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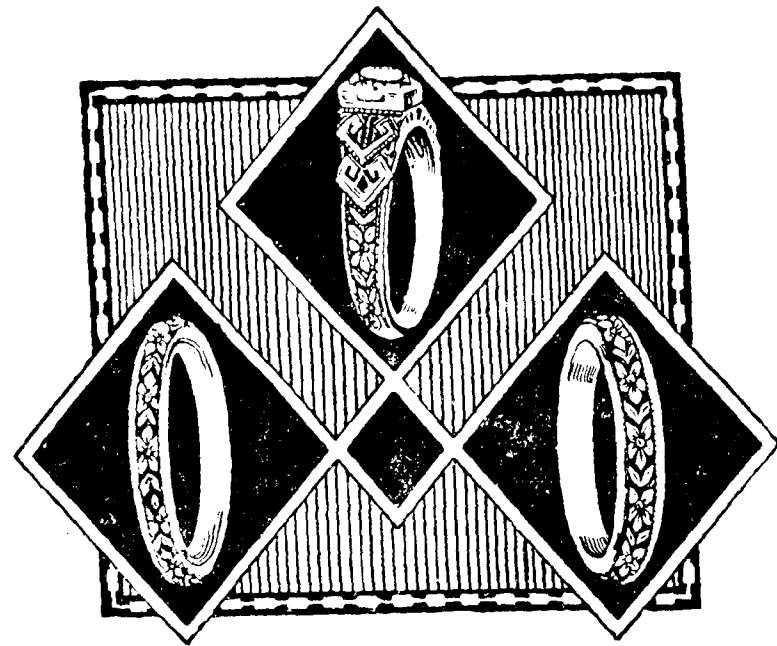
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The Vedanta Kesari

VOLUME XXXIII



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THE SPIRITUAL ASPIRANT AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

By SWAMI SARADANANDA

If we want a clear understanding of the *sadhaka* aspect of the life of Sri Ramakrishna, we must first be acquainted with what is *sadhana*, its object and the ultimate end it seeks after. Wrong notions of spiritual life prevail among people. Most of the so-called spiritual men of the day, in their zeal to attain something supernatural, take to certain kinds of practices that are neither conducive to the spiritual growth of man, nor are healthy to life. They forget the Ideal, and cut themselves off from the current of Real Life. Some are so self-deluded as to think that spiritual life consists in the observances of certain external ceremonials and local customs (*acharas*) coupled with physical austerities. Sometimes even mystery-mongering passes for real spirituality. Again the practices that have been enjoined by the sages on the different individuals as a corrective to their respective evil habits and tendencies, are often preached universally as real *sadhana* to be practised by all. There are people again who ruin themselves by pursuing the mistaken idea that they can bring their God under control to serve their selfish ends of sensuality by the powers of *mantrams* or some kinds of practices, even as the snake is charmed by incantations. So it will not be out of place to give here some truths about real spirituality as discovered

by the great saints and sages of India after their life-long struggle and strenuous *sadhana* from century to century.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'To see God in all is the last word in spirituality'. But this blessed vision dawns when man reaches the climax of *sadhana*. The Hindu scriptures also testify to this. The Shastras declare, 'All is Brahman; all the various objects, gross or subtle, conscious or unconscious, men, animals, birds, trees, plants, etc., all that you see in this universe are but that One Indivisible Brahman'. That Brahman alone you sense in various forms and in diverse ways. Though all the time you live and move in Him and hold your life's dealings only with Him, yet you are not aware of it, and you think you are doing so with different people and diverse objects.

But why is that not so realised?

You cannot realise the truth as you are in the mist of error. So long as the mist is not cleared away from your sight, the mistake cannot be found out. Error is detected only when compared with truth.

And the cause of this mistake here as everywhere else, is ignorance. How and when this has begun, no body can say; and more futile it is to try to know its origin so

long as one is in ignorance. Dreams appear as true as long as you are dreaming. Only when compared with the waking state, after the sleep is broken, they appear as false. Well, there may be some stray instances when people realise even in dreams that they are dreaming. But even that consciousness is due to the lingering memory of the waking state. And instances are not wanting where the memory of the highest consciousness of One Indivisible Brahman as experienced in *samadhi*, lingers even in the waking state.

Drive out the ignorance and the truth will be revealed unto you. The sages of yore had realised the truth and they had shown us the way how to get rid of this nescience.

But still another doubt arises in the mind. What guarantee is there that the experience of the sages who form a microscopic minority is true, while the sensuous perceptions of the universe by all men are false? Can it not be a fact that those whom you call sages, are deluded on the other hand?

Well, truth is not to be judged by the opinions of majority or minority. The experience of the sages is accepted as true, for by that experience they had been able to free themselves, from all kinds of miseries, to become fearless and acquire the eternal peace and blessedness. Moreover, they had also thereby found out the secret purpose of all the struggles of mortal human life. Further, real knowledge gives a wonderful catholicity to man, dowering him with all the excellences of head and heart, such as, patience, contentment, kindness, humility and so on. From the Shastras we learn that these sages had attained such graces in their own lives, and even now we find that those who follow in their footsteps and attain the Supreme Knowledge too are possessed of the same.

Again the question may arise here, how can error be common and universal? The object that you or I experience as the cow is so

experienced by all. Nobody ever mistakes a cow for a man. It is not a little wonder then that all people commit the same mistake all at the same time? One or two men may be wrong, but again there should be others who must see the reality. But here we find an exception to that general rule. How is it?

Well, you see the exception because you are not counting the sages in the category of men. The sages do not see the cow as cow but see god instead. But as to the question why all make the same mistake, the scriptures reply, 'There is a Universal Mind, *sutratma*, in which arises the diverse images of the various objects of the universe. And as the individual minds form part and parcel of that one Universal Mind, they share the common experience of the Universal.' Hence the knowledge of external objects does not depend on our individual and subjective ideas, but it is the conception of the Cosmic Mind, and therefore we cannot see a cow other than the cow. And again for the same reason, even when some get emancipated from the thralldom of nescience, others remain still subject to the chimerical visions of the universe. But we must remember that though the Universal Soul in His Cosmic Mind has got the idea of the universe, He is not immersed in ignorance like ourselves, simply for the reason that He being the omniscient Lord has the knowledge of the existence of One impartite Brahman in and through this manifold universe. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'The snake has poison in its fangs, but it is none the worse for it. The poison does not affect it or cause its death, although its bite kills others.'

Thus we come to learn from the scriptures that the universe does not exist in reality apart from its idea in the Cosmic Mind. And it can also be said that the universe remains only as ideas in the individual minds too; for the Cosmic Mind is an organic whole and the individual minds are eternally connected

with it even as the limbs are connected to the body. It cannot be affirmed that the idea of the universe did not exist before, but entered there in some particular time. For what we call time and space or name and form, without which no idea of differentiation is possible, are ideas eternally connected with the idea of the universe. In other words, the ideas of time and space cannot be separated from the idea of the Universe in the Cosmic Mind. Therefore the Vedas and other Hindu scriptures have declared that Prakriti or Maya which causes this universe, is beginningless or beyond time. And our individual minds, as conditioned by this Maya from a beginningless time, have developed the notion of permanent reality about this world-idea; and similarly having been deprived of the vision of the Real, the

one Brahman, from a beginningless time, they have become unable to detect the error about the truth of this world-vision, and get rid of this delusion. For as already stated, error is only found out when we come to know the truth.

Thus we see, if we want to know the truth of this Universe, we must get beyond this universe of name and form, beyond all time, space and causation, beyond all ideas and ideation, and have the blessed vision of that transcendental reality. And the preparation and struggle to attain to the realisation of that Reality are known in the Vedas and other scriptures as *sadhana*. And he in whom this struggle remains whether consciously, or unconsciously is known in India as a *sadhaka*.

THE PRICE OF TWO

When one suit of clothes is enough, to have two is a costly luxury and to put on three is to sin against oneself and to set a bad example for others. All religion and philosophy do the job of outfitters to the inner man; but the less of their dress the better for the health of the dress defying (*upadhirahitam*) spirit in us. Inside us sits one who wants to be free from all dress, and we impose our heavy-dressing habit on Him also. Had we known the price we pay for this un-wanted luxury, we would have made some efforts at least to reduce it. It has cost us not only lots of our spiritual money; it has cost us our natural capacity for bearing all inclemencies of weather. Luxury drains away our natural strength and at last kills us. The luxury of many realities in our philosophy has depleted our natural capacity for seeing the many as One. Even as there are people who, having become slaves to habit, claim that

six layers of clothing are an irreducible necessity, there are others who fight for a modicum of three realities in the philosophy for their inner man. And when inclemencies of weather set in, when a spiritual storm comes on, these people run from one God to another for shelter and find none, for God builds shelters for those who build for themselves. Contrariwise, the man with the philosophy of one reality (and he himself that reality) easily finds his own shelter, his own self, retires into it and is at perfect peace and poise. He is the Advaitin. The Advaitin has place for only one light in his philosophy; he has only one suit of clothes, one water-pot and preferably one meal a day. He is an Advaitin within and without. Religion out of consideration for the weakness of man allows two suits for him and sometimes three. But true philosophy is rather austere, and insists on man having one only and even exhorts

him to throw overboard that one, if he wants the Highest. That is what Advaita Vedanta teaches.

