies or sheaths in the make-up of man. Vedanta names them sthula, sukshma and karana, i.e., physical, subtle and causal. The Jains know them as audarika, taijasa and karman Sariras. The Buddhist Nirman kaya, Sambhoga kaya and Dharma kaya correspond. Christian mysticism calls them body, soul and spirit. Jewish mystics designate them as nefesh, ruah and neshamah. According to the three-fold nature of human mind, Jnana, Ichcha and Kriya; ilm, khwahish and fal or, feeling, thinking and willing, we find indicated in terms of psychological science the three paths of spiritual practice in all religions. In Hinduism they are expressly mentioned as Jnana marga, Bhakti marga and Karma marga. Generally corresponding to these are the Haqiqat or Aqayad, the Tariqat or Ibadat and the Shariyat or Mamilat of Islam and Gnosticism, Pietism and Energeism of Christianity; Samyak Drishti, Samyak Sankalpa and Samyak Vyayam of Buddhism and

* "The Essential Unity of All Religions" by Dr. Bhagavan Das, M.A., Ph. D. Published by Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Price Rs. 3. Pp. 279 + xxi.

so on. The well-known Sufi exclamations Anal Haq, Haqtui, are exact equivalents of the Upanishadic utterances Aham Brahmasmi and Tatwamasi. The Old and New Testaments respectively utter this same great Kalema, Mahavakya or logion thus: "I am God and there is none else. You are the Temple of God. I and my Father are one. I am He," etc. In an ecstatic mood of exalting joy, as Ashtavakra cried out Aho Aham, Namō Mahyam, so Bayazid Bustami long afterwards re-echoed him, Subhani ma Azam Shani, "How wonderful am I, salutation unto me! How great is my glory!" The Ormazd Yasht of the Zoroastrian religion declares "My first name is Ahmi," (Skt.) Asmi, I am. The Bible too says, "I am that I am, I am hath sent me unto you." The sayings of Vedanta and Tasawwuf are so similar as to be almost indistinguishable when translated into a third language specially with regard to the path of wisdom.

The next point of contact between religions is the law of analogy or correspondences. This is the truth of uniformity, same-sightedness or Samata. As the microcosm, the Alami saghir, the Kshudra Virat, so the macrocosm, the Alami kabir, the Maha Virat; as the terrene man so the heavenly man—this is the way the Hebrew, the Christian, the Islamic and the Vedic mystics put it. As the atom so the solar system, as the scientists term it. As one so all, as once so always, as here so everywhere. The Vedanta states this metaphysical fact on which the law of analogy is based as sarvam sarvatra sarvada: "All is everywhere and always." Tasawwuf describes it as Indiraji kulfil kul, "the immanence of the all in all."

Another thought which all religions hold unitedly is the long line of the spiritual Hierarchy—

called Rishis and Munis, Buddhas and Bodhisattwas, Tirthankaras and Arhats, Qutabs and Watads, Messiahs and Messengers and so on.

All religions recognise three stages of spiritual unfoldment. They are known as Deism, Pantheism and Monism; Dvaita, Visishtadvaita and Advaita; Ijadiyah, Shuhudiyah and Wujudiah. Accordingly there are three conceptions of cosmology: Arambhavada from the plane of body, Parinamavada from that of mind and Vivartavada from that of the spirit. Thus there have grown up three conceptions of God, the Personal, the Immanent and the Absolute. This is known in Christianity as the doctrine of Divine Trinity, God the Father, God the Holy Ghost and God the Son, corresponding to the Hindu conception of Avatar, Iswara and Brahma. The Sufis put the three stages in three logia or Mahavakyas or Klemas (1) Hama Az Ust or "All is made by Him." (2) Hama Andar Ust, "All is in Him." (3) Hama Ust or "All is He." As the Vedantic Trinity in Unity, Sat-Chit-Ananda, is summed up in Chaitanyam so in Tasawwuf what are called Nujud, Shuhud and Ilm are summed up in Nur. Hsing, Chih and Chi of Chinese Taoism correspond with Hebrew conception of Ben, Abba and Imma and Muslim conception of Al-malik, Al-Razzaq, Al-Alim.

As the Hindus sing Sahasranama of Iswara so Islam has a hundred holy names of Allah. Five principal ethical virtues are common to all religions. The Samasik Dharma of Manu, Yama Niyama of Yoga, Panchasila or Paramitas of Buddhism, Commandments of Moses and Christ are identical, meant for the householders. For the renunciant, the Sannyasin, Bhikshu, Fakir, Hermit, Yogi or Salik additional stricter virtues are prescribed. In Vedanta

they are called three Eshanas; Lokaishana, Vittaishana and Putraishana; in Buddhism Bhava Trishna, Vibhava Trishna and Kama Trishna. Jainism knows them as Ahar Samjna, Parigraha Samjna and Maithuna Samjna. Sufis call them the primal desires for Zamin, Zar and Zan. In Christian lands the popular names for these are wine, wealth and woman. Psycho-analysis perhaps would name them as ego-complex, property-complex and sex-complex.

In the way of works, Karma kanda, Shariyat or Mamilat, sacraments and rites, in which differences are widest, there is also a very substantial similarity underneath the surface. The Vedic Sandhya-upasana, the Christian prayer, the Muslim Namaz are the same. The essential parts of them are almost exactly the same. Indeed they are almost like translations of one another. It will be noted that Aum, Amin and Amen respectively used by Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are exactly the same word, all meaning "Be it so." All religions prescribe atonement to the sinners in three steps: Paschat-tapa, Prakhayapana and Prayaschitta; Nadm, Etaraf, Kaffar; repentance, confession, expiation. All religions equally enjoin discriminate charity to the deserving. All call their scriptures by names having the same significance, viz., the word of God, Brahma Vakya, Kalam-ullah, Gospel. All believe in a fourfold source of religious law: Quran, Hadis, Ijma, Qayas; revelation, tradition, canonical regulation and conscience; and Sruti, Smriti, Sadachara and Atma-tusthi.

Pilgrimages, Tirthayatras and Hajj are undertaken by followers of all faiths. The worship of the ideal Mother and Babe is common to all religions. Kwan Yon Buddha of Buddhism, Fatima, and Hasan

Hussain of Islam, Madonna and the Child of Christianity, Yashoda and Krishna of Hinduism are its examples. All have pageants, eikons, Bambino processions, Maulud and Katha and Kalakshepa, Duldul and Tazia, Ramlila and Krishnalila, Mohurru and Pitripaksha, holy days of fasts and festivals, lamentations, Ekadashi, Ramzan and Lent. All religions have sacraments, Sam-skaras, Sunnats, initiations, solemn ceremonies, intended to purify body and mind. All use physical appliances to help concentration of mind during devotions like the Tasbih, the Mala, the Rosary. All have Japa, Azkor, litanies, Upavasa, Rosa, fast, Jagarana, Shab-bedari, vigil. The followers of all religions wear outer marks of one kind or another such as tufts of hair on the head or chin, tonsure, sacred thread, paint-marks on the forehead, Zunnor, Helar or Sitar, crescent, cross, stars and so on. All believe in the mysterious potency of special objects such as amulets, Yantra and Tawiz. All call their places of worship in the same way, i. e., the House of God, Church, Mandir, Mazhid, Dagoba. All build them with heavenward aspiring shikara, kalasha, gopura, munara, taarum, gumbad, tower, dome, cupola, spire and steeple. All have calls to prayer, azan, Ghanta, bell. All offer prayers, masses, fatiha at cheblum, Shraddha for the dead. All believe in special spiritual relationships of Guru-shishya, Pir-murid, saint-disciple. All have priests and Pujaris, Mullahs and Imams, monks, Sadhus, Fakirs, Bhikkhus, Maths, Monasteries, Akharas and Viharas and so on.

Thus we see Dr. Das's book is a remarkable study of comparative religion. It is a kind of comprehensive commentary on the lines of the spiritual synthesis of the Gita as well as

the wonderful life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. It is a book of the hour and no student of religion should spare a perusal of it. In these days of communalism it would help a great deal to minimise discord and dissension by inculcating its wholesome ideas of unity in the minds of the younger generation. The educational authorities in India will do well to introduce it as a text-book in the schools or colleges and thus pave the path of tolerance and liberalism. And lastly with the author may we request the learned scholars of India to form a small but active

committee with representatives of the several faiths and members contributed by the different universities to prepare a series of graded text-books of Universal Religion expounding the main points systematically and illustrating them amply like Dr. Das with parallel passages from the scriptures of the various religions? May we also take the liberty in this connection to suggest the holding of periodical conventions of religions to promote mutual understanding by bringing to the forefront the essential unity of them all?

SAINT UMAPATHI SIVAM

By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T.

UMAPATHI was one among the celebrated three thousand Dikshits of Chidambaram, who alone had the privilege of offering worship to the Deity Nataraja in the temple there. He was learned in the scriptures, and was devoted to his God. He took delight in worshipping the Great Dancer, though he got the rare privilege of serving Him only once in three thousand days. But he was not yet God-mad; he had not yet dived deep into the mysterious depths of divine realisation; he had his share of the pride of the man who is just floating on the surface of the waters of religious experience; the humility that comes of scaling the supreme heights of realisation had not yet dawned on him; he had a real pleasure in being surrounded by the paraphernalia of his profession. But the eye of God saw through him, and God chose him out from among the many to receive spiritual initiation. The spring of true spirituality lay dormant in him; it only needed the touch of a

master spirit to burst out. And just as to the expectant pearl-oyster Heaven sends a drop of rain which later matures into a pearl, so too to Umapathi, there came a Guru. Once Umapathi was returning home after worship at the temple. He was escorted by many attendants who showed to him the temple honours. But on the roadside was a begging monk, Mairagnana Sambandar by name, who in reality was a man of stupendous realisation. Umapathi took no notice of the wandering friar who remarked in a jocular vein, 'There goes one who is blind even at day.' It is said in the scriptures that a chance word, or a smile, or a touch from the man of realisation is often enough to rouse the dormant spirituality in "qualified" persons. Such indeed was the case with Umapathi. The words of the monk brought to him in an instant a vivid realisation of the hollowness of mundane things. He got down from his palanquin and

begged of the monk to take away his blindness from him and to give him the vision of spirituality. Mairagnana Sambandar was quite right in characterising Umapathi as blind even at day. For does not the Gita proclaim: 'That which is night to all beings, in that the self-controlled man wakes. That in which all beings wake is night to the self-seeing Muni'? As the Katha Upanishad beautifully puts it, 'the self-existent God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal self. Only perchance some wise man desirous of immortality turns his eyes in and beholds the inner Atman.' So long therefore as we do not turn our eyes inward and behold the Inner Essence we are no better than the man who is born blind and to whom all the effulgence of the sun and the moon and the stars is mere nought.

But the supreme hour of divine grace had come for Umapathi. His Guru initiated him into the true religion; Umapathi cast off the pride of position and followed his wandering master. Once the master wanted to test the degree of perfection that his disciple had attained. He went to the weavers' quarters and drank the gruel used for polishing the yarn. He used his palms as a cup, and the liquid flowed down his hands and elbows. Umapathi without any hesitation drank the liquid that thus flowed down his masters' elbows. The *ucchishta* of his master was to him sacred *prasadam*!

Long after Umapathi lived and passed away, a similar event happened on earth; Umapathi's extreme devotion to the Guru was witnessed in the case of a later saint. When Sri Ramakrishna Deva was suffering from acute

physical distress towards the end of his career, and the doctors had warned his attendants of the infectious nature of his disease, young Naren, (the future Vivekananda) seeing that the doctor's words had caused uneasiness in the minds of his brother-disciples, went into the Master's chamber, and drank the remnant of the gruel tasted and sipped by the Master, though to the gruel in the vessel were added perhaps his spittings and his saliva. To the ordinary man of the world this may seem sheer madness. But moments of such madness alone have produced the prophets of the world.

After this incident Umapathi underwent a course of rigorous discipline and attained the bliss of God-realisation.

The ordinary world comprising commonplace humanity has not the gift of recognising singular merit. Any one that dares to step out of the groove of the day to day existence immediately loses the sympathy of the multitude. So was it with Umapathi. When he cast off in one blessed hour honour and affluence and chose the austere life of the religious aspirant, he was mistaken by his former colleagues for a mad man. Nay, he was even regarded as one who had fallen from the path of righteousness! So great is the hold of conservatism on the human mind that mankind regards any attempt to transcend the initial, though necessary, stage of dependence on external observances as a positive sliding down in the scale of spirituality. Umapathi, in whom the eye of inner vision had opened and to whom therefore was no longer necessary the observance of the scriptural and conventional conduct enjoined on his caste in general, was criticised by his colleagues as having 'lost caste.' And when the turn

came for Umapathi to worship Nataraja at the temple, he was not allowed to enter the shrine. Those that prevented him from offering worship were of course actuated by the pure motive of keeping the shrine of their Beloved Deity free from the profane touch of a person whom they regarded as having fallen from his high estate.

But the Lord is wiser than man. He has the ability to assess the real worth of His devotees. And so when after having ex-communicated Umapathi, the Dikshits entered the shrine they were startled to find that the Deity was not present in its place. To the amazed assembly of Dikshits there came a voice saying, 'I have gone to the place where Umapathi is offering me mental worship.' The Dikshits then repented their hasty action, and begged Umapathi to return to the temple and offer worship to the Deity.

Petran Sambhan was an untouchable by birth, but he was a highly evolved soul. He was sick of the baseness and dirt he found among his kinsmen, and with a view to lead a pure life he separated from his folk and chose the vicinity of a temple for his residence. He also undertook to supply firewood to the kitchen in the temple where the offerings to God were cooked. So great was the ardour of his devotion to the Lord that one night the Lord appeared before Petran Sambhan and advised him to go to Umapathi Sivam for initiation. The Lord also left with Sambhan a note to Umapathi, directing Umapathi to initiate Sambhan into the higher spiritual life and to bestow on him the bliss of God-realisation. Umapathi meanwhile had established a *math* in a village, where he was carrying on his mission of bringing enlighten-

ment to mankind by precept and practice. Petran Sambhan went to the village, but so full of humility was he that even with the Lord's authorisation in his hand he did not intrude himself on Umapathi. He began to supply fuel to the kitchen in Umapathi's *math*. On a rainy day the supply of firewood had to be suspended. Dinner to Umapathi came late, and enquiring for the cause of the delay Umapathi came to know of the untouchable's long service to the *math*. Umapathi directed that on the next day the untouchable should be taken to his presence. Next morning Umapathi and Sambhan met each other. The former saw the Lord's note to him. He looked at his disciple and knew in a glance that Sambhan was ripe for the highest realisation. In a minute the Guru's grace descended on Petran Sambhan who was transformed into an effulgent light and merged in the All-pervasive Existence.

Sambhan's widow could not understand the greatness of the passing away of her husband. Ignorant as she was, she perhaps believed that her husband was the victim of black magic and witchcraft. A complaint was lodged with the king by her and her relatives. The king demanded an explanation of his action from the saint Umapathi. He also wanted to have an ocular proof that Umapathi really possessed the power to bestow supreme realisation on mortals. The saint looked round on the amazed crowd of spectators. 'Oh king,' he said, 'not one among this crowd is fit to receive my grace. The only object here that is ripe for spiritual initiation is the plant that grows there. It has been serving for a long time the Lord's devotees with luscious fruits, and moreover it is everyday watered by the water

which bathes the Deity in the shrine here. I shall now bestow on this plant this bliss of at-onement with the Cosmic Ego.' And before the very eyes of the unbelieving multitude the plant was transformed into a glow of light, and everyone envied the fortune of the plant. And those that came to the saint in doubt and indignation remained to adore him and ask for his grace.

Twice again in later life Umapathi became the victim of caste arrogance and was denied admission into the temple of Nataraja. But

twice again did the Lord show His preference for Umapathi's devotion.

Umapathi was a gifted writer and has left behind him works of great philosophical value. One of his works is a treatise on the holiness of the great pilgrim centre, Chidambaram.

Umapathi is one among the four minor prophets of Saivism. His life-history is of particular significance to us of the modern day. We who struggle for the abolition of out-worn usages in society have much to learn from the enlightened catholicism of Umapathi Sivam.

HOW PRESENT-DAY SCIENTISTS LOOK AT RELIGION—II

By Swami Iswarananda

(Continued from previous issue)

THE first question was: "Do you credit the existence of a spiritual domain?" 13 answered in the negative and 121 in the affirmative. 66 either did not reply to this particular question or their replies were too indefinite to be classed as either positive or negative. A few comments on this question deserve mention. One said, "Don't know what spiritual means." To another, the word spiritual had no real meaning. One wrote "I would be among the last to deny it, but feel quite unable to define it." Some Fellows found it difficult to answer, as the word 'spiritual' was not defined, but, with their own meaning, they believed in a spiritual domain. One "tried to," another "hoped." According to one Fellow it is "possible" but, there is no evidence except what is individual and non-communicable. Some confounded

"spiritual" with "spiritualistic" in which sense they did not quite believe, but replied that consciousness is the basis of existence. One wrote, "As far as I know there is nothing contradictory to the established facts of science in such a belief, but the existence or otherwise of a spiritual domain should depend for its belief on the evidence in its favour." Another had "no personal experience of a spiritual domain." A mathematician wrote, "If you mean, 'Is there a spiritual aspect of experience which is as valid and important as the material aspect', I say yes." A botanist replied, "I do not think that the universe can be explained on a purely materialistic basis." One said, "There are clearly fields of human activity (e. g. art) not understandable by scientific methods." Another Fellow replied that all experience will not be explained in terms of

abstracts we call physics and chemistry. One zoologist said that a physico-chemical account of phenomena exhibited by living organisms is insufficient to explain them. Another Fellow regards the antithesis between the natural and the spiritual a false one; he believes that the ultimate interpretation of all reality must be in terms of spirit. A Fellow of the Institute of Physics replied, "It is the only thing I do credit, for thought and feeling are all I know of directly." Sir A. S. Eddington says, "Our environment may and should mean something towards us which is not to be measured with the tools of physics or described by the metrical symbols of the mathematician." He recognises "an experience which we describe as the presence of God." J. S. Haldane said, "Psychological interpretation constitutes a higher plane of interpretation nearer to reality than mere physical or biological interpretation."

The next question was about free will. According to science all phenomena are determined by the laws of nature. If human will is similarly mechanically determined, and there is no freedom of choice and personal responsibility, morality or ethics is impossible. Hence the question: "*Is man in some degree responsible for his acts of choice?*" Of the 180 answers received to this question 7 answered in the negative and 173 in the positive. 20 either sent answers which could not be considered affirmative or negative, or else did not reply to this question, although they answered others. Of these some said they did not understand what the question meant. One says that the present tendency to discard determinism is based partly on the success which has attended the use of statistical methods. Another remarks that the solution

is to be found in the analysis of the connection between the physical and the psychical. One says that free will which man has attained by conquest of primitive instincts is destined to become hampered by communal restraints. That more than twenty-four to one, of those who gave definite replies, should affirm belief in some measure of freedom of choice shows how great a change of opinion has taken place amongst leading men of science of recent years. Some were emphatically positive. Of these one wrote, "Most certainly yes; and as a biologist and one interested in the brain and mind, I have emphasised it." Others said, "undoubtedly," "yes, wholly," "yes, certainly." One Fellow significantly remarked, "I do not think the doctrine of indeterminacy furnishes as much support to the idea of free will as the evidence of my own consciousness of the power of choice. The individual will is one of the determinants which determine action." Sir Eddington in his "Science and Religion" says, "I think there is no longer any need to doubt our intuitions of free will.....ours is the responsibility for what ensues from them." According to Sir James Jeans, "Science can no longer shut the door on this responsibility, she has no longer any unanswerable arguments to bring against our innate conviction of free will."

The subject of the third question was the relation between creation and evolution. To quote the editor of the book, "It seems to be taken for granted by some people that, if one could prove that anything evolved, then one could demonstrate that it had not been created, and that if everything could be shown to have evolved, then that would show that nothing was created. But people consider that the

word "evolution" merely denotes a hypothesis with regard to the various stages of becoming, the steps in the history of development (or degeneration) by which things have come to be what they are. The majority of religious people believe that the emergence or unfolding is not a cause—not an *ultimate* cause, but is an effect of which the cause is God." Hence the question: "*Is it your opinion that belief in evolution is compatible with belief in a creator?*" 142 replied "yes", 5 "no"; 53 gave vague answers or did not reply to this particular question. Many made interesting remarks on the question. One Fellow of the Royal Society said the question was irrelevant. Another said he could see no connection between the two beliefs. A third maintained the answer depended upon the meaning attached to the words 'evolution' and 'creator.' One says the idea of a creator is too anthropomorphic and infantile for it to give a precise meaning to the question. According to another there is no incompatibility between the two ideas; the incompatibility arises when certain ideas about evolution are opposed to specific ideas about a creator. One Fellow holds that it is logically possible that a creator created the universe and then left it to evolve, so that the answer to the question is yes, but he adds that the idea is too absurd to be credited. Another remarked that we cannot possibly know anything about a creator. Another Fellow, though he does not see any incompatibility in the two ideas, cannot imagine what a creator is like. One wrote, "Belief in evolution is not compatible with such an idea of a creator as that put forward in the Book of Genesis." According to another, "Belief in evolution is scarcely feasible without belief in a

creator (and director)." One defined evolution as "the creative manifestation of Divine Reason." Another held, "No consistent evolutionist can possibly be an atheist." Some do not see any incompatibility if 'creator' means not a personal God as pictured in the Bible, but an impersonal creative agency. In the opinion of one, "Belief in evolution is compatible with belief in a personal God." According to Sir James Jeans, "The universe seems to look more like a great thought than like a great machine." He suspects the realm of matter to be created by mind, not individual mind, but a Universal Mind. Further, he says, "If the Universe is a Universe of thought then its creation must have been an act of thought." The analysis of the replies shows that a majority of more than 23 to one held that belief in evolution is compatible with the belief in a creator.

The fourth question was "*Do you think that science negatives the idea of a personal God as taught by Jesus Christ?*" By 'Personal God,' the editor remarks that Christian Theology does not mean a God with a body but one with human attributes such as knowledge, power, etc. It is not sure how many of those who said that science negated the idea of a personal God had this conception in their mind. It is possible that some of them might have been thinking of the idea of a God with a limited body, etc. Of those who replied, 26 held that natural science does negative this idea. 103 answered that science does not negative this idea. 71 either gave no reply or answered so vaguely that their opinions could not be regarded as either positive or negative. The comments on this question are as various as those on the previous questions.

Some say that science absolutely negatives the idea of a personal God. One says even the teachings of Jesus are negated. Another replied, "Yes, such anthropomorphism is childish." One Fellow remarked the idea of a personal God is exceedingly improbable. A professor of natural philosophy said, "No, I do not think science has anything to say pro or con to the existence of God. But I do strongly hold that it makes the existence of a good God inadmissible." Another says that it is not only inconsistent with scientific knowledge, but with rational, honest, unprejudiced reflection of the phenomena presented for observation by the world around us. To another a personal God in the usual sense is unthinkable. Another replied that science does negative the idea of a personal God with human attributes.

By those who said science does not negative the idea of a personal God the following reasons have been given. Natural science deals with things that can be measured, numbered, and delineated. It is beyond its province to attempt to give answers, positive or negative, to a question of this kind. Science has no bearing on faith. Science does not penetrate the spiritual domain, and its laws, experiments, and mathematical analysis are restricted in scope. There are no points of contact between science and such ideas. Science works in a different realm and has nothing to say for or against. These ideas in their purest form are independent of physical knowledge. Science dealing only with certitudes cannot negative faith, nor should ever do so. Knowledge of the material universe does not affect knowledge of the spiritual.

One Fellow believes that in the ultimate analysis the idea of God,

as the Divine Reason, constitutive of reality, must somehow include the more or less anthropomorphic concept of personality. According to another, the idea of God is a specialised product of the human mind, even more than ethical values; this does not prove however that God is non-existent; it only goes to show that, as man's perceptions become clearer, some dim understanding of the Father of Light is reaching us; scientific research must bring us nearer to truth and remove us farther away from all that is mere assertion in Christianity. One Fellow said that though the accumulated scientific knowledge today is too restricted to negative, the idea of a God with the adjective 'personal' is presumptuous—or meaningless. Another cannot understand how an infinite being can be personal. One replied that he could not understand what meaning to attach to the word 'personal.' Another said science presents God as the creative mind rather than as a person. One Fellow remarked that the attribute of personality was too paltry to be applied to the stupendous Originating Mind. Another replied that he could not imagine the world to have been created by anything of which we can have any conception. One wrote, "No (science does not negative), in using the word 'personal' in the sense of a spirit with whom man can be, in some way, in communion; but yes (science does negative) in the sense of a person acting into the world in the interests of man. I believe in a spiritual God with whom I am in some vague way *en rapport*." One scientist said, "Science in my opinion teaches that there is a Supreme Force behind all things, which some call God, others nature. Science gives no support to a personal God, i.e., one

in more or less human form." Another believes in a God, "in whom we live and move and have our being," but "cannot make any graven image of God." One Fellow answered, "We recognise the presence of God—God present, not merely as a being outside us, but within and around us as a personality of personalities. The evidence of God's existence is the presence within us of personality above that of our mere individual selves, and it seems to me that there is no other evidence which has any weight at all."

To the fifth question, "*Do you believe that the personalities of men and women exist after the death of their bodies?*" 47 replied definitely "Yes"; 41 expressed definite disbelief in survival, 112 did not either state their belief or sent uncertain and vague answers. The following variety of views have been expressed by the Fellows. "No, I can conceive no proper mechanism for such survival, as far as our present data go." Others pointed out that a more specific definition of personality would be required before the question could be answered scientifically in the affirmative. Some said that the personality of people is dissipated into the elementary states of consciousness, which is probably the stuff of the universe. Some doubted whether human personality is sufficiently developed to exist apart from its embodiment. One scientist thinks that personality seems to be a matter of limitation, it might well be transcended beyond the grave. Some said, scientifically survival is not proved. Others say it is not impossible but that it is improbable. Some did not see any reason to exclude the belief. One Fellow who did not believe in survival was prepared to find he was mistaken. Others said

there would be no advantage in survival. One expressed the view that although science offers no evidence either way, yet belief in life beyond the grave is the best working hypothesis for this life. Some hold that psychical research does not give convincing evidence of the survival of the soul, while others take the opposite view. Some say the nature of the life beyond the grave is entirely beyond our comprehension. Some hold the opinion that the impossibility of understanding the relationship between brain and mind makes it illegitimate to deny the survival of the mind; on the other hand the evidence for it is inadequate. One scientist considers that the strong desire of so many people for personal existence after death renders survival probable. Another says that our personalities are so imperfect that there must be very little in the best of us that is worth preserving, and that little must, if it is to survive, undergo modification of a kind that is quite outside our human comprehension. One Fellow believes in the probability of an eternal existence that is outside time, but then it would be incorrect to speak of it as an "after-life." Prof. Haldane believes in survival, not as mere individual personalities, but only through their oneness with God. One Fellow of the Royal Society replied, "It would be a waste of energy which nature does not allow if we were all made to end in nothing. It is impossible." The majority of those who gave definite replies believe in survival.

The last question was: "*Do you think that the recent remarkable developments in scientific thought are favourable to religious belief?*" 27 answered in the negative, 74 in the affirmative, 99 did not reply or sent only vague replies.

The comments were as follows: The two domains are *different*, neither sheds light upon the other. Consequently developments in scientific beliefs are neither favourable nor otherwise to religious beliefs and the two outlooks on life should have no quarrel with each other. The two world outlooks are mutually subject to *change*, and should be so, and *modern* ideas in the one are likely to be compatible with *ancient* ideas in the other. Changes in scientific thought are friendly and helpful to evolving theological opinions but are sceptical of some ancient religious beliefs—or, rather of the ancient natural science embedded in venerable sacred literatures and dogmas. Science and religion both aim at discovering the truth and any success achieved by the former should be welcomed by the latter. The rapid changes of thought have rebuked the cocksureness both of theologians and of scientists who were unjustifiably dogmatic. It is well that they have both learned to be more reverent, humble and willing to develop their conceptions. Some Fellows are certain that recent developments in scientific thought are most favourable to religious beliefs. Others regard them as unfavourable to the cosmogony of the Bible and dogmatic ideas in general and so to religious belief—but not to religion. Some think that recent developments in scientific thought are against the materialistic and mechanistic view of the universe.

Are men of science religious? Very few made remarks on this topic. Very few scientists seem to have compared notes with others on the subject of their religion. Consequently it is difficult to know whether the majority of scientific men are religious or not. But those few who expressed their

opinions were unanimous on this point. One remarked, "I have little doubts that in this country, and particularly on the continent, men of science are far less inclined to believe in Christianity than other men, yet the idealistic pursuit of knowledge by research workers makes them, to my mind, more religious than the average businessman. I am an agnostic with little taste for philosophy." Another said, "Science has never been irreligious, and scientific men as a class are probably more ethical and right-living than any other class." One Fellow observed: The scientific study of nature in all her aspects inevitably leads to a sense of awe and reverence such as, I venture to think, cannot be attained in any other way, but this perhaps would not be called religious belief." One scientist wrote that he is deeply convinced that the religious sense and disposition are a vital necessity of human existence, at least for the majority. One said, "Science and religion have nothing to do with each other. When Faraday entered the door of his laboratory he shut the door of his oratory. When he entered the oratory he shut the door of his laboratory. This is my idea on matters of religion."

From the foregoing replies to the questionnaire it seems to us fairly clear that science as such is not opposed to the cardinal concepts of religion and that the majority of scientists are, on the whole, not inimical to it, if not its advocates. This is no doubt a very palpable change of outlook, on the part of scientists, from that of the last century which was, or was supposed to be, aggressively antireligious or irreligious. The fear that the advance of scientific knowledge may once for all destroy the religious

attitude appears now to have been not quite warranted. Natural science as such seems to be incapable to answer questions about the fundamentals of religion or to criticise them. But this negative incapacity of science does not in any way prove the validity of religious doctrines and dogmas; they have to stand or fall on *independent evidence*. The ultimate *truth* or validity of religions as well as scientific concepts, apart from their *values*, may yet be challenged by, and has to stand before the bar of, Philosophy.

But the value of religion will in no way be diminished, though the old worn out forms and expressions

of it may have to go. Psychology has found an inner need in man which is satisfied by religion. Science cannot satisfy this psychological need for the harmonious adjustment of human personality to the inner as well as the outer universe and therefore cannot hope to supplant it. Science teaches us to know, religion teaches us to be and to become. That is why the Vedanta philosophy, rising above religion and theology, always gave a place to Upasana and Karma in its scheme of life for the development of personality. And so it seems to us this value of religion will ever be present so long as humanity does not undergo a change of species.