The boldest statement of Hindu thought—and indeed the boldest ever made by any philosophy—is the strengthening assurance that we are all one, in spite of the manyness that we see everywhere and that sits so heavy on us. This oneness is to be discovered in the deepest layer of our being, in consciousness, our basic, residual and residential reality. When all lights go out, when the senses, the mind and the *buddhi* sleep, this light of consciousness keep on burning. Before the world of forms sprang up this consciousness was there, and after its dissolution it will continue to shine: for both states are pictured by consciousness. In consciousness, which is thus all-illuminating and hence the all-comprehensive reality, which is Knowledge, the ever-luminous, all meet and realise their stupendous and staggering Oneness; in it we come by our deep-lying reality and our bliss. When this knowledge dawns all the fruits of the spirit, joy, contentment, kindness, humility and all, are added unto us. This one consciousness cannot be reduced: it is our minimum. We cannot enlarge it or outgrow it: it is our maximum. Oneness is our necessity as it is our inmost essential nature. Hence to be wanting two or to see two is to go against ourselves, is to crave for a fatal luxury. The wise Hindu ancients have warned us against this luxury: 'There is always fear for him who sees two in this world' says the Vedanta. 'He goes from birth to death who sees not the One'. 'For him who sees not the One here in this very life, there is great calamity.' 'The knower of the One goes beyond sorrow.' 'From knowledge of the One to immortality'.

These words mark the flower and fulfilment of Advaitic realization. Here are our Hindu ancients prescribing just the

thing for our present ills, for our divisions and separatist tendencies which make no end of difficulties in the way of our country's unity and progress. What a high price we pay for our separatist tendencies, for our inability to form ourselves into one nation, for our incapacity to see another man's point of view! The sense of two became so overwhelming in the heart of Europe (Nazi and non-Nazi) that it gave way to a terrible mutual fear-complex. There is always fear for the one who sees two, says Upanishad. And this mutual fear made the World War II inevitable. Foreign yoke is the price India pays for seeing two in place of one for the last hundred years. 'India cannot give up his majesty the King on earth'; observes Swami Vivekananda, 'that is why Vedanta cannot become the religion of India.' 'There is a chance of Vedanta becoming the religion of your country' the Swami assures a western audience, 'because of democracy.' 'But', exhorts the Swami, 'it can become so only if you can and do clearly understand it, if you become real men and women: not people with vague ideas and superstitions in your brains and if you want to be truly spiritual since Vedanta is concerned only with spirituality'.

Since Swami Vivekananda expressed these rosy hopes about the Vedantic potential of the West, Europe fought two world wars. This must have been enough to set her thinking that there is something wrong in her religion and philosophy of life. Here is a Western savant analysing the western religion, exposing its deep-lying defects and prescribing Vedanta as the only tonic and hope for the West. Writes Gerald Heard: 'Why is Western religion helpless? In the answer to that question there lies, it would seem, the case for Vedanta. Western religion has made three fundamental mistakes. Taking its cosmology from the rudimentary Hebrew world-view it tied itself

to a crude Apocalypticism. By the sixth century Parousial expectations, long discouraged by the Church were given an *ad hoc* moral substitute by the invention of the doctrine of Purgatory. Henceforward Protestantism would have no world-view, unless it returned to Apocalypticism by becoming fundamentalist. The Vedanta has a world-view infinitely vaster than the Hebrew and one which does not contradict the findings of science. Western religion neglected psychology and psychophysiology (and this is the second great mistake of western religion). Its conception of Deity, fluctuating between a humanised *Jehovah* (the loving Father of Jesus) and a Trinity in which an anthropomorphised Logos mediates between man and the inflexible absolute Judge God, made Christianity's one praxis to be simple petitionary prayer. True, Eastern influences introduced a crude asceticism and an occasional *second hand* knowledge of meditation, but psychical and psycho-physical knowledge was lacking and whenever there was any search for these things the church ruthlessly persecuted the seekers. In Vedanta meditation and contemplation are basic and make a complete working psychology. . . . And all this rests, not on blind authority, but upon empirical work. . . . This was the third and final blunder of western religion: Tied to an inadequate world-picture, lacking a psychology, fearing experiment, it had to end in the last and worst mistake of brutal intolerance. The Vedanta, having a world-picture which counsels against impatience and rashness and having a psychology which shows how men may test truth and, further, may change their characters, and their consciousness, not only avoids intolerance but has a scientific case for tolerance. . . . Here (in Advaita-Vedanta) then, and here alone, lies the hope, not of personal salvation (though that is an integral part of the training) but of a new and balanced philo-

sophy and praxis of life which could provide sane and progressive living for a unified mankind.' (*Vedanta for the Western World*, page 53.)

We have quoted the above not only to show how much the thinking West is turning to India's Vedanta for light and solace, but also to convince those of the Westerners who think that the Advaita-Vedanta does not supply all the spiritual needs of the West. We print elsewhere in this issue an article, entitled 'Vedanta for the West' from the pen of Mon. Jean Herbert, Chief Interpreter to the United Nations, wherein he observes that though the West looks to India for invaluable spiritual help, Advaita-Vedanta is not in a position to give it.

He writes: 'The invaluable help which India can and should give to the Western world at the present stage, is to show through both example and teaching (1) that spiritual values should come first, irrespective of immediate consequences in practical life; (2) that a balance of head and heart is an absolute necessity; (3) that each man has a wide choice between many conceptions of God, of the relation between God and man, of Yoga, etc. and should exercise it; (4) that spirituality is a matter of personal experience and not of creed or of labelling; (5) that spiritual practice, like music or medicine is both a science and an art, which must be learnt methodically and obstinately, preferably with a competent guru and in which improvisation is often disastrous; that systematic meditation is essential in every form of spiritual life; (6) that the interest of the individual can be neither distinct from nor opposed to that of his neighbour or that of the community; (7) that intense and exclusive devotion is compatible with—not to say inseparable from—unqualified respect for other faiths and schools.'

'While Advaita can admittedly help for the purposes listed under (3), (6) and (7) it can

only considerably hinder a westerner for the others.'

Let us see how Advaita hinders the westerner in developing the qualities listed under 1, 2, 4, and 5. Item 1 wants us to put spiritual values first, irrespective of consequences in life. The one refrain of which the Advaita is never tired from first to last is that we are spirit first and last, (Cf. the Mahavakyas: *tatvamasi*, *Aham Brahmasmi* etc.) and that the kingdom of the spirit must be sought first and all other things will be added unto us. Item 2 reminds us that a balance of head and heart is an absolute necessity. Advaita-Vedanta which insists on Ashtanga yoga (the eight-fold discipline for intellect and emotions) and the Sadhanachatushtaya sampatti (the four graces of discrimination, self-control, continence, forbearance, ahimsa, etc., spiritual indifference towards this world and the next and lastly desire for liberation) need not be reminded of its supreme virtue of balancing the head and heart. Without this balance the integral experience, *samyak darsana*, the final fruit of Advaita is impossible of attainment. Item 4 insists on spirituality being viewed as a matter of personal experience and not of creed. If Advaita were a creed or simply a label, it would not have been possible for it to practise such wide tolerance which the writer allots to Advaita under item 7. Spirituality is a matter of personal experience. But such experience can be had by all and must not be the monopoly of a few. Again, the insights of such experience should not contradict reason. They should transform men and forge them into one. Advaitic realization is all this and something more. Item 5 reminds us that spiritual practice is both a science and an art and must be learnt methodically and obstinately from a guru, and that systematic meditation is essential. If Advaita does not enjoin on us a methodical discipline as

taught by a guru and a regular course of systematic meditation, we don't know of any other philosophy that does so. We may remind the writer of the words of Gerald Heard quoted above: 'In Vedanta meditation and contemplation are basic and make a complete working psychology'.

The writer has missed some of the very practical aspects of Advaita and has thus given ample evidence of having committed the common mistake of the West of understanding Advaita as an 'intellectual system' and not as experience *par excellence*. Earlier in the essay it is said that the intellect ridden West has accepted in full the intellectual arguments of Sankara, but has thrown overboard devotion and God and has added Advaita to the already existing 'systems'. We expected that the writer will help the westerner to set right this wrong idea about Advaita by stressing the experience aspect of Advaita. But we have been disappointed. Advaita is first the experience of the all-comprehensive and ultimate reality. It has a philosophy that systematises this experience and presents it as a working hypothesis for aspirants. It has a strict course of discipline and its world-view is spiritual and hence has beneficent social consequences. Advaita must be presented in all the above bearings to clear away the misconceptions that have crept into the brain of the westerner.

It is plain that the West is not ripe enough to receive Advaita. What then is the alternative? Dualism comes the answer from Mon. Jean Herbert. 'Yes, I agree', says Swami Vivekananda, 'that there is some good in the dualistic method. If a man wants you to show him the polar star, you first point out to him a bright star near it, then a less bright star, then a dim star, and then the polar star!'

'But how long,' asks the Swami, 'will the world have to wait to reach the truth if it follows this slow, gradual process? How

long? And where is the surety that it will ever succeed to any appreciable degree? It has not so far. After all, gradual or not gradual, easy or not easy to the weak, is not the dualistic method based on falsehood? Are not all the prevalent religious practices often weakening and therefore wrong? They are based on a wrong idea, a wrong view of man. Would two wrongs make one right? Would the lie become truth? Would darkness become light?'

Does the West with its many Christian Chaitanyas stand in need of more Chaitanyas and a new consignment of dualism from India? It will be a thankless and even disastrous job for Indian exponents of spirituality to be ministers of dualism as that is definitely not the sort of spiritual help the West requires to-day. The scientist-philosophers have made very near approxi-

mations to a theoretical realisation of oneness. That is something positive. The two world wars, fought, not between nations but between two conflicting ideologies, have given Europe bitter lessons for rearing up an ideological dyarchy in her heart. Her heart must now be seeking relief and refuge in the peace of a political and spiritual oneness. India's word is clear: In the context of violence her message of non-violence which is practical Advaita—is a saving and salutary gospel. But India herself is now in the throes of change and national indecision. To help her substantially to rehabilitate herself in her position of strength will be in the immediate and intimate interests of the West. For the West stands in need of Indian help to discontinue paying the high price of two, to cut to Gordian knot of a perniciously dual personality.

TECHNIQUE VERSUS MYSTICISM*

By DR. CHARLE BAUDOUIN

'Not only do we speak of national and revolutionary mysticism, but also our journalists have familiarized us with the terms, mysticism of sport, of cinema, of youth, of muscle, of jazz, and what not.' This perversion has resulted from our exalting technique over mysticism. The moderns hold mysticism primitive and technique most evolved. In this brilliant article the writer evaluates both mysticism and technique and assigns proper places to them.—EDS.

and profession will respectively correspond with these states.

The principle of arrangement in this series will be easily recognized. We proceed from the internal to the external, from the spiritual to the material, from the intensive to the extensive.

II

Let us recall the magic activity of primitive tribes. That activity has been described

I shall try to distinguish five states of the mind substance, or, if you will, five regions of the mind. They lie in a continuous series proceeding from Mysticism to Technique. The terms Mysticism, Lyricism, Thought, Objectivity and Technique may suffice to define them. The activities associated with the words religion, art, philosophy, science

* Translated from the French original by Sri P. Seahadri Iyer of the Travancore University.

as a technique which implies a mystic element. We see that in magic the two ends of the series are found and they touch each other. In other words all the states of the mind are already present in magic. But they lie indistinct, in a lump. The evolution of the mind in the course of centuries of culture has resulted in the isolation of the parts from this whole. It is the fan-light which shows itself at first. Then the inter-mediary terms appear.

III

How does this happen? If we arrange these five terms beginning with mysticism in a line from left to right, we note a progression dependent on the measure of pull exerted by the succeeding ones on those which go before. In spite of diverse movements and eddies, it will be clear that the current goes more and more from left to right, from mysticism to technique. It would seem that mysticism is the burning centre, the fruitful maze, whence the other terms are projected by turns. Further it is clear that mysticism develops into poetry which ripens into wisdom. Wisdom again asserts itself in science and science develops into technique infinitely.

IV

It is at least this view which imposes itself explicitly or implicitly on our contemporaries. But even the supposition of its immunity from flaws will lead to grave misunderstanding. They hold mysticism primitive and technique most evolved. Since they take evolution for progress, their estimation of these terms tends to grow higher and higher as they proceed further and further to the right. They treat with condescending contempt the terms on the left. That this view is false will be evident if we remember that technique was in fact present from the very beginning. All we can say is that

technique grew out of mysticism, and that is progress for technique. But it should be remembered that mysticism is also purged of all that issues out of it. A decisive step in that purification is marked by Jesus' words:

'Your Father knows what you want even before you ask for it' (Ch. (1) *Gospel of Mathew*), implying the giving up of the utilitarian prayer. And that purification is a decided progress for mysticism.

V

We cannot hold the two ends of this chain all at once, since they are not equivalent. But the end should be well fixed on high. Would you climb by the rope-ladder, then it is necessary that the ladder should be fixed to the high beam. You may say that it does not interest you to climb by such and such a ladder and up to the highest. Be it so. But you should not hook the ladder in the void to any level you please. You should hook it on high, even though you do not wish to go above the middle. Hooked high, it will stretch as much as you exert yourself. Otherwise it will press down all and itself sink low.

VI

You will pass for a reactionary when you denounce the excesses and evils of technique. It may be said that technique is not an enemy of the soul. Certainly not, just as the pole is not the enemy of the equator. But we cannot be everywhere at one and the same time. If we are stationed at the pole, we will not feel hot. If we wish to be at the equator, we have to traverse the intermediary regions. All these zones are well shown in the atlases for children. I may recount the story of the boy, who with rare tact, built himself a radio post with a phonograph attached to it. His machinery was put into action. The idea never came

to him of producing anything but jazz. This boy is an image in miniature, of the greatness and the misery of the modern west, installed in technique and making of itself the figure of a 'World without soul.'

VII

The inclination which descends from mysticism to technique is really that of the modern mind. It installs itself with frenzy in technique. Levy Bruhl is characteristically modern when he attempts to define mysticism as primitive mentality, for which he has afterwards given the happy term 'prelogical'. The magic state of the primitive mind is mysticism from the point of view of our perfected technique, because it represents a technique charged with mysticism. But viewed from the other end of the purified simple mysticism the same state can also be fairly defined as technique, because it represents a mystical state encumbered with practical recipes and tact.

VIII

The singular degradation of the term mysticism in recent years is a noteworthy linguistic phenomenon, with an undoubted psychological significance. The destiny of words lies certainly in being current or falling out of use. But here the degradation has been very rapid and almost brutal. Not only do we speak of national and revolutionary mysticism, but also our journalists

have familiarized us with the terms mysticism of sport, of cinema, of youth, of muscle, of jazz and what not. It is well they do not as yet speak of the mysticism of petrol, of India-rubber, of fixed-rate shopping! There will naturally then be a mysticism of the technique which ends by buckling the buckle and putting head over heels.

The exaltations to which the term mysticism is subjected are in no way justifiable. Meanwhile it will be well to note that this degradation of the word has a significance. And this significance lies in the home sickness felt by true mysticism to come into its own, in a universal disaffection. By the degradation of the word, our world eloquently expresses how far it has lost and how much it is obsessed by mysticism.

IX

Those who to-day in the name of science judge perennial philosophy, themselves (or their sons or their disciples) will judge to-morrow the perennial theoretic science in the name of technique and will seek to reduce science to technique. But it is clear that this will be to amputate even technique. Our moderns know this well. If they reflect by analogy, they will also know that to reject philosophy is to amputate science as well and they will gradually learn at last that to give up mysticism is to endanger all the rest.

Life would be stunted and narrow if we could feel no significance in the world around us beyond that which can be weighed or measured with the tools of the physicist or described by the metrical symbol of the mathematician.

—Professor A. S. Eddington.

VEDANTA FOR THE WEST

By JEAN HERBERT

Chief Interpreter to the United Nations

Shankara's advaitic works and commentaries are being studied to-day by the Western intelligentsia on a par with the philosophies of Kant and Bergson. The revelation of Shankara to the West, observes the writer of this thought-provoking article, has undoubtedly helped to clear the way for an intellectual rapprochement. But can Advaita be expected to play in the West a role similar to that which it plays in India? Mr Jean Herbert, feeling the low spiritual pulse of the West, answers the question in an emphatic negative. He shows how Shankara's Advaita has been misunderstood by the intellect-ridden West which has listed Advaita as another 'system'. Dualism is prescribed as an alternative. The time has come, says he, for the exponents of Indian wisdom to put the stress on the dualistic teachings of Hindu spirituality and bring Chaitanya to the West. But does the West with its numerous saints stand in need of more dualism and Chaitanyas? If the West really requires any Vedanta from India, it is Advaita-Vedanta. EDS.

Authorised representatives of Indian thought in the West have of late been laying considerable stress on the advaitic teachings of Shankara, and it is gratifying to see that their approach has met with great response in various important intellectual circles. That has led various observers to hail with joy one long-awaited and often despaired-of meeting of East and West, and to prognosticate that it would help to bring about some mutual understanding and respect and facilitate fruitful union between the two major branches of the human family. Since that *rapprochement* really forms the major issue confronting the twentieth century, and on its outcome depends the growth or extinction of what we like to term culture, the claim should be closely scrutinized and its near and far effects carefully estimated.

There can be no doubt that philosophers, professional and otherwise, in Europe and in America, have been profoundly impressed by the depth and subtlety of Advaita, its uncompromising and unimpeachable logic and its consistent explanation of many metaphysical problems which have baffled all modern Western schools of thought. Men

like Swami Nikhilananda in the U. S. A. Professor Radhakrishnan in England, Swami Siddheswarananda in France have actually put India on the map for Western students of philosophy, and they have thereby shown to the most important colonizing countries that the culture of India is not a subject fit exclusively for archaeologists or anthropologists like those of Babylon or Papua. One of the largest publishing firms on the continent of Europe is even now considering including Shankara's exclusive commentaries on the Brahma-sutras, not in a collection of Orientalia or of antique texts, but in its main collection of philosophy, on a par with Kant and Bergson. For the first time in history Sanskrit works are being studied in Western universities for their substance, and not only for what help they may bring to the students of comparative philology. An ever-wider reading public is now demanding translations which give the philosophical meaning rather than a grammarian's version, and many readers even want editions which give a clue to the spiritual implications. As such, the commented versions which Shri Aurobindo gave of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and various

Upanishads are rapidly displacing previous publications.

It should also be fully acknowledged that partly as a result of such developments, India is now being viewed by a large Western elite with considerably more respect, not only as the lineal heir to one of the greatest ancient cultures but as a living exponent of one of the most respectable thought-currents in the world. Gandhiji himself is looked upon less often as a mad man and more often as the mouthpiece of hundreds of millions of sensible and consistent people. And the consequences of this new outlook probably helped to increase support for the political claims of India.