INDIAN CASTE SYSTEM: A STUDY*

By A. S.

NO human institution has been the theme of such acute controversy carried on by a galaxy of eminent scholars and ethnologists as the Indian system of caste, Varna Vyavastha. Oriental scholars like Weber, Oldenburg, Rhys Davids and others have contributed much to the study of this highly interesting subject. Nesfield, M. Senart, Sir Herbert Risley, Sir Edward Gait and other modern ethnologists have advanced evolutionary theories as to the origin and development of the social divisions of India. The value of these theories has, however, been greatly diminished, not having been tested by the materials available in the Vedas, Brahmanas, Smritis, etc., the Buddhist texts, the later Sanskrit literature and the rich vernacular literature dealing with the development of

caste during the post-Buddhistic period down to the eighteenth century. As against these theories, there is the ancient Indian theory of the origin of caste, elaborated by the Indians themselves in their sacred literature. This ancient theory of the divine origin of caste is devoutly believed by the Indians who either think they do not need the evolutionary theories of the ethnologists to support a great institution or do not believe in them.

In his small pamphlet of 77 pages Mr. Hayavadana Rao has given an idea of the immensity and the complexity of the problem, and how it bristles with difficulties at every step and expresses the opinion that unless all the materials available are carefully sifted and studied in proper perspective, nothing final

*Indian Caste System: A Study: By C. Hayavadana Rao, B.A., B.L., F.R. Econ. S., Fellow, Mysore University.

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can be said on this much-debated subject. Mr. Hayavadana Rao, who is quite competent to express an opinion on this matter, has with the modesty of a true scholar refrained from putting forward a theory of his own, and we think, wisely. The value of his contribution lies in the attempt he has made to probe some of the problems connected with this subject; he is content to give a summary, a very lucid summary we should say, of the theories already put forward by the various scholars, both Indian and European, and the obvious need there is for further study and research. In the first five chapters he has submitted the theories to a critical examination, and we think he is on safe ground when he says that none of the theories advanced can be regarded as conclusive. Thus the Indian theory holds the field, and the author has in chapter VI given a detailed examination of the materials on which that theory is based. We wish he had given more space to this examination. As we stated above, the materials available to construct a theory of caste and study of its history are abundant and are scattered in the vast Sanskrit literature of India, the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Sutras, the Smritis, the Puranas, the Kavyas and the commentaries, Buddhist literature and Jaina Sutras. In other words, we have to hunt up for the materials from writings commencing from about 3000 B. C. to 600 A. D., a stupendous task which cannot be avoided if one is seriously minded to study this ancient institution in all its aspects.

The earliest account of the origin of the Varnas is found in the famous Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda, which describes the creation of the castes, the Brahmin, the Rajanya, (Kshatriya), the Vaisya and the

Sudra. This Vedic hymn has been regarded by some oriental scholars as a later interpolation. No great significance need perhaps be attached to this conjecture; for, independently of this hymn there is evidence to believe that in the Rig Vedic period the idea of a separate Brahmin caste, as distinct from the warrior and agricultural castes, had already been evolved. In the Yajur Veda (Taittiriya Samhita) the theory receives a clearer expression, while the Brahmanas contain repeated references to the creation of castes, which seem to take a definite shape. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, which also describes the creation of the four Varnas, goes on to say that in the eye of the law all were equal and none could pretend to a higher status over another. Evidently in the Upanishadic age, individual castes claimed superiority over others and in keeping with the speculations of the period, insistence is laid on the essential equality, if not the oneness of all castes, *each being created for the good of the society, the law being above all.*

The Smriti writers of the 6th century B. C., Bodhayana, Gautama, Vasishta, take us a stage further; and while giving an account of the creation of castes, describe also their different duties. And when we come to the period of the Bhagavad Gita, we find that the position taken in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is emphasised and the four castes are said to have not only their particular qualities (Gunas), but also their particular duties. "The fourfold division of castes was created by Me," says Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, "according to the apportionment of duties and qualities." The caste system had by then become rigid, and we find in the Bhagavad Gita an exaltation of the qualities of the

castes and the strict performance of the duties appertaining to them. The Jain, Buddha and Vedanta schools of thought ignore caste. By the time of Manu, caste came to be stereotyped in its present form, although the process had been going on for some centuries; and in the laws of Manu we have not only the old theory of the creation of the four castes set down on the traditional lines, but there is also a further enlargement in the duties assigned to each of them.

It is inferable from what has preceded that the caste system was the very foundation of the Hindu social order, that in the beginning it was elastic, that in the course of time it tended to become rigid and that there have been attempts at various times to arrest this tendency. There is evidence to show that the views of certain schools of thought which ignored caste should be understood as exalting service above order, stripping the outward vestures of the caste, which became stereotyped with a tendency to fission and debasement of human character. The objection was not so much to the system of caste as such, but to the working of the system, more to escape the evils of caste by rising above it. No great significance need be attached to the views of a certain class of people in modern times, which, distracted by the multiplicity of material considerations on the models of the West, wishes to abolish caste, ignoring the genesis of its creation and the good points inherent in it, attaching a disproportionate importance to its evil

effects only, which are capable of removal. There is a considerable body of intelligent and informed opinion which, represented by the best and sanest intellects among Indians and others, abhors the thoughtless breaking away from the past because it is a past. Its regard, for tradition and the continuity of things is against a hasty and ill-considered step in dealing with an institution which has stood the test of time, and which has in it the elements of progress when modified with suitable adjustments. The fact that the caste system has persisted in its present form is probably the chief reason for the stability of Indian society, to orderliness, to contentment, to the absence of continual strife as is found in the societies of the West. A little thought would convince any one that these fundamental divisions known as caste are not after all peculiar to this country. They are universal in their nature. While in the Hindu social polity, these differences are recognised and society is definitely organised on their basis, in other societies they are not definitely recognised, and the social order is not connected with them. It may be interesting to recall in this connection that in one of the social Utopias which have been sketched in the West, we find a system of society outlined by the great French philosopher Auguste Comte, in which the caste system is definitely revived and the characteristic marks imprinted on it by the great Rishis of India are found reappearing.

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

Gaudapada's Karika

The state of being complete in itself: the natural condition of a thing: that which is inborn: that which is not induced by any action: that which does not cease to be itself: all this is to be understood by (that is, when we speak of) the nature of anything. (9)

Sankara's Commentary

Even in worldly experience (Vyavahara), the nature of a thing is not known to change and this is explained here. The state of being complete in itself is seen in the state of the supernatural powers such as becoming very light, etc. acquired by the Yogins. This never changes in any period of time, either past or future. The natural condition of a thing is seen in the heat and light-giving properties of fire, which never change in any time or place. That which is inborn in anything is seen in the ability of a bird to fly in the air. That which is not induced by any action, is seen in the natural property of water to flow from a higher to a lower level. All people acknowledge that to be the nature of a thing, when it does not cease to be itself. In all objects of worldly experience, which are merely objects superimposed (on Brahman), this is recognised to be the meaning of the nature of a thing. What then should it be in the case of the real substance, having no birth? The meaning is that it is of the nature of immortality and nothing else.

Gaudapada's Karika

All Jivatmans are by their very nature free from old age and death

(and such other changes). But the very thought of predicating old age and death (to Atman) is getting away from the very nature (of Atman). (10)

Sankara's Commentary

Again, what is it, the nature of which is assumed to be subject to change by the disputants, and what is the error in their assumptions? To this we reply: All the Jivas, whose nature is that of Atman, are on account of that very nature free from all changes such as old age, death, etc. Being of such nature, if on the Atman are superimposed old age, death, etc., just as the snake is superimposed on a rope, they will be moving away from (or giving up) the very nature (of Atman). The very thought of old age and death (in relation to Atman) is committing the error of superimposition (that is, thinking one thing to be another).

Gaudapada's Karika

To those (who consider that) cause is verily the effect, the cause must be born (as effect). How can that which is subject to birth be said to be unborn; or one having parts, eternal? (11)

Sankara's Commentary

The Vaisesika shows how the Sankhya theory of an existing thing being born (as the world) is self-contradictory. The cause which, according to the disputants (Sankhyas), is the material like clay (the cause of jars, &c.), is verily the effect. That the cause only, becomes transformed into the effect, is what they say. The unborn and ever-existing (that is

changeless and permanent) Pradhana is said to be born in the form of Mahat and other effects. If Pradhana is said to be born in the form of Mahat and other effects, how can it be said by them to be unborn? It is contradictory to say that an unborn thing is born. Moreover, it (Pradhana) is said to be immutable. When it breaks up in one part into a variety (as the world), how can it continue to be immutable? It is not in conformity with the experience in this world that jars, &c., having parts and broken in places, are ever said to be immutable. The purport is that there is a twofold contradiction in saying that a thing is unborn and born (transformed) at the same time, and that a thing with parts is capable of being broken up into pieces and at the same time remaining unchanged.

Gaudapada's Karika

If (as Sankhyas say) what is meant is that the effect is none other than (inseparable from) the cause, (we say that) your effect must be as unborn (as the cause). (If it is asserted that) the cause and effect being non-different, the effect is born, what becomes of the immutability assigned to the cause? (12)

Sankara's Commentary

What is said before is further explained here. If you wish to hold that the effect is non-different from its unborn cause, it is as good as asserting that the effect is also unborn. This is contradicting the experience that a thing is an effect and yet unborn. Effect and cause being non-different, how can there remain the immutability of the cause, in the effect that may be born? For, half a hen cannot be cooked, allowing the other half to lay eggs.

Gaudapada's Karika

There is no illustration in support of the assumption that the effects are born from the unborn (cause). But to say that the effect is born from a cause which is also born, would end nowhere (except in *Regressus ad infinitum*) (13)

Sankara's Commentary

Moreover, in support of the assumption of the disputants, that from an unborn substance an effect is born, there is verily no illustration. In the absence of an illustration, it may be taken as settled that from an unborn (cause) no effect can be born. Again, if a born thing gives rise to another, the question will be asked, who gave birth to the first. (There being no limit to such questions), the whole argument ends in *Regressus ad infinitum*.

Gaudapada's Karika

First, a cause gives rise to the result, which in its turn gives rise to the cause: and so cause and result are both beginningless. How can this be established by them (the disputants)? (14)

Sankara's Commentary

When the Scripture (Veda) says "When all this has become Atman" (or when Atman has become all this), it is meant to establish that in reality, there is absence of duality. It is argued: From Dharma, etc., (merit and demerit) as causes, the aggregate of elements known as the body is produced. From this body again are produced merit (and demerit). They attribute to the causes in the form of merit (and demerit) and to effects in the form of bodies, an interdependence and mutual origin. How can such people predicate birthlessness either to causes or effects? Therefore,

the eternal and unchanging Atman can never become either effect or cause.

Gaudapada's Karika

At first, a cause gives rise to the result, which in time gives birth to the cause. This is as good as saying that the father is born from a son.

(15)

Sankara's Commentary

The contradiction involved is further explained. The saying that from the result born of a cause, the cause is re-born is quite as contradictory (or absurd) as saying that from the son is born the father.

Gaudapada's Karika

(Therefore) the order of succession of the cause and result must first be established. (If you say that) they are born simultaneously, they can bear no relation to each other and are like the two horns (of an animal). (16)

Sankara's Commentary

If you say that the contradiction pointed out does not follow from the argument, we ask you to seek (and establish) the order of succession of the cause and effect, that the cause is the prior one and the effect the following one. If the cause and effect are said to arise simultaneously, they cannot bear the relation of cause and effect and are like the right and left horns of a cow growing at the same time.

Gaudapada's Karika

Your cause, being the production of a result, has no real existence. How can a cause which has no real existence, give birth to an effect? (17)

Sankara's Commentary

If you ask how the two are not related to each other, we reply as follows :

Being produced from a result, which of itself has as much real existence as the horns of a hare, a cause cannot be produced from such a non-existent thing. From a cause which is so non-existent as the horn of a hare, how can you derive any result? Two things each depending upon the other for its production, can never, like the two horns of a hare, come to bear the relation of cause and effect, nor indeed any other relation.

Gaudapada's Karika

If the cause is the product of an effect and the effect the product of the cause, which of the two, in view of the production of the other, is settled to be prior to the other? (18)

Sankara's Commentary

If in spite of the impossibility of showing the relationship between the cause and the result, you still believe that cause and effect can beget each other, we ask you to determine which of the two occupies the prior position : so that the subsequently placed product may at least have a relatively later position in time, to the prior cause.

Gaudapada's Karika

(Your) reply (to the question in the last verse) must be either your inability to explain or your ignorance or the impossibility of assuming any order of succession. Therefore, the arguments of all the learned opponents only serve to enlighten (our standpoint, that is) non-birth (of the universe). (19)

Sankara's Commentary

If you think that you are unable to say, that inability is but your ignorance of the truth of the reality. Or your statement of the order of succession, that is, the cause being the product of

the result and of the result being the product of the cause, is but making cause and effect mutually dependent. This order is mere assumption and is against all reason. If there is no rela-

tion of cause and effect, between a cause and its result, the fact of there being no birth at all in any case, is brought to light, by the contradictory arguments of the learned opponents.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Caste-arrogance

Rays of Light, the monthly organ of the Catholic Truth Society of India, published from Trichinopoly, contains an interesting account of the proceedings of the Catholic Congress which took place during the Christmas week at Madras. "One of the points," it says, "on which at the late Congress there was much plain speaking, a point made actual by Mr. Gandhi's anti-untouchability campaign, is that of caste relations within the Catholic fold." We have till now been told only of how the propaganda carried on by Christianity and other faiths in India was influencing Hinduism in a considerable measure, and helping to purge it of many of its defects. But here we come across an admission showing that reform movements in the Hindu fold, whatever may have been their starting point, do have similar purging influence on societies like the Christian which are normally supposed and declared to be beyond any such need. This shows how propaganda, although in the name of God, sometimes runs the risk of being carried on without relation to facts.

"Speaking with some personal experience," said one of the members, "of the more backward among us, of what might be termed the Catholic masses, I must confess that it is with no little concern that I view the problem. I hope things are different in other parts of the country; but it might generally be said of the Tamil districts,

that there is none more caste-ridden than the so-called caste Catholic. He would not merely carry his caste into the church and segregate depressed castemen into one wing marked off by a railing, but in the very act of receiving Communion, even in the immediate presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist he would claim precedence and would object to Communion being given to a single depressed class man before the whole on his side had been exhausted. This caste arrogance, and I could give it no other name, is the root of many an evil. The least attempt on the part of the parish priest to end this undesirable state of affairs is hotly resented, resulting in many cases of boycott of the Church. With the prevalence of such caste spirit, little wonder that there is a total lack of communal life among Catholics as such. No one feels that he has any responsibility towards the maintenance of the Church and meeting the expenditure thereof, much less to the other beneficial activities of a parish. . . . Let us by our concerted action exorcise this demon of caste from our midst, infuse our own people with a true sense of Christian charity, cultivate in them a feeling of brotherly love towards one another, and bring about among our fellow-Catholics a spirit of unity and solidarity."

It seems to us that if to get rid of caste-arrogance *caste* is the one demon the Christian seeks to expel the Hindu should not forget that *arrogance* is a more powerful demon to be exorcised, inasmuch as it is he that utilises not merely caste but riches and even the colour of the skin as his "strongholds" and has resisted, and will surely resist,

all attempts to introduce "a true sense" of "virtue," "holiness" etc., stressed uniformly by all the important religions of the world.

The magazine next gives an account of the noble efforts made at various times to solve this caste question in the Church. We shall quote three paras, the last of which deals with a High Court Judgment.

"In 1744 Pope Benedict XIV gave 'strict orders' that all Catholics, high and low, should meet in the same churches and all together (*una simul*) receive the sacraments. The doctrine of untouchability, he said, was alien to Christianity and was to be eradicated from the minds of Christians, because there is no such distinction among those who are the sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

"In 1783 the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, in two Letters sent from Rome to the Missionaries on the Coromandel Coast, expressed—as many Catholics do now in various parts of India—their great astonishment at the caste separations found in South Indian churches. They next laid down four points:—

(a) Such a separation might indeed be tolerated for a time to avoid a greater evil. But it was explicitly noted that it was *toleration and not approval*.

(b) It was declared to be the earnest desire of the Apostolic See that caste people, making progress in religion, should get rid of a prejudice so *contrary to Christian humility and charity*.

It would be a great service if Hindu scholars could reveal whether or not Hindu Smritis have meant that "caste people, making progress in religion (and not getting stuck up) should get rid of a prejudice," namely caste-prejudice, and we might add, caste-arrogance in the category of arrogances,—"so contrary to" Hindu humility and charity! But to quote again:

(c) Some Missionaries who in the restoration of a church had notably increased the signs of separation were blamed and the Bishop was ordered to remove these signs immediately.

Certainly there is no constituted central authority among Hindus at present to order such removal or enforce it should the labours of scholars and noble-minded men be directed towards removal.

(d) All Missionaries were reminded of the duty they have to root out from the minds of Catholics this prejudice by inculcating one fraternal charity by which all Christians should love each other as brothers and as sons and heirs of their Celestial Father."

"In 1916 the High Court of Judicature at Madras (in 2nd Appeal No. 431 of 1914) decided in the negative whether, by agreement or caste custom, a Roman Catholic can claim exclusive privileges for his caste inside a church."

"It has been the effort of the Vellalas to keep them (people from outside castes) in their lowly status. Conversion to Christianity has, it seems, in no way modified the pretensions of the former or taught them that sense of equality before God which is a cardinal feature of the Christian religion.....The claims are to introduce into a Christian Edifice their practice as to pollution and thus insist on a right to be kept from contact from a lower caste.....With regard to this, it is hardly necessary to say more than that it contradicts the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, and is at variance with the universal practice in Catholic churches, where persons of every degree daily mingle in their worship."

In the light of all this, and the 1933 December Catholic Congress' resolution condemning this spirit of caste among Catholics, "what must be the attitude," asks the *Rays of Light*, "of every Catholic in whom even a spark of faith is burning?" Catching the spirit of this frank admission and worthy resolve, let us Hindus as well, ask ourselves what our attitude must be towards the problem of caste-arrogance, if even a spark of faith is still burning in our hearts.

God and the World (Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna)

If by the grace of God the quick spirit of renunciation comes to one, then one can get rid of the attachment to lust and wealth, and then only is one free from all worldly bondages.

When paper is moistened with oil it cannot be written upon. So the soul spoiled by the oil of sense-enjoyments is unfit for spiritual devotion. But just as oiled paper, when overlaid with chalk, can be written upon, so when the soul is chalked over with renunciation, it again becomes fit for spiritual progress.

The key to open that room wherein God is, works in a curiously contrary way. To reach God you have to renounce the world.

This world is like a stage where men perform many parts under various disguises. They do not like to take off the mask, unless they have played for some time. Let them play for a while, and then they will leave off the mask of their own accord.

Whatever gives enjoyment in this world contains a bit of divine

happiness in it. The difference between the two is as between treacle and refined candy.

The world and God, how is it possible to harmonise both? Look to the carpenter's wife, how diversely busy she is! With one hand she is stirring the 'cheera' (flattened rice) in the mortar of a 'dhenki' (a wooden husking and rice-flattening machine), with the other she is holding the child to her breast and suckling it, and at the same time bargaining with a purchaser about the 'cheera.' Thus, though manifold are her occupations, her mind is fixed on the one idea that the pestle of the 'dhenki' shall not fall on her hand and bruise it. Be in the world, but always remember Him and never go astray from His path.

As the street minstrel with one hand plays upon the guitar and with the other strikes a drum, all the while chanting a song, so, O thou world-bound soul, perform all thy worldly duties with thy hands, but never forget to repeat and glorify the name of the Lord with all thy heart. [Extracts from the *Vedanta Bulletin of San Francisco*.]

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

FROM INTELLECT TO INTUITION:
By Alice A. Bailey. Published by John M. Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2. Pages 177.

This book is an able plea for including graded exercises in meditation among the curricula of studies. The author is quite competent to make such a plea, for she has had seven years' experience as a teacher of meditation and more than three thousand students have passed through her hands. Meditation, she clearly shows, is "an ordered process"

enabling the sincere aspirant first to accomplish a "synthesis" of his personality and then to transcend it, such transcendence giving him the capacity to draw upon the power of "intuition" at will. Mysticism too leads to flashes of intuition, but the approach has been that of the *heart*, not of the *intellect* or the *head*, with the result that the experiences gained are fleeting and leave the aspirant under the necessity of beginning a "fresh cycle" of devotion and struggles. The graded exercises in meditation, on the other hand, pave the

way for the steady acquisition of the supreme wisdom which has been the characteristic mark of the Knowers of the race. We wish a very wide circulation to this little volume. Those who believe that meditation or any other spiritual practice makes people "dreamy" or impractical will find here an exposition that can remove many of their false notions.

ECCE HOMO: By Francis X. McCabe, C. M. Published by the Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, U. S. A.

"Protestantism was not, is not, and never can be, religion. It was, is, and always will be what its own adherents, in the beginning called it, a protest and themselves protestants. A protest against what? Against Christ as God and His divinely constituted teaching authority in the world." The history of the Protestant movement itself is described by the author thus: "It was not until the sixteenth century that pride of intellect and stubbornness of will caused men to organise in protest against Him and against His Church, again calling down upon themselves and their children His blood in malediction. That and nothing else was the religious revolution of the sixteenth century." A step later we read: "From the very beginning of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century the false prophets have been crying out, 'Lo here is Christ, or there' until men in utter disgust have thrown up their hands despairingly, asking, who is Christ, and where is Christ?" Man with his fallible human reason has been put in the open pulpit as the interpreter of God's law and God's truth. "Ecce Homo"—Behold the man!

The book is thus written to maintain the Catholic doctrines and especially the sole authority of the Catholic Church to teach. All the arguments advanced are based upon the meanings assigned, according to tradition, to some passages from New Testament, Acts etc. The defect in this method of reasoning against the reasoning of other people, styling human reasoning wholesale as 'fallible', is highly intensified when the point in discussion is the accuracy of the traditional method of interpretation itself.

"Outside the Catholic Church, there is in the so-called organised religions of

today, even those calling themselves Christian, absolutely no positive teaching of the divinity of Jesus Christ." "If not in so many words" they "deny the divinity of Christ because the denial of any one doctrine taught by Christ is a denial of His divinity." Blessed be those religions that refrain from arguments of this type against one another but consider their point gained if people are substantially enabled, not doctrinally but *practically*, to conquer their "selfish and sometimes very degraded and degrading desires"—an aim the author himself has at heart. A study of comparative religion, if it will be conceded any place in religious life, would show that, after all, the essentials of spiritual life have been stressed by every religious Teacher worth the name.

Throughout the book, we see the author, although with Catholic doctrines alone in mind, endeavouring to stem the anti-religious or un-religious attitude of the modern days. He points out with genuine anguish how people "make gods of themselves, and set up their own moral code, which may be summed up in one word—*expediency*". "All morality has broken down among men, and, in its place, the law of the jungle, the survival of the fittest, prevails, and dominates the human society of the present day. Russia today publicly lives it. Mexico is almost entirely under its sway. So-called Christian nations of today, sending their missionaries to pagan lands, are living it but under a mask of hypocrisy that would put to shame the Pharisees of old." In true colours he then goes on to portray the hollowness of private as well as public life, which is considered civilised but is built upon oppression, infidelity, unchastity and the like. Thoughtful people will perfectly agree with the author, feel as he does the present degradation, but say that "there is hope,"—not, however, only when Catholic principles *alone* are accepted, but when religious principles, which are not the monopoly of any faith in particular, are accepted and sincerely and persistently *practised*.

Apart from the argumentative portion where perfect agreement is hardly to be expected, the book has a supreme

value, especially to Christians of a devotional turn of mind, as it gives a beautiful and appealing presentation of the ministry of Jesus. The chapter on St. Stephen and the description of the author's experiences in Rome, touch some inner springs in the reader's mind.

THE KALYANA KALPATARU: Published by the Kalyan Office Gorakhpur. Inland subscription Rs. 4-8 per year.

The Hindi Kalyan requires no introduction; it is so widely known. Owing to the eager desire of non-Hindi knowing readers to peruse devotional writings of the character which the Kalyan has been maintaining, the authorities have decided to issue an English edition, called Kalyana Kalpataru, to distinguish it from its elder brother. The first number has been aptly made "God-Number" and contains valuable articles contributed by the most eminent scholars, thinkers and religious men. The series of "Prayers," Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Mahomedan, Hebrew, etc., wound up by the "Heart's Prayer" shows the catholicity of the outlook that the magazine will be having throughout. As for the illustrations in this "God-Number" it will suffice to say that it has the Kalyan stamp of excellence.

THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (IN TWO PARTS IN TELUGU): By B. Venkateswarulu, B. A., Published by Sri Ramakrishna Puja Mandir, Kottapeta, Guntur.

In these volumes the author has described the life of the Swami Vivekananda, gathering his materials from the four volumes of the old Mayavati Memorial Edition. The style is vigorous and characteristically classical, some of the ideas being rendered into verse and others being illustrated by quotations from the Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita, etc. While we congratulate the author upon his achievement and feel sure that through these volumes many would come to know of the life and work of the great Swami, we think that it would have considerably enhanced the value of the work if the style had been more

lucid so as to meet the demands of the public at large.

HINDU-MATA-SASTRARTHA NIROOPANAM (IN TAMIL): By K. Narayana Iyer, B. A. Printed at the "Sridhara Power Press," Trivandrum.

The author seeks to expound Hinduism from the orthodox standpoint as set out in the religious literature of the Hindus, namely, the Vedas, Smritis, Itihasas and Puranas. He has already published a bulky book in English on the subject in two volumes entitled, "The Permanent History of Bharata Varsha." The book under notice is intended for the benefit of non-English knowing readers. Well written chapters are devoted to such subjects as Re-incarnation, Karma, Yoga, Avidya, Maya, Brahman, Jagat-Jiva, Isvara, etc. The matter dealt with in the several chapters will be found useful to orthodox Hindus, as affording rational explanations of the fundamental truths of Hinduism.

In an English introduction to the volume before us, the author claims that Hinduism is the original source of some of the existing religions of the world, viz., Judaism, Christianity and Muhammadanism. The story of Adam and Eve, which is virtually the foundation of these religions, is said to have its counterpart in the ancient religious literature of the Hindus in the persons of *Adama* and *Havyavathi* mentioned in the Bhavishyat Purana, which treats of the fall of man and his efforts to regain his lost position. *Adama* and *Havyavathi* represent together the control of the senses by the mind and the determination to sacrifice all worldly desires. The forbidden fruit represents the worldly desires of man. The serpent which induced Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit is, according to the same Purana, the wicked Kali or the Tamasic man. Adam and Eve having partaken of the forbidden fruit, their descendants became *mlechas* (*mlecha*-given up to low desires). Adam and Eve discovered their mistake after a long period and plucked all the fruits in the tree and sacrificed them in the fire of knowledge and were rewarded by ascent to Heaven. By such analogies and clues that might be gathered from Hindu sacred literature in expla-

nation of well-known incidents in the Bible, the author seeks to prove that the three religions mentioned above have borrowed their fundamental principles from Hinduism.

We have not seen the author's English book "The Permanent History of Bharata Varsha". We presume he has there given adequate reasons for his conclusions, which, however ingenious and entertaining they may be, cannot satisfy the critical scholar, the student of comparative religion and the doubter unless supported by convincing arguments.

A. S.

THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE GITA:—By Swami Sharvananda. The Ramakrishna Ashrama, New Delhi.

No book, ancient or modern has had such profound influence on mankind as the immortal Bhagavad Gita which occurs as an episode in the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata. That it should have enjoyed such immense popularity and authority in the land of its birth is but natural, as here it is regarded as one of the "five jewels"—*pancharatnani*—of Sanskrit literature. Was it not Schlegel, the earliest translator of the Gita in Latin, who has aptly characterised it as "the most beautiful and perhaps the only true philosophical poem, that the whole range of world's literature known to us has produced?" The credit of having brought to the notice of western scholars this wonderful book belongs to the Court of Directors of the East India Company who in 1775 published the first English translation of the Gita "by the particular desire and recommendation" of the then Governor-General of India. Translations in other European languages soon followed and there is no country now which can boast of a literature which has not a translation of the Gita.

The Gita is a synthesis of the doctrines of Kapila, Patanjali and the Vedas and so long as the mind of man continues to be virile enough to grapple with these fundamental problems, so long will the world's literature continue to be enriched with new expositions of the wonderful philosophical system enshrined in the Gita. The latest addition to the literature on the Gita is the hand-

some little volume of discourses by Swami Sharvananda who is well known on this side of India as the President for many years of the Ramakrishna Math in succession to its founder and first President, Swami Ramakrishnananda of revered memory. The seven discourses brought together in the volume before us were given by the Swami in Simla in 1931 under the auspices of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha. The discourses were intended to bring out only the most salient features of the religion and philosophy of the Gita for the easy comprehension of the average educated Indian. The Swami has eminently succeeded in this task and while bringing out the inner significance of the teachings contained in each chapter of the Gita and their practical value in modern life, he has also incidentally explained some of the fundamental doctrines of the Vedanta philosophy.

The first discourse deals with the matter contained in the first two chapters of the Gita. The Gita contains the completest philosophy of life and presents a most wonderful synthesis of the religious doctrines of the entire Vedas, and in this sense, the Gita may be regarded as the "Divine Commentary of the Vedas." The Swami refutes the suggestion of western orientalists that the Gita is an interpolation in the Mahabharata and says that if one studies closely the Mahabharata itself and understands the trend of the teachings of the *Sanatana Dharma*, one cannot fail to discern that the Gita does really form an integral part of the Mahabharata. Often the very *slokas* of the Gita are quoted in the epic and in many places, *eg.*, in the *Shanti Parva*, sometimes the very language of the Gita has been used. In the second discourse which deals with chapters III—V of the Gita, the Swami gives an intelligent exposition of the inner significance of the caste system, *Varna*. The Swami sees in the system a wider significance than what the orthodox commentators understand by it, because from the Hindu scriptures we learn that these four castes (*Varnas*) are not confined to human society only but also exist among other creatures of the universe. It is unnecessary to take the reader in detail through the Swami's discourses which deal with the other

chapters of the Gita. In the final discourse which deals with chapter XVIII of the Gita, the chapter in which the Lord gives us the quintessence of His teachings, the Swami gives an inspiring message to the modern world and emphasises the two great points that the Lord brings out in His teachings, *viz.*, that man's spiritual evolution depends wholly upon his selfless performance of duty, and not on fighting for rights. Such an attitude towards life will bring true democracy in the society and all kinds of democracy based on economical, political or social principles are bound to be unstable as they stand on a false view of life and do not touch the spiritual chord of the human soul. Real, permanent democracy can be built up only by the spread of spiritual culture, the doctrine of *Dharma* and the grand ethics of self-dedication. Then the vision of peace and prosperity which the present day world stands so much in need of, will ere long be materialised. We have perused with profit the Swami's discourses which we heartily welcome as a valuable addition to the literature on the Gita.