Such recognition no doubt, also contributed to restore to Indians generally and to Hindus in particular the self-confidence which a long period of national disfranchisement had gravely affected, and thereby correspondingly liberated their inner potentialities, creative and otherwise, as a helpful and constructive factor in the world of to-day.

For various reasons, including those which I have listed, the revelation of Shankara to the West has undoubtedly helped to clear the way for an intellectual *rapprochement*, which may begin to bear fruit in the recently created United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation and elsewhere. It will be much easier than it was at the beginnings of the League of Nations to discuss problems political, social and philosophical on a world-wide basis.

It may even be held that this impact of Shankara on the West has so far gained more recognition for India than the advent of Rabindranath, who was appreciated as an artist more than as a thinker, of J. C. Bose and C. V. Raman, whom Western scientists only accept as late-comers in their own field of science, or even of Swami Vivekananda,

whose teachings were received with mixed feelings.

To my mind, however, the essential question is not whether the self-styled 'white' race and India will be able to reach an agreement by stressing the points on which they see eye to eye and ignoring the others or compromising on them. It is rather whether in that coming-together each will contribute to the world of to-morrow its most valuable assets so that the synthesis for which we are headed is rich, well-balanced, stable and capable of lifting the human race above its present material, mental, moral and spiritual level.

One may safely assert that since the East and the West diverged, not so many centuries ago, and so to speak specialised, the East renounced (more or less intentionally and consciously) political power and material wealth to remain the guardian of spiritual values, while the West sacrificed the latter in order to achieve, through science and technique, complete mastery over the outside world.

The main purpose of the now urgently-needed synthesis is to save the human race from impending destruction through the amoral or immoral use of the power which the West has thus acquired and/or through the outward inertness into which the East has partly drifted.

Viewed from that angle, what effect may be expected from the teaching of Advaita to the West? One point must first of all be made clear. Whenever I have asked any Hindu exponent of Shankara in Europe or America why he stressed that particular school of Indian thought so much, I have always received a two-fold answer. The first part of it was that the teaching expounded was not Advaita exclusively, but Vedanta generally, including the dualistic and qualified-non-dualistic aspects. The second was that Advaita was after all the highest peak reached by Vedanta, the ultimate product of

philosophy and was therefore worthy of such special treatment. Let us consider those two statements.

It is a fact that many of the study-circles to which I refer are called Vedanta Societies, and I know of no one which is admittedly limited to Advaita. I am also quite sure that all the teachers preface their courses of instruction by general remarks about the three greatest Vedantic schools and even refer to some of the less famous ones, thereby giving a true picture of the general background. But after that many of them hardly ever mention Ramanuja or Madhva except to draw a contrast, with Advaita. Whereas new translations of *Atma bodha* and sections of *Vivekachudamani* and other advaitic text-books by Hindu sannyasins and professors come out in the West with increasing frequency, the only translation of any important advaitic or visishtadvaitic work which was published recently in the West—to my knowledge—was given by a Frenchman, Olivier Lacombe. Therefore whatever catholicity may be announced, many of the most influential teachers who profess to bring Vedanta to the West really only expound Shankara.

And with few exceptions they do not even bring the whole of Shankara, but only his advaitic philosophical works. We should heartily welcome the courageous departure made in the West by Swami Nikhilananda who in his new book due to be published this year in the U. S. A. dared give some of Shankara's hymns to the Divine Mother, to Shiva, etc. When I myself published a selection of those hymns in France, a few years ago, they were received with concern by authorised Hindu representatives and with more than scepticism by scholarly Indianists, who 'knew perfectly well that the monist philosopher Shankara could never have written hymns in praise of Hindu gods.' And unfortunately books published in India

pass practically unnoticed in the West, even when they are of such high quality as Swami Yatiswarananda's *Universal Prayers* and *The Divine Life*, and the Advaita Ashrama's *Altar Flowers*.

Therefore whatever may be claimed to the contrary, what the West receives under the name of Vedanta is exclusive monism in an overwhelming majority of cases. To exponents of Hinduism, it is all the more tempting because in such a way they can easily command the admiration and respect of the intellect-proud West and eschew the accusation of being pagans and idolaters.

Let us now turn to the other assertion which it is certainly not my intention to dispute—that Advaita should be stressed most, because it is the highest teaching which India can give. To my mind, there is no doubt that Advaita has provided India with a satisfactory common basis for her wide variety of methods of spiritual research, a basis which is probably unique in the world. It is clearly thanks to the advaitic background which (as a theory) is more or less acknowledged by every Hindu, that an ever-increasing number of flourishing sects, addressing themselves to innumerable gods and goddesses, have been able to cater to the spiritual and religious needs of crores of Hindus without arousing any appreciable dispute or conflict. The latent realization at the back of the mind of every devotee that his or her Ishta-devata is one of the many aspects of Isvara, himself the personal aspect of Brahman, has enabled all those sects to plunge into the most unrestrained and profitable *sadhanas* without tumbling into the pitfalls of idolatry and fanaticism, as would probably have been the case in any other country.

Not only that, the under-current of Advaita largely provided India with the necessary corrective to her sweeping passion

for *bhakti* and enabled her to retain the necessary balance between heart and head.

The fact that in India, in all periods of history, only an infinitesimal number of *sadhakas* actually followed an exclusive monistic yoga with any practical result (Sri Ramakrishna said there is one jnanin in a century) does not therefore detract in any way from the value of Advaita, nor impeach its claim to be the crowning glory of Hinduism.

There is another point which should be considered here. Some of the most distinguished representatives of Indian spirituality in America claim that we should not study Ramanuja's Visishtadvaita nor Madhva's Dvaita, but the Dvaita and Visishtadvaita 'as seen from Shankara's point of view', because 'only Shankara and those belonging to his school can reconcile the three points of view by considering the three as three rungs in the same ladder'. They point out most relevantly that while Ramanuja and Madhva both hold 'exclusive views', only a follower of Shankara can say: Lord, when I identify myself with the body, I am Thy servant; when I consider myself as an individual soul I am part of thee; when I look upon myself as the Spirit, I am verily Thyself.¹ But whereas that comprehensive statement can probably be understood without much difficulty by the average Hindu,

¹ The Hymns to Gods and Goddesses ascribed to Shankara give evidence of a devotional strand in his personality. But his special and supreme contribution to life and thought was the Advaita philosophy. Hence a true follower of Shankara must be an unmixed and uncompromising Advaitin. No follower of his would have subscribed to this amalgam, at best a hotch-potch of Advaita where the self is seen as the servant of the Lord, as part of the whole and the like. In this context especially, where Advaita is given the topmost rung it deserves, and the study of Dvaita and Visishtadvaita is urged from the all-comprehensive Advaitic standpoint, it is very misleading to present this highly diluted form of Advaita.

I fear that with extremely few exceptions Westerners can only read into the theory of the three rungs that same superiority complex which underlies the candid admission of 'broad-minded' Christian priests or ministers: 'Non-Christian religions are good and helpful; they may even bring some of their best adepts to a level where they will be worthy of admission into the Christian fold.' And as regards studying Dvaita or Visishtadvaita from Shankara's view-point, however desirable or illuminating that certainly is, it is strangely reminiscent to open minded Westerners of 'suggestions' from Christian missionaries that Hinduism, Islam, etc, should only be studied in books written by Christians preferably clerics.

Now, can Advaita be expected to play in the West a role similar to that which it plays in India? On the basis of a fifteen-year intensive and close scrutiny of the effects which the impact of Indian thought has had in Europe and America, my answer is emphatically in the negative. And I believe the reasons are easy to understand.

As it stands at present, the West is predominantly intellect ridden. Through mental activity alone it has achieved or

² Advaita is no creed hungry for converts. It is the simple affirmation of the identity of the self (Atman) with the all-inclusive ultimate reality (Brahman) and hence is the assurance of the immediate possibility of the identity-experience of the totality. Thus the Advaitic experience includes all other partial experiences. Such being the case Advaita cannot contradict any other philosophy nor suffer from any superiority complex as it does not suffer from exclusiveness. We are reminded about the remarks of Gaudapada on Advaita: 'As non-duality is the ultimate reality, therefore duality is said to be its effect. The dualists perceive duality either way, i.e., both in the Absolute and in the phenomena. Therefore the non dual position does not conflict with the dualist's position.' (*Mandukya Karika*, III, 18). Evidently the writer has missed this all-inclusive and hence non-contradictory nature of Advaita and attributes to it a superiority complex.

become able to achieve all that it is most proud of in the realms of pure science, engineering, military power, standard of living, social advancement, medicine, and even colonisation and war. It has unqualifiedly divorced the new idol of science and the older one of philosophy from religion which has turned mostly into a social function, and from spirituality, which is considered by most people as a now hardly intelligible relic of the past.

The typical Westerner is proud of his intellect and shuns, deprecates, or disowns anything in his heart or in his soul which may seem to be in contradiction with it. Further he is wedded to the logics of Aristotle and Descartes, one of the essential axioms of which is: if A is true, the contrary of A cannot be true.

When he is brought face to face with the monistic aspect of Shankara's message, practically to the exclusion of all other aspects of the teachings of India, his reaction is quite naturally the following: 'I was right in thinking that the intellect has and should have priority over everything else in man, and that every thing that will not bend before it should be thrown overboard,' i.e., worship of God and all that is connected with it. Since Shankara has proved, to my full satisfaction, and more so than anyone else before him, that God does not belong to any higher order of reality than myself⁴, why

⁴Buddhi (which is sometimes translated as intellect, but better translated as wisdom) is to be enthroned in man not to bend all other things in man or to throw overboard things which do not bend, but to organise and integrate other faculties. Buddhi has got the determinative (*nischayatmika*) capacity more than the other elements in man and can bring man to the integral experience, *samyak darsana*. It is to such an intellect, Buddhi, that Shankara gave priority and not to the over analytical and discursive intellect.

⁵Shankara said that the God of religion or the Absolute of philosophy is our inmost reality. It is only when this truth is realised can one say that

should I bring him into this world which my own rational mind has already conquered and subdued?

When a Westerner reads Sri Ramakrishna's statement that 'Shankara was right, but what Ramanuja said was also true', he simply cannot make sense of it⁵ since to him it would be tantamount to saying: 2 and 2 make 4, but 2 and 2 also make 5. And so he clings to the letter of the other statement that Advaita is the *summum* of Indian wisdom, taking it to mean that it has displaced and proved wrong the other teachings, just as Galileo's theory that the earth moved cancelled the previous theory that it did not move.

The spread of such a misconception of Shankara's monistic teachings as the Westerner is bound to have unless he is closely watched and corrected by a competent guru cannot but confirm and strengthen him in his predominantly intellectual view of life and unbalance him still more than he was before, both individually and collectively. And let us not ignore the fact that the stiffening of that attitude in the West is likely to influence in its turn the peoples of the East, and draw them powerfully to the intellectual and

God does not belong to any higher order of reality than himself. For a man without realisation to say thus will be to give currency to a dangerous philosophy. To know one's inner Reality as God Himself is to see in every one the same God and to see the world as the garment of God. God can thus be realised here in this world, in this body. The theory that believes in His being brought into this world is rather unhelpful.

⁵The Westerner cannot make sense because he understands Shankara and Ramanuja as giving two contradictory statements of Reality. The Advaita of Shankara and the Visishtadvaita of Ramanuja are two pictures of Reality taken from two points. Hence they cannot be alike. All the same, both are pictures of Reality and so are true. It is in this sense that Sri Ramakrishna says 'Shankara was right; but what Ramanuja said was also true'. The Westerner will understand it correctly if he takes it thus: 2 and 2 make 4, but 3 and 1 also make 4.

materialistic standpoint which has brought such untold suffering to the whole world.

Does that mean that Vedanta can bring no help to the West? Far be it from me to suggest such a conclusion. I am one of those who definitely believe that the world will never find salvation unless the West learns at the feet of India how to control its material power through spiritual values. And I further admit that elementary philosophical notions of Vedanta, including Advaita, are an indispensable starting point, since only that can satisfy a Western intellect that the wisdom of India does not run against the dictates of logic. For that purpose the lectures given by Swami Vivekananda in the West and collected under the title "Jnana-Yoga" prove invaluable.

But once the Western student's misgivings on that point have been cleared, he should immediately be warned that for all but a privileged few—whose path is harder than any other—such philosophy only provides a background, that all practical effective spiritual life can only be lived in the consciousness of duality⁶ (or of qualified non-duality for a very small elite), through intense devotion to a God endowed with a certain amount of personality and attributes, and that his most urgent task is not to discover what may be behind and above God, but to find out which of the many concepts of the Godhead will give him the greatest opportunity and encouragement for the practice of such devotion. Swami Vivekananda never made the terrible mistake of broadcasting the *Vivekachudamani* and the *Mandukya Upa-*

⁶'The highest peak of Hindu wisdom was indicated when it averred that practical effective spiritual life can only be lived in the consciousness of Oneness. Duality is a concession to the weak. Let Swami Vivekananda speak: 'After all, gradual or not gradual, easy or not easy to the weak, is not the dualistic method based on falsehood? It is based on a wrong idea, a wrong view of man. Would two wrongs make one right? Would the lie become truth? Would darkness become light?'

nishad to the West wholesale and indiscriminately. He was far too fully aware of what the result would be.

The invaluable help which India can and should give to the Western world at the present stage is to show through both example and teaching (1) that spiritual values should come first, irrespective of immediate consequences in practical life; (2) that a balance of head and heart (not shallow rationalism and egoistic sentimentality) is an absolute necessity; (3) that each man has a wide choice between many conceptions of God, of the relations between God and man, of yoga, &c., and should exercise it; (4) that spirituality is a matter of personal experience and not of creed or of labelling; (5) that spiritual practice, like music or medicine, is both a science and an art, which must be learnt methodically and obstinately, preferably with a competent guru, and in which improvisation is often disastrous; that systematic meditation is essential in every form of spiritual life; (6) that the interest of the individual can be neither distinct from nor opposed to that of his neighbour or that of the community; (7) that intense and exclusive devotion is compatible with—not to say inseparable from—unqualified respect for other faiths and schools.

While Advaita can admittedly help for the purposes listed under (3), (6) and (7), it can only considerably hinder a Westerner for the others⁷. What

⁷Evidently the writer has missed Advaita's supreme emphasis on the realization of our inner reality as the spiritual reality which answers the Westerner's need (1), Advaita's insistence on the discipline of the head and heart directed towards their balance and integration, the value Advaita attaches to personal experience and the methods, the *sadhana chatusthaya* it enjoins on aspirants. These aspects of Advaita, vital though they are, have not caught the eye of the writer. Hence he sees it as inefficient to meet all the spiritual needs of the Westerner. For a better discussion of the points please see last portions of 'The Price of two'.

can help him far more is the study of the great Hindu scriptures and mythology, not excluding Puranas, which are brimful of inspiring stories, parables and more particularly myths of the highest spiritual value when properly explained and presented, still more so because they are new to the Western reader and strike his imagination, which stale Biblical stories can no longer do to the same extent. We should be grateful to Swami Prabhavananda for starting along the right line with the publication in California of well chosen extracts of the *Srimad Bhagavatam* in book-form, and to Swami Ashokananda for giving similar stories a fair amount of space in his remarkable American periodical 'The Voice of India'.

The time has come when exponents of Indian wisdom in the West should no longer be timorous of being branded as idolaters if they do not confine themselves indiscriminately to an intellectual teaching which is not only useless but even harmful to a majority of the people who come to them. They should put the stress on the dualistic teachings of Hindu spirituality, as tempered with

Karma, introduced with Jnana and accompanied by Yoga, which can be of immediate practical use to a large section of the Western public. Only if they do so can India contribute her full measure to the synthesis from which the world of to-morrow will be born.

P. S. — One Swami, to whom I had submitted a rough draft of the above article, told me that for the very reasons which I outlined, he felt that Chaitanya should now be brought to the West. I do believe that it will have to be done eventually, not only because it is essential to enable the West to understand India, but also because various classes of devotees in the West can take many leaves from his book. I fear however that if Chaitanya is introduced without sufficient preparation, Christian groups will be thoroughly alarmed and become aggressively antagonistic, as they will see in Krishna a rival of Christ. And that grave misapprehension can only be avoided if we first introduce the idea of the Ishtadevata as developed in Hindu dualism in general.

THE LOCUS OF SOVEREIGNTY

By PROF. P. S. NAIDU

Where does the supreme and ultimate power lie in a democratic country? Does it lie in the legislature, or in the party to which the majority in the legislature owe their allegiance, or in the will of the people as a whole? The question is not easy of solution, and political theorists are not agreed as to the exact locus of sovereignty. Let us, however, discuss the question in a purely objective and scientific spirit, and accept the conclusions to which such a discussion may lead us.

Let us, for the sake of argument, consider a hypothetical case of party interference with the legislature. Consider a popular assembly with ten seats, and with a hundred voters in each of the ten constituencies entitled to return candidates to as many seats. The successful candidates may get elected with a small majority in their favour, and the unsuccessful ones may lose, and yet have an appreciable amount of popular support. Let us say that the successful candidates secure 51% to 55% of the votes. On an

average it will work out to 53%. And if all the successful candidates happen to belong to the same political party, then it will be seen that the assembly will be packed with 'representatives' who represent only 53% of the voters, while 47% have to go without any kind of representation whatsoever. Under these conditions is it legitimate for the party executive functioning outside the legislature to enforce its will first on the cabinet, then on the legislature, and finally on the whole people nearly half of whom are in violent disagreement with the principles inspiring the dominant party? The locus of sovereignty, therefore, becomes a burning political question when a political party, because it has managed to secure an *intolerable* and *intolerant* majority in the legislature, rides rough-shod over the minority in opposition with callousness and indifference, born of a sense of unshakeable power.

I have already hinted at the difficulties which face the student of political science when he deals with the problem of sovereignty. Professor C. E. M. Joad, the renowned thinker, throws up his hands in despair and says, "I personally happen to hold the view that sovereignty *ought* to reside in the people as a whole, but this view owns no more authoritative basis than my own unsupported intuition, and I do not know how to defend the assertion if challenged. That sovereignty ought to reside in the people seems to me self-evident, but I am well aware that it is far from being evident to all people. Moreover, I do not see how it is possible to prove by argument either that the people can or should or cannot or should not, delegate its sovereign powers to representative persons or bodies".¹ As against this hesitant statement we may remind ourselves of what J. S. Mill wrote in his *Considerations of Representative Government*. (1861) "I have no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government

is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the Community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being, at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in the government, by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general". That it is a far cry from Mill to Prof. Joad is, no doubt, true. Eight decades have passed since Mill wrote on political science, and within the last two or three decades so many cataclysmic changes have occurred in the political world that one may turn pessimistic and hesitant when one faces the supreme political problem of sovereignty. And in political science, the *is* and the *ought*, fact and its application, theory and practice are so closely intertwined, that the *is* is often mistaken for the *ought*. Of late, pragmatism has been influencing the thinkers in Political Science, and what appears to be good for a short while has been enthroned as the *summum bonum*. These considerations, however, need not stand in our way when we undertake an objective analysis of sovereignty because all types of totalitarianism are proving their worthlessness in the present struggle for survival.