A. S.

1. UDGITHA VIDYA. 2. DIE ALTESTE PHILOSOPHIE DER KARMA MIMAMSA: By Prof. Dr. Otto Strauss. Published by Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Kommission bei

Walter de Gruyter U. Co., Berlin. Price E. M. 4.50 and 4.00 respectively. Pages 70 and 66.

Dr. Otto Strauss is an eminent Sanskritist of Germany and the Professor of Indology in the University of Breslau. He is an ardent lover and erudite scholar of Indian Philosophy and has worked in different branches of this vast subject. Lately he has specialised in Advaita Vedanta and now is occupied in the critical study of Sureswaracharya's *Naishkarmya Siddhi* and *Brihadaranyaka Bhasyavartika*. The two German books under notice are the outcome of his lectures on the History of Ancient Indian Philosophy at the famous Prussian Academy of Berlin. Quite in keeping with the glorious precedent of eminent scholars such as Professors Maxmuller and Deussen he is publishing a long series of annotated German translations of original works on Hindu Philosophy, of which these two books are the first. Udgitha Vidya is the translation with critical notes of Brahmasutra, third Adhyaya and third chapter, with Sankaracharya, Bhamati of Vashaspatimishra and Vedanta Kalpataru; and Die Alteste Philosophie der Karma Mimamsa of Purva Mimamsa with Sabaracharya. Dr. Otto Strauss should be congratulated for popularising Vedanta in the continent and stabilising the Indo-German cultural relation—S. J.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Vijnananandaji in Ceylon

After nearly three decades Ceylon had again the privilege of a visit from one of the few surviving direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Srimat Swami Vijnananandaji and party reached Colombo on Wednesday the 27th December 1933 and were given a grand reception by the members, devotees and admirers of the Mission. During his brief stay in Colombo His Holiness visited all the important Buddhist temples like the Kalania, which, according to tradition, has been sanctified by the visit of Lord Buddha himself.

Among the other places seen by the Swamiji may be mentioned the Vivekananda Society and the Harbour where a boating was kindly arranged by the Assistant Port Surgeon. The Swamiji gave religious discourses at the Ashrama and various other places, and these were very largely attended. At Batticaloa the Swamiji performed Puja in the shrine of the Students' Home and gave practical religious instruction to the inmates. An address of welcome was presented to him by the Hindu public of the place at the Vivekananda Hall, to which a suitable reply was given. Similar functions characterised the visit of the Swamiji to Trincomalee, Anuradha-

pura and other places in the island. Although His Holiness' stay lasted barely eleven days, his discourses, personal talks, nay his very presence have left an indelible impression the mind of many a struggling soul in Ceylon.

Orissa and Midnapur Floods: Ramakrishna Mission's Work

The public is aware that the flood relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission in the Districts of Cuttack, Puri and Midnapur were being conducted from eleven centres. There being no need of any further relief in the area of the Midnapur District taken up by the Mission, the centres there were closed in December last. In the Cuttack and Puri Districts there is yet considerable distress, but three or four months later it will be much more acute. These few months the people will be able to manage somehow, but unless relief is given in the critical times that are ahead, they will die of starvation. The funds at our disposal, however, being almost depleted we have thought it prudent to suspend the relief activities for the present in view of the approaching calamity, for with such meagre funds it was impossible to continue the work throughout. The centres in this area were accordingly closed in December. The tanks and wells, however, having been spoilt by the influx of salt water and sand, there is a great dearth of drinking water in these parts. We have therefore decided to open test work from the Chilka and Balikuda centres in the shape of digging or repairing wells, cleaning tanks, and so on, which will provide labour to some.

In the Contai sub-division of the Midnapur District, our relief work lasted from August to the first week of Decem-

ber. During this period we distributed from the Balighai, Pratapdighi and Balayagobindapur centres 1649 mds. 7 srs. 13 chs. of rice and 1313 pieces of new cloth to 2152 people belonging to 96 villages, besides but-building materials to 211 families, enough seed grains to cultivate 70 acres of land to 250 families and 2642 mds. of bran as cattle-fodder. Owing to the outbreak of malaria and other diseases, many patients were helped with medicines and diet.

In the Tamluk sub-division of the same District, the work was conducted from the Barabaichberia and Chaksmultalia centres from the 17th October to the 30th December, during which time 428 mds. 20 srs. of rice, 236 pieces of new cloth and some blankets, napkins and old cloth were distributed to 1361 people belonging to 69 villages. Medicines and diet were also given during the outbreak of malaria.

In the Cuttack and Puri Districts of Orissa the relief work was started in the middle of August and gradually six centres were opened, viz., at Kapileswar, Niyali, Fatepur, Chitreswari, Baliana and Balikuda. Up to December last 10,225 people belonging to 317 villages were helped with 5912 mds. 13 srs. 6 chs. of rice, 5454 pieces of new cloth and some old cloth. Here also medicines and diet were distributed to the sick suffering from malaria, dysentery, etc.

The total receipts for the above relief work up till now are Rs. 30,747-1-0 and the total expenditure Rs. 27,833-1-0. We take this opportunity of expressing our heart-felt gratitude to all those who have kindly helped us in this work.

(Sd) SUDDHANANDA.

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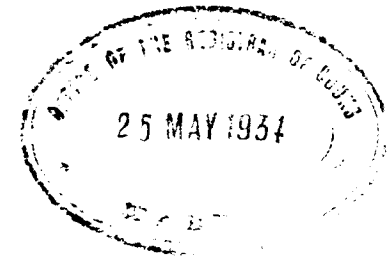
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

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[No. 1

HINDU ETHICS

न ते चालयितुं शक्यो धर्मव्याहारकारिणः ।
न तेषां भिद्यते वृत्तं यत् पुरा साधुभिः कृतम् ॥
न धनार्थं यशोऽर्थं वा धर्मस्तेषां युधिष्ठिर ।
अवश्यं कार्ये इत्येव शरीरस्य क्रियास्तथा ॥
न भयं क्रोधचापल्ये न शोकस्तेषु विद्यते ।
न धर्मध्वजिनश्चैव न गुह्यं किञ्चिदास्थिताः ॥

The promoters of righteousness will withstand successfully all attempts to force them away from the path of virtue. Their conduct, conformable to the model set by the righteous men of old, can never be otherwise.

They never acquire virtue, O Yudhishtira, for the sake of wealth or fame. They acquire it, on the other hand, because it is a duty like that of cherishing the body.

Fear, wrath, restlessness and sorrow dwell not in them. Theirs is not the outward garb of religion for misleading their fellowmen. There is no mystery with them.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLVIII, 26, 29 and 30)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

All the sacred scriptures reveal this truth that the requisite powers of the Guru can be manifested in a person only when his false ego is destroyed.

THUS it is quite obvious that inasmuch as the Master was able to discard his false or limited ego completely, he could become such an appropriate instrument for the manifestation of the Cosmic Ego or the powers of the Divine Mother. Inasmuch as he could look upon himself as the lowest of the low, by divesting himself of the least trace of the false ego, the World-Saviour aspect of the Divine Mother could manifest in him with such unique fullness. The religious history of the world stands as eternal evidence to the fact that in the lives of all prophets of all faiths this power and attitude of the Guru always appeared with the destruction of the false ego.

From time immemorial we are hearing that attaining spirituality or God-realisation is not possible so long as one looks upon the teacher as a human being. "Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Shiva the Supreme Lord," such are the hymns we are ever reciting whether with sincere belief or without it, in honour of the Guru, the initiator into the spiritual life. Many are there, again, who in consequence of the spell of their foreign education have thrown overboard their nation-

al culture and ideals and, considering this kind of deification of human beings as a mortal sin, raise vehement protest against such practice.

The attitude of the Guru is not ascribable to human beings. It is the Power of God Himself, manifested through the instruments of human body and mind.

For, who cares to know that the personality of the Guru, though manifested through the human body, does not belong to the world of humanity? Who cares to understand that as air, water, food and similar daily necessities serve as means to the preservation of life, so, the Divine Mother fully manifests Herself in the form of the powers and attitude of the Guru, through the mind, pure, illumined and purged of egotism, in order to bring peace and amelioration to the souls tormented with miseries and hedged round in ignorance? Or again, who cares to know that a person becomes a worthy instrument for such divine manifestation to the extent to which he can rid himself of the false ego? In ordinary beings this Divine Power manifests only in minute fractions, therefore we fail to comprehend it clearly. But when a person is so fortunate as to meet with its marvellous display in such great personalities as Lord Sri Krishna, Buddha, Chaitanya, Sankara, Jesus and other prophets of

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

3

the past epochs and Sri Ramakrishna in the present era, at once he realises in the very core of his heart that this Power comes, not from man, but directly from God Himself. The aspiring soul that was so long straying away from the right path and being afflicted with the malady of incessant births and deaths, is in no time purged of ignorance and impurities by his contact with this Divine Power. The emancipated soul then exclaims, "My Master, Thou art never a human being. Thou art God Himself."

God out of His mercy, assumes the form of the Guru and removes ignorance from human minds. Therefore the devotion to the Guru and that to God mean one and the same thing.

Thus we understand that the attitude or the power of the Guru is nothing other than that aspect of the Divine Mother which frees human minds from all ignorance and impurities. The scriptures refer to this same Divine Aspect as the Guru and teach us to have implicit faith in, and sincere devotion to, It. But, for an ordinary human being with gross intellect, who has but just begun to have faith and devotion, it is not possible to accurately comprehend, or pour his love on, an abstract idea. That is why the scriptures direct us to revere the initiator into the spiritual life as the Guru. Now to those people who hold that they can show their regard to the Guru, the Divine Power, but not to the body through

which this Power manifests, inasmuch as it is not ascribable to this particular body,—we reply: "Well brothers, if you can have devotion to this Divine Power alone as distinguished from the vehicle through which It is manifested, do so by all means. But be on your guard that you may not be deceived by your mind. The Divine Power we call the Guru, and the instrument through which It works, are just like fire and its heat which you have never seen existing independently of each other. How, then, you will accept and revere the one and reject the other, we do not know. If a person loves or reveres another, he holds in esteem even the most insignificant things if they are associated with the object of his love or reverence. To a sincerely devoted soul even a flower or a piece of cloth, that is touched or used by the object of reverence, is a sacred thing. Nay, even the ground over which the beloved one walks, is of immense value. Is it then necessary to explain any further why the body where the Guru, that is, the Divine Power, resides in order to accept the offerings of the devotee and shower His Mercy on him, is looked upon by the pupil as worthy of faith and devotion? Those alone who do not rightly understand what this attitude of the Guru is, consider the body of the Guru as of little importance. On the other hand, persons possessed of genuine devotion to the Guru will certainly have great reverence for his body as well. The Master

would illustrate this truth with the story of Vibhishana as follows :

The Master's Teaching regarding Devotion to the Guru. The Illustration of Vibhishana's Devotion.

Once upon a time, long after the play of Sri Ramachandra on the earth as a human being had been over, a boat was wrecked near Lanka and one of the men on board was cast by the waves on the shore of the island. The immortal Vibhishana is ruling over Lanka all these ages. The news of the man's arrival reached him in due course. At the mention of the soft human body, a rare delicacy, the mouths of many of the Rakshasas began to water ; but king Vibhishana was filled with an unusual emotion. With eyes overflowing with tears and voice choked with the feeling of devotion, he went on repeating again and again, "Oh my good luck! Oh my good luck!" The Rakshasas could not understand his feelings and therefore were one and all struck with wonder. At last he explained to them the reason of his exaltation. "After a long long time," said he, "I shall be able to see once again the same human form which my Sri Ramachandra assumed when He set His foot on this land and favoured me with His Grace. Is it a matter of small fortune? It appears to me as if Sri Ramachandra Himself has come here again in this form." Forthwith he hurried with all the courtiers to the shore and escorted the man to the palace with profound love and respect. The man was then seated on the throne and the king

with all the retinue waited upon him as obedient servants. Having thus entertained him in Lanka for some days, the king, at last, with tearful eyes, allowed him to return to his home, loaded with rich presents and escorted by the king's followers.

When an aspirant attains genuine devotion, even the most insignificant things remind him of God. Lord Chaitanya was merged into ecstasy with the thought, 'This is the earth of which drums are made.'

After narrating this story the Master would again say : "This is what happens when the devotion is genuine. Even the most ordinary things make the devotee remember God and lose himself in Him. Have you not heard how Lord Chaitanya was merged in Samadhi with the appearance of the thought, 'This is the earth of which drums are made'? Once, while passing through a village Sri Chaitanya came to know that the inhabitants of that village earned their living by making drums. At once he exclaimed, 'This is the earth of which drums are made,' and immediately lost all external consciousness. For, he thought, out of that earth drums are made and these are used in congregational music; and the music, again, is in praise of God who is the Soul of our souls, the Beauty of beauties. So many ideas came together in a flash and the mind was at once rivetted upon God. Likewise, when one has true devotion to the Guru, he will certainly be reminded of the Guru by the sight of the Guru's

relatives. Not only that. Even if his eyes happen to meet only the co-villagers of the Guru, his thoughts are at once directed to the Guru himself. Constantly he prostrates before them, sprinkles his body with the dust from their feet, feeds them sumptuously and renders all other services to them. At this stage the disciple fails to see any defects in the Guru. Now only can he say, 'Even if my Guru frequent ale-houses, he is the Lord, the

Eternal Bliss all the same.' Otherwise, a human being cannot but be a mixture of virtues and vices. But the disciple, on account of his devotion, no longer sees man as man but as God Himself, just as one sees everything as yellow, due to his jaundiced eye. His devotion then reveals to him that God alone is everything; it is He that has become the master, the father and the mother, man and beast, the sentient and the non-sentient."

TRADITIONAL METHOD AND THE MODERN SEEKER

Misdirection of Energy

HOW to enable men to overcome their weaknesses, round up their personality and tune it permanently to a divine key : this has been the problem the various religions have attempted to solve. Of the methods taught by them the majority have been connected with philosophical systems working on the principle of One Unknown only, namely God, Personal or Impersonal, or upon Two Unknowns or more, as for example, Matter and Spirit ; or Individual Soul, the World and the Supreme Soul. Refusing to be caught, beyond healthy limits, by the polemics of the different systems, when we analyse the devotional and other exercises prescribed by each, we find innumerable striking similarities among them, perhaps similarities more than divergences, and certainly greater reasons for toleration, friendship and reverence than for quarrels

and efforts at mutual extermination. Knowing, as we all do, the amount of struggle necessary for building up admittedly virtuous habits, it is indeed a wonder how we can frequently lose all sense of proportion and indulge in hacking one another to pieces, in a plane of theories relating to the superiority of particular sets of Unknowns, wasting to that extent the time and energy available for quiet practice. Meditative life appears impossible for most of us, not because we do not get enough time to devote to it, as we often like to complain, but because we have a wrong sense of values, which we do not pause to view critically, and we consequently fail to realise in which directions preventable wastage is constantly taking place. Success in meditative life depends upon our finding out and effectively stopping such sources of wastage and learning to utilise the time and energy gained in this

way for systematic constructive work within.

Attitude towards Sources of Instruction

As the desire to lead a controlled life waxes strong, its constant pressure usually forces the aspirant to seek assistance from without. The ultimate truth may be that all knowledge is within, and that what he imagines to be helps got from outside are really simple stimuli which tap the enormous reserves of his mind and occasion therein a most natural domestic arrangement, destined even otherwise to be brought about sooner or later. But this explanation by no means goes against our common experience that people do look for guidance from external sources when, rightly or wrongly from the ultimate standpoint, they feel that there is something higher to be attained and that their internal equipment is insufficient, at least for the time, to lead them towards it. Fortunate are those who, in this eager search, light upon some one who assures them of success, revives their confidence and shows them where and in what manner they might safely take their first step. Seldom, however, do these benefactors make their appearance with any official formality, or as some do fancy, with a perceptible "wakening light." That aspirant, therefore, who would care to throw open the windows of his mind only when such signs are noticeable, would undoubtedly miss the influence felt and absorbed by people of more

receptive moods. Success, in fact, comes with less delay to those who adopt a reverential attitude towards all sources of instruction that might become available, not merely at the commencement of the quest, but also at any moment subsequent to it.

In illustration of this, we might well recall to mind an incident in the story of Utanka as given in the Mahabharata. Relying on the justice of his cause and the purity of his life in general, Utanka resorted to a simple stick alone in his attempt to dig his way into the underworld, after Takshaka who had escaped thither, stealing the ear-rings he had in his charge. Indra, the Lord of the celestials, looking down from high heaven, admired the high resolve of the youth and graciously drove into his totally inadequate tool the irresistible strength of his own weapon, the thunderbolt. The earth then rapidly gave way before the mortal's strokes and Utanka stepped triumphantly into the world of the serpents; but his success would have ended there, had he been too proud to listen respectfully to an apparently ordinary person who rode up to him on horseback and enquired what he wanted. Saluting him and obeying his behest, Utanka simply blew into the horse,—a very insignificant act compared with his ambitious scheme of conquering the snake-world—and behold! from every aperture in the animal's body there suddenly issued forth such deadly flames and smoke that the frightened Takshaka submitted and

returned the jewels. Whatever may be the nature of the quest, the open mind does profit by instruction from outside and achieve its object the sooner for it.

No Incompatibility

The modern mind, however, refuses to sell what it considers its independence by trusting to the counsels of living persons, who must all be fallible by nature, but is prepared on the other hand to venture alone into the vast ocean of literature on the subject of mind control, where it will gladly fish for itself from the areas coming periodically within its reach. The genuine seeker who thinks it shameful to wait passively for a gratuitous divine or human push every now and then, but heroically prefers to set out and do his best, irrespective of the pains his quest might bring, has certainly admirable mettle in him and will scarcely come to serious grief in the long run. But how does this attitude of self-reliance become incompatible with the receiving of instruction from persons who have been longer in the spiritual field, and who may therefore be expected to know, if not its straight paths, at least many of its numerous pitfalls? Sacred literature is, after all, nothing but the voice of the teachers of the past, and if living teachers are avoided on the ground of their fallibility and their incapacity to divine the needs of the aspirant, it is difficult to see how without violation to one's principle one can deign to listen to the preserved voices of the

dead. The contradiction involved in such a procedure, it may be argued, vanishes since the right of rejection, the assumed prerogative of an independent spirit, still remains with the aspirant and the ancient books are treated only as so much raw material, out of which the portions appearing reasonable alone are going to be accepted. The difficulty would persist, nevertheless; for there seems to be no justification, even on this valuation, to shut out the suggestions of living teachers from the bulk of raw material taken up for consideration.

No Undue Compulsion

No one denies the efficacy of the aspirant's reliance on his power of reasoning and of his acting on the strength of his convictions alone. On the contrary they are recognised as qualities hard to get, and they do certainly help the struggling man in avoiding many a pitfall which awaits over-emotional and sentimental people. Indeed, analysis will even reveal that the majority of failures in meditative life are traceable to the lack of a judicious application of the power of reasoning in the different stages of spiritual practice. All teachers worth the name have given in the past, and do give in the present, every facility, not of course for whimsical rejection of any suggestion, but for the healthy exercise and the consequent gradual unfolding of the aspirant's power of discrimination. Let us not forget in this connection the valuable passage of the Gita, विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तया

शुनः "Having reflected on these things fully, adopt the course thou likest best." These words falling from the lips of Lord Krishna after He had discoursed upon all the points raised by Arjuna's attitude and verbal expressions of doubt, and also after He had shown him a vision of His Glorious Divine Form, are typical of the non-compelling manner generally adopted by competent teachers. A careful study of such books as portray the relations between disciples and their preceptors will show, in addition, that in all cases where the individuality of the disciple has been strong, and the power of his intellect keen, evolution into a wider and more discerning state of awareness has been achieved only after a protracted struggle. "I fought my Guru," says the Swami Vivekananda, "for six long years"; and the result was that he knew every inch of the ground.

Benefit derived from Teachers

Turning now to the literature dealing with practical steps, we shall find that the independent seeker has plenty to master and choose from. The path of devotion which trains the aspirant to expand his natural affections and direct them Godward, has been stressed by all religions and expounded with a thoroughness that makes it easy for anybody, who will use his normal power of discrimination, to chalk out a routine for his daily practice. Other possible paths, which pitch upon special outstanding virtues of the individual, as for instance, a

passion for service, as convenient starting points for systematic discipline have also been analysed, classified and elaborately discussed by various sets of teachers. We have thus the paths of action, of discrimination and of meditation, all of which lay down definite methods to be adopted by the aspirant, whom tradition requires to act under the supervision of a competent preceptor. Under expert guidance it is possible for the aspirant to introduce into his daily life a few simple items calculated to clarify his general outlook, while at the same time he can, with an assurance of eventual self-mastery, plunge into the field of religious writings to select therefrom the ideas relevant to the stages ahead of him. Guidance of this type does not, however, guarantee immunity from mental conflicts or eliminate the necessity of painful struggles to get over them when they come. A minimum of struggle is in fact inevitable for overcoming the resistance which even a relatively virtuous outlook will surely present to any attempt at giving it some tangible expansion. The advantage of the teacher's company lies mainly in the fact that unnecessary conflicts can be clean avoided and that the aspirant can quickly learn to detect his mistakes by personal observation of the principles on which criticisms are offered on his changing responses.

The independent seeker, on the other hand, left to his own resources, has to learn by experiment

what methods would be most suitable at the various stages of his evolution. Experience shows that it is not often that the diagnosis he makes of his tendencies and inner needs can turn out to be correct. For the surface mind can, and does, deceive to a great extent. Frequently we find that people, who have been gradually unfolding along the devotional path, come across, for example, a lucid and able presentation of the path of discrimination and the glories promised to its votaries, and are forthwith swayed into attempting revolutionary changes in their habits and outlook. With an initial equipment of an open mind, a sufficiently subtle faculty of discrimination and a facility in applying it, the dangers attendant upon such changes may be minimised. Or, as is more probable, the changes themselves may be perceived as totally uncalled for. But this capacity presupposes a considerable amount of progress; and the problem before the raw beginner is not how to regulate himself from such an advanced stage, but how to attain that very stage itself. Hindu philosophers who view progress as extending, if necessary, from one life into another, would confront us with the argument that such a high attainment is nothing but the manifestation in this life, of what had already been achieved under the direct supervision of a teacher in the life previous, and that the beginner has therefore no other alternative than to follow the traditional

method. Anyway, till actual experience teaches the seeker the futility of such violent changes, there is bound to be, taking even the most favourable view of the consequences, at least a considerable set-back to his further progress.

Hurry for Short Cuts

In fact, it is difficult for an aspirant in the earlier stages to get over the idea of these paths as so many air-tight compartments, some of which, by turns, appear to him to promise the easiest course and the greatest benefit. The goal of spiritual life is vaguely considered as capable of giving him, in a very refined state of course, an unlimited quantity of the pleasures with which he has been familiar in ordinary life. This goal, besides, he wishes to attain in as short a time as possible so that he may enter betimes upon the blissful and eternal holiday which, he fancies, must be his ever afterwards. This undue hurry and this hankering for results have first to be detected and overpowered by suitable counter-ideas before the different paths can be seen in their true light. There is, after all, no short cut to progress in the sense that by some mysterious device one can suddenly transform oneself into a worshipful personality, skipping over the necessity that there would otherwise remain for painfully conquering one's weaknesses and replacing them by virtues. No path contains any mystery and nothing but hard and patient struggle will lead to solid achievement. The ancient books have

proclaimed this principle in unmistakable terms, and the independent seeker who attaches the proper value to it and makes it the foundation for daily practice, gets to that extent the benefit a regular disciple derives from the timely suggestions of his preceptor.

Danger of Self-labelling

Granting that the outlook has been freed from the pernicious passion for hasty short cuts, there still remains the possibility of the seeker labelling himself into particular paths and getting stuck up within a self-imposed and narrow circle. How often we see very sincere people refusing to read devotional literature or the stories of saints for the simple reason that they have classified themselves in advance as meant for the path of discrimination, and that they do not therefore wish to get side-tracked by permitting themselves such an uncongenial experience! Some honestly, but without the least capacity for self-analysis, believe they are born for mystic heights, and then, quite logically to their minds, endeavour to back out from all situations involving healthy activities, common courtesy or a moderate dose of general reading and discussion of ordinary human levels, making thereby their own lives dry and barren, and the lives of others uneasy, and sometimes positively painful. If only they could realise that the various paths differ merely in the proportion in which they mix the indispensable items of spiritual practice, and that no path contains a useless item from

which, by way of competition, another path would generously grant them exemption, they would pause before they attach labels to themselves in this manner. But such a synthetic outlook comes much later in spiritual life, as the net result of a fair amount of hard practice; and can never be thought of as a first acquisition following the comparative study of a few books, and guaranteeing from that time the accuracy of one's self-diagnosis and prescriptions. Till such accuracy is made a permanent asset, the independent seeker is not beyond the range of storms that the traditional method can help him to quell.

Benefit of Satsangam

Despotic monarchy has no doubt had its day and can never be revived. Those who believe that the contact of the religious teacher has been only a despotism, although beneficent, in the spiritual line, have therefore every right and reason to invent democratic devices in keeping with the spirit of the times. But those who may be inclined to regard the preceptor as a sort of twentieth century Dictator, whose guidance can be accepted on the ground that he derives his power only by the common consent, may freely burn such historical incense before him, and will surely progress to the extent that they listen respectfully to the suggestions he may give from time to time. If the objection of the modern mind is merely to submit to one-man-rule, it can yet find the traditional

method agreeable. For by its emphasis on Satsangam or Sadhusangam, tradition has always democratically invited the aspirant into the company of holy men, pressed him to become a member of the

group himself and utilise his time in some common "drill," comparison of notes and general discussions on the one hand, and separate individual practice on the other.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

[Sarada Devi, known as the Holy Mother among the devotees of the Order, was the source of inspiration to many an earnest seeker after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna. In the Udbodhan Office, where she mostly resided, she led a quiet and unobtrusive life, ministering to the spiritual needs of the men and women who looked up to her for guidance. The reminiscences which we shall bring out in our columns were written in Bengali by some of her devoted disciples. The translation is done by Swami Nikhilananda now engaged in preaching work in New York. The publication is taken up to satisfy the eager desire of many to know more about Mother's life and work.]

WE had plenty of flowers at our Ballygunj home. The Holy Mother was always pleased with flowers. One day I gathered a large quantity of them and came to see her. I found her just ready for the worship. I arranged the flowers and she sat on the carpet before the image. I forgot to keep aside some flowers for worshipping the feet of the Holy Mother. So I was sorry to think that it would not be possible for me, that day, to worship her. But I soon found out that she had anticipated my secret desire. She herself had separated some flowers on the tray. After the worship was over, she said to me, "Now, my dear child, I have kept those flowers in the tray for you. Bring them here." Just then a devotee came to see the Mother with a large quantity of fruits. She was very pleased to see him. She put a mark of sandal

paste on his forehead and caressed him by touching the chin. I had never seen her show her love to any male devotee in such a manner. Next she asked me to hand him a few flowers. He accepted them. I found his whole body trembling with devotion. With great joy he offered those flowers at her feet and then went away after accepting the Prasadam.* She sat on the cot and invited me very tenderly to come to her. I worshipped her feet. She, with great love, placed her hand on my head and kissed me. I was deeply touched by her blessings.

After a while I found her on the roof drying her hair. She invited me to come near her and said, "Take off the cloth from your head and dry your hair, otherwise it may affect your health." Golap-Ma

* Prasadam : food offered to God.

came to the roof and requested the Mother to make an offering of the food to the images in the Shrine-room. The Mother came down from the roof. I also followed her after a while and found her in the Shrine-room. Like a bashful young bride, she was saying to Sri Ramakrishna in a soft voice, "Come now; your meal is ready." Then she came to the image of Gopala and said, "Oh, my Gopala, come for your meal." I was just behind her. Suddenly she looked at me and said with a smile, "I am inviting them all for their noon-day meal." With these words, the Holy Mother entered the room where the food was offered. Her earnestness and devotion made me feel that, as it were, the images obeyed her words and followed her to the offering room. I was rooted to the spot with wonder.

After the offering was over we all sat together for our meal. Then the Mother asked me to rest for a while. A man came a little later with a basket of fruits which were meant for offering. He asked the monks what he should do with the basket. They told him to throw it out in the lane. The Mother left her bed and went to the porch. She looked at the lane and said to me, "Look here. They have asked him to throw away such a nice basket! It does not matter for them in the least. They are all monks and totally unattached. But we cannot allow such waste. We could utilise the basket even for keeping the peelings of the vegetables." She asked

some one to fetch the basket and wash it. The basket was kept for some future use. I had my lesson from this incident. But we are so slow to learn.

After some time a beggar came to the house and shouted for some alms. The monks felt annoyed and said rudely, "Go away now! Don't disturb us." At these words the Holy Mother said, "Have you heard their remarks? They have driven away the poor man. They could not shake off their idleness and give something to the beggar. He only wanted a handful of rice. And they could not take the trouble of doing this bit of work. Is it proper to deprive a man of what is his due? Even to the cow we owe these peelings of the vegetables. We should hold these near her mouth."

I went to see the Holy Mother again after many days. She had gone back to her country home, and returned to Calcutta in the autumn of 1320 B. S., a few days before the Durga Puja. I visited her one afternoon and found a woman lying near her feet and begging with tears for initiation. The Mother was seated on her bedstead. She refused to comply with her prayer and said, "I already told you that I would not be able to initiate you now. I am not well." The woman was insistent. The Mother felt annoyed and said, "You treat initiation very lightly. You are perfectly satisfied if you get the Sacred Mantram. But you never think of the consequence." But the woman was inexorable. All present felt disgusted. The Holy

Mother at last asked her to come another day. Then the woman requested her to ask one of the monks to fulfil her desire.

Mother: They may not listen to me.

Woman: What do you mean, Mother? They must obey you.

Mother: In this respect they may refuse to comply with my request.

Finding the woman unrelenting, the Mother said, "Well, I shall ask Swami S. He will initiate you." But the woman started insisting again and said, "I shall be happy to be initiated by you. You can certainly fulfil my desire if you so like." She brought out ten rupees and said, "Here is the money. You may purchase the necessary articles for initiation." We all felt mortified at her impudence. This time the Mother was angry and said severely, "What? Do you mean to tempt me by money? You cannot coax me with these coins. Take them back." The Holy Mother immediately left the room.

Being hard pressed by the woman, the Holy Mother at last agreed to initiate her on the sacred Mahash-tami day. She soon took leave of us. The Mother now found some leisure to talk to me. She said, "Come here, my darling. I could not even exchange a word with you. How are you all?" It was almost evening. The women devotees came to see the Mother with suitable presents, clothes, sweets, etc. She was talking with them in a happy mood. It was a warm day.

I was fanning her. A woman devotee begged me to give her the fan. All of us felt exceedingly happy and blessed if we could be of the most trifling service to her. How has she bound us to her with an irrevocable tie of love and compassion! Her very sweet presence made her abode at Baghbazar the place of peaceful retirement for all of us afflicted with the sorrows of the world. I was about to take leave of her. As I prostrated before her, she said tenderly, "Come soon, another day. Write to me when you go away from Calcutta. Where is the piece of cloth you have brought for me? Give it to me, I shall wear it."

I came to see her after two and a half months. She cried, "Oh! It is almost an age since I have seen you!" In the course of the talk I asked her about the woman whom she had consented to initiate.

Mother: She could not come here on the appointed day. I had said to her, "I am now ill. Let me be well and then I shall initiate you." My words came to be true. She could not come on the Mahash-tami day as she herself fell ill. She came here many days later and was initiated.

Devotee: That is true. The words that are once uttered by you cannot but be fulfilled. We suffer as we go counter to your wishes. You also, many a time, condescend to initiate us even while you are ill and thus suffer all the more by transferring our sufferings to yourself.

Mother: Yes, my dear child. "A very nice and quiet girl. There is only one dish of vegetable. If this be not palatable, then the whole dinner is spoiled." The meaning of these words was that I had only one sister-in-law in the family. My life could have been made unhappy if she had not been nice.

My sister-in-law was with me. The Mother said referring to her,

ANANDA-BRAHMA-VADA—I

(OF THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD)

By Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M.A.

The Quest of the Absolute
THE Taittiriya Upanishad is generally accepted as one of the earliest Upanishads. It consists of three discourses. The first gives the truth-seeker a systematic course of instruction on the method of disciplining the body and the mind and preparing the self for the culture of higher knowledge. The second teaches him to rise to higher and higher planes of experience and makes him acquainted step by step with the inner and inner—truer and truer—characters of the self, leading him to the conclusion that perfectly blissful consciousness constitutes the innermost essential character of the self, and that the outer selves, as experienced in the lower and lower planes, are the grosser and grosser embodiments and partial self-manifestations of this true self. The third discourse, given in the form of a dialogue between the Rishi Varuna and his truth-seeking son Bhrigu, clearly points out that, with the ascent by means of

proper self-discipline to higher and higher planes of experience, there is a revelation of the more and more essential aspects of the nature of the Absolute Reality, and in the highest plane there is the realisation of the ultimate truth that *Ananda* (Absolute Bliss) constitutes the true, perfect noumenal character of the Absolute Reality.

In the Upanishad period the Absolute Reality was indicated by the term 'Brahman,' and it is in this sense that the term has been used in later Indian Philosophy. The term 'Brahman' etymologically means *the Greatest, the Supreme*. Hence it came naturally to denote that Supreme Reality which has no kind of limitation, which is self-existent, perfect and infinite, than which nothing greater or higher or more real can be conceived to exist, and beyond which there is nothing to be known. Accordingly, if Brahman is known in its true character, the highest truth is known and the ultimate demand of knowledge is

perfectly satisfied. The most advanced thinkers of the Upanishadic age arrived at the conclusion that the knowledge of the true character of Brahman was not only the ultimate goal of human knowledge, but it was the perfect fulfilment of the highest ideal of the entire human nature. They realised that Brahman is not only the absolute ground of all that exists, but that it is the true self of all selves. They discovered that the human self, freed from all limitations and characteristics falsely ascribed to it, is identical with Brahman in its true essential character. By knowing Brahman, man attains the perfect nature of his self.

This idea that the perfect self-fulfilment of man consists in the true knowledge of Brahman was prevalent among the learned members of the higher grades of the Upanishadic society, though there were exponents of *Karmakanda*, who opposed this view of the ideal of human life. The idea was most prevalent among those who were averse to worldly concerns, and loved contemplative life. Men in general with various grades of moral, intellectual and spiritual development, though believing that the knowledge of the true character of Brahman was the highest goal of life, were however led to adopt particular courses of activity or particular forms of religious practices or particular types of discipline and culture, for the satisfaction of particular demands of nature, for the achievement of particular purposes of actual life, for the realisation of the transitory

and imperfect ideals valued in the society. But the best among them, actuated by the noblest aspiration for getting rid of all possible sources of pain and misery, transcending all limitations and imperfections, realising the highest ideal of human life, and satisfying once for all the innermost demands of nature, proceeded to the systematic investigation into the essential character of Brahman, the Absolute Reality, under the direction of preceptors who had already attained the highest truth and were competent to teach it.

The Method of the Quest

It has to be understood that the process of investigation, in this case,—the method of the quest of the Absolute—is of a fundamentally different nature from the processes generally adopted for the discovery and proof of the truths of the sensible phenomenal world. The human reason, in every plane of its knowledge, has some fundamental assumptions or postulates, which are unquestionably accepted as the foundations and standards of truth in the particular plane. In the physical plane our reason takes for granted that our sense-organs, in their normal conditions, give it an exact representation of the phenomenal objects of the world existing independently of the knowing subject. The principles of identity, contradiction, causation, etc., as understood in this plane, are also regarded as inviolable ultimate conditions of truth. Accordingly we proceed to the investigation of

truths of this plane by methodical sense-perception and application of those principles. We do not care to turn inward and examine how far our own outlook, the characters and limitations of our sense-organs, the principles assumed, and the mode of reasoning adopted become the *constituent* factors of the nature of the objects as known by us. In this way, in every plane the knowing subject, with its characteristic limitations, finite powers of observation and special modes of looking upon objects and reasoning about them, imposes itself upon the objects and modifies their nature; but it accepts this modified nature of the objects as their true essential character. In truth, the objects as they really are in themselves remain unknown to the subject. The knowledge attained and accepted as true in these lower planes is necessarily relative. It is not the knowledge of the objects as they are in themselves, but that of the objects as appearing to and reconstructed by the subject. The character of the objects of knowledge, therefore, changes with the change of character and outlook of the subject in the different planes of its development. The methods and instruments of knowledge themselves stand as insurmountable barriers between the truth-seeking subject and the true nature of the objective Reality.

In order to attain knowledge of the Absolute Reality, the subject has to rise above these planes of relativity and ascend to the plane of

absolute knowledge. This plane is, in one sense, the plane of absolute passivity of the subject, in which the subject should put no obstacle, by its own positive character, particular predispositions and narrowness of outlook, to the perfect self-revelation of the Absolute Reality, so that the Reality may make the subject completely its own and reflect itself in its true character upon it. In another sense, this may be regarded as the plane of absolute activity of the subject, in which the subject has to free itself absolutely from all desires and inclinations, prejudices and predispositions, assumptions and postulates, narrowness of outlook and limitations of power, which may possibly exercise any truth-distorting influence upon it and make its knowledge relative. The subject has to attain a state in which it will shine undisturbed in its perfect truth-realising character.

For this purpose the method which is of utmost importance is *Tapasya*,—a process of systematic self-discipline,—discipline of the physical organism, the mental powers and tendencies, the faculty of reason, and all the aspects of nature with which the truth-seeking subject finds itself related and which exercise beneficial or hostile influence upon its mission of discovering the true character of the Absolute Reality. By suitable *Tapasya*, the subject has to transcend the limitations of its outlook and remove from within its actual nature the obstacles in the path of the true vision of the Absolute, approach nearer and

nearer to the Absolute by extricating itself from the inherent impurities and imperfections of the lower planes, and ultimately stand face to face with the Absolute and become united with it.

Varuna's Instruction to Bhrigu

In the Taittiriya Upanishad, Bhrigu is said to have approached his father Varuna with an inquiry into the true character of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. It is obvious that there were divergent views about the character of Brahman prevalent among the wise men of the time. Varuna, as a true teacher, instead of trying to satisfy the curiosity of the boy with a dogmatic assertion or philosophical dissertation, explained to him merely the connotation of the term Brahman and instructed him to devote himself to the quest of the Absolute by the appropriate method of self-discipline. He taught him to make his soul—the truth-seeking subject—worthy of receiving the truth by freeing itself from impurities, imperfections, distorted outlook and divided attention, and he assured him that the Absolute Reality would reveal its true character according to his worth.

The sage explained that Brahman or the Supreme Reality must be that ultimate substance from which all these beings derived their existence, by which their existence was sustained, towards which they were moving and in which they would again be completely merged in the end. Brahman was thus conceived

to be Something, which was the origin, the substance, the support, the regulator and the final goal of all phenomenal existences. The essential nature of this Something was the subject matter of inquiry.

The necessity for such an inquiry is not felt, until and unless the knowing subject is convinced that the phenomenal beings, whether animate or inanimate, are not self-existent, that their transitory, conditional and derivative existence implies as their ground some Absolute Reality with eternal, unconditional and necessary existence, and that the uniformity, adjustment and harmony experienced among their movements, changes and courses of development imply a unity of the regulating principle. This conception of the phenomenal nature of all actual and possible objects of experience, the consciousness of their inexplicability in terms of their own apparent characteristics, the yearning for transcending them and being in touch with the supreme ground of their existence, presuppose a high degree of intellectual development and comprehensiveness of outlook. But to be convinced that some Supreme Reality must exist by itself as the ultimate ground of the universe does not mean acquaintance with the essential character of this Reality and direct touch with it. The knowing subject must undergo higher and higher courses of moral, intellectual and spiritual discipline and thereby rise to higher and higher planes of outlook and experience, in

order to approach nearer and nearer knowledge of this Ultimate Truth to the supreme ground of all existence, to attain truer and truer and finally to be united with it in the deepest spiritual experience.

(To be continued)

FUNDAMENTALS OF BUDDHISM

By A. C. Banerjee

BUDDHISM is not a religion, because it serves not as a vehicle of faith and worship to reach the kingdom of God, the very existence of which has been denied by it, nor a philosophy as its aim is not to speculate on the origin of the universe—a no-problem according to Buddhism. But it is a thorough rational investigation of the most vital and basic principles of life, a study of life in its real state, its causes, its flow and its consequences, and a practical solution to the most vital-seeming problems of life.

Buddha, the expounder of Buddhism, was born about 621 B. C. in a district of the Great Indo-Gangetic plain—the land that had been the birth-place in the ages of sages and saints, of philosophies and religions—and met with many religious beliefs and various shades of philosophy then prevailing in the country. But none of them could satisfy his highly rational intellect and keen realistic vision. He left the grandeur of his royal parents' palace at the blooming age of thirty and set out to know the great truth of life himself.

Man is a creature of his environment. His mind and body are tied

in the firm grip of circumstances. His thoughts, his deeds and actions are guided by his surroundings.

Great are those who have broken off the shackles of their environment and freed their mind to view facts from a detached plane—the only plane for the realisation of truth—and frustrated all conventions and superstitions that befog and deceive the common mind. They are the revolutionaries and pioneers of human thought that pave the stepping stones to the advancement of mankind. It is the clarity and dynamic force of their thought that strengthen the vitality of human culture.

Buddha was a revolutionary of that order. He broke off all conventions and superstitions of his time. He shattered caste and viewed all men from one humanitarian point of view. He declared that all men are subject to the same law (the law of cause and effect) and that there are grades of mental and physical efficiency amongst them, but no hereditary caste or creed. He denied the existence of God or any such Super-being holding the reins of human destiny. He said every individual is his own

maker and his own guide. He viewed the facts of life directly by his own keen penetrating intellect and he invited his disciples to witness them themselves. He said, "Don't accept anything because I have told you, but test it by your own judgment and if it proves to be true, follow it."

Buddha was asked if the universe is finite or infinite in space and time, if life and body are the same or different, if the enlightened one exists after death or not, and so on; but he answered not, not because they transcended Buddha's knowledge but because they were irrelevant questions having no bearing on the vital problems of life, and caused by the false manner of envisaging things.

Buddha defined his doctrine in the four great noble truths—suffering, arising of suffering, cessation of suffering and the way leading to the eradication of suffering. This is the whole text of Buddhism.

What is suffering? Buddhism records: Life is suffering; death, illness, old age, association with the undesired, dissociation from the desired, in short all the five elements of life (form, feeling, perception, volition and knowledge) are suffering. It is plain truth. It is the grim problem of every individual life, whose greatest tragedy is that it has sought for happiness but met with pain, sorrow and disappointment.

But suffering is not a permanent thing. It arises and it grows. What is the cause of its rising? Buddhism

explains: Craving. Craving for life! There is danger, because life is impermanent and its change is liable to bring suffering. Craving for wealth, honour, love! Upon all hangs the same suicidal danger—the impermanence, the changeability of nature. And all cravings lead to suffering, even the craving for heaven or for a higher plane of life after death follows the same track of law.

That which is subject to the law of causation is subject to the law of cessation according to the very nature of the law. Suffering is caused, it comes out of craving and consequently it is eradicable in nature. How is it eradicated?

Buddhism declares: No craving, no suffering. Even the most common life can realise by experience that the object itself,—the object of our perception,—does not bear the germ of suffering. Nor is the subject himself such an infection of misery as to inoculate the poison to whatever he comes in contact with. Suffering does not lie in the contact between our senses and the object of our perception but on the measure of interest that our mind attaches to it. That is why Buddha declared: "In all, the primal element is mind; pre-eminent is mind; by mind is all made. If man speaks or acts evil of mind, suffering follows him close as the wheel the hoof of the beast that draws the cart. Again, on the other hand, if a man speaks or acts uprightness of mind, happiness follows him close like his never-departing shadow."

Mind is the prime mover of life. No amount of external rites or rituals, worship or ceremonies, asceticism or mysticism, which are nothing but external manifestation of egoistic craving, can lead a person to the state of perpetual bliss,—the goal of life,—if his own thoughts are misconceived and his mind clings to cravings. It is only the clarity and rightness of thought that can root the cravings out.

But how to achieve that? By following the noble eightfold path—right understanding, right mindedness, right speech, right action, right living, right endeavour, right recollectedness, and right concentration. These are, again, classed into three gradual groups of morality (Sila), Concentration (Samadhi), and Wisdom (Panna). The first

purifies the behaviour, both mental and physical, breaks the shackles of convention and superstition and directs the mind toward right vision. The second penetrates directly into the heart of the objects of our perception and analyses them in their exact nature. And the third reveals the truth that all things are impermanent and that the craving for them leads to suffering. Here the enlightened one kills his cravings, and by his own sharp and penetrating intellect he realises that all his bondage of material as well as super-material objects are shattered. The causes for life and death are destroyed once for all, and he enters the state of perfect pacification of the mind and final enlightenment—the State of Nibbana.

LATER INDIAN METAPHYSICS: SAIVA SIDDHANTA

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L.

THE Saiva Siddhanta is one of the choicest products of the South Indian intellect, and deserves to be placed alongside the great systems of thought given to the world by Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhwa. The great works which form the inspiration of the Saiva Siddhanta system are the sweet and sublime Thevaram, songs of Saints Sambandhar, Appar, Sundarar, and the wonderfully mellifluous and passionate poems of St. Manicka Vachakar in his Tiruvachakam. These poems

are as remarkable as the Tiruvaimozhi songs and hymns and poems of the Alvars. Tirumular's Tirumanthiram is another great gospel of this school of thought. The great work of Sekkilar, called Periya Puranam, which contains the lives of the sixty three Saiva Saints (Nayanars) contains the best elements of the Saiva Siddhanta system of philosophy. But the first clear and comprehensive formulation of the system is in Meykandar's Sivajnanabodham (13th century A. D.), which is an exposition of

twelve verses in Raurava Agama. His disciple, Arulnandi Sivacharya, expanded the teachings of his master in the great work called Sivajnanasiddhiyar. Umamathi Sivacharya's Sivaprakasam and Tiruarutpayan are other famous works.

It is noteworthy that the cult of Siva is as old as the Satarudriyam and the Svetasvatara Upanishad. Nay, the Yajurveda says: एकमेव इन्द्रो न द्वितीयस्य तस्यै (Siva is the Supreme Deity; He has no peer). In the Upanishads we read about उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोकं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् (Companioned by Uma, the Great God, the Lord of all, the three-eyed, the dark-throated, and perfectly tranquil). I have no patience with those theorists who fancy a God Rudra who is different from God Siva. Every God has his gentle (Saumya) aspect and his terrible (Ghora) aspect. Vishnu the Protector has as many destructions to his credit as Siva the Destroyer. The stern aspect of Siva is called Rudra. Some people who wish to show off their prodigious learning say that Rudra is an Aryan and Vedic deity while Siva is a non-Aryan and Dravidian deity, and that the two concepts mingled and coalesced later on. We do not know at whose invitation they were present as such commingling coalescence. Nor can we follow the theories of those who discern in the Agamas a later rival to the Vedas. The great minds of India's past found no divergence or discrepancy as between the Vedas and the

Agamas. The great Saint Sekkilar says: 'May the Vedic faith flourish and may the Saiva cult shine.' Saint Thayumanavar says: 'The Vedas and the Agamas are both of them true, both being the word of the Lord. Know that the first is a general exposition and the latter is a detailed exposition. Both are the word of God. Where difference is perceived between them on examination, the great will perceive that there is no such difference at all.'

Earlier than them, the great Nilakanta Sivacharya, called also Srikanta, who wrote a Bhashya on the Vedanta Sutras from the Saiva point of view, wrote: वयं तु वेदशिवागमयोर्भेदं न पश्यामः, वेदोऽपि शिवागमः (I do not perceive any difference between the Veda and the Sivagama. The Veda itself is the Sivagama). A well-known Tamil stanza says: 'The Veda is the cow; the Agama is its milk, and the Tamil songs—Thevaram and Tiruvachakam—of the four Saints is the ghee within it.'

The very quintessence of absurdity is reached when we find asserted that the name Siva is a Tamil word meaning 'red' (Chivappu) and that the word is not found at all in the Vedas. The word is found in innumerable places in the Vedas (स ब्रह्म स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमः शिवराट्). Nay, the holy Panchakshari, नमः शिवाय, is the very heart point of Rudram. Further, in the Lalita Sahasranama, Iswari is described as the Goddess, the dust on Whose feet is worn on the head of Sruti and as being the pearl in-

side the mother-of-pearl of the Agamas. In a beautiful verse Sri Sankaracharya describes the Goddess as being the parrot in the cage of the Omkara and the Kokila (cuckoo) singing in the garden of the Upanishads and as the peacock dancing in the forest of the Agamas. Thus, to fancy any divergence of doctrine between Vedas and Agamas and any non-identity among Vedic and Agamic, or North Indian and South Indian or Aryan and Dravidian deities, may be plausible and applauded scholarship, but does not contain an iota of truth at all.

I do not propose to expound in detail the twelve verses of Raurava Agama which form the basis on which the grand fabric of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy has been raised. I would, however, give a running exposition of the stanzas to show the evolution of thought therein. The first verse¹ shows that the manifold world, with all its variations of name, form and sex, has emanated from Siva. His Shakti creates the world out of Maya. The creation is by His Will. It consists of Tanu (body), Karana (senses), Bhuvana (worlds) and Bhoga (pleasures and pains). The Saiva Siddhanta teaches that Matter (Maya) is the material cause of the universe, that Siva is the efficient cause and that His Chit Shakti is the instrumental cause (Sahakāri Kārana). It has been well said that the seed is Maya, the sprout is

Karma, the tree is the world, the earth is God and its moisture and heat are the Shakti of God. The dissolution of the universe is to give souls rest after Karma. The creation of the universe is to enable souls to take the fruits of Karmas (actions) and to lead them to get rid of their Ānava Mala (subtle impurity or ignorance). God Siva is not affected in any way by the unceasing changes and transformations of the universe. In the same sun's presence one lotus is in bud, another is in bloom, another is fading, and yet another is dead. The sum of the three Malas (Maya, Ānava and Karma) is expressed by one word, Pāsa. This Pāsa causes bondage to the Jiva or Atma, who is called Pasu. Ānava Pāsa binds the soul by limiting his omniscience and is called Pratibandham. Karma Pāsa binds the soul in the bonds of desire, action and enjoyment, and is called Anubandham. Maya Pāsa limits the omnipresence of the soul and confines it to the body and is called Sambandham. The entire aim of the soul's existence is to get rid of Pāsa and attain God.

The second verse² tells us how God is one with the souls and yet different from them and gives them embodiments in accordance with their Karma. According to Saiva Siddhanta, its doctrine of Advaitam does not mean that there is only one existence. Advaitam does not mean Ekam. The souls are depend-

ent upon God. His grace (Arul Shakti) pervades the entire realm of Being. Thus the doctrine of the Saiva Siddhanta is the doctrine of Bhedābheda (unity in difference). The three Malas, i. e., Maya, Karma and Ānava are Anādi, without a beginning. The souls pass from the subtle to the gross body and *vice versa*. The endless rounds of births and deaths is called Samsara. God pervades everything and yet is above everything. Thus His immanence and transcendence are asserted equally well in the Siddhanta. Its aim is to substitute for our relation of unity in variety in regard to the world, the relation of unity in variety in regard to God. The first verse in the immortal Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar gives a beautiful illustration. Just as the sound 'A' is the first and pervades every other sound and yet is different from all other sounds, so God is supreme and is immanent and transcendent, one with everything and yet separate from everything. Just as life is one with the living body and yet is different from it, even so God is one with everything and yet is different from everything. Thus the Siddhanta affirms difference of being and identity of substance.

The third stanza describes the nature of the soul. The soul is different from Maya and from God. It speaks of 'my body,' 'my senses,' and 'my mind' and realises its self-identity in the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. The Saiva Siddhanta says that God is Sat,

that Maya is Asat and that the soul is Sadasat. God is like the sun and the soul is like the eye. Maya is like the eye-glasses which give a temporary relief to defective eyesight. It is only the physician's lancet that can cure the malady. Even so only the grace of God can cure the soul's subtle primordial ignorance. The soul is really separate from its gross, subtle and causal sheaths or bodies.

The fourth stanza shows the inter-relations of the soul and the mind. It is in this respect that Indian philosophy is far superior to western philosophy, which almost always confuses the mind and soul. In respect of the mind, the Siddhanta, like the Vedanta, refers to its four aspects, Chittam, Manas, Ahamkaram and Buddhi (perceptive, cognitive, egoistic and determinative aspects). The Siddhanta affirms five Avasthas or states of the soul: the Jagrat or waking state when the soul is functioning in the forehead and has thirty-five active organs including the ten external senses; the Swapna or the dreaming state when the soul functions in the region of the neck and has twenty-five organs excluding the ten external ones; the Sushupti or state of deep sleep when the soul functions in the heart and has three organs including the Chittam; the Turiya when the soul functions in the region of the navel and has only two organs; and the Turiya-tita when the soul functions in the Muladhara (sacral plexus) and is Purusha having none of these

1. कीपुत्रपुंसकादित्वावगतः कार्यदर्शनात् ।
अस्ति कर्ता सदेतत् सज्यस्मात्पुनर्हरः ॥

2. अन्यस्सन् व्याप्तिरुपन्यः कर्ता कर्मानुसारतः ।
करोति संसृतिं पुंसां ब्रह्मया समवेतया ॥

organs at all. The fourth stanza compares the ego or the soul to the king and the four aspects of the mind to the ministers. Chitta, Manas and Ahamkara prepare the statistics of the sense-impressions, and Buddhi is the prime minister who settles the conclusions and reports the same to the soul.

The fifth stanza shows how each human sense or faculty can see what is lower than itself but cannot perceive itself or what is higher than itself. The senses can perceive the objects but not themselves or the mind. The mind can perceive the senses but not itself or the soul. Even so, the soul can perceive the mind and the senses but cannot perceive itself or God. The soul is vivified by the Arul Shakti or grace of God, just as iron is moved by the magnet which itself remains unchanging or unchangeable. In beatitude the soul is one with God, yet separate from God, just as in daytime the light of the stars is included in the light of the sun and becomes indistinguishable from it but is yet separate from it.

The sixth verse deals with the nature of God. He is Satchidanandam. The Saiva Siddhanta does not admit divine incarnation and differs in this respect from Vaishnavism. We can realise God only when our Pasujnanam is transfigured by the light divine (Pathi-jnanam). God Siva, by His powers of Ichcha and Kriya, evolves the universe and, by His power of Jnana or Arul, leads the soul unto Himself. Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra,

Iswara and Sadasiva are the presiding deities of A, U, M, Bindu and Nadam in the Pranava.

The seventh stanza teaches that God (Sat) does not know bondage (Pāsa), that matter (Asat) does not know God and that the souls live in matter and in God and are hence called Sadasat.

The eighth stanza teaches that God appears as Guru to the evolving, aspiring soul and leads it unto God-realisation. It is by means of Tapas that the soul will free itself from the bondage of the senses and the mind. Tapas consists of Sariya, Kriya and Yoga. The first two include all ethical and ritualistic acts. They and Yoga lead to Jnana, which includes Bhakti. They bring about the balancing of virtue and sin, the seeing of the Guru and attainment of divine grace. The interconnection of Sariya and the other steps is described by the terms Dāsa-marga, Sat-putra-marga, Sakhā-marga and San-marga. Saint Thayumanavar brings out this interconnection by the simile of bud and blossom and unripe fruit and ripe fruit.

The ninth stanza says that we can realise God, not through our mind or our senses but by means of Jnana. Only then shall we be liberated from our bondage. It is by the contemplation of the holy Mantra of Panchakshara that Jnana will dawn on our souls. For, then only can we conquer our Vāsana Mala.

The tenth verse says that by attaining oneness with God, the

soul will lose its Mala, Maya and Karma. He who becomes a Jivan-mukta through Jnana will live in his body which is the result of his Prarabdha Karma, but he will not have any other birth as all his other Karmas have been burnt up by Jnana.

The eleventh verse describes union with God. His grace will remove the impurity of the soul and attract the soul to itself as a magnet attracts iron. The soul is then full of the bliss of the Lord.

The twelfth verse teaches that the liberated person, in his Jivan-mukta state, should worship Sivajnanis and Siva Linga as Siva Himself.

The concept of God in Saiva Siddhanta is sublime. It affirms God's omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. It says that God is infinite, unlimited, absolute, immutable and perfect and that He is also just and merciful. It affirms clearly His self-existence, immaculate purity, wisdom and infinite bliss. It speaks of nine forms of God: Sivam, Shakti, Nadam, Bindu, Sadasivam, Maheswara, Rudra, Brahma and Vishnu. It is said that the Siva Linga is the primordial Sadasiva or Pranava form of God, combining in it the subtle forms of Nadam and Bindu, the former being represented by a line and the latter by an arc. The phallic theory about the Linga is a crude and false absurdity. In many Lingas the face of Siva is found sculptured. Vinayaka, Subrah-

manya, Bhairava and Virabhadra are other forms of Siva.

According to the Saiva Siddhanta, the statement that God is Nirguna means only that He is Gunatita, transcending the three Gunas of Prakriti, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and hence is Aprakrita or non-material. It thus harmonises God's personality and His transcendence of the Gunas. Just as we see the sun by his rays, even so we can see God only by the light of His grace. This is one of the special features of this school. Another special feature is its affirmation, besides the twenty-four categories, which are derived from Maya or Prakriti, of twelve more—seven Vidya Tattvas and five Siva Tattvas. The power and grace of God are to be specially found in divine form (Murti), abode (Sthalam), waters (Tirtham), priest (Guru), holy image (Lingam), devotees (Jangama), ashes (Vibhuti) and beads (Rudraksham).

The ethical code is lofty and noble. It harmonises ethics and ceremonialism; it combines purity of body with purity of speech and mind; and gives scope for the harnessing and utilisation of the inevitable inequalities of life in the direction of equality and unity. Its sublime emphasis on Ahimsa and its stern prohibition of the killing of animals have led to the word Saivam being interpreted as meaning vegetarianism.

The battle of the faiths begins in India, as elsewhere, as soon as the attempt is made at the overlordship

of one cult over others. The Vaishnava bigots declare Siva to be a Jiva, though they grudgingly, and probably with unuttered and unutterable mental reservations, concede that He is a perfect soul (Jivanmukta). The Saiva bigots accord the same honour, sauced by damnation with faint praise, to Vishnu. They say that in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna, by reason of his So'ham Bhavana or realisation of God Siva as being one with himself, showed the universal form to Arjuna. They hold that Arjuna found on the person of Siva the flowers he had showered on Krishna, that Arjuna

was really doing worship of Siva all his life and that Krishna had received Siva Diksha (initiation) from sage Upamanyu. This is sheer bigotry. The Vishnu form is as Paramatmic as the Siva form. If Siva can have many forms which are incompatible with one another, if He can be the Linga, Ardha Nariswara and Chandra Sekhara at one and the same time, why can He not have the Vishnu form as well? Why should we be constantly discussing spiritual heraldry and settling the rank of divine precedence by interminable arguments seasoned by abuse?

REVERENCE THAT SAVED

S. N. Suta

PURANIC figures are all grand. We may not agree with all they thought or did. For they had a code of manners of their own, and a sense of values, too, widely different from our own. Yet in many points they excelled owing to the broad and reverential attitude cultivated during the days of their training, and kept up with ease to their life's end.

Take, for example, the story of Utanka in the Mahabharata. He had finished his studies and shown, in a trying situation, that he could withstand temptations. His teacher, therefore, blessed him and allowed him to go home. But Utanka wanted to do him some signal service before leaving. It was then agreed that he should bring the two ear-

rings belonging to Paushya's Queen. The teacher's wife wished to wear them on a particular day.

Of the subsequent incidents, let us single out a few. Paushya bade Utanka approach the Queen in her own apartment and demand the jewels. Utanka went, but returned unable to see her. The King thought for a while and remarked that his wife being very chaste, no one who had been defiled or had taken impure food would be able to see her. Utanka, with great modesty, reflected in his turn and remembered that, in his hurry, he had defiled himself by making ablutions after his meal in a standing posture. He therefore corrected himself now; and as a result was able to see the Queen, who gave him the ear-rings.