Let us commence our analysis of the locus of sovereignty with a statement of the connotation of the term *sovereignty*. By sovereignty we mean the *supreme power* within the group. It is as Prof. Joad says, the "ultimate repository of power, some authority which is the source of the authority of all the other persons or institutions who and which possess authority but which derives its authority from nobody and nothing." When sovereignty is understood in this sense, then two questions arise naturally in our minds—(1) What is meant by sovereignty within the group, and where does it reside? and (2) Is there any sovereignty outside the group to which its own sovereignty is subject? We may re-state

¹ *Guide to Philosophy of Morals and Politics*, p. 561.

the questions in a slightly different form thus: (1) To whom within the group is the government responsible, and (2) Is the government of one group wholly independent of the governments of all other group? The second question relates to internationalism, and so it is not our concern at present. Let us concentrate our attention on the first question.

When we take up the problem of sovereignty within the group, we find at once that we have to face two important questions, the first relating to the *nature*, and the second to the *locus* of sovereignty. In regard to the first question we must admit that though the general consensus of opinion favours a monistic view, yet there are thinkers of the type of H. Laski and Graham Wallas who defend the pluralistic position very vigorously. In spite of the many influential advocates of pluralism political practice favours, in an overwhelming measure, the monistic view of sovereignty. Sovereignty, then, we may conclude is one and indivisible and is resident in the State as a whole.

Granting that sovereignty is indivisible, the further question arises, where does it reside? Once again we are confronted with conflicting views on the exact *locus* of sovereignty. One school of opinion holds that sovereignty resides in one or a few privileged members within the group. This theory is based on absolutistic and oligarchist form of government. The other and diametrically opposed school subscribes to the view that sovereignty is vested in *all* the individuals of a group. It is the view that underlies all types of democratic government.

In estimating the relative merits and demerits of those opposed views, the student of Political Science has to guide himself by the achievements of the various types of government based on the conflicting theories. We, in this decade of the twentieth century, have the advantage of having witnessed all types of democratic and totalitarian govern-

ments at work, and have seen their vulnerable points. We can therefore fix the locus of sovereignty without having our vision clouded by the stupefying glass of the unhealthy dazzle of admiration which surrounded the totalitarian forms of government a few years ago.

There are two fundamental values in relation to which all political theories and practices have to be judged as regards their worthiness or worthlessness. The first of these is the eternal and inalienable dignity of human personality. The individual human being is an end in himself; he is not to be treated as a means for some other end; the second is, the welfare of the group as a whole is the only purpose for which a government exists. These two values are supreme in the political field. Even tyrants and dictators have put forth the welfare of the group as an excuse for their tyrannical and undemocratic acts. So, the fiercest opponents of democracy have recognised sub-consciously the group as a whole as the final determinant of sovereignty. It will be seen, therefore, that the ideals which inspire the democratic form of government have stood the test of time, and that by their flexibility and innate spiritual dynamism are capable of unlimited progress towards perfection. The principles underlying all other forms of government are stultifying and derogatory to human personality.

But power is a great corruptor of human nature, and we have witnessed many a sorry example of the 'tyranny of the majority' in democratic governments when their power was backed by an intolerable and intolerant majority where tenure of membership of the legislature was assured for a number of years. 'A majority is tyrannical' wrote Lord Bryce in *The American Commonwealth* (ch. 84), 'when it decides without hearing the minority, when it suppresses fair and temperate

criticism on its own acts, when it insists on restraining men in matters where restraint is not required by the common interest, when it forces men to contribute money to objects which they disapprove, and which the common interest does not demand. Plato foresaw long ago this incipient danger in democracy when power somehow gets into the hands of an uncultured and unspiritual majority. Mill, desiring to emphasise the essential dignity of human personality, writes, 'Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest'; for 'the only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. The consideration of freedom raised by Mill has a very important bearing on the conception of the locus of sovereignty, and so great was the renowned thinker's insistence upon the need for the free play and expression of individual opinion, and for the vindication of the freedom of individual behaviour unfettered by the timidities, and unconfined by the conventionalities of the majority', that he was forced to locate sovereignty in the *superior* minority. We do not agree with this view, but we do agree with the exalted liberal principle which lies at the back of it and gives it some kind of sanction. The only thing in the realm of politics which is good in itself and without qualification is the personality of the individual human being, however low and humble he may be in social status. Every political doctrine, and every form of government should be so framed as to respect this personality, and bring out its potentialities to the fullest extent.

Our conclusion, then, is that sovereignty is one and indivisible, and resides in the group as a whole. How should political practice be shaped in order to make this view

of sovereignty real and effective in the actual life of a democratic community? Our answer is that, in the first instance, there should be a very considerable decentralisation of sovereign power. Taking the Madras Province for an example, the village should be made the centre of legislative, administrative and judicial organisations. The village should have a council of elders, chosen by suitable means, (not necessarily by ballot) over 45 years in age, and conspicuous for their experience, wisdom, tact and social influence. Their political view should be the *last* consideration in choosing them to the place of responsibility. The whole village should participate in choosing the elders. One half the number should retire every year, and the retiring members should *not* be eligible for reappointment for two years. This council of elders should wield supreme power over the whole village, and should be the backbone of administration of the whole province.

The village should send its representatives direct to the Taluq and District councils, and also to the Provincial Assembly. An age limit, somewhat lower than the village limit, should be prescribed for the Taluq and district councils, but none for the Provincial Assembly. Half the number of each one of these bodies should retire every year, and should not be eligible for re-elections, for two successive years. Political parties may be allowed to run these elections but suitable methods must be devised for bringing a healthy restraining influence on the exercise of power by the dominant party. An effective opposition must be created to the party in power.

And above all there should be a permanent irremovable judiciary, appointed for life, and armed with powers to check undemocratic law-making when the legislatures show a tendency to enact laws interfering with the fundamental principles of human liberty. In brief, the whole machinery of government should be so devised that the party in power

will be kept ever on the watch, and forced to justify their measures to enlightened critics among the group, and also kept ever in fear of losing their seats if they prove undemocratic in the least degree. It should be impossible for the executive to enact any law merely on the strength of the majority support in the assembly. The group as a whole must approve of the novel measures. The threat of dismissal, and the obloquy of popular condemnation should always be present before the minds of the executive as reprisals for any undemocratic measures they may be contemplating.

I may conclude with what I have said elsewhere in regard to the exercise of authority by the majority party in power. '... In a spiritualised democracy, the sole purpose of whose existence is the maintenance of the liberty of the citizen the only person who may be entrusted with the task of governing the country is he who has renounced the world. He should be one who has achieved... Para Brahma realisation. He should, in other words, be a *jivan-mukta*. As in Plato's Republic, there should be a panel of *jivan-muktas* who would take turns at ruling the country, each spending half the year in solitary meditation, and the other half in administering the affairs of state. These sannyasin rulers, being *jivan-muktas* themselves, would know how to maintain the liberty of the individual through the exercise of authority. They would make wise laws, but in enforcing the laws

they would never exercise self-assertion, but only sympathy. If punishment is necessary, they would inflict such punishment on their own body, offering it as a sacrifice if necessary. They will not be afraid of criticism, nor will they plead with the public for the voluntary suppression of differences of opinion. They will submit their policies to unsparing criticism by their opponents. In exercising authority inside the framework of the government, there is always the danger of the self-assertive propensity being re-kindled even in the minds of *jivan muktas*. And the only ballast for self-assertion is submission. The executive should, therefore, have the submissive propensity constantly stimulated in their minds by welcoming and even demanding criticism of themselves. When the voice of criticism (or of opposition) is silenced, then liberty is in great danger.

If the dignity of human personality is to be maintained, and if group-sovereignty is to be made a real force in the state, then the plan adumbrated above must be accepted as fundamental to democracy.

* Prof. Laski says in his *Liberty in the Modern State*: 'The best index to the quality of a state is the degree in which it is able to permit free criticism of itself. The state which refuses to risk its own continuance to the free approval, for its members, and that means risking their disapproval, gets no approval at all; for what it gets is mere compulsory conformity.'

VIPRA NARAYANA—THE LOWLY ALWAR

By 'SRI SAILA'

Cities, as well as nations, have been the sports of Fortune, and history teems with instances of nations degenerating and cities decaying. What was once a flourishing city becomes a ruined village in course of time, and the description of the 'Deserted Village'

by Oliver Goldsmith would aptly fit in with the present state of many of our Indian villages.

Tirumandankudi is now a tiny village on the northern bank of the river Kaveri, about 6 miles to the north-west of Kumbakonam,

in the Tanjore District of the Madras Presidency. Its present population is less than 300, but in its heyday it was a very prosperous and large city and contained a colony of 700 Brahmans well-versed in Vedic lore. At the present time it owes its importance only to its close proximity to Pullam Putankudi, a place where Sri Rama is said to have granted salvation to Jatayu. And occasionally, a pilgrim or two may go there as it has been the birth-place of a Tamil Vaishnavite mystic (Alwar) of South India, namely, Tondar-adi-podi, the subject of the present sketch.

Vipra Narayana, who later on assumed the humble name of Tondar-adi-podi (dust of the feet of devotees), was a son of Veda Visharada, a front-tufted Brahman of the village, and was, if we are to believe the Guruparamparas, born in the 288th year of the Kali era. We have no record either of his parentage or early life. The early sacraments (*samskaras*) which a Brahman boy should be subject to, were duly administered to him, and Vipra Narayana, became a very learned man in due course. It is said that he never married, but remained a bachelor throughout life.

Religious devotees used to go on regular pilgrimages to famous shrines in those days and Vipra Narayana, followed this time-honoured custom. He first went to Srirangam. The beatific vision of the Lord, and the charm of the shrine's situation between two rivers so captivated the mind of our saint that he decided to make it his permanent place of residence. He reared up a flower garden and devoted himself exclusively to cultivate and supply enough flowers, *tulasi* leaves, etc., to the deity. Needless to say that he lived on *unchhavrutti* (alms).

Time passed in this wise for some years and Vipra Narayana was now in his middle age. The then ruler of the Chola country had his capital at Uraiyur close to Srirangam and he was patronising a courtesan named Devadevi

who lived at Karambanur or Uttamarkoil, a shrine on the other (north) side of the river Coleroon. She used to pass through the sweet and fragrant garden of Vipra Narayana on her way to and from the king's court, and she had an unholy desire to make herself the owner of this beauty spot. She knew fully well that the 'gardener' would not part with it for money, and she therefore determined to get it through the other alternative, namely love.

With this object in view, Devadevi divested herself of all her costly ornaments and appeared one day before Vipra Narayana in a shabby ochre-coloured cloth while he was engaged in his garden. So intent was he in his work of tending the garden that he did not for a long time notice the fair stranger. When at last the day's work for him was over, he saw her and asked who she was and what took her there. Devadevi was ready with a reply: She said that she was a fallen woman, and that, smitten with remorse, she desired to reform herself through his kindness and intercession. She added that she had considerable knowledge of horticulture and that she would be of some help to him in his divine service of gathering flowers, etc. The saint's unsophisticated mind did not suspect anything malevolent at the time and Devadevi was engaged as the garden-servant.

For six long months Devadevi worked in the garden. She watered the plants, tended the *parterre*, gathered the flowers and wove them into beautiful garlands. Fair as it was, Vipra's garden became more lovely since the advent of the fair servant and he was more than satisfied.

One evening it was raining heavily. The saint was inside his *parnasala* in the garden, but Devadevi stood outside in the drenching rain. His pity moved him to allow her to come inside, and when she came there wet to the skin, he gave her one of his own clothes for her temporary wear. Thus they were

alone, and the erstwhile servant began to play the coquette, with the result that Vipra Narayana lost his balance of mind and succumbed to her overtures. From that moment, Vipra forgot his divine service and was, so to say, a slave to passion. It is said that the wench, after she had spoiled the saint, was so heartless as to neglect him. But he ran after her in spite of his being a cast off lover.

While matters stood thus, a golden cup belonging to the temple was reported to be lost. Investigation led to its recovery from the house of Devadevi who was arrested and brought before the king. She stated that one Rangan, a servant of her paramour, Vipra Narayana, brought it to her as having been given to her as a present by him. On being asked, Vipra denied all knowledge of the matter and said that, being a poor man, he had no servant at all. The king was in a fix. He levied a fine on Devadevi and put Vipra into jail. It is said that the king had a dream that night and Sri Ranganatha appeared before him and said that Vipra was innocent and that the golden cup was taken by Himself to Devadevi in order to wean Vipra from his infatuation. The next morning the king repeated his dream to his courtiers and immediately ordered the release of Vipra.

The night's incarceration was a turning point in the after life of Vipra. Remorse smote him and abjuring all women and all

other desires, he went again to his flower garden to resume his service to God. He purified himself by sipping the water in which the feet of holy men were washed and it was at this time that he assumed the name of Tondar-adi-podi or Bhaktanghri-renu in Sanskrit. He is said to have lived to an advanced age of 105 years and passed peacefully away at Srirangam. Devadevi also spent her days at Srirangam in devoted service to Sri Ranganatha.

Tondar-adi-podi has left us two poems in Tamil and they have been included in the *Divyaprabandam*. The first known as '*Tirumalai*' consists of 45 verses and was so-named as it was like a garland to Sri Ranganatha. The second is known as *Tirupalli-Elizabeth* and is in 10 verses of exquisite beauty of style and diction. It purports to awaken the Lord from His 'Awakening Sleep' and is daily sung by Sri Vaishnavas during their Divine Worship.

Unlike other Alvars, Tondar-adi-podi 'knew' only Ranganatha of Srirangam. His firm belief was that Vishnu was the Supreme Deity and the repetition of His holy name enabled him, as he says, to plant his feet on the head of Yama (God of death). He reiterates that greatness is obtained not by birth but by devotion to God, and in one verse has the boldness to state that those who decry the devotees are veritable chandalas.

TWO BUILDERS OF MODERN INDIA

By M. R. RAMASWAMI, B.A., B.L.

'Western civilisation is doomed. India alone can save mankind from mutual destruction.' Thus spoke the Swami Vivekananda more than 50 years ago. A bewildered, unbelieving world wondered how a rickety

old nation groaning under the iron heels of alien imperialism could rise to play such a remarkable role in history. But the turn of contemporary events tend to prove to-day the Truth of the Swami's thundering prophecy.

All the vaunted progress of material science and industry in the West has led the world to the brink of a volcanic precipice. If humanity is not to plunge headlong into the yawning chasm of atomic violence, it has to be taken along a new road, to a new order based on moral values. Man is badly in need of a new gospel of life, a new religion without its name, embodying the basic Truth of all old creeds. He may hope to survive only if he gives up the reckless path of suicidal violence and adopts means of gaining his legitimate ends consistent with the dignity of his soul. For this he has to be trained systematically to harness the unfailing strength of his inner spirit in order to combat the rule of might over right and establish the reign of Truth and justice in human affairs.

That is exactly what Mahatma Gandhi is trying to do through his Satyagraha campaign in India for the last quarter of a century. It is, at bottom, a truly spiritual movement, though with a deliberate political objective. If it triumphs—as it wellnigh promises to do—and our dumb millions are freed at once from their age-long religious, social, economic and political slavery by the dynamics of soul force, India under Gandhiji's leadership will have forged on the spiritual anvil an effective and in many respects a much superior substitute to violent wars and revolution for the settlement of disputes and emancipation from suffering. That will mark a new era of human enlightenment and moral awakening, all over the globe. There can be no greater contribution than this to the cause of peace and goodwill on earth, nor a better method of sterilising the gross abuses and devilish destructive devices menacing mankind to-day. If the way is paved by Satyagraha for this consummation, then, to that extent, Swami Vivekananda's dream regarding India's glorious destiny as the saviour of humanity will also stand fulfilled even before the echoes of his eloquence die out.

But this is no easy task. It involves no less a process than the awakening of the divi-

nity dormant in every one, the sublimation of brute nature by the alchemy of Love and Truth, on a scale hitherto unheard of in the annals of the world. That is essentially a religious mission. But religion to-day has fallen into disrepute among the intelligentsia of the world. It missed its mark when, instead of watering the roots of life and vitalising all spheres of human activity equally with the spirit of Truth and Service, it encouraged the cutting up of life into mutually exclusive compartments and itself chose to take shelter behind the cloistered sanctity of the temple, church, and mosque. This left the ignorant masses outside an easy prey to all sorts of exploitation, the priests themselves often being no less guilty than the politicians, imperialists and the industrial magnates in the unholy game.

Satyagraha seeks to end all such exploitation by the spiritualisation, in a sense, of politics, trade, industry, education, social, national and international relationships through the practical application of Truth and Non-violence in the various spheres of human life and conduct. By thus reinstating moral and spiritual values equally in all branches of life and directly pressing into service the supreme religious principle to remove the manifold sufferings of the poor down-trodden millions, Gandhiji is rendering the greatest possible service to the cause of Religion itself. Thereby he is giving the most effective refutation of the charge that religion is the opiate of the masses and an obstacle to the all-round progress of the people. That might be true to a certain extent of the formal religion of empty, lifeless ritualism, conducted mechanically by professional priests without regard to the crying needs, moral as well as material, of the populace sunk in ignorance, misery, superstition and cowardice. But religion translated in terms of Gandhian Satyagraha manifested through supreme regard for Truth, selfless nation-building service and dauntless courage displayed in heroic invitation of lathi blows and bullets, without bitterness towards the

opponent, cannot be condemned as mere mockery or a cunning device for mass deception. It is, on the other hand, the most potent force conceivable for the emancipation and enlightenment of the masses and their elevation to planes of morality and culture which cannot be reached by years of ordinary education through schools and colleges.