"These," said she, by way of warning, "are very much sought after by Takshaka, King of the serpents. Hence carry them with great care." Confident of his strength, a little proudly perhaps, Utanka made answer, "Lady, be under no apprehension. Takshaka is not able to overcome me."

Paushya now wished to worship Utanka as his Atithi (guest). Utanka agreed, but finding that the food served was cold and unclean, containing hair in it, and remembering too well the incident of defilement just over, boiled up and cursed the King with blindness. Paushya replied by cursing that Utanka would be childless. Hospitality thus quickly developed into hostility! A moment later, however, the King verified the state of the food and asked for pardon and freedom from blindness. "What I say," said Utanka, "must come to pass. Having become blind, thou mayst, however, recover thy sight before long." Proud and impetuous, it is true; but what sense of strength coupled with readiness to forgive and comfort! Paushya too was strong and clear-headed, but what a woeful incapacity for cooling down! Said he, "I am unable to revoke my curse. A Brahmana's heart is soft like new-churned butter even though his words bear a sharp-edged razor. A Kshatriya's words, on the other hand, are soft like butter, but his heart is a sharp-edged tool. I am unable to neutralise my curse. Then go thou thy ways." Not at all daunted, and conscious of

his purity, Utanka replied, "The food being truly unclean, thy curse cannot affect me. Of this I am sure."

Curses are no doubt bad, supposing one is capable of giving them; but capacity to cool down and forget and comfort is certainly worth acquiring as a permanent mental equipment.

On the way a naked beggar approached Utanka, sometimes appearing, sometimes disappearing. Not minding it much, Utanka kept the ear-rings on the ground and stooped for water. The beggar then snatched the jewels and fled. Completing his ablutions this time (कृतोदककायः शुचिः), Utanka reverently bowed to the gods and spiritual masters (प्रयतो नमो देवेभ्यो गुरुभ्यश्च कृत्वा) chased the thief and seized him. But Takshaka—for it was no other—escaped through a hole in the earth, and the hole immediately closed! Undaunted as usual, Utanka took up a stick and began to dig but could not make much progress. Indra beheld his distress and rewarded his reverence by sending the thunderbolt to his assistance. The hole then widened and Utanka got into the world of the serpents.

In his habitual reverent mood, Utanka then sang the glory of the serpents. He praised Airavata and their elders and their great prowess and beauty. Even Takshaka, the wrong-doer, was adored and requested to return the ornaments. But apparently to no purpose.

He then looked about in a thoughtful mood, and happened to

see a man with a handsome horse. Again the habit of reverence stood him in good stead. To the rider he addressed a series of holy Mantras, chanting towards the close, "Thou wielder of the thunder, thou who ownest for thy carrier the horse received from the depths of the ocean and which is but another form of Agni, I bow to thee, thou Lord of three worlds, O Purandara!" Highly gratified, Indra—for the rider was he, though Utanka knew it not till his teacher told him later—asked him what good he desired. Straight and bold came the reply, "Even let the serpents be brought under my control." The man rejoined, "Blow into this horse." Though the advice could be viewed as silly, Utanka's reverent eye could see only the divine hand in it; and he blew. In a second, fire and

smoke filled the snake-world and Takshaka, surprised beyond measure and anxious for the welfare of his subjects, hastily came out and said, "Pray, Sir, take back the earrings."

Utanka now remembered that that was the day on which the teacher's wife was to wear the jewels. How was he to cover the distance? The man with the horse then addressing him said, "Ride this horse, Utanka, and he will in a moment carry thee to thy master's abode." Thoroughly convinced of the divine play around him, Utanka mounted the animal's back, and reached his destination in time.

This was the strong and reverent man whom the gods, as the story shows, chose to be the instrument for starting Janamejaya on a fiery campaign against the snakes.

A SPIRITUAL ARISTOCRACY

By A. S.

DR. Justin E. Abbott is already known for his English rendering from ancient Mahratta sources of the lives of some well known poet-saints of Maharashtra. His latest work entitled *Stories of Indian Saints** forms volumes IX and X of the series "The Poet-Saints of Maharashtra" planned by him, the former covering the first thirty chapters of Mahipathi's

* *Stories of Indian Saints*; English translation of Mahipathi's *Bhaktavijaya*, Vol. 1 by the late Justin E. Abbott and Narhar R. Godbole, 1933. Price Rs. 3.

Bhaktavijaya and narrating the lives of Jayadev, Tulsidas, Namadev, Kabir, Dhyanadev and some others.

Dr. Abbott was born in 1853 at Rahuri in the Ahmednagar District of the Bombay Presidency, which has been the scene of the greater part of his life's activities. He passed away at Summit, New Jersey, U. S. A. on the 19th June 1932, and this English translation of one of the greatest Mahratti classics is published under the provisions of his last will and testament. From

the interesting Foreword of the Editor, Mr. J. F. Edwards of the United Theological College of Western India, we get an idea of the high place in Mahratti literature held by Mahipathi, one of whose masterpieces is the *Bhaktavijaya*. The late Mr. L. J. Sedjwick, I. C. S., one of Mahipathi's students, wrote thus of Mahipathi in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay (1910, Vol. XXIII, No. 65, pages 109, 110): "Viewed from any standpoint of criticism, the Ori poems of Mahipathi and *Abhangs* of Namadev, Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas must be placed among the finest of the poetic productions of the world." Another of Mahipathi's students, the Hon. C. A. Kincaid, I. C. S., joint-author with Rai Bahadur D. B. Parasius, of a three-volume History of the Mahratta People (pp. 3-4) and author of "Tales of the Saints of Pandarpur" (pp. 3-4), says: "Had Mahipathi used a linguistic medium more widely known than Mahratti, he would have ranked high among the world's poets." Dr. Abbott himself, the learned translator, had a masterly knowledge of Mahratti and we have it on the authority of Pandit Godbole that often Dr. Abbott's English translation had enabled him to elucidate the meaning of the Mahratti text.

India from the remotest past has been the cradle of poet-saints, god-men so to say, who realised God through Bhakti (devotion),—Suka and Valmiki, and in later times Tulsidas, Tyagaraja the singer-

saint, Kabir, Tukaram, Jayadev, Nammalwar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and many others. The Bhakti school of thought in India has always represented God as very near to his Bhaktas (devotees), ready at any moment to rush to their rescue when they were in trouble. This thought appears as early as the Bhagavata and is represented by several Maharashtra saints, men and women of literary ability, wise in philosophy and godly in character. South India can also point with pride to many poet-saints of both sexes among the Nayanars and Alwars. The Bhakta's conception of spiritual communion and kinship with God, His nearness and protection, is well portrayed by Dhyaneswara, the first of the Mahratta poet-saints (about 1290 A. D.) in his commentary on the Bhagavata Purana. He says: "When the hour of their death comes, let them remember Me. The very moment they remember Me, that very moment I am present at their side. Their devotion puts Me heavily in their debt. With this feeling of indebtedness to them, when My Bhaktas lay aside their bodies in death, I serve them from a sense of gratitude."

The average Westerners' misconception of idolatry and polytheism has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding. According to them, Vishnu, Krishna, Ramachandra are so many separate independent gods; and stone images which represent them in temples are but little remote from the feti-

shism of savage peoples. And yet India's best thinkers, her deep philosophic minds and her noblest saints have been enthusiastic idolators without a suspicion in their minds that such worship is either mental weakness or moral degeneracy. Hindu polytheism is God Supreme manifesting Himself in many forms in accordance with the needs of the times or of particular worshippers. Rightly considered, Hindu theology must be understood as monotheistic, as Christianity or Islamism. This fundamental idea must be clearly recognised; for otherwise misconception of Hindu religious thought, as represented in the Stotras and songs of the saints, is inevitable. One should have regard to the substance of the prayer and not to the form of the prayer or the deity invoked. If this attitude of mind can be correctly interpreted as spiritual, India may be said to have realised the Oneness of God through variety of forms, as taught by her seers and saints. In this view Hinduism may be said to be based on the strictest monotheism.

In the Stotras, songs and prayers, of which we have an abundance in the Bhakti literature of India, there must be many things that will appear strange to those who have a different philosophy. So in assessing the value of Bhakti literature, which has swayed masses of Indian humanity for ages past, and which still has a powerful hold on them, attention should be concentrated, not so much on the form in which

the prayers appear, but rather on the substance, the kernel, of the prayers, the heart's sincere desire expressed through loving devotion. To the average Hindu, and even to those who have risen to high philosophic heights, worship of God through a visible representation has been a way of natural approach to the Supreme. Indeed it has been considered by many Indian thinkers as the only way, although the Manasa Puja or the direct mental worship has always been given a higher place. The stone or metal image of some supposed manifestation of an Avatar, in its setting in a temple sacred to that manifestation, has always been, and is to this day, an inspiration to reaching God; and it cannot be denied that spiritual satisfaction has been found by such worship through an idol. It is a pity that students of comparative religion, devoting their attention entirely to philosophy and ritual, have neglected the devotional literature of India, which is a unique characteristic of India's religious life and thought.

Let me conclude this rapid survey by reiterating the points of view which I wish to present. The Bhakta should not be regarded as occupying the lowest rung of the ladder in spiritual attainments. The Bhakta is also a Jnani, let there be no mistake about it. And so, to understand the theology of the Bhakti school, one should not begin with idolatrous worship and work backwards, but should begin with that philosophy which for centuries

has dominated Hindu thought. As stated above, its basis is an absolute monotheism. This universe, everything included, consists of One Substance. For the sake of convenience, it may be called Brahman, or otherwise named, but no human words can fully describe it. For nothing is known of it. On this monistic basis Hindu theology revolves. God, a Personal Being, omniscient, omnipotent and good, is a form in which the One Substance exists. There is

but One God. But God manifesting also in various forms as the universe presented to our senses, it is assumed that He can be described, and He has been described by philosophers and poets and teachers. All the manifestations described, then, are thus only of that One Substance.

We commend these observations to students of comparative religion for a fresh, sympathetic study of the religious life and thought of India.

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

Gaudapada's Karika

If the illustration of the seed and the sprout is brought forward, then also the thing to be proved and the illustration are on the same level. When the illustration and the thing to be proved are alike, the former cannot be used to prove the latter. (20)

Sankara's Commentary

(The opponent says) "In the relation of cause and effect which has been maintained by us, as between an antecedent and its consequent, you have raised verbal difficulties (quibbles) and tried to show that our argument tends to be as absurd as the birth of a father from the son and that there is as much relation between the two, as between the two horns of an animal. But we have never maintained the production of an effect from a cause not already existent or of the cause from effects not already established." (The Siddhantin asks) "What then do you mean?" (The

opponent says) "The relation between the cause and the effect is similar to the relation that obtains between a seed and a sprout." (The Siddhantin then proceeds) "So you appear to hold that the illustration of seed and sprout and the thing you wish to prove, are alike. But we ask, if the relation of cause and effect in the seed and sprout is really beginningless; and say no; for all the antecedents must have had a beginning as their consequents have. As we actually see, in the seed and sprout, there is no beginninglessness, in both cause and effect, as we find that all the previous ones had a beginning and all the succeeding ones likewise. At any moment, a sprout arises from a seed and the sprout later on gives rise to seeds. The succession of seeds and sprouts shows always a beginning and nothing can be said to be without a beginning. This also applies to cause and effect. If you maintain that the series of seeds and sprouts is without a beginning, we say

no; for apart from individual seeds and sprouts, there can be no such independent thing as a series of seeds and sprouts without a beginning. Similarly a series of causes and effects cannot be maintained as apart from individual antecedent (causes) and subsequent (effects). Hence we have well explained how the succession of causes and effects has no beginning and we have not made use of any verbal quibbles in maintaining our point. Also, even learned Logicians, do not make use of an illustration which itself requires a proof for its establishment, to prove a point which is like it in all respects. Here the word "Hetu" is used to mean "illustration."

Gaudapada's Karika

The absence of the knowledge of antecedence and consequence, brings prominently into light, the doctrine of non-birth. For to those that see the qualities of a thing born, how can the antecedent (cause) be beyond understanding? (21)

Sankara's Commentary

If you ask how (the doctrine of) non-birth is brought into prominence by the learned (disputants), we reply as follows. We mean that the mere absence of knowledge of the antecedence and consequence, as regards cause and effect, is itself enough to bring to light (the doctrine of) non-birth. If the properties of a thing born, are perceived (as they are), how can its preceding cause not be grasped? The perceiver of a thing born, must needs perceive that from which it is born: for the thing born and that from which it is born, must be in a closely intimate relation with each other. Therefore (the doctrine of) non-birth must come to light.

Gaudapada's Karika

Not a thing is born either from itself or from another. (Also) nothing

is born either as being (sat) or as non-being (asat) or as being and non-being (sadasat). (22)

Sankara's Commentary

Anything that is said to be born, is not (really) born either of itself or of another or of the two combined. Nor can being, non-being or a union of the two be born. The birth of anything cannot be established by any manner of means. Nothing can be born from its own form (not sufficient in itself). Nothing can reproduce itself, as one jar does not form another jar. Nor is anything produced from something else, as a cloth is not produced from a jar. In the same way, two different things cannot together produce a new thing, as it is opposed to experience. A jar and a cloth together do not give rise to a (new) jar or cloth (or to a third thing).

(An opponent may say) Well; a jar is produced from clay and a son from the parents. (We reply). True; that a thing is and is born, are the ideas and words of the ignorant. But these ideas and words are further analysed by the wise, to determine what is true and what is false. When properly examined, the basis of the ideas and words and the corresponding attributes of objects such as jar and son, are found to be nothing more than words. This is supported by the Sruti "All effects are mere words and names."

If effects (like jar and son) are supposed to be pre-existing in clay, parents, etc. birth need not be predicated of them as they are already existing. Effects cannot be said to be born from non-being (asat), as like the horns of a hare, they have no existence whatever. No effects can be produced from being and non-being (sadasat) as such a combination is contradictory (and destructive) in its very nature. Therefore,

it is settled that no object whatever is ever born (or produced).

Again, those who maintain that an object is produced by the union of action, actor and the result, and that it is of a transitory nature, are far removed from us who rely on reason and experience. For, as the objects produced disappear immediately after their production and before their cognition (and determination), they cannot at all be experienced and thus memory is rendered impossible.

Gaudapada's Karika

A cause is not born from that which has no beginning. An effect also (is not born) of its own nature. When (a thing) is known to have no beginning, it will also be known as having no birth. (23)

Sankara's Commentary

Moreover, when you admit the beginninglessness of cause and effect, you must necessarily admit that both cause and effect can have no birth. How so? From an effect which has no beginning, no cause is produced; for you do not admit that from an effect having no beginning, a cause could arise: nor do you say that an effect can arise of itself, without an external cause or from a cause having no beginning and no birth. Therefore, in admitting the beginninglessness of cause and effect, you tacitly accept their non-production (and non-birth). Worldly experience also supports the view that where the cause is not known in the beginning, its birth also cannot be known, as said above. Only that which has a cause, has a beginning, and not that which has none.

Gaudapada's Karika

For cognition, there must be (an external) cause, as otherwise both (that is, cognition and cause) are destroyed (that is, become non-

existent). Also on account of the causation of sorrow, the existence of external objects must be accepted (this is the view of an opponent). (24)

Sankara's Commentary

To strengthen the view already described, a possible view which an opponent may take is brought forward. Cognition consists of apprehension of sounds, &c. which are produced by causal agents. We recognise that they have a cause, an object (causing them), apart from the cognising subject. The cognition of sounds, &c. cannot take place in the absence of objects (causing them). Therefore, there are causes (producing cognition). If there were no objects, sounds, touch and colours like blue, yellow and red, &c. such varieties of cognition cease to have any existence. As we are aware of them, there is no cessation of such variety of cognition and of the objects causing them. Therefore, as there are both cognition and objects of cognition, we are of opinion that apart altogether from the cognising subject, there must exist external objects, as maintained by thinkers (other than Advaitins).

The various colours, blue, yellow, &c., depending on external objects, cannot be attributed to the inherent powers of consciousness, capable of bringing about the variety of cognition. The clear crystal cannot show blue or other colours, unless flowers, &c. having the colours are placed beside it. Hence, it follows that apart from the cognising subject, there are real external objects, as maintained by other schools of thought.

Moreover, pain exists, being caused by burns, from fire, &c. If fire, &c., causing burns, did not exist apart from the cognising consciousness, they would be causing no pain from burns, &c. But

they do (cause pain). Therefore, we know that external objects do exist. Pain cannot be said to be due only to cognition, merely because it is not seen elsewhere.

Gaudapada's Karika

From the point of reason, cognition may be admitted to require a cause. But from the point of view of Reality, a cause may be said to be causeless. (25)

Sankara's Commentary

The view expounded in the previous verse is now refuted. (The opponent is told) What you say is true. According to you, reason may require a cause for cognition and for the production of pain. You may stick to your opinion, that reason requires the existence of external objects (to account for cognition). But if you ask what we have to say to it, we reply as follows: Jars, &c. which, to you, form the basic objects for cognition, are considered by us as having no cause, as having nothing to rest upon and as not forming a cause for their cognition. We proceed to tell you why. Because we consider them from the point of view of the nature of things, that is, Reality. The jars do

not exist apart from (different from) their basic clay. (Jars do not exist independent of clay) just as a horse exists different from a buffalo. Similarly, a piece of cloth does not exist independent of the threads and these again from their constituent parts. By carrying the analysis deeper, till we come to the very essence of things, and language fails, we do not arrive at anything which may be said to be the cause of anything. Or we may interpret "the nature of things" to mean "unreality of appearances" and conclude that the so-called external objects are as much causes (of cognition) as a rope is a cause for the appearance of the snake. As the appearance of objects is due to illusion, even a cause may not be a cause because it disappears when the illusion goes. In the case of persons in dreamless sleep or in Samadhi, or of persons who have become liberated (Muktas), there is no illusion and consequently, there are no external objects independent of Atman. What appears as an object to an insane person, need not present the same appearance to a sane one. The appearance of duality and of pain are similarly refuted.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Tribute to Dayananda

Prof. Kalidas Nag began his instructive Convocation Address at the Gurukula University, Haridwar, by paying a glowing tribute to the life-work of Swami Dayananda. The Swami, said he, was born (1824) "when his brother-spirit, Rammohun Roy, was fighting single-handed, with rare courage and conviction, to defend the Vedic philosophy and religion against the uncritical and unjust attacks of ill-

informed foreigners." After undergoing a "discipline of phenomenal severity," Dayananda took leave of his venerable Guru, Virajananda (1863), who outlined to him the noble work he was to take up. "The Vedas," said he, have long ceased to be taught in Bharatavarsha, go and teach them; teach the Shastras, and dispel, by their light, the darkness which the false creeds have given birth to."

The Swami's visits to Bengal and Bombay between 1872 and 1875 and "his masterly advocacy of a 'Back to the Vedas' and of a radical religious and social reform created a new enthusiasm all over the country." In Bengal he found a ready welcome at the hands of Devendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen. "That was the epoch when the nation was waking from the nightmare of self-humiliation" caused by the "hypnotism of foreign propaganda" degrading our religion and our culture. All provinces saw the birth of scholars who took to Vedic studies and brought out the results of their researches in book form. This pursuit of Vedic knowledge with a new zeal was carried on "thanks to the apostolic mission of Swami Dayananda who, true to the parting message of his Guru, waged a relentless war against narrow and dogmatic distortions of the original Aryan life through later Sanskrit literature." His *Satyarth Prakas* in Hindi—the language he chose for the benefit of the masses in his discourses—was completed in 1874 and was followed by his *Veda Bhashya* and other works. "We are dazzled," says Prof. Kalidas Nag, summing up, "when we think how he attended to so many other things, the teaching of Sanskrit, writing of grammatical treatise, organising schools and social service centres, culminating in the foundation of the Arya Samaj in 1877, one of the chief arches of our national reconstruction. Opinions will differ, as they must, with regard to the details of his critical and creative activities. But there was no doubt in the heart of our nation, when that great son of Mother India passed away in 1883, that a Dynamic Soul had come after ages to bless the rising gene-

ration into a new life of reform based on justice and of creative sacrifice for the benefit of India and the world." Dayananda thus "flung our stagnating soul back on the elemental currents of Progressive Life. That is how he saved our nation from a slavish imitation of the Occident, and purged our society from the age-long inequities of caste, and injustices to our women and depressed classes."

Of course this was not told in the sense that *all* inequities and injustices are clean removed from *all* quarters, and that present and future generations have nothing further to do in that direction.

The speaker next passed on to the educational institutions started under Dayananda's inspiration, describing the Anglo-Vedic College and the Gurukula as "modest laboratories of national education" which "came to open our eyes and to help the fulfilment of our wants", "where Education departments and our Universities were failing us."

Legacy of Aryanism

His "young friends of the Gurukul," said the Professor, introducing the subject of his Address, had already been told by the lecturers of previous years, of the priceless "legacy of Aryanism." This year, therefore, he was going to confine himself exclusively to a "historical appraisal of this ancestral legacy," hoping that his suggestions would kindle in the soul of a few *Snatakas* of the Arya Goshti, "the enthusiasm to explore and discover, collect and collate, explain and interpret the baffling richness of materials of Aryan history and culture". He did not mean to say that no research institution at all had been started for the purpose. For there were the Oriental Col-

lege at Lahore and the Bhandarkar Institute at Poona, while Benares and Bengal had respectively their Saraswati Bhavan and Shantiniketan. The University of Calcutta, too, had been doing substantial service by its special provision for a proper study of India's Ancient History and Culture. But these had proved utterly insufficient for the colossal task. Success, in the Professor's opinion, is possible only "if all the Universities of India co-operate with one another, if they collaborate with the Universities and research centres of Japan and China, Siam and Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and ever so many new zones of linguistic, archaeological and historical studies in the Orient." They have also to keep in touch with the great Oriental seminars of Europe and America, especially those of France, Germany and Holland. Then alone could they hope some day to "reconstruct our forgotten national history and re-write the grand Encyclopaedia of Aryan Culture."

Enough, however, had already been done to expose the gross mistakes of those who, through racial and sectarian narrowness, had tried to prove that Aryan culture was a static one, confined at best only to limited geographical areas. Time was when "with mordant though stupid irony" a Macaulay could summarily dispose of our culture by describing it as "absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics and absurd theology." "With a cocksureness that is the special privilege of God's innocents," Macaulay asserted that the sums spent on the Arabic and Sanskrit Colleges was "not merely a dead loss to the cause of truth but a bounty money paid to raise up champions of Error"! This was in 1835. What a contrast, showed the lecturer,

when Professor Louis Renou of the University of Paris, "with a rare devotion and French clarity" could bring out, in 1931, before a hundred years were scarcely over, "a most welcome and exhaustive *Bibliographie Vedique*" containing in about 350 closely printed pages, "an invaluable guide to all important articles, notes, monographs and volumes written on the Vedic and post-Vedic literature! Even in 1757, Anquetil du Perron, an "intrepid French youth of twenty," "had traversed the Indian Ocean with the determination to discover for Europe the Vedas of the Aryans and the Avesta of the Iranians." Even when past seventy, Perron kept patiently recording his personal reminiscences about "the theological and philosophical doctrines of the four sacred books of India: 'Rak Beid, Djedjr Beid, Sam Beid, Athrbai Beid.'" "That was no doubt a landmark," says Prof. Nag in the cultural collaboration between the East and the West."

Spread of Aryan Culture

Referring to the century and a half of research that has followed the efforts of Perron, the lecturer finally dwelt at length upon "the triumphal march of Aryan culture from the land of Saptasindhu to the Gangetic valley" and elsewhere. He spoke of the "clash and conflict between the two opposite forces of Vedic progressivism and the post-Vedic conservatism inducing the formation and hardening of exclusive groups and castes, which in their turn threw the progressivists into the opposite camp of heterodox reforms of Jainism and Buddhism." He pointed out the striking coincidence between the exhortations (Satyāna pramaditavyam etc.) in the *Sikshadhyaya* of *Taittiriyaopaniṣad* and the *Apramada-*

varga of the *Dharmapada*, which is supposed to contain the direct counsel of Lord Buddha. Buddha took "legitimate pride in his Aryan ancestry, although, propelled by the fundamental laws of Aryanism, he renounced the later Vedic aberrations and castes and proclaimed the first great dynamical religion of universal Fraternity (Maitri,) translated into the historic reality of Greater India by Emperor Dharmasoka" his loyal disciple. India was then again on the march, and "thousands of her sons and daughters, inspired by the divine frenzy of spiritual nomadism congenital to the Aryan, left their hearth and home," crossed "the Himalayas and the Oceans and all frontiers, physical as well as cultural, to carry the deathless treasures of Aryan self-realisation, orthodox as well as heterodox, to humanity at large, irrespective of caste and creed." Summing up with passionate eloquence, the Professor said, "This history of Greater India is one of the most inspiring chapters of human history showing how the terrific deserts of Central Asia were fertilised with the life-blood of these servants of Humanity who built up oases of culture and spirituality, which we are rediscovering from the sand-buried ruins of Khotan and Kucha,

Turfan and Tuen Huang." "Fifteen centuries of this cultural and spiritual co-operation between India and the Far East has yet to be reconstructed and incorporated into the general history of Dynamic Aryanism."

There is Hope

The lecture ended with a refreshing note of prayer. Said the speaker: "If during the terrific struggles of Islamic and Christian invasions, the Aryan spirit lapsed for a few centuries into lethargy and fatalistic surrender to external facts, if in course of these dark ages, we developed psychological and social nightmares like the outrageous cult of untouchability, child-marriage and infanticide, this nation was never deprived of the divine guidance of seers like Ramananda and Kabir, Nanak and Chaitanya till we come to our own days when we are cheered by the prophetic voices of a Rammohun and a Dayananda. May their example and their blessings purge us of all sins and inequities, and may we again be permitted to assume our ancestral role of supplying the notes of Unity and Harmony to the spiritual orchestra of Humanity ever disturbed by discords of hatred and disunion!"

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE POPES AND THEIR CHURCH: By Joseph McCabe. Published by Watts & Co., 5 and 6, Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E. C. 4.

The author calls this "A Candid Account," and really, throughout the book there is an appeal to authorities and a merciless directness of statement that must make the book dreadfully candid to those against whom it is

written. When chapter after chapter unrolls before us, we feel, behind the high lights and the shadows effectively arranged with consummate dramatic skill, the grim figure of the author himself looming large and showing, by his ominous gravity, his determination not to throw away even a bit of his vast resources and also his consciousness of the results he must be producing. "I am

so frequently described," says he in the Preface, "as a writer of portentous solemnity that I need not fear a charge of frivolity and flippancy. As Mr. G. K. Chesterton has explained (*Heretics*, ch. xvi), I am entirely incapable of frivolity or humour." Now, mark the comment that follows, as well as the ease with which Mr. McCabe not merely parries these thrusts but, what is more interesting, makes them strike the Catholic Church itself with their unspent force! "This has been to me," he innocently assures us, "a precious safeguard in wandering through so singular a world; while"—and the torch is pushed towards the explosives, as he continues—"the knowledge that I was once a priest and professor of the Church will keep the reader confident that I have not mistaken the religion of ancient Mexico or modern Tibet for that on which I profess to write."

The opening paragraph, which we quote in full, shows the subject matter of the whole book. "Of all the fictions," we read, "which still shelter from the storm of modern criticism under the leaky umbrella of 'Catholic Truth,' the legend of the divine foundation of the Papacy and the Papal system is quite the boldest and most romantic. No divine force, but a pitifully human series of forgeries and coercions, of pious frauds and truculent ambitions, perpetrated in an age of deep ignorance, built up the Papal power, hierarchy and creed." These statements Mr. McCabe then proceeds to substantiate with quotations from various authors and records, many of which are admittedly Catholic. In the chapter with the biting heading, "Europe Decays and Popes Thrive," we read, for example, that "In the *Liber Pontificalis* itself we have the explicit testimony of Pope Hadrian I, the greatest Pope of the time, that *Pope Stephen ordered the eyes of Christopher and Sergius to be cut out, and for the sordid reason that King Didier promised to restore the disputed lands if he did so*. Stephen, Hadrian says, admitted this to him." As a sample of the records cited, we find in the chapter, "Papacy in the Depths," a most ugly incident noted down in his *Diary* by Burchard (who "lived in the Vatican") as having taken place on

October 30, 1501, which happened to be the Vigil of All Saints Day. Pope Alexander did not attend Vespers that evening, which was itself bad enough, but later in the night he "and his daughter, Lucrezia, dined with Cesare (a Cardinal) and fifty prostitutes in Cesare's rooms in the Vatican. The women, after the banquet, danced unclothed..... And this incredible, yet indisputable, scene ends with the 'Vicar of Christ' and his daughter distributing prizes of silk garments to those of the servants of the Vatican who 'had had carnal intercourse with the courtesans the largest number of times'!"

We wish to show two other sample ingredients entering into the composition of this dreadful dynamite Mr. McCabe hurls at the Catholic Church. In the chapter, "Down the Slope" we read of how Pope Gregory, who "erupted anathemas" against Emperor Frederick, returned to Rome after his expulsion. Gregory, we are told, made peace with his opponents, and "celebrated his return by the new kind of Papal firework—the burning of a multitude of Roman heretics." Really, more "burning" epithets cannot be selected to depict the activities of the Inquisition. But the final stroke is yet to come, when Saints Francis and Dominic are led up and made to pose in an altered theatrical light. "Of Francis, to whose fraternity, in its degenerate and ridiculous modern form, I once belonged, I speak nothing but respect and sympathy. Under the illusion of asceticism, which the Popes fostered, he wore out his gentle soul, and he died of a broken heart because his fraternity quickly went the way of all monastic flesh. But Dominic! The Dominican friars would do well, in modern times, to change their name. The fanaticism of their founder was more dangerous to others than to himself. He specialised on hatred of heretics, and his white-robed sons grimly stoked the fires of the Inquisition until the black-robed sons of St. Ignatius came to dispute the honour."

The Second Part of the book deals with such subjects as Catholic Scholarship and the Teachings and Rituals of the Church, which latter are badly ridi-

culed, and the Losses of the Church, meaning thereby the fall in the number of adherents at the present day. One may legitimately laugh at the follies and condemn the pretensions of an institution, of whose "secret" archives and their contents, vices and diplomacy one has had direct knowledge and experience. But does this also necessitate ridicule of the faith, superstitious it may be in a sense, of that section of humanity that happens to be, in spite of the extraordinary erudition and intellectual eminence of a few, imbibing at least the benefit of the kindergarten stage of rituals and worship? Crimes may, and ought to, be exposed, leaving it to those who are experts in sifting evidence to determine the accuracy of the charges and the conclusions. But as for faith, ridicule bestowed upon it seems to us to be a misdirection of literary effort. We would, therefore, like to go through a book, if Mr. McCabe will be pleased to give us one, which will deal in his characteristically candid, forcible and clearly-thought out manner, with the irreducible minimum of steps that one need take to attain a "spiritual outlook" or to develop one's personality to the extent that the rituals, etc., of the Catholic or of any other Church for the matter of that, do promise, falsely be it granted, to bring about in the sincere and faithful aspirant. Meanwhile, to all those who wish to know how institutions can easily take a downward curve in spite of their grand mottoes, and who wish to fashion wholesome devices to infuse greater power of resistance into weak human flesh, monastic as well as lay, we heartily recommend an intelligent study of this deadly missile prepared by Mr. McCabe.

THE GARDENING REVIEW: Published by Rajam & Co., 17, Mukkar Nallamuthu St., G. T., Madras. Annual Subscription Rs. 3.

This is a monthly devoted to agricultural and horticultural problems. It contains valuable articles, with practical suggestions. The get-up is excellent.

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ADVANCE INDIA: Edited by T. S. Ramanujam, M. A., LL. B. (Lond.). Annual Subscription Rs. 5.

This is a newly started monthly with a variety of useful articles. India's political, economic and social problems rightly occupy a large proportion of its closely printed pages. Prohibition, Peace Conference, Fascism, Foreign Scholarships and the many other similar topics dealt with show the wide range which the magazine attempts to cover. The get-up is neat and beautiful.

YOGA: Published under the auspices of the Yoga Institute of India by Shri Yogendra. Annual Subscription Rs. 2-4.

The author's books on Breathing and Yoga are well known. This attractive little magazine deals with different aspects of the practice of Yoga. Some pages are set apart for women. In the closing pages are usually given interesting answers to questions, of which the following may be taken as a sample: "Can Basti be performed in sea water?"

LIFE OF SRIS CHANDRA BASU: By Phanindranath Bose, M.A., Ph. D. Published by R. Chatterjee, 120-2, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

Sris Chandra Basu was one of the reputed Bengalis of the last century who was connected with almost every important movement of his time in some form or other. He belonged to a family

of Bengali settlers in the Punjab. In this book a high place is accorded to his father Babu Shyama Charan Bose in the history of the progress of education in the Punjab, where he acted as the Head Clerk in the office of the Director of Public Instruction.

Babu Sris Chandra began his career as a lawyer and after a few years' practice was taken into Government Service. He was a man of extraordinary versatility. The work done by him to advance the cause of Sanskrit Literature by the numerous books written by him and published by the Panini Office deserves all praise.

The extra stresses the author has put on the injustices committed by the Government officers seem to us to take away from the grand effect aimed by him. The get-up of the book, too could have been considerably improved. We trust nevertheless that this biography will be read with interest by all.

MUKUNDAMALA: Edited with English translation by M. V. V. K. Rangachari, Cocanada.

The author calls this "an appeal to modern thought." Sanskrit characters are avoided for the benefit of "those of the larger public who might not have cared for any other script." We feel, however, that the printing of Sanskrit verses in English characters without any signs to indicate long or short vowels serves no useful purpose. Elaborate notes have been added. Here is a sample on Aham (I): ".....The cult of Vishnu or the Visishtadvaitic cult is claimed to be the golden mean between the arrogant usurpation of Godhead by man and the despondent abdication of all higher pursuit." The style, as this shows, is too verbose to make the book pleasant reading. To this extent one misses in this book the spontaneous outburst of devotion characteristic of the original work by Kula-sekhara.

KNOW THYSELF: By Swami Rajeswarananda, Sri Arya Ashrama, 44, Nagappier St., Triplicane, Madras.

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Being invited by the Transvaal Hindu Seva Samaj, Swami Adyananda of R. K. Mission arrived in Johannesburg on 1st February 1934. Many prominent Indians and some Europeans were present at the railway stations at Pretoria and Johannesburg. In the evening about sixteen associations in Transvaal, including the Indian National Congress, extended a hearty welcome to the Swami. The Swami, in reply, spoke on "India's Message to the World." The first public lecture was delivered in the Selbourne Hall, Johannesburg, on the 13th February, when the Swami spoke to an audience of nearly a thousand people, many of whom were Europeans. After the discourse, the Swami answered the questions that were asked by some of those present. The local Vedanta Ser-

vice Society soon afterwards celebrated the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, and the Swami spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna the Prophet of Modern India". Out of the other engagements that followed may be mentioned the speeches at the Indo-European Council on "An Eastern View of Western Civilisation", at the Government Indian School on "The Ideals of Education in India," at the International Club on "India and Her Civilisation" and at the Pretoria Theosophical Lodge on "What is Yoga?" Invitations have been received from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Kimberley and many other important cities. Weekly lectures on "Hindu Philosophy and Religion" have been arranged at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for some time to come. The Swami is also holding classes on the Gita, thrice a week for the benefit of the Indians.

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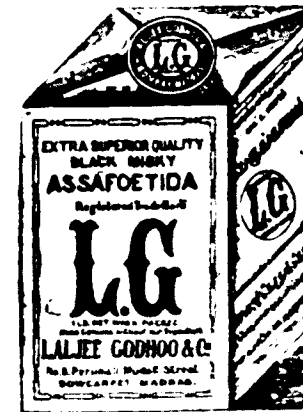
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ॐ

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कामक्रोधद्वेषता ये तानुपास्य च पूज्य च ॥

लाभालाभौ सुखदुःखे च तात

प्रियाप्रिये मरणं जीवितञ्च ।

समानि येषां स्थिरविक्रमाणां

बुभुक्षतां सत्वपयस्थितानाम् ॥

धर्मप्रियांस्तान् सुमहानुभावान्

दान्तोऽप्रमत्तश्च समर्चयेयाः ।

The virtuous, O Bharata, are those who act for the welfare of all, who are possessed of great courage and who are ready to give their all, even their very lives, for the benefit of others. They are free from lust and wrath. Do thou, therefore, always wait upon them and seek instruction from them.

Gain and loss, weal and woe, the agreeable and the disagreeable, life and death, are equal in the eyes of those men of firm tread, engaged in the pursuit of (divine) knowledge and devoted to the path of tranquillity and righteousness.

Restraining thy senses and without yielding to heedlessness, worship those high-souled persons who bear such love for virtue.

SHANTI PARVA (Ch. CLVIII, 25-28, 33-34)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

ONCE at Dakshineswar one of the devotees—an impertinent one, though very sincere at heart—began to raise various objections to what the Master was telling him. When he thus went on marshalling his counter arguments although the Master explained the subject under discussion thrice or four times, the Master said with a mild scolding, "How obstinate you are, my boy! You don't accept this even though I myself say so!" Now a tender chord of the young man's heart was touched. "Of course," he said, "when you say so I cannot but accept. My previous objections were only for argument's sake."

Arjuna's Devotion to his Guru

At this the Master said with a smile of satisfaction on his lips, "Do you know what the devotion for the Guru is like? Whatever the Guru will say, the pupil must *realise* at once. It was Arjuna who had this kind of devotion. One day, Sri Krishna, while roaming about in a chariot along with Arjuna, looked up to the sky and said, 'Behold! What a nice flight of pigeons there!' Arjuna at once turned his eyes to that direction and exclaimed, 'Really, friend! Very beautiful pigeons, indeed!' But the very next moment Sri Krishna looked again and said, 'No, friend! They are not pigeons, it seems.' Arjuna, too, saw again and said, 'True,

dear, they are not pigeons.' Now, try to understand the meaning of this. A devout worshipper of truth as Arjuna was, he did not possibly assent to whatever Sri Krishna said, simply for flattering him. But he had such an unflinching faith in Sri Krishna that he at once *perceived* actually whatever Sri Krishna said."

Guru, as a Divine Aspect, is but One. Nevertheless the pupil must have unwavering faith in his own spiritual guide. The illustration of Hanuman with regard to this.

If it is settled that the Guru, who is mentioned in the scriptures as capable of removing the darkness of ignorance, is a Divine Aspect, as shown above, then simultaneously with it this other truth also has to be accepted that there are not many Gurus but only One Guru. Although the bodies, the instruments through which the Divine Aspect manifests Itself, are different, yet your Guru and our Guru are not different entities altogether. As a Divine Aspect, they are but One. As an illustration of this fact, we can cite from the Mahabharata the story of Ekalavya who chose with great devotion the clay image of Drona for his teacher and learned the art of archery from it. Though this abstract concept of the Guru stands to reason, nevertheless a thorough understanding of it requires much time and practice;

and inspite of a thorough understanding, the pupil has no other go but to worship his Guru in the person through whom he is favoured with the Divine Grace. In order to illustrate this, the Master would cite the story of Hanuman, the glowing example of faith and devotion, as follows.

Once in the battle of Lanka, Sri Ramachandra and his brother Lakshmana were entangled in a noose of snakes by the great hero, Meghanāda. In order to escape from this they thought of Garuda, the eternal enemy of snakes. Garuda came in no time; and at the very sight of him the terror-stricken snakes ran away helter skelter in all directions. Sri Ramachandra too, being pleased with the devoted Garuda, assumed before him the form of Vishnu, his chosen Deity, whom he always worshipped, and thus he was made to understand that the same Vishnu was then incarnated as Rama. But Hanuman did not like Sri Ramachandra taking the form of Vishnu and anxiously waited for his reverting back to Rama form. Sri Ramachandra at once understood this dissatisfaction of Hanuman. He had no sooner dismissed Garuda and again assumed the form of Rama than he asked Hanuman, "Well my child, why didst thou have that sort of dissatisfaction by seeing my Vishnu form? Possessed of great wisdom, as thou art, it is not unknown to thee that Rama and Vishnu are but One." "True, my Lord," replied Hanuman with

deep modesty, "there is no difference whatever between Vishnu, the Lord of Lakshmi and Rama, the Lord of Janaki, inasmuch as the same Supreme Self has taken both the forms. But nevertheless my soul always hankers after Rama, the Lord of Janaki. He alone is my Be-all and End-all,—as I am blessed with God-realisation through this very form. As the Supreme Self, there is no difference between the Lord of Lakshmi and the Lord of Janaki. Nevertheless the Lotus-eyed Rama is my Be-all and End-all."

Guru, the Divine Power, exists potentially in all souls.

Thus the Guru is a Power of the Divine Mother; and in as much as this Power is inherent in all souls, either in manifested or in unmanifested form, the devoted aspirant ultimately attains to a state where this Power manifests through his own self and explains to him all the profound truths regarding matters spiritual. In order to remove doubts about spiritual problems, the aspirant has no necessity at this stage to approach a second person. The Lord teaches Arjuna in the Gita, "When thy intellect crosses beyond the taint of illusion, then shalt thou attain to indifference regarding things heard and things yet to be heard" (II, 52). When your mind will have no business any more with such things as are worth hearing or spoken of in the scriptures, you will go beyond them all and understand everything

by yourself. Such is the state that the aspirant then attains to.

The Master's Teaching—'Ultimately the mind itself becomes the Guru.'

It is with reference to this state that the Master would say, "Ultimately the mind itself becomes the Guru or acts as the Guru. A human Guru whispers the *mantram* (the secret formula to be repeated by the pupil) into the ear, while the Guru of the Universe utters the *mantram* (infuses spiritual energy) into the soul itself. But there is a world of difference between the mind in that exalted state and the mind in the ordinary level. In that sublimated form the mind becomes purged of all impurities and consists of pure *sattwa* and thus serves as an instrument for the manifestation of the higher divine power, while the mind in the ordinary level is averse to God, remains absorbed in sense enjoyments and is always swayed by the passions of anger, lust, etc."

The Guru is a Match-maker.

The Master would say, again, "The Guru is a match-maker, as it were. So long as Sri Radha is not united with Sri Krishna, their common friend who serves as their match-maker, knows no rest. Similarly, the Guru has no rest until the aspirant is united with the Deity. Thus the great Guru leads the pupil by the hand to higher and higher spiritual realms, and lastly taking him before the Deity, says, 'Look here, my pupil,' and disappears immediately."

The Guru finally merges into the Deity. The Guru, the Deity and the Devotee—the Three in One and the One in the Three.

One day, a devoted pupil heard the Master speak in this strain, and being grieved at heart at the unavoidable separation from the Guru, said, "Where does the Guru go then, sir?" The Master replied, "The Guru merges in the Deity. The Guru, the Deity and the devotee—the Three are in One and the One in the Three."

SELF-LABELLING IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

IF a person classifies himself in advance as meant for a particular type of discipline, the path of devotion for example, is he doomed to failure from the start? Supposing he is wrong, as there is great reason for his being so in the earlier stages, how far will he stray before he is forced to stop, or is imperceptibly pushed into the right path?

What will be the nature of the stopping force and how long can it operate? Whence can correction proceed and how would the various paths look in his eyes when a few corrections have been made in his ideas regarding them? In the following sections we propose to discuss some of these questions very briefly.

Necessary and Helpful

We shall begin by admitting that this kind of self-labelling is not at all wrong. Nay, it is almost indispensable. This can be found out by analysing the ideas governing any action of ours. We decide upon a particular course of action, an excursion for example, only when we have come to the conclusion that it is helpful to us in many ways, that we can recoup our physical and mental vigour thereby, and that financially or in other respects we are in a state of fitness for undertaking it. Were we too poor to meet the necessary extra expenses or too ailing in body to move about with ease, such fitness would be lacking and we would not attach the excursion-label to ourselves. Prior to every action, then, there must be our sense of our fitness for it in as great a measure as our sense of the benefit that will come out of it. And self-labelling is nothing but this preparatory mental process. It not only starts us on our spiritual struggles, but also gives us, in proportion to its deep-rootedness, a tenacity of purpose without which success is impossible. Spiritual life is not smooth any more than worldly life is; and he who avoids the latter for its troubles and resorts to the former, believing it to be an escape-mechanism giving out sprays of cool and blissful waters, will get his due disillusionment the moment conflicts begin within his mind. And for this inevitable and healthy, though painful, internal churning he usually has not to wait long. Here,

as elsewhere, success obeys the same law, namely, that resistance of any kind can be got over only by a persistent application of well directed energy in adequate amounts. Self-labelling is advantageous since it can act as a spur and goad the aspirant into activity along his chosen channel when adverse circumstances threaten to drive him back or whirl him out of it. The conviction that he is born for a certain kind of discipline and equipped by nature herself with the necessary qualifications for it, is bound to infuse fresh courage into him in moments of depression and, to that extent, prepare the ground for his eventual success.

Meanings Naturally Veiled

What is the harm in self-labelling then? The harm lies not in the mental process as such, but in the meaning that the aspirant gives to the label. Here, however, another difficulty crops up. We may preach a theory that words have, or ought to have, definite senses; but actual experience shows that they are not all as definite as we often imagine them to be. For example, we are all familiar with the word "rose" as well as the kind of flower meant by it. Closing our eyes let us call up the figure of a rose. Normally we are forced to get a picture of a particular flower in a particular setting, for which latter the simple word "rose" contains no clue at all. The picture may consist of a bouquet in which the rose, big or small, occupies a place, erect or slanting;

or a garden from which it is being plucked for us; or a prayer hall at whose altar it has already been offered. No two of us are likely to get the same picture, though the word "rose", according to our theory or our dictionary, can have only a definite meaning and no other. Here it may be argued that the differences are due to the peculiar mental make-up of the people concerned, that each person merely adds on to the indisputably definite sense of the word "rose" the factors of size, position, locality or value, just to give some beauty and completeness to the picture. Granting this, to avoid quarrelling over words, we yet find that every "definite" sense is destined in this way to be veiled, adorned and exhibited in a suitable background according to the varying mental antecedents of the thinkers. If this is true in the case of the simple idea of a flower, how much more must be the veilings and the trappings, the high lights and the shadows contributed by the aspirant's mind in the case of words like devotion, purity, or discrimination, commonly used for purposes of self-labelling!

Note, Reason and Check

And if it is thus in the very constitution of the mind to add to, and take away from, the definite meanings of its labels, in its own peculiar fashion, how is the aspirant to proceed at all? The difficulty must certainly be the greater in the earlier stages when introspection has either not been attempted seriously, or has not become powerful

enough to detect the hidden sources of distortion. We cannot expect a person first to acquire such power, and *then begin* mind control; for part of the intended control consists precisely in the acquisition of this very power. This leaves only one course open before him, without any alternative: he must attach the label which appeals to him most, devotion for example, assign to it what sense he can at his level of culture, and try sincerely to put into practice as many of the implications as come within the range of his limited and untrained vision. The danger in self-labelling is thus seen to lie neither in the act of labelling nor in the imperfect meaning with which the aspirant starts. It can lie, and does lie, only in his coming to believe that the original meaning with which he commences his practice is the correct meaning for all time, and in his becoming obsessed by it or enamoured of it, so that he bars the road to the entry of new meanings into his mind afterwards. By such barring he gets stuck up in his chosen channel instead of floating steadily forward with its current. He has, therefore, to know from the start, that the initial assignment of meanings must be left open to revision and alteration, and always remain in the proper mood to receive new meanings that his daily contacts with his environment may suggest to him. To avoid slipping into a vicious circle, let us accept at this stage that, other things remaining the same, the aspirant must expect greater and

greater clarification regarding his chosen path, as his practice becomes intense, *take note* of the suggestions that may from time to time throw fresh light on, or even challenge, his original code of values and behaviour, and *check* his experiences by means of tests with which he has become familiar. Whatever be the path chosen, these are indispensable; and self-labelling becomes a danger only without them.

Leaving to Nature

Since each aspirant, then, has of necessity to begin work with the imperfect and often distorted notions that he has come to possess, through what steps can he achieve an expansion of his heart till "its knots are cut asunder and all doubts are destroyed?" Some believe that he must leave it to nature to accomplish all evolution, and that only harm can result from attempts to force the pace of progress through so-called spiritual practices. Who will care to mar the normal blossoming of a rose bud by pulling open its petals a day or two in advance and yet expect the beauty and the fragrance to remain unaffected? This reasoning is surely sound, if it can stand searching analysis and show that it is not the outcome of sheer laziness and an unwillingness to exert on any account. There is only one point to be noted regarding it, and that of course makes much difference. Nature in the case of the plant does not show whims or partiality or an offended mood, as human beings consider it a privilege

to do, but effects growth methodically, utilising to the full the benefit of its environment. Does every aspirant's mind react similarly to its surroundings, and without being influenced by prejudices, welcome the food and light available at every stage of its progress? If it does, then nothing *more* need be done. The problem before the raw beginner, however, is—as we have pointed out before—not how to regulate himself from that state of open-mindedness and freedom from prejudice, but how to reach such an advanced state itself.

Allow Free Play

Some wish to extend the analogy of the plant and argue a step further. Plants, they say, do not care to take in *all* the elements that are found mixed up in their environments. Untutored by any one, they accept and reject in accordance with their peculiar inner necessities, and they never make mistakes. Similarly man also must have his freedom to grow unhindered by theories as to the various new factors which must be introduced into his daily life to ensure success. Just as it was admitted that, in the earlier stages of his practice at least, the aspirant can label himself, and assign meanings which appeal to him, why should we not admit also that he can, without any danger, continue his accustomed ways of responding to the men and things around him? If he has no inclination to hunt for a spiritual teacher or has a repugnance to get into any group of avowed spiritual enthusiasts with

their common "drills" and other exercises, why should not such inclinations be recognised as essential or inseparable qualities of his mental make-up, by retaining which alone the bud of spirituality can blossom in him? Loves and hatreds constitute the very basis of all actions; why should spiritual life be considered an exception, where success, it is to be assumed, depends upon the rooting out of these fundamental emotions? Let all emotions have free play. The environment combined with the natural inner drive to secure pleasure will invariably set up healthy reactions; and out of the resultant boiling and cooling of the mind, Time can be trusted to produce and bring up the cream of illumination. There is no necessity, therefore, for deliberately altering one's code of values or to remain scanning the horizon expecting to bask in the glory of the new meanings said to rise above it. Illumination, after all, is not the total arrived at by adding up the bits of meanings thrown up from the recesses of the mind, like the skulls thrown up by the grave-digger in *Hamlet*.

What Environment and What Drive?

To this type of reasoning one might reply by telling that neither can illumination be considered as the terminal state of a life-period of drifting with the original loves and hatreds over which no systematic control is attempted. Environment and the inner drive are certainly enough to pave the way for

illumination provided they are made to include more than what the objector intends. If beautiful landscape, educational institutions, productive concerns, chances of money-making or of political conquest are factors of environment acting upon the inner drive, we have to concede the same place to factors like the presence and teachings of saints, hypotheses relating to the desirability and possibilities of mind control, the too obvious defects of a civilisation based upon greed and aggrandisement, and so forth, also. Truly speaking, to the man of average education the whole world, with its broad avenues and varied departments should constitute the environment. He has no doubt to commence his life-pilgrimage in earnest from a relatively narrow end of some avenue, laid out through some department or other; but progress here, as in other walks of life, requires that he should keep his eyes open, note the advantages that can be secured by entering richer departments, and alter his responses accordingly. The inner drive, which is nothing but another name for life-energy, should be directed not merely into a few channels which appeared smooth and capable of giving some satisfaction at some time, but into those channels, into those avenues and those departments which maturer reasoning shows, and actual experience proves, to be capable of rounding up the personality and tuning it to a divine key. The inner drive, then, ought to this extent be

a "reasoned" drive, regulated by a desire to know more and a readiness to expand the outlook by suitable practical steps. Everywhere, people wish to assert their individuality nowadays, and it would be a pity if in spiritual life alone they think it an honour to drift and to boil and to cool as environments dictate. And this, too, under the false notion that environments, strictly speaking, cannot include the precepts and example of sages and seers and the indispensable items of spiritual practice common to the various paths described by the scriptures!

Stimulation through Jealousy

What is the harm if a person is prepared to put up with the dishonour, if there be any, consequent upon leaving it to the environment to push him along the path of progress? Is there no hope for him at any time, anywhere; and is he doomed to welter for ever in the gloomy regions transcended by the wise? It seems to us that the necessity for such weltering may not arise at all, though some of the mythologies of the world have balanced their eternally blissful heaven by an equally eternal and correspondingly painful hell awaiting the wilfully ignorant. For theoretical purposes it is quite easy to picture a person so incorrigible that he will rather allow every roaring breaker to dash with all its violence against his face than learn to avoid its fury by a prudent dive or make a shift to better environments by a careful skipping into the smoother waters

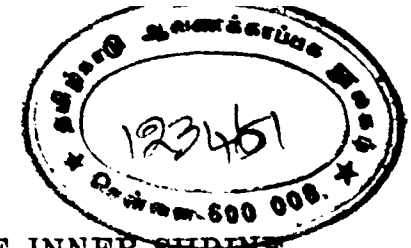
ahead. In practical life, however, such incorrigibility is found not to persist very long. Every aspirant, let us remember, has in him the normal man's equipment of the feelings of jealousy, of rivalry and of competition. For a time he may, as the result of some ill-conceived principle, refrain from voluntarily viewing his accustomed responses critically, and from making suitable adjustments in the light of the suggestions of people longer in the field. But before long, imperceptibly perhaps, but anyway helplessly, he would be forced to alter his methods and even his principles on the continued and inescapable sight of things which can excite these "lower" passions. The heroism with which the open-hearted and the discriminating face their ordeals in life; the patent accuracy of the strides they make as against the halting and awkward wobble characteristic of the drifters; the calmness, the sweetness, the fragrance, the triumph, the glory and the honour witnessed in the case of the former and their opposites in the latter—these and many more, taking place within the immediate surroundings, are bound some day or other to draw the attention of the most obstinately inert and cause in his mind such volcanic eruptions of jealousy that his passive philosophy will soon be deservedly buried too deep for recovery. Competitive spirit, when once aroused, quickly bursts the limits of all previous calculations, and by diverting the inner drive into unexpected avenues, creates a

need for new responses, and in due course effects a considerable healthy widening of the general outlook. The painful struggles which must accompany any such widening cannot be avoided in the least by any delaying tactics; they can only be postponed and precious time wasted meanwhile. Is it advisable for any one to stand aside, marking time and refusing to extend his normal powers of reasoning and discrimination to his spiritual life and activities, while the rest of humanity seems to ignore him and marches steadily onward? What a pity, too, if that waiting is destined to be rudely terminated by the waking up of jealousy and other "lower" passions, uniting to overwhelm him and compel him, as no human teacher would have ordinarily stooped to do, to accept those very methods when such acceptance would have lost all grace owing to the prolonged and shameful refusal!

Awakening through Shocks

Correction of the aspirant's outlook can come through various other forces also. As opposed to the indirect effect of other people's success upon his competitive spirit, it can come through his own direct experience of discomfiture, failure and even disaster. Where there is a lack of voluntary effort, nature supplies the want by administering

"shocks" according to her own peculiar law; and the victim is obliged to think of ways and means to avert them in the future. It may be that shocks cannot be avoided at any stage of spiritual progress; indeed some of the greatest spiritual giants got a good many from their environments. And the truth may also be that the aspirant simply gets the capacity to order his inside in such a manner as not to be affected any shock, when it comes. He may merely learn to soar in such solemn heights that, even from the level of his lowest descent, the rude shocks and the thrilling delights of the ordinary man seem like simple puffs of hot or cold breeze, and cannot in any way frighten or tempt him into modifying the course of his thoughts and actions. Still, the acquisition of this capacity means an immense difference in outlook; and if the ordinary methods of following the suggestion of expert teachers or of comparison of notes with other aspirants will not be adopted, the work done by them with relative smoothness is sure to be forcibly started when a crash or two will have taken place. Pain, like jealousy, can remove inertia. And very aptly does the Gita put down the अति, the afflicted, as the first among those who worship the Lord and yearn for His Grace.



THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE INNER SHRINE

By Sheo Narain Lal Shrivastava, M. A.

LEIBNITZ, who perhaps first familiarised the modern western world with the idea of monads, said that each monad mirrored the whole universe from its own individual standpoint. This was the perception of a grand truth. Every living being, the humblest creature that breathes, mirrors forth to itself in knowledge, the entire objective universe, as far as its capacities permit. To live is to know, to be conscious of a world. How is the living distinguished from the dead? In this that, while the former has knowledge or intelligence, the latter has not. Of the humblest amoeba that lives, it is the privilege to be the knower of a world.

But man alone, of all created beings, enjoys this privilege the most. The universe before man is spread out in knowledge, and is revealed the fuller, the deeper his knowledge grows about it. In knowledge, man holds "the whole choir of heaven and furniture of earth." Since the dawn of human civilisation, the highest and noblest aspiration of man, has been to get ever fuller knowledge. Civilisation, through all this progress of ages, has been marching towards one unseen goal—the attainment of Infinite Knowledge. The spirit of man ever struggles to out-soar the boundaries of the known, and peer into the mysterious unknown

beyond. Religion, which is the expression of the deepest urge within man, is at bottom, the same impulse.

Now, the march for the conquest of knowledge was made in two directions—characteristic broadly speaking of the East and the West; the one investigating the nature of the knower, the Atman, for which exist all knowledge and the objects known; the other pushing its enquiry outward into the world of objects known, in entire segregation from the knower, the Self. The western mind, down from the days of the Greeks, resorted to empirical generalisations in building the edifice of their knowledge; while the Orient, especially India, relied on introspective analysis as the one secure way of coming to ultimate truths. Of course, India made great strides in the empirical sciences also, but she did not cling to these as pathways to the highest Illumination. The knowledge that brought the fullest Illumination to man was the knowledge of the spirit, the Atman. The Hindu sages knew full well that one could not hope to be fully illumined by engaging himself in an endless pursuit of knowledge concerning objects, segregated or divorced from the subject, the knower. The knower is prior to, and exceeds all that is known or could ever be known; consequently

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a knowledge of objects alone could not bring the fullness of wisdom. Hence, the inward search after the Self.

II

Atma-vidya is the crowning glory of India, the highest achievement of her genius, and her most precious gift to the world. The Atman is the ruling conception in Indian thought and the central peg around which is hung the entire fabric of Vedantism and the spiritual culture of India with its characteristic inwardness. We shall now endeavour to lay bare the meaning of Atman in all its connotations and then pass on to consider the steps which lead to this Inner Shrine.

The world, the entire cosmos, as we said before, spreads out in knowledge, which is ever growing, ever developing. Whence is all this knowledge? It must have a source, a matrix. This ever-swelling fountain of knowledge must have a perennial source from which it proceeds. This source is the Atman, the eternal and ultimate knower of all knowledge, the subject of all, that is, the base and support of the entire knowable universe. The Atman knowing, the Atman witnessing, all things are as objects of its knowledge. The intelligible universe presupposes an ultimate and fontal intelligence which comprehends all and can itself be comprehended by nothing. This supreme intelligence was called by the ancient Hindu sages the Atman which knows all but is known by none: "स वेति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता

तमाहुरग्रयम् पुरुषं महान्तम्". It is the light of all lights: "ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः". it shining, everything shines: "तमेव भान्तं अबुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभति".

This supreme intelligence is the principle back of all our intellection, cognition and knowledge. To it we ought to gain access if we want the highest Illumination.

To ascend to this summit of knowledge, this fontal source of intelligence, has been the dearest endeavour of the aspiring sages of India. The Hindu seekers of Truth never gave their assent to the view that the ultimate nature of Reality is comprehensible by reason. They must intuit the very source from which all intelligence proceeds, must go down to the very matrix of all rationality. The modern pan-logistic philosophers of the West have the hardihood to declare that because we, by the very constitution of our minds, are committed to a rational understanding of the universe, the rational is the only way in which the deepest meaning of the universe can be revealed to us. They fail to perceive—and this is their besetting sin—that rational or conceptual knowledge itself presupposes and rests upon a basic intelligence which lends it life and sustenance. The necessity of positing a deeper and more basic intelligence than reason can well be understood if we examine carefully the discursive and relational character of conceptual knowledge. The various concepts that enter into and combine in every single act of

judgment or unit of knowledge, are all isolated, distinct from one another, and appear successively. This process of synthesising the several distinct concepts and welding them together into a single act of judgment presupposes a medium of intelligence which retains each preceding concept and gives birth to the one succeeding it.

The one sovereign way of attaining truth, therefore, that Hindu thinkers teach is to approach or intuitively realise the very fountain-head of knowledge, the Atman—'आत्मानं विजानीय अन्यो वाचो विमुञ्चय'. But how to know the Atman, the Eternal Knower which is the presupposition and condition of all knowledge? As Yajñavalkya exclaims "विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात् येनेदं सर्वं विजनाति ते केन विजानीयात्." The problem of turning back upon the subject or making the subject itself an object of knowledge, has been a vertigo, both to the eastern and western philosophers. Apropos of this difficulty Kant wrote "This I or he or it, this something that thinks, is nothing but the idea of a transcendental subject of thought = x , which is known only through the thoughts that are its predicates, and which, apart from them, cannot be conceived at all. We turn round and round it in a perpetual circle, for we can make no judgment about it, without making use of it in our judgment."

While most western philosophers acquiesced in the thought that the Self is ever inaccessible to our comprehension, the Hindu thinkers

made it their Holy Grail, the dearest object of their quest. If the Self, the ultimate source of knowledge, is not comprehended, we are doomed to ever imperfect knowledge. And they made the comprehension of the Self, the Atman, a possibility not of course through discursive understanding, but through intuition. They found out that the Self can intuit itself. Self-intuition or Atma-jnana was the goal of all their Sadhanas.

III

The attainment of this goal is possible only by a course of practical discipline or persistent Sadhana. Consciousness that goes out, as it were, in the apprehension of the external world, must be indrawn to itself in order to apprehend its own inmost core. An inward regress to the Inner Shrine of the Atman is the characteristic method of approach to Reality, taught by the Upanishadic sages. The Atman, or the ultimate principle of consciousness, which gives life to the mind and the senses, must return to its own unfathomed depths to see its inner light. Atmajnana or Self-intuition is a return journey, the Self's coming to itself from the world of its own manifestation. It is, in the words of the Poet,

"Hushing life's myriad utterance,
Back to the all-enfolding Word."

In order that the inner Light of the soul may shine, the operations of the mind and the senses must be stopped. In the lines we quote below, the Kathopanishad gives a very apt description of how

the inward journey is made, of how we can arrive at the Inner Shrine.

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसि प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।

ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत्तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥”

That is, we should stop the operations of all our faculties by merging the function of each outer faculty into the inner one that conditions it. Speech should be sunk into the mind, the mind into intelligence, and intelligence into the silence of the Atman. We must recede backwards from the last manifestation of intelligence to the Supreme Intelligence, the ultimate principle of consciousness, the Atman, the sanctum sanctorum. In speech all our intelligible experience finds expression; all that is in any way intelligible to us we express in speech, in words. But thought precedes speech and is the condition of speech. Speech has its birth in thought, in the mind. It is the inner thought-activity that in outward manifestation is speech. If therefore thinking is to be intensified, its out-going energy in the form of speech must be conserved by stopping speech. To intensify thought, speech must be stopped. It is a matter of common experience that when we think seriously we remain silent. Similarly, intelligence precedes and is the condition of thought. We have endeavoured above to show that thought-knowledge or conceptual knowledge presupposes a more basic intelligence. It is this intelligence that expresses and manifests itself in thought-forms. This intelligence can be in-

tensified if thought-activity is stopped. But when the pure principle of consciousness back of this intelligence is itself to be manifested, even this veil of intelligence must be removed. Speech, mind, and the intelligence are the corridors through which we must pass in order to reach the Inner Shrine, the Atman. The Upanishads often reiterate the saying that the Atman is concealed in the inmost cavity of our being—‘निहितो गुह्यम्’; and we are asked to meditate thereupon.

This method of attaining spiritual vision is not unknown to the mystics of the West. Eckhart, for example, says “When jointly are the faculties withdrawn from their business, their objects all, then will the word be spoken. Hence it is said ‘In the midst of silence was the secret word spoken unto me.’” To take another example, here is a passage from the Pseudo Dionysius in the fifth century.

“And thou, dear Timothy, in thy intent practice of the mystical contemplations, leave behind both thy senses and thy intellectual operations and all things known by sense and intellect, and all things which are not and which are, and set thyself, so far as may be, to uniting thyself in unknowing with Him who is above all being and knowledge; for by being purely free and absolute, out of self and of all things, thou shalt be led up to the ray of the divine darkness, stripped of all and loosed from all.” Albertus Magnus, the great scholar of the Middle Ages, opens his treatise

De Adhaerendo Deo, with these words: “When St. John says that God is a Spirit and that He must be worshipped in spirit, he means that the mind must be cleared of all images. When thou prayest shut thy doors, i.e., the door of thy senses. Keep them barred and bolted against all phantasms and images. Nothing pleases God more than a mind free from all occupations and distractions.” This state of withdrawal into the inner domain of the Soul, it should be remembered, is not a state of being inferior to the reasoning state, but one immensely superior to it; as Plato says, “The Soul reasons best, when as much as possible, it comes to be alone with itself, bidding good-bye to the body, and to the utmost of its power rejecting communion with it.”

Thus man attains his highest Illumination by realising his own inmost Self. Today the very word religion has become an opprobrium. The modern world is utterly disgusted with its external paraphernalia, its

theological tenets which cannot be brought into harmony with modern science and modern knowledge, and the immense multiplicity of sects into which it has divided mankind. So much so that a modern scientific and philosophical writer, Prof. Whitehead, goes the length of saying that ‘religion is the last refuge of human savagery.’ (Vide Whitehead’s Religion in the Making) Under such circumstances, we cannot too strongly emphasise the importance of placing before the modern world that idea of religion which was given prominence to by the Upanishadic sages, viz., religion as consisting essentially in self-realisation. Religion as self-realisation does away with all undue clinging to external paraphernalia, does away with the blind acceptance of irrational theological dogmas, and makes religion consist solely, in the words of Swami Vivekananda, in “the manifestation of the divinity already in man.” May God help us all to realise the divinity within us!

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By A Disciple

I went to Baghbazar one morning with a basket of flowers. I offered them to the Holy Mother. She was exceedingly happy and began to decorate the image of Sri Ramakrishna. Some of the flowers were blue. She took these in her hands and said, “Ah, what a pretty colour! There was a girl at Dakshineswar named Asha. One

day she came to the temple garden and picked a red flower from a plant with dark leaves. She cried, ‘Dear me! Such a red flower on a plant with dark leaves! Goodness gracious! What a strange creation of God!’ Sri Ramakrishna saw her and said, ‘My dear child! What is the matter with you? Why are you weeping like that?’ She could

hardly utter a word. She was weeping incessantly. Sri Ramakrishna at last pacified her." The Holy Mother was in an exalted mood and said, "Look at these flowers with a blue colour! How can one decorate God without such nice flowers!" She took a handful of flowers and offered these to the image of Sri Ramakrishna. A few flowers dropped at her feet before they were offered to the image. She cried, "Dear me! How they have dropped at my feet before I could offer them to the Lord!" "It is very nice," I said. Then I thought, "To you Sri Ramakrishna may be a higher being; but we do not make any distinction between you and him."

A widowed lady came into the room. I asked the Mother about her. The Mother said, "She has taken initiation from me about a month ago. She had accepted another teacher before. But then she realised her own mistake and came here for initiation. I could not convince her that all teachers are one. The same power of God works through all of them."

After our noon-day meal we were resting for a while when the Mother began to talk to us about her old days at Kamarpukur. "I was quite young," said she, "when one day Sri Ramakrishna came to Kamarpukur from Calcutta with stomach trouble. During the early hours of the morning he would wake up from sleep and tell us about the dishes I should prepare for his noon-day meals. I would

follow his directions. One day, I found that I had not a particular spice with which he wanted the vegetables flavoured. My sister-in-law (Sri Ramakrishna's brother's wife) asked me to cook without that spice. Sri Ramakrishna heard those words and said, "How is it possible? If you have not the spice, procure it from the market. You cannot cook the curry without the spice which is necessary for it. I sacrificed the rich dishes of Dakshineswar, the fish curry and the rice pudding and came here for the flavour of that spice, and you want to deprive me of that! This won't do!" My sister-in-law felt ashamed and sent for the spice. The Brahmani, the woman-teacher of Sri Ramakrishna, was then with us. He addressed her as Mother. I was afraid of her and looked upon her as my mother-in-law. She was very fond of red-peppers. She cooked her own dishes—all hot stuff. She offered me those preparations. I would silently eat these and wipe out the tears from my eyes. She would ask me how I liked those things. I feared her and said, "Very nice!" My sister-in-law would remark, "No, these are very hot." I noticed that the Brahmani was displeased with that remark. She would say, "Why do you say so? My daughter approves of these dishes. Nothing can please you. I will not give you my curries any more." The Holy Mother began to laugh as she narrated these incidents.

The conversation again turned to flowers. The Mother said, "One

day while living at Dakshineswar, I made a big garland of seven strands with some red flowers and some jasmine flowers. I soaked the garland in water in a stone bowl and quickly the buds turned into full blossoms. I sent the garland to the Kali Temple to adorn the image of the Divine Mother. The ornaments were taken off from the body of Kali and she was decorated with the garland. Sri Ramakrishna came to the temple. He at once fell into an ecstatic mood to see the beauty of Kali so much enhanced by the flowers. Again and again he said, 'Ah! These flowers are so nicely set off by the dark complexion of the Divine Mother!' 'Who has made the garland?' he asked. Some one mentioned me. He said, 'Go and bring her to the temple.' As I came near the steps I found some of the male-devotees there, Balaram Babu, Suren Babu and others. I felt extremely bashful and became anxious to hide myself. I took shelter behind the maid and was about to go up the temple by the back steps. Sri Ramakrishna noticed this instantly and said, 'Don't try those steps. The other day a fisherwoman was climbing those steps and slipped. She fractured her bones and died. Come by these front steps.' The devotees heard those words and made room for me. I entered the temple and found Sri Ramakrishna singing, his voice trembling with love and emotion." A few women-devotees entered the room and the conversation stopped here. It was time for me

to take leave. Again the Mother began to talk about God-realisation. She said, "Do you know, my child, what it is like? It is just like candy in the hand of a child. Some people beg the child to part with it. But he does not care to give it to them. Still he easily hands it over to another whom he likes. A man performs utmost austerity throughout his whole life to realise God but he does not succeed whereas another man gets his realisation practically without any effort. It depends upon the Grace of God. He bestows His Grace upon anyone He likes. Grace is an important thing."

The Holy Mother intended to visit our home at Ballygunj today. The arrangement had been made yesterday. We have purchased for her a new set of things, a small rug, mat, marble cups and plates, etc. We had no sleep during the night; such was the thrill of our joy. It was arranged that the Mother would come in the afternoon. S.....went to Baghbazar in the morning and waited there to inform us, if necessary, of any change in the time of her coming to our place. We finished our ordinary routine work early in the day and eagerly awaited her arrival. The small rug was spread for the Holy Mother. Flowers were kept around it. The whole house was made pure by sprinkling Ganges water about. We made flower garlands and bouquets. We were eagerly looking

forward to her arrival. At last we heard the rumbling sound of her carriage and came downstairs. The carriage stopped at the door. She had been looking at us with sweet and laughing eyes. No sooner did she get down from the carriage than all became eager to prostrate before her.

The Holy Mother was accompanied by Golap-Ma, Nalini, Radhu and a few monks and Brahma-charins. I escorted her to the room kept apart for her and prostrated. The Mother said, "Have you finished your meals, my darling? I tried my utmost to hurry up; but it was not possible for me to come earlier." She caressed me by touching the chin. I had no time to spend with her. I had to cook a few sweets.

A gramophone was being played upstairs. In the midst of my work, I snatched a few moments and went to see the Mother. She was very happy to hear the gramophone. "What a wonderful machine!" she said, and was as happy as a child. It was a very warm day. She lay on a straw mattress in the verandah and others were seated by her side. A marble tumbler with iced-water was placed near her. She was sipping it now and then. She saw me and cried out, "Hallo! Come here and take a little iced-water. The day is warm." I drank some water and felt refreshed. I was in a hurry, for it seemed almost impossible to finish the work.

The offerings were placed in the adjoining room after dusk. The Mother asked Golap-Ma to offer them to God. She said, "Why should I do so when you are here?" The Holy Mother herself came to the room to offer the food and began to praise the various preparations arranged before her. We were all happy at her joy. After the offering was over the Mother and other guests sat down for their meals. She finished her meal before the others. She sat on a reclining chair in the porch and said to me, "Where is my betel-leaf?" I had been waiting upon other guests, but I hurried up and gave her the betel-leaf. I was ashamed to find that she had to ask for it. I said to Sumati, "Why did you not wait near her with the betel-leaf? You saw me busy with other things." After a while the Mother found me alone and said with tenderness, "You could not rest even for a moment. You were very busy. Come to our place one day and bring your mother." My mother was with us that day and it was her good fortune to meet the Holy Mother.

It was time to take leave. The Holy Mother was unwilling to go by a motor car. Once the car she had been riding in ran over a dog. But it would be very late at night to reach Baghbazar by a horse-carriage. That would inconvenience everybody. She agreed at last. With hearty blessings for us all, she set out for Baghbazar.

ANANDA-BRAHMA VADA—II

By Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M. A.

(Continued from previous issue)

Physical Plane of Knowledge and Materialistic Conception of Brahman

BHRIGU, who was yearning to know the true character of Brahman, was first instructed by his revered father to "will to know" by means of necessary self-discipline (*Tapasya*). As a result of his first course of moral, intellectual and spiritual self-discipline, Bhrigu arrived at a materialistic conception of Brahman. In this lowest plane of philosophical thought, the inherent demand of his reason for the ultimate cause of all phenomena and for the fundamental unity underlying all diversities, was apparently satisfied by the general conception of one objective Matter, which was found to be the source, the substance and the resting place of all particular objects of experience including the living bodies. In this plane the dependence of the thinking, feeling and willing powers upon the physical organism appears to be so real and essential, that the knowing subject may naturally be led to regard the physical body as the self of man and the mental functions as evolved out of it. The life and mind cannot function except in a sound body, but the body remains even when the life and mind cease to function, and is reduced to pure

Matter. Hence it is concluded that the body is the ground of the life and mind. The physical organism, again, is nothing but the transformation of food (*anna*), and food is nothing but Matter. Thus, as the diversities of the inorganic world are merely different forms in which Matter appears, so also the diversities of living, moving and thinking beings grow out of and depend upon Matter. Matter is found to be the only permanent entity in this changing world. Hence Matter, which we experience as food (*anna*) for our body, senses, mind and reason and on which we depend for our existence, must be accepted as the Supreme Reality, Brahman. To the human soul in this plane of self-development, Brahman reveals Itself as Matter, the world appears purely material.

It is to be observed that in the plane of thought in which the knowing subject identifies itself with the physical organism, it cannot help accepting sense experience as the most reliable source of knowledge about the true nature of objects and as the basis of all inferential knowledge. In the speculations of this plane the physical organism of the knowing subject stands at the centre of the objective world, determines its outlook upon

Reality and practically serves as the standard of truth. What we call scientific knowledge of the present age has scarcely transcended this plane. But Bhrigu, having reached the ultimate ground and unity that could be comprehended in this plane, found that the inner urge of his reason was not satisfied and he could not feel himself self-fulfilled. So he approached his father again and wanted further light upon the true character of Brahman.

Vital Plane of Knowledge and Conception of Brahman as Prana

The sage Varuna instructed the truth-seeking son to undergo a further course of deeper self-discipline and meditation. He remarked that practically speaking *Tapas* itself was Brahman, for Brahman revealed itself to *Tapas*. Bhrigu obeyed his father's instruction, attempted by *Tapas* to dive deeper into Truth, found out the inadequacy of his present conclusion and ascended to a higher plane of thought. This time he learnt to look upon the objective world from the Vital plane, and conceived *Prana* or Life as constituting the true character of Brahman. In this plane, matter appears to him to be nothing but food and embodiment of Life, which is the Reality for which matter exists. It is Life which, being immanent in matter, determines all its changes and transformations for its own self-manifestation and self-development. The uniformity of changes and operations in the material world, the order and harmony found in

all its departments, the organic inter-relation among the different orders of phenomena, the development of the various species of beings in accordance with definite laws,—all these indicate a central immanent Life-Power controlling and systematising all operations of matter and organising the apparent plurality of material objects into a living cosmos. As Life immanent in the minute particle of plant, animal or human seed (protoplasm) is the cause of the self-development, self-multiplication, self-organisation and self-adaptation of the plant, animal and human body, so there must be a Universal Life-Power which is the cause of similar operations found in all the departments of the universe and the systematisation of all these operations of all these departments into development of One whole Universal Organism.

Not only this; the different orders of apparently lifeless material objects in the world, when viewed closely, are found to be in different stages of preparation for the manifestation of Life, which, though immanent, is concealed in them. The inner changes going on in them are in the direction of evolution of Life, which becomes manifested in unveiled forms in organic nature. The different orders of conscious and self-conscious creatures, on the other hand, represent higher and higher stages of Life's self-manifestation. Before the appearance of diversities, Life had been in an unmanifested state. It is the inner law of Life, which regulates the courses

of transformation and development of its diverse manifestations and appears as diverse laws of nature, viewed from the standpoints of the different departments of its manifestations. At the time of dissolution, all particular forms of existence lose themselves in the undivided (*avibhakta*), unmanifested (*avyakta*) existence of one Life. This viewpoint led Bhrigu to conclude that *Prana* or Life satisfied the requirements of the definition of Brahman and was therefore the Absolute Reality. To the knowing subject in this plane of self-development, the objective Reality, Brahman, revealed itself as *Prana*.

In the Physical plane dead matter was found to be the source and substance of all objects of experience and was therefore conceived to be the Absolute Reality. But no satisfactory explanation was obtained for the evolution of life, consciousness, will and reason from dead and inert matter and even for the uniformity of changes, the wonderful adjustment of forces and the reign of laws in the material world. In the plane of Life this explanation is found out. The very conception of Life is that it is a self-evolving, self-multiplying, self-organising and self-preserving Reality. By the power inherent in itself, it passes from the unembodied, unmanifested state to the embodied manifested state, from the potential state to the actual state, from the state of simplicity and homogeneity to the state of complexity and heterogeneity, from the

state of relative incoherence to the state of greater and greater coherence. In the course of its self-development, Life becomes conscious and rational. Thus, if Life is recognised as the real essence of matter, the phenomenal world can be more satisfactorily explained. Moreover, the knowing subject experiences the objective world as more akin to itself; the gulf between the two is much narrowed down, it finds greater peace in its knowledge of the world.

Mental Plane of Knowledge and Conception of Brahman as Mind

Bhrigu communicated the result of his meditation to his father; but the latter could not accept it as the final conclusion. He instructed the persevering son to further purify his body and mind, to make his intelligence still more transparent and to make a still deeper inquiry into the real character of Brahman. Finding that he had not yet attained the ultimate truth, Bhrigu engaged himself in stricter self-discipline and deeper meditation. The fallacy of his present conclusion became clear to him and he rose to a higher plane of knowledge. He found out that the Universal Life, which manifested itself in the sublime and beautiful system of the harmoniously adjusted plurality of diverse orders of inorganic, organic, sentient and rational beings, which regulated all the forces of nature and organised their activities with a deeply conceived design for the achievement of some ulterior pur-

pose, could not be of the nature of an unconscious Power blind to the past and the future, ignorant of the ideal to be realised and unaware of the contrivances adopted. It must be of the nature of a conscious will, a Mind, realising itself through Life and its functions. When an ideal is found to determine the character of the actual, what ought to be is found to regulate the course of what is. When the present is not only an inevitable product of the past, but also a preparation for the future, it must be inferred that a Mind is working behind the process. Further, Life can evolve out of itself in course of its self-development only those things which are potentially present in its nature from the very beginning. Accordingly, Mind could not have been evolved out of it, if Mind had not existed in an unmanifested form in the essential nature of Life itself. Hence, Life which develops itself into Mind must have been a mental reality in its inner character. As Life as an inherent ideal determines the course of development of apparently inorganic matter, so Mind as an inherent ideal determines the course of development of Life. Thus, Mind is the essence of Life, and so of matter.

It also becomes obvious in this plane of thought that all objects of experience—animate and inanimate, sentient and insentient,—become intelligible only in terms of Mental categories. If the characteristics which the Mind contributes or attributes to those objects be with-

drawn, they become characterless entities or non-entities. The objective world therefore appears as a Mental system (*Manomaya*), existing for, by and to the Mind. It owes its existence to the free, conscious, self-manifesting activity of thought and will of Mind, which manifests itself in this apparently pluralistic universe progressively through the inorganic, organic, sentient and self-conscious stages, with the design for the realisation of the Ideal immanent in its essential nature. The world process, in all its bewilderingly diverse departments, is governed by the same Mind and directed towards the same ultimate end. When the final purpose will be achieved, the universe will exhibit itself as One Mental Organism, with its ideal fully realised. Mind is thus the material cause, the efficient cause, the final cause and the formal cause of the phenomenal world. These considerations made Bhṛigu conclude that Mind is Brahman.

In the Physical plane, the world of experience appeared to be governed by the law of phenomenal causation and to be the playground of physical, mechanical, chemical, electrical and magnetic forces without any aim or ideal to achieve. Viewed from the Vital plane, the phenomenal causation and the operation of all these forces appeared to be determined from within by a central Life-power in accordance with the law of Biological causation. Here Teleology was discovered in the heart of the mechanism of the universe.

But when reason ascends to the Mental plane, Biological causation also is found to be subordinate to Rational, Moral and Aesthetic causation. The universe is conceived not merely as a living organism, but a rational, moral and aesthetic order, in which all the parts are so determined and developed, all the forces are so governed and adjusted, that the whole system may advance towards the realisation in itself of the ultimate ideal of Perfect Truth, Perfect Beauty and Perfect Goodness. The highest ideal which the human mind seeks to realise for its own perfection appears in this plane to be the ideal immanent in the universe and determining the course of the world-process.

Thus it appears that one Supreme Mind, by the infinite and irresistible power of His thought and will, is manifesting Himself in innumerable inorganic, organic and sentient beings with the differentiating characteristics of each of them, and is governing them all in order to realise through them the ideals which are operating within Him. The conception of such a Supreme Mind involves the idea of Personality, in as much as this Mind is self-conscious and self-determining, distin-

guishing Himself from, though immanently operating in, His phenomenal self-manifestations. It is evident that this Mind is omnipotent and omniscient, there being nothing to limit His thought and will.

In this plane, the subject finds the Absolute Reality very much allied to itself. It is conscious of itself as a Mind—as a thinking, feeling and willing being, longing for truth, beauty and goodness; it experiences in this plane that the Absolute Reality—the ground and substance of the universe—is also of the nature of Mind,—that thought, emotion and will, working for the realisation of truth, beauty and goodness, constitute the essential character of the Absolute Reality, Brahman. The man inquiring into the nature of Brahman becomes aware at this stage that he, as a finite mind, stands face to face with an Infinite Mind, and that no real world of space and time with bewildering diversities separates him from Brahman. For the Infinite Mind constitutes the very substance of these diversities. The physical world becomes transparent to him and shows everywhere the operations of the Mind and the Hand of Providence.

(To be concluded)

GAUTAMA THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

By Swami Ranganathananda

THE month of Vaisakh is sanctified by the birth-events of two of the greatest of India's sons—Gautama Buddha and Sankaracharya. If any two personalities of ancient Indian history have claimed the largest attention and unstinted praise of modern thinkers, it is these two individuals. The thoughts and lives of these two personalities have been dynamic factors in their own times; but today, under more auspicious circumstances, they seem to exert a still greater influence on contemporary thought and life. What is that enduring element in them which seems to defy time itself and what is the nature of its appeal to the modern mind? We shall try to find an answer to this question in the following pages.

It is only a few decades since India has awakened from her deluded estimates of Buddha's teachings. A section of Indian orthodoxy went to the extent of painting Buddha as the incarnation of a demon. And for a thousand years his teachings were viewed with suspicion. It was Sankara who showed—mildly though—that Buddha and the Vedanta teach nearly the self-same truth. Still later, in the thirteenth century, Jayadeva sang his praise as an incarnation of Vishnu. But the real place of Buddha's teachings among those of India's galaxy

of saints and sages has begun to be correctly understood and appreciated only since the beginning of the nineteenth century. And this much-desired change of attitude was in great part due to India's contact with western culture and the consequent adoption of an evolutionary view of Indian history.

What is Buddha's place in this evolutionary setting? What needs did he come to fulfil and how did he fulfil them? To answer this question we have to go further back and consider the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads. The Vedic age is marked by an excessive insistence on the performance of sacrifices bearing their fruits in the shape of felicities in heaven. But the development of philosophical thought in the Upanishads is marked by a critical estimate of the value of these sacrifices as well as the shifting of emphasis to an ethical life subserving a philosophical goal. The sanction of ethics is sought in a lofty metaphysics. In place of the imaginations of the early Vedic Rishis in their efforts at chartering the heavens, the Upanishads substitute a keen and penetrating search after Truth and Reality following a most rigorous and scientific procedure. Thus there emerges the sublime philosophy of the Upani-

shads based on a rigorous ethical life—*Sadhanachatushtaya* and *Tattwa Vichara*.

But the Upanishadic protests against Vedic ritualism could not make themselves felt and hence we find Sri Krishna in the second chapter of the Gita reviving again that protest, but this time transforming the whole scheme of Vedic ritualism by the magic wand of his philosophy into a wonderful and effective system of ethics. The Karma Marga is transformed into the Karma Yoga. The great achievement of Sri Krishna may be said to be this—that he exalted the ethical life far above the life wedded to barren theology and formalism and based it firmly on philosophical foundations. In the whole history of India this struggle of life to rise above theology and formalism can be witnessed time and again and the appearance of great men at such epochs has effected this release.

After the time of Sri Krishna, life in India found itself again under the ancient theology. Ritualism asserted itself and vain disputations and wranglings combined with caste exclusiveness became the order of the day. This Vedic formalism and social exclusiveness have come down to our own times invigorated by the touches which the Mimamsakas gave them. This can be characterised as the static element in Indian orthodox tradition. At various epochs the dynamic element has asserted itself from the side of philosophy. But often

philosophy and the philosopher who have gone to release life from this crushing tradition have both been drenched and soiled in this traditional flood. Sankara, for instance, who may be considered to be the greatest opponent of this tradition in later times, and who has no doubt succeeded much in making philosophy the guide of life,—even he has been caught up in the meshes of this traditionalism. Probably, the time was not ripe for such a change; more favourable circumstances were necessary and these are available only today,—circumstances brought about by the modern developments of scientific ways of life and a vigorous and critical thought based on scientific methods. The philosophical spirit in India today has this task before it.

The only enchanting figure in the historic period who seems to have successfully, for a time at least, resisted this tendency and lifted the crushing burden on Indian life, is Buddha. The ethics of the Upanishads and the teaching of the Gita find a brilliant echo in him. By eschewing all disputations and wranglings over mysteries and by providing a simple and wholesome ethical code Buddha gave freedom to the individual to grow. And by ignoring caste distinctions and disabilities and by a democratic appeal he paved the way for the gathering of India's scattered forces and bringing them to one focus under Asoka. Historically, this was the most glorious period of Indian

national life, and Buddha was its inspirer.

"Do good, and be good," so teaches Buddha. The ritualist offered temptations to go to heaven as the motive of all work. Sri Krishna discards this motive as petty—'Kripanāh phalahetavah,' and substitutes in its place self-purification and the good of the world.

'Sacrifice, charity and austerity are purifying to the wise.'

'As do the unwise, attached to work, act, so should the wise act, O descendent of Bharata, (but) without attachment, desirous of the guidance of the world.*' Buddha takes up this idea and works it up to its logical conclusion. 'For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many,' he dedicates his life. Here there is no question even of personal salvation. He was willing to give up his life to save even a poor goat. His compassion knew no limits. His heart embraced not only men but also animals and even trees and plants. This utter self-abnegation and expansion of heart embracing every aspect of creation in a flood of love and compassion is the greatest contribution of Buddha to the thought of the world. No character in the history of the world can be compared to him in this. It is this aspect of his life and teaching that is attracting the attention of Western thinkers. American Humanism has

* Gita, Chapter 18 verse 5, and Chapter 3, verse 25.

drawn much of its inspiration from his personality.

In India itself, as Sir Radhakrishnan says, Buddha has begun to be an attraction and an inspiration to all her intellectuals. Today when a fresh attempt is being made to awaken India from her long sleep and start her on the road to progress and prosperity, the importance of Buddha's teaching of unselfish love and service,—the good of the many, the happiness of the many,—is increasingly being recognised. His life and example are supplying the driving power for all humanitarian activities. Indian thinkers are unanimous in their opinion that India must understand and follow Buddha if she is to come to her full stature. Says Swami Vivekananda: "It was the great Buddha, who never cared for the Dualist gods, and who has been called an atheist and materialist, who yet was ready to give up his body for a poor goat. That Man set in motion the highest moral ideas any nation can have. Wherever there is a moral code, it is a ray of light from that Man. We cannot force the great hearts of the world into narrow limits, and keep them there, especially at this time in the history of humanity, when there is a degree of intellectual development such as was never dreamed of even a hundred years ago, when a wave of scientific knowledge has arisen, which nobody, even fifty years ago, would have dreamed of. By trying to force people into narrow limits you degrade them into animals and

unthinking masses. You kill their moral life. What is now wanted is a combination of the greatest heart with the highest intellectuality, of infinite love with infinite knowledge."*

But though today India is admiring Buddha and trying to follow in his footsteps, the attitude was different immediately after his passing away. The Vedic tradition had, at this time, fallen into the hands of the Mimamsakas and the priests invented stories about Buddha making him the incarnation of a demon. India was taught to discard Buddha and his lofty teachings and go back to the old formalism and theology. This she did with consequences, sad and serious, from which we are suffering even today. The selfishness, egoism and narrowness of heart which characterise the misguided section of the orthodox mind in India today, acting as a bar sinister against all social progress and well-being, can be traced back to this banishment of the Buddha Idea from India. Swami Vivekananda writes in one of his epistles: "The Lord once more came to you as Buddha and taught you how to feel, how to sympathise with the poor, the miserable, the sinner, but you heard Him not. Your priests invented the horrible story that the Lord was here for deluding demons with false doctrines! True indeed, but we are the demons, not those that believed. And just as the Jews denied Lord Jesus and are since

* Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume 2, page 145.

that day wandering over the world as homeless beggars, tyrannised over by everybody, so you are bond-slaves to any nation that thinks it worth-while to rule over you."*

Yes, India has paid dearly for her delusion. Today conditions have changed. Science is compelling a revision of all old notions and is paving the way for a changed social and religious outlook. Authority and tradition which pressed down upon philosophical thought and social life are gradually wearing away under the blasting light of scientific criticism. Traditional philosophy and authoritarian ethics have lost all charm for minds cultured in the scientific spirit. What is needed at the present time is a philosophy based on pure reason, and ethics based on the highest metaphysics. Modern Indian thinkers find in Vedanta and in Buddha the necessary inspiration in both these directions. Buddha is no more considered as an alien and a rebel but a bold and fearless thinker and a reformer of Hinduism. Buddha represents the Upanishadic spirit and typifies the ideal of Nishkama Karma of the Gita. To quote Swami Vivekananda again: "Let me tell you, in conclusion, a few words about one man who actually carried this teaching of Karma Yoga into practice. That man is Buddha. He is the one man who ever carried this into perfect practice. All the prophets of the world, except Buddha,

* Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Volume 5, page 12.

had external motives to move them to unselfish action. The prophets of the world, with his single exception, may be divided into two sets, one set holding that they are incarnations of God come down on earth, and the other holding that they are only messengers from God; and both draw their *impetus* for work from outside, expect reward from outside, however highly spiritual may be the language they use. But Buddha is the only prophet who said, 'I do not care to know your various theories about God. What is the use of discussing all the subtle doctrines about the soul? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is.....' He is the ideal Karma Yogi, acting entirely without motive and the history of humanity shows him to have been the greatest man ever born; beyond compare the greatest combination of heart and brain that ever existed, the greatest soul-power that has ever been manifested. He is the first great reformer the world has seen. He was the first who dared to say, 'Believe not because some old manuscripts are produced, believe not because it is your national belief, because you have been made to believe it from your childhood, but reason it all out, and after you have analysed it, then, if you find that it will do good to one and all, believe it, live up to it, and help others to live up to it.' He works best who works without any motive, neither for money, nor for fame, nor for anything else; and

when a man can do that, he will be a Buddha, and out of him will come the power to work in such a manner as will transform the world. This man represents the very highest ideal of Karma Yoga."

The sublime philosophy of the Upanishads and the teachings of Sri Krishna in the Gita on the one hand, and the lofty life and inspiring personality of Gautama Buddha on the other, are the two factors which are behind the foremost movements working for Indian national reconstruction. The Upanishadic teaching of the Oneness of all existence and the Gita emphasis on a life devoted to the realisation of this Basic Unity, are the two undying thoughts which are coming down to us and making an irresistible appeal to the modern mind, inside as well as outside India. The brightest example of their practical application is Buddha himself. It is no wonder, therefore, that in these days, when the nation is attempting to follow the teaching of practical Vedanta, it is looking up to Lord Buddha for inspiration. His life reads as a commentary on these verses of the Gita :

" Even in this life they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose minds are firm-fixed

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥

समं पश्यन्ति सर्वे सत्यवित्तममीश्वरम्

न हिनस्त्यत्मनस्तमानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥

on the sameness of everything. For God is pure and the same to all, and therefore, such are said to be living in God."

" Thus seeing the Lord the same everywhere, he, the sage, does not hurt the Self by the Self, and so goes to the highest goal."

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD ?*

By A. S.

WHEN the Peace Treaty was signed in 1918, the war-weary nations of the world, those that were actively engaged in the fray and even those that were outside it, made a solemn resolution that the fair face of this earth should not henceforth be disfigured by bloody fights which are but the relics of a pre-historic past, of a barbaric and savage stage, but that they should in future devote themselves to constructive work, living as friendly neighbours, settling their differences, if any, by negotiation and arbitration through a neutral body, with legal sanction behind it to enforce its decisions. Wars which have proved to be the most costly and wasteful of human institutions, and the least pardonable survival of less intelligent ages, should be abolished by common consent as a savage anachronism. There should be a new economic planning of life and nations, big and small, should be vouchsafed safety and protection to live in peace and harmony, the service of science being fully utilised in this great endeavour. Many years have not rolled by since this

pious resolve was made, and yet we find ourselves in the titanic grip of a world-depression far more serious than an unusually severe economic crisis, which reveals a permanent and increasingly dangerous disorder in the economic life. The conditions which prevailed in Europe just before the Great War of 1914, are found reflected in the present-day relations among the Powers, though in a different and somewhat modified form. While the League of Nations has done valuable services in educating nations and peoples in the idea of international justice, it has not been able to impose its will on those who are war-minded. It is within our recent knowledge how in the matter of certain disputes between Japan and China, the League has shown itself quite feeble and powerless to afford security against the occurrence of armed conflicts. Hitler and the Nazis gravely threaten the precarious stability of Germany. Alsace-Lorraine will welcome the sound of the German bugle; a new coup in Austria may at any time raise a more desperate crime for co-opera-

* Can We Save Civilisation ? : By Joseph McCabe. The Search Publishing Company Ltd., 6, Old Gloucester Street, London, W. C. 1.

tion with Germany than France can silence; the world will have seriously to consider the industrial development of Russia with a huge body of exalted workers; in Italy and Poland, the thrones of the Dictators are insecure. These in broad outline are the conditions we find at present in the so-called civilised countries of the West. Strange world-weather this for the period of convalescence which the nations promised themselves after the Great War!

Mr. McCabe is not unmindful of what might happen in Asia. He says: "We are bound to recognise the possibility of a united and scientifically equipped Asia, perhaps in alliance with outlawed Russia, calling Europe to account for its conduct in the East during the last hundred years. Will this civilisation of ours survive the menace of its increasing internal disorders and of the gigantic hostile forces that one can surely discern in the thin mists of the near future?" One might have seen in recent happenings in Asia and the Far East how Japan is closely imitating pre-war Germany. Quite recently she claimed the sole responsibility for the maintenance of peace in the East and is evidently out to establish a hegemony of the Orient, which in the end would mean the subjugation of China and her reduction to the state of a vassal of Japan. Who knows that India is safe from her ambitions? But this is by the way.

In a well-written volume of 200 and odd pages, the author who is

evidently well equipped for his task by years of study in science and history and experience gained by decades of travel in various countries, presents a vivid picture of the present world-crisis in its broad, historical perspective, with suggestions to make clear the ground and hints for general lines of action. Mr. McCabe does not claim to belong to any organisation, political or economic, and has therefore the added advantage of viewing the problems from a detached standpoint.

In no other peace-period of history has there been so swift and catastrophic a blight of the world's industrial, commercial and financial life. And so far as the present crisis is industrial and commercial, as it mainly is, it is admittedly due to the lack of correlation between production and consumptive capacity. Piles of unwanted goods are heaped up in the warehouses and stores of the manufacturing countries. Experts tell us that the lack of adjustment of a production that was immensely enriched by science, is the predominant cause of the crisis in America, where it is most acute, and one of the principal causes elsewhere. It has led to almost as much distress as the Great War. While the fact is admitted, there is hopeless disagreement, evasiveness and even nervousness among experts, scientists and statesmen as to the remedies to be applied to ease the situation. And one of the outstanding features of this catastrophic period, the author attributes to the

pathetic futility of statesmen and politicians. He says truly that until there is some control, co-ordinating production in the economic world, some check on the impulse to enlarge production, we shall go from crisis to crisis, probably with increasing distress. Millions of men, their wives and children, live on the ragged edge of existence, because they cannot have access to the stored piles of surplus goods. They cannot produce, because they must not produce; they must not produce, because they cannot purchase. Modern life in the West has reached this paradoxical state, a large supply of unwanted goods on one side and stark penury on the other. We agree that the best brains available must be set to solve this paradox of life, and an economic system devised in which every worker could be enlisted. The rise in production will then be automatically balanced by a rise in purchasing capacity. Then only could the increasing application of science to production be justified. What is required is a true scientific spirit in the ordering of national and international life, not simply advance in the technique of science. And if the claim made on behalf of science that it has been responsible for a prodigious advance of prosperity, is well founded, the world should not be in the predicament in which it finds itself, but there should be an all-round enrichment and betterment of life. The fault is not that of science, but of its methods, instruments and application.

The author makes a serious indictment, not without justification, that if we are ceasing to derive all the advantages from the service of science, it is due to the mismanagement of our most weighty affairs by politicians through our Parliaments, which have become the dumping ground of self-seeking men of inferior or no ability and with no character. The insecurity of the political career, with its long periods of unemployment and theatricality and hollowness of party struggles, most naturally repels men of the highest ability from engaging themselves in the work of government through Parliaments and Councils.

So it comes to this that the political mechanism needs to be reconstructed on a rational basis, and the controllers and directors of the national life must be men endowed with large hearts and wide vision. The scientific method should be extended from the technique of production and distribution to the whole plan of life. In this view of the conception of science and the true scientific spirit, reckless rivalry between nations should be deemed just as unscientific, and in the end as costly, as the reckless rivalry in industrial enterprises. There must be co-operation and planning on national lines and international adjustment; and we agree with the author that there is no hope of any lengthy period of health unless we organise the economic life within each nation as units of an international framework.

We have perused with interest the author's able thesis. The dark places of our economic and political system have been probed by him with skill, and in doing so he has not indulged in carping at imaginary ills. Nor is there any vulgar abuse of any class or section of the community. His is a criticism, at once inspiring and humane, of the maladies such as he finds the world is suffering from. We have every confidence that the lines of action suggested by him will be given the consideration they eminently deserve.

In concluding this review, it is no disparagement to the author if we strike a somewhat jarring note. We are obliged to do so from a sense of responsibility. At page 19, the author says: "The Hindu civilisation is five thousand years old, one of the oldest on the earth. But it is as full of vitality and promise as ever, while the very powerful civilisation of the Assyrians was annihilated after about a century of supremacy." In referring to the two civilisations, the author has himself, unconsciously perhaps, suggested the answer. The passions which mock the Eternal can never be lasting. To us who believe in the sovereignty of the inner world of ideals, on which the entire scheme of social polity is founded, which is described by the simple word "Dharma," the bewildering conclusion of present-day life, which parades under the name of civilisation, must some day cease to be. These are the outward symptoms of

a cancerous growth within our own moral nature. Civilisations pass. The miseries which we see today seem like the convulsions of a dying age. The human mind, as Dr. Rabin-dranath Tagore has said, attains full status when it transcends geographical barriers. The utility of civilisation lies in its being able to share the good things of the world with all nations. And if the Hindu civilisation lives today, it is because it is based on the philosophy of internationalism. We have seen the triumph in human history of the law of natural selection prevalent in the biological world, the elbowing out of the less offensive by the aggressive pressure of a superior noxiousness. All human calculations have tended to be based upon the working of that law, till at last we find in the world today 'the man in us has made his final obeisance to the brute in us' as the poet has so well expressed. The present suffering in the world is not due to the lack of intellectual attainments or material advantage, both of which we have in a full and ever-increasing measure. India is not ashamed to own her great trust in Dharma and a balanced economic ordering of life based on spiritual values. We have to search for a formula for the present malady in the world and its cure. Individuals, communities and nations have far too long been following a path of expansion, the keynote of which is restlessness, out-throat competition, mutual distrust and ceaseless strife. The antithesis of expansion is perfection,

which is nothing else than the ancient Hindu ideal of Dharma. The true value of expansion consists in the ordering of our economic, social or political life *within the limits imposed by Dharma*. It is

unfortunate that the gifted author has no faith in national reconstruction based on spiritual realities; the claim, in his opinion, is a wretchedly sophistical use of an ambiguous expression.

AUSTERITY'S LURE

By S. N. Suta

WE have a passion for attempting single strokes. What a grand thing it must be if we can gain each of our objects by the repetition of some simple act! It is true that such repetition may prove monotonous after a time. But the little dullness can certainly be more than balanced by the achievement to come. Take our philosophers. They want "that one thing by knowing which everything can be known." Our scientists too are of the same type. Like the philosophers, they may disagree in their theories and interpretations. But they are all one in directing their sense-organs, natural and acquired, bodily and instrumental, into the undercurrent of the world of phenomena to detect, capture and tame that one substance or force which has hitherto eluded control. With it yoked to the chariot of our desires, Kama Dhenu or Kalpa Taru, the "cow" or the "tree" which can instantaneously answer all needs, must become a reality. Seated at our table, we just press a button or administer a mild push or a pull. *भीषास्मादातः पवते भीषोदेति सूर्यः भीषादग्निश्चेन्नश्न मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चमः ॥* — Through fear of us puffs of wind start up; sun's rays split and shoot

forth; conflagrations spread; rain falls in showers; and death, the fifth, stalks over the land sweeping off those whom we do not want! Scripture then shall stand fulfilled, though in a scientifically altered and thoroughly modern sense! When such is the general tendency, is it any wonder that in religious practice also the single stroke and the single recipe lure the aspirant at almost every stage of his evolution?

If we read the mythologies of the world, we shall be surprised to see the variety of single strokes by which aspirants have tried to realise the Lord. Finding that man must act, some naturally developed a philosophy of action. Many of them branched into rituals, a few permutations and combinations of which persist to this day in practice, and many more undoubtedly in the spacious realms of supposition. Some thought that the Lord must be effulgent, and perhaps literally like a "thousand suns blazing in the heavens all at once" and endeavoured by mystic devices to get consumed in His glory. Seekers of this "gas light Brahman" have always suffered severe agonies when the inevitable contacts of the wide awake and

dream states reminded them of the prosaic affairs on earth. Some others worked on the hypothesis that the body with its coating of flesh was acting as an opaque obstacle to the full manifestation of the Lord's splendour, and proceeded systematically to make it thin and transparent through rigorous austerities. These and many others, although beginning with diverse half-true assumptions, succeeded in widening their outlook as their practice continued and experience grew, and therefore attained their life's goal. But those who would unduly stick up to their one-sided practices often came to grief and learned their lessons at a bitter cost. In proportion to their sincerity, however, their pains prolonged or subsided; till at last when the horizon was sufficiently widened, Grace came down in showers and they too became illumined.

There was once a king of the Pandyas called Indradyumna. His fame soon spread throughout the southern lands and he came to be regarded as the foremost of the Dravidas. Vishnu was his chosen deity; and as devotion developed in him, he determined to propitiate Him by a course of austerities¹. Any line that military men take up, they usually can pursue with singular vigour and enthusiasm. Many an aspirant of this class has, as a result, achieved success in the field of religion more quickly than

1. स वै पूर्वमभूद्राजा पाण्ड्यो द्रविडसत्तमः ।
इन्द्रयुज इति ख्यातो विष्णुव्रतपरायणः ॥

aspirants of other classes. Dhruva, the royal boy of five, secured within a bare half year the blessings of the Lord which "Sananda and others of life-long celibacy, realised and attained to by means of meditation extending over many lives²." It is well known how easily prince Gautama could seat himself under the tree with the determination not to get up from there till illumination came. Search in other mythologies and other histories too; the military man who sought God would be found to have sought Him with the full force of his sublimated fighting spirit. Indradyumna, like the true warrior that he was, cut himself away from royal associations with a speed and directness characteristic of the sword-cuts he used to deal his enemies in battle.

Since austerities required solitude, or at least could be better practised away from the haunts of men, Indradyumna selected a lonely spot on Mount Kulachala for his stay. The man of disciplined habits that he was, he adapted himself to the new surroundings with perfect ease. At fixed times he descended to the brook below for his ablutions and repaired to his small hermitage up above for the worship of Vishnu. He lived on the most meagre diet, wore matted hair, like any other aspirant of the forest regions and very often undertook a vow of

2. समाधिना नैकभवेन यत्पदं ।
विदुः सनन्दादय ऊर्ध्वरेतसः ॥

silence in addition³. Even in that carefully selected, secluded corner human feet, although of other aspirants or of sages, might intrude upon his privacy and disturb the practices through which alone the Lord, he fancied, was going to be brought to him. Time did matter in such things; and he for one was not prepared to waste a moment further by any dealings with "others". Talk, he had found, was an introduction to a variety of relationships; and with his skill in strategy he quickly perceived the tactical advantage of effectively blocking that dangerous outlet.

But the Lord's ways are inscrutable. While Indradyumna had thus fortified himself and was sitting silent in his lonely corner, expecting Vishnu to bless him for his self-control, sage Agastya unexpectedly arrived there with crowds of his disciples⁴. The king was not absorbed in Samadhi at the time, but was able to understand what was happening around him. If his vow required that he should not open his mouth, it was yet possible for him to rise up from his seat, and, by gestures at least, request the worshipful guests to seat themselves and ease their tired

limbs. He should then have brought water himself, washed their feet and worshipped them with food and other articles available for a person who had a will to procure them. But this common courtesy he would not do. Royal pride, once in full swing, was surely no more dominating the king's mind. But it was there in a subtle form still. It had entered unobserved into his austerities and coloured his outlook. What he was attempting to secure, namely, the mental fitness for receiving the Lord's Grace, he could have got smoothly and in no time by opening his mind to the sage and his disciples now—and to others in due course, likewise—and doing to them what he had intended to do to the Lord. With Agastya's blessings and assurances he could have playfully dislodged the few enemies that were still entrenched within his mind. But he would not reason that way or budge an inch. He would rely on his own independent strength. *He knew* what to do.

To the trained eyes of Agastya, Indradyumna's mind was like an open book. He no doubt noticed the sincerity and the determination of the king, but he noticed also the foundation of pride on which the king was blindly erecting his edifice. Summoning a little extra energy, therefore, he raised his voice and hurled a few sharp words at that very foundation, which was thenceforth marked out for a speedy destruction. Said the sage, "This is an unrighteous wicked soul *with*

3. स एकदाऽऽगमनकाल आत्मवान्मृहीतमौनव्रत ईश्वरं हरिम् ।

जटाश्रस्तापस आप्नुतोऽच्युतं समर्चयामास
कुलाचलाश्रमः ॥ (viii, iv, 8)

4. यदृच्छया तत्र महायशा मुनिः समागमच्छिष्य-
गणैः परिभ्रितः ।

तं वीक्ष्य तूष्णीमकृतार्हणादिकं रहस्युपासीन-
मृषिशुकोप इ ॥ (viii, iv, 9)

no culture, who treats genuine knowers with contempt. He shall be steeped in blinding darkness; and he shall be turned into an elephant because he has a proud heart like that of an elephant." With these words, Agastya turned round and left the place with his disciples.

It was not yet too late. Indradymna could have got up and, by gestures at least, prayed for forgiveness. But he retained his seat, not however with any spirit of defiance which uncontrolled pride and really low culture would have generated under the circumstances. Although Kshatriya blood still coursed through his veins, yet in this most trying, provoking situation he held in complete check all notions of vindicating himself. He was able, in addition, to install the form of the Lord lovingly in his heart and attribute to Him the blasting expressions of the angry sage. Devotion and austerity had so much toned down his passions that he could with unexampled self-mastery comment to himself, "This is the will of the Lord." (दिष्टं तदुपधारयन्) Such nobility and self-possession could not go in vain. But neither could the sage's pronouncement go to nought. The Unseen and Supreme Intelligence "saw" through it all and brought about a compromise in Its own inimitable

5. तस्मा इदं शापमदादसाधुर्यं दुरात्माऽकृतबुद्धि-
रयम् ।

विप्रावमन्ता विशतां तमोऽन्धं यथा गजस्त-
न्धमतिः स एव ॥

manner. Indradymna became the celebrated Gajendra, in obedience to what the sage had foretold; and retained not merely his permanent status of sovereignty in the elephant world as well, but also the capacity, whose steadiness was amply demonstrated, to install the Lord in his mind in all moments of crisis.*

The rest of the beautiful story any one can look up in the Eighth Skandha of the Bhagavatam. Fallen under an equally powerful curse, one of the demigods was living out his period of imprisonment in a crocodile's form in a lake near by; and when the elephant king strode into it with his inborn air of dignity, followed by his retinue, the crocodile bit into his leg and began dragging him forcibly into the depths. In its own element the aquatic creature proved more than a match to the whole herd of elephants who could do their best on land alone. The tussle went on for a thousand years, and when Gajendra's pride had been slowly rubbed out of him, the net result of his austerities began to stream into his necessarily receptive mind. Reasoning, allowed only a restricted application in the Indradymna stage of his evolution, he now applied, first under pressure and then gradually with spontaneity, on a wider scale; and as a result was able to praise the Lord in His transcendental aspect as well as the aspect in which He was the cause of all phenomena. Gods

6. आपन्नः कौजरी योनिमात्मस्मृतिविनाशिनीम् ।
हयैर्चनानुभावेन यद्रजस्वेऽप्यनुस्मृतिः ॥

like Indra did not approve of Gajendra's worship of the Formless, which appeared presumptuous in their eyes, and so refrained from interfering in his behalf. (एवं गजेन्द्रमुप-
वर्णितनिर्विशेषः.....नैते.....उपसम्पुः) But Vishnu who knew the depth of His devotee's sincerity and noticed also the widening of his mental horizon as Gajendra was wistfully glancing through the tearful eyes of his sinking elephant's frame, came speedily on His winged vehicle and gave him the freedom his mistaken austerity and subtle pride had so long delayed. His one-sided austerity and final meditation on the

Formless resulted, curiously enough, as the Bhagavatam says, in his "attaining to a form like that of the Lord Himself, clad in yellow silk and endowed with four arms." (प्राप्तो भगवतो रूपं पीतवासाश्चतुर्भुजः ॥)

Austerity is no doubt valuable, and persistence in it can ultimately lead to the goal. But let us not complain if, while pursuing such a narrow path, we are forced to weep through elephant's eyes, literally or figuratively, as a penalty for not revising betimes our disproportionate estimate of its place in the attainment of illumination.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Two Standpoints

WHAT are the signs of a spiritually eminent person? This has always been a difficult question to answer. Arjuna puts it to Sri Krishna and a fairly long section of the second chapter of the Gita is specially devoted to its answer. Other ancient books also deal with this topic since the picture of a perfect man helps the aspirant immensely in climbing up the spiritual ladder. To view him from a single angle is not entirely sufficient. In that case only a particular class of seekers will be benefited. For instance, if he is described as always calm, at most all those who are unduly active and restless may, if they like, try to regulate themselves according to that standard. Even there, the benefit is bound to be limited. For no one can arrive at the exact measurement of the requisite calmness. Often such single standards do more harm than good. For they give only partial views; and these hamper the growth of the aspirant till he is able to get a more complete view. To obviate

this difficulty the scriptures of the world have attempted to describe the perfect man from as many angles as possible. This too, unfortunately, has been a fruitful source of troubles. For philosophers have tried to squeeze all the items of description into single theories, each philosopher applying all his ingenuity to assign primary importance and secondary importance to the various items to suit the theory he wishes to maintain. Yet through all these conflicting theories we can find our way to accept two broad standpoints to make a fairly accurate study of the perfect man: What does *he* say he *feels*? And in what manner and with what results do *we* see him *acting*?

No two saints are very much alike in the work they turn out. A description of the activities of any one saint, therefore, will be useful to us only in so far as it helps us to understand the general principles characteristic of the outlook of the saintly *type*. We proceed to give below some extracts from a letter written by a critically minded

friend of ours after a recent visit he paid to Sri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai. We publish them, only with the idea of showing a manner of approach that may not be in keeping with any orthodox single theory but yet covers both the standpoints mentioned above, and may be taken as a fairly reliable guide in such matters. If every aspirant can frame suitable tests after an intelligent study of these remarks, he may be able to spot out and avoid many an obstacle that might otherwise bar the road to his own further progress. The critic writes :

A Rare Type

"The Maharshi impressed me as a rare type of man. I do not know whether he is a Jnani, or what he is. For, as the Vedanta says, a Jnani can be known only by a Jnani; and I am certainly not one. But this person, any one can feel, is not of the ordinary run of men. We nowadays come across men everywhere whose one thought is world reform and things of that kind. But here is a man who is *perfectly aware*, as one can see from his conduct and movements, who has absolutely no such idea, who has in his opinion nothing to add to the sum-total of human happiness himself. He simply seems to exist, without waiting for anything, without being anxious about anything. On watching him I was powerfully reminded of the Gita passage beginning with Uddāsinavad, "Like one that is unconcerned" etc. He seems to take, as far as I see, no interest even in the Ashrama that has sprung up around him. He simply sits there; things are going on *as events and other men shape them*. The only activity of the Ashrama in which he seems to take active interest is cooking. He cuts vegetables in the kitchen; and if

there is any special cooking any day he is sure to try his hand at preparing some of the dishes for that day. Spicing and other processes of the culinary art are performed there under his directions."

The Silence of Advaita

"Another point that struck me is his silence. We used to ask in fun among ourselves why eminent professors who crossed the seas did not deliver their Vedantic lectures through silence. But here is a person who actually does this as far as his teaching of the Vedanta is concerned. When I asked him to tell me something of spirituality, the first thing he said was that silence was the highest teaching! The beauty of the man is that he remains faithful to this idea to the utmost extent possible. His idea is that *the Advaitin has no position to state, no Siddhanta to propound*. He regrets that in these days even Advaita has become a Siddhanta, whereas it is really not meant to be so. The reason for the existence of so much Vedantic literature is this: When doubts arise in the mind, as our intellect is quickened, such literature is helpful in dispelling them. In other words, the Advaitin speaks only to dispel a doubt that might have arisen in himself or in another. Our saint remains faithful to this idea. He is mostly silent and speaks but a little if questioned on any point. Of course he jokes and speaks occasionally on other things, but he has no dogmatic teaching on Vedanta to deliver. He told me he says 'yes' 'yes' to every one who interprets Advaita, even to some of his followers who interpret his ideas in the books published under his name. When I asked regarding a book that I purchased in the depot there, how far the ideas stated therein are his teachings, he told me

that it is very difficult to say that, as he had no definite teaching. As people have understood, they have written, and they may be right from certain points of view. He himself, he said, has absolutely no idea or inclination to write a book; but due to the entreaties of some of the people about him he has written some verses, and he told me that he is often troubled by men who take a fancy to translate them into this language and that, and ask him about the faithfulness of the translation." (He writes and speaks in many languages.)

There may be many who believe that the Maharshi is really working miracles through his apparent silence and inactivity. They may look upon the springing up of the Ashrama with its publication and other departments as the manifestation in the material plane—of course slowly begun—of the enormous "power" his silence has been projecting into the unseen plane of the causes of all phenomena. They are free to hold such beliefs if thereby they get for a time any substantial help in their spiritual struggles. But nothing can possibly be gained by introducing mystery at every step. In our opinion, the critic is right in refusing to bring in mystery and in giving the belief of the saint himself regarding silence. The Advaitin, according to the Maharshi, "speaks" *only to remove a doubt arising in his own mind or in that of another*. And quite consistently with his theory this saint does give help to those who really want it. But, can silence *by itself* help another in any plane? We think it cannot; it can only be the interpretation which other people give to the *thoughts and mood* of the silent man that can exert any beneficial influence on their character. "The saint is blessing me;

henceforth I shall succeed in controlling myself," "This holy person seems to be telling me that I should pray regularly hereafter"—thoughts like these, springing up as a result of approaching any silent sage, can undoubtedly act as powerful incentives for leading a controlled life. Whether the saint himself is "sending out" such thoughts, is an altogether different point. In any case, *mere* silence, apart from the positive thoughts of the person who adopts it as a vow, or of those who come into contact with it, cannot act as a spiritually helping force. Our critic continues :

Dumb Eloquence Does Satisfy

"So mostly, the Maharshi remains silent; and people come, make prostrations, sit before him for some minutes or hours and then go away, perhaps without exchanging even a single word! I have got my own doubts as to whether people benefit by this teaching through silence. But yet people come from long distances to hear this dumb eloquence, and go back *satisfied*."

After all, one does not go to a temple to hear the image talk! Neither is the silence of the image responsible for the worshipper's *satisfaction*! The difficulty comes in only when silence *by itself* is regarded as a virtue par excellence, and is declared capable of bestowing spiritual benefit upon another. But to go back to the letter :

No Inertness

"Though he speaks but little, it is very instructive to watch his face and eyes. There is nothing very prepossessing about his personality, but there is a beam of intelligence and unruffled calmness in his eyes, that are unique. His body is almost motionless except when he occasionally changes his position or wipes his sweat in that hot place. I was carefully observing his face;

I found him seldom winking and never yawning. I say this to show that I am sufficiently satisfied that the absence of activity in him is not due to inertness."

Those who attempt meditation would do well to remember these observations. There are some who wish to sit long and cherish the secret hope that the patience involved in such sitting or some other unknown virtue connected with it will somehow, some day, give them the capacity to master their mind. But let them remember that if they find such sitting punctuated by yawning now and then, it would be far more wise to get up and be *physically active*, and thus discontinue what would otherwise be nothing short of a systematic practice of semi-sleep.

Sweet and Friendly

"The third point that struck me," writes our friend, "was the absolute absence of vanity and self-importance in him. Except for his toilette confined only to a *Kaupinam* (loin cloth), a visitor may not find it possible to make out Ramana Maharshi. He eats the same food as every one else there; there is not even a single extra item or special dish for him. I specially noted that in conversation he is not averse to using the first personal pronoun, unlike some other Vedantists who use "he" and things of that kind. I point out this to show how unostentatious he is. His silence, I am convinced, is not to assume a gravity of disposition calculated to keep people at a distance. And when he breaks that silence, as he does when questioned, he appears to be the *sweetest and most friendly of men.*"

Many an aspirant, unfortunately, fails to progress owing to the 'gravity complex' or owing to the false notion that sweetness is the

result of effeminate softness and indicates want of manly strength!

Same-sightedness

"He makes no distinction between man and man for their wealth or position in society. I saw peasants and gentlemen in motor cars coming and being greeted with the same silence. They all sit on the floor and receive the same hospitality. In fact, the Maharshi seems to be quite indifferent to any financial gain that the Ashrama may have by special treatment given to rich men."

"I stayed in the Ashrama for three days. The Maharshi talked with me very kindly and quite freely on several questions I asked him. Although his manner of replying is not so impressive as I expected, his *thoughts are always clear, concise and free from all ideas of narrowness.* Though he has not read much, as he himself told me in some context, he has a good grasp of all the difficult points in Vedanta. My impression in short is this: Whether he is a Jnani or anything else I do not positively know. But I am convinced that he is a sweet and lovable person who is indifferent to all things about him, who has no end of his own to gain, who is always alert even when he seems to be most deeply absorbed, and who may be said to be perfectly free from greed and vanity. In seeing him, I do believe I have seen a unique personage."

Range of Activity as We See

Shall we not add to this description that he is at the same time a person whom *we see acting ungrudgingly as a cook, as a poet, as a philosopher and as a guide, exerting a uniform pressure of encouragement upon "his followers" and "others," upon the rich as well as the poor, who have come to look upon his residence as a place of pilgrimage?*

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