Gandhiji has never failed from the outset of his mission to stress the dominance of the spiritual motive in Satyagraha and the need to adopt an integral view of life. The term itself connotes the supreme importance of adhering to Truth as the synonym of God, the *summum bonum* of life, based on the dictum *Satyannasti Paro Dharmah*. He fights for India's freedom and would die for it only because it is a part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. Salvation is not for slaves. "I recognise no God" he says, "but the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God, through the service of these millions." Again, "I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind. This I could not do unless I took part in politics..... For me, there is no politics devoid of religion. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the Gita, I want to live at peace with friend and foe. Politics bereft of religion is a death-trap. It kills the soul." Gandhiji is never tired of drawing public attention to the supreme value of religious disciplines like prayer, fast and devotion for the success of Satyagraha. Huge congregational prayers comprising all communities, with collective singing in unison of the Divine Name, Ram Nam, after recitation of selected texts from all the main scriptures of the world, have become a regular feature of his public life only because he holds them to be a necessary training in the use of the weapon of Satyagraha. In one of his recent addresses before a mammoth prayer gathering in Bombay he observed: "The root of Satyagraha is in

prayer. A Satyagrahi relies on God for protection against the tyranny of brute force."

It is this religious appeal that largely accounts for the unique hold that Mahatmaji's teachings exercise on the Indian mass—mind. For, as Swami Vivekananda diagnosed long ago, the life blood of India runs along religious channels and it is there that the remedy has to be applied to cure our national ailments. "Each nation has a main current in life," observed the Swami. "In India it is religion. Make it strong and the waters on either side must move along with it." It is, in this connection, worthy of note that Gandhiji is walking with unerring instinct in the footsteps of Vivekananda in advocating selfless service of the poor and the lowly as the best form of worshipping God. None pleaded more eloquently than the Swami for the rescue of religion from the cloister and the shrineroom and for the practice of the highest principles of Advaita and universal love in the open forum of life, in the world battle-fields, market-place and council chamber as well as the home and the temple. Following the dictum of Sri Ramakrishna that Jiva was equal to Siva, Man equal to God, he boldly preached and practised the Gospel of Seva, the worship of *Daridra Narayana* and *Deena Narayana*, in preference to the rosary as the means of attaining *mukti*. "Him I call a Mahatman," he roared, "whose heart bleeds for the poor; otherwise he is a Duratman." You have heard 'Matri Devo Bhava', 'Pitri Devo Bhava.' But I say—'Daridra Devo Bhava'. 'Murkha Devo Bhava'—The poor, the illiterate, the afflicted—let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion." Swamiji proclaimed from the house tops that he did not believe in a religion or God which cannot wipe away the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. "Let the Vedas, the Koran, the Puranas and all scriptural lumber rest now for some time," he cried. "Let there be worship of the visible God of Love and kindness in the country." Again, "we want to lead mankind to the place where there is

TWO BUILDERS OF MODERN INDIA

neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran. Yet, this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Mankind must be taught that religions are but varied expressions of the Religion, which is oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best."

That is just the direction which Mahatma Gandhi's movement is taking in its latest phase marked by mammoth prayer gatherings in which Hindus and Christians, Muslims and Parsees take part with equal devotion and zeal. Sri Ramakrishna started the stream of religious renaissance by embodying in his remarkable life the cardinal truth that religion is realisation and can be reached by all the paths laid down by the prophets of old. Swami Vivekananda gave wonderful depth and volume to the current by his unparalleled exposition of the principles underlying the different creeds and systems of philosophy and synthesising them in the matrix of the universal gospel of Vedanta. Mahatmaji to-day is putting this universal religion into practice—the religion of being good and doing good, the religion of Truth, Purity and Love—in a form that is easily grasped and acted upon by the millions in all lands so as to save mankind from the tragedy that threatens to engulf it. There is striking support for Gandhiji's non-violence also, as a national policy, in Swami Vivekananda's statements relating to India's unique genius for cultural assimilation and synthesis of the inexhaustible strength of her spiritual heritage. According to the Swami too, real strength lay not in physical might, but in meekness. Dash, pluck and fight, which the westerner possesses in plenty, he held to be weakness. He was not inclined to deplore India's conquest by alien invaders as to point out with pride the nation's ultimate triumph in conquering the conquerors by moral and spiritual strength and taming the alien brutes into soft, decent, cultured specimens of humanity. That was his reading of Indian history through the ages—the hoary mother of humanity

blessing and improving the morals and culture of her erring children though the latter may misbehave and despoil the nation's material resources. This work of elevation, she had already achieved in a measure with her Muslim invaders. "England too," he made bold to prophecy, "will be conquered in her turn. To-day she has the sword, but it is worse than useless in the world of ideas."

Regarding the secret of this strength as contrasted with that of the West, the Swamiji observed: "The West says: Do, show your power by doing. India says: suffer, show your power by suffering. The West says: We minimise evil by conquering it. India says: We destroy evil by suffering, until evil is nothing to us. It becomes positive enjoyment." The power of suffering, he said, was infinitely greater than the power of doing. The power of love was of infinitely greater potency than the power of hatred. Swamiji held up the glorious example of Sita as typical of India, in this respect—the idealised India. "Sita was a true Indian by nature. She never returned injury."

Votaries of Satyagraha will find a perennial source of strength and inspiration in the works of the Swamiji, as, no doubt, many of them must have drawn already. From the earliest Vedic and Puranic times, India has been giving birth to giants of spirituality and Satyagraha of more potent force and influence than any living today. Our ancient scriptures are so deep and profound in the wisdom they enshrine that there is no problem of modern times on which we may not shed their light with profit to ourselves as a nation and humanity at large. If Gandhiji is able in any measure to help mankind to save itself from the disasters which western civilisation has brought on it, the glory of it belongs to the whole galaxy of saints and sages, teachers and prophets, leaders of spiritual thought and action, who have illumined the Indian horizon in the past. He is only fulfilling a fraction of the huge task envisaged by them for the good of humanity, but in a

practical manner so as to give material and spiritual benefit alike to the hitherto ignorant, helpless, down-trodden masses in India and outside and give them back, in the pregnant

words of Vivekananda, their lost individuality. That is but the first step. That firmly taken, the next is sure to follow with the certainty of sun-rise after dawn.

GITA AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

By K. KALIANA SWAMI, B.A., B.L.

The authoritative scriptures that are held in high esteem by all classes of Hindus are what go by the name of the *Prasthanatraya* consisting of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Brahma Sutras*. Of these the most widely read and relied on as a guide in all phases of human life is the *Bhagavad Gita* which is the most popular book in Hindu religious literature, usually referred to in its shortened form as the *Gita* or the *Gospel of India*. It is believed to contain within itself the quintessence of Hindu religion and ethics, typifying as it does the struggle of the individual soul from human imperfection to divine perfection. It is spoken of as "a treasure-house of Dharma, not only for the Hindus but for all mankind" and as such acclaimed as a world-scripture. That being so, the *Gita* must be looked upon as affording not only spiritual shelter to persons of all classes and creeds, whatever might be their intellectual or spiritual development, but also as pointing out the way to their further progress and evolution into a higher spiritual state than the one in which they find themselves.

Human beings are not born identical, differing as they do in their temperaments and constitutions and as Aldous Huxley puts it "within each psycho-physical class one can find people at very different stages of spiritual development" and "forms of worship and spiritual discipline which may be valuable for one individual may be useless or even positively harmful for another belonging to a different class and standing within that class, at a lower or higher level of development".

Such being the actualities of human life, it is perfectly natural that different men should follow different methods in their endeavours towards reaching the goal of perfection. With the advance of time and the spread of education there is a visible progress in human intelligence and knowledge of things, both secular and spiritual. And people are able by the right use of their understanding and reasoning to sift the true from the false, the passing from the permanent, and the unreal from the real, so that what had satisfied their forefathers or their caste or community and which has traditionally come to them by efflux of time in a petrified and hide-bound form no longer satisfies them and much less has it the compelling capacity of forcing submission to it. With the free exercise of one's faculties, one is able to see for himself where he stands spiritually and what would conduce to his progress in that line. So, without binding himself to out-moded religious usages and the spiritual restrictions of the caste or religion into which he was born and wherein he was bred up, he tries to break through them and translate himself into that spiritual atmosphere in which he sincerely feels he would be able more successfully to progress towards his goal.

Leaving aside migrations that are effected from one religion to another out of purely secular or worldly motives and leaving aside forced conversions as well, it must be said that there are always persons who, out of sincere conviction and earnest hope that their spiritual progress would be advanced, have become converts to religions other than

their own and have led, as a result thereof, holy and devout lives, without doing violence to their cherished convictions or their reason.

It may be asked as to what is the teaching of the *Gita* with regard to the evolution of the souls of such men and women. Regarding the *Gita* as a whole with an unbiassed mind, it must be said that it does not deprecate such conversions or view them with disfavour in any way, teaching, as it does, that the goal to be attained is the same in whatever way one tries to reach it. Nor can it be taken to make any difference when persons, realising that man requires the help of all the truths revealed in the various religions in his path towards perfection and feeling that in every religion there is only a partial manifestation of God's truth, in as much as God's infinite truth cannot be exhausted through any particular scripture or prophet, determine to follow what may be called a universal religion, by living up to the highest truths that are revealed in all religions, without allying themselves to any of the known historic or other religions. Otherwise there can be no meaning in what the *Gita* says: "Howsoever men approach me, even so, do I accept them; for, on all sides whatever path they may choose is mine, O Arjuna". Unless this broad interpretation is put on the above words of Sri Krishna, *Gita* would cease to be a universal scripture, for, any restricted meaning or qualification that may be sought to be imposed on these words would take away whole bodies of men and women out of the pale of His all-embracing grace. And nothing could be a greater blasphemy to the All-merciful God of the *Gita*.

But yet there are expounders of the *Gita*, like Prof. D. S. Sarma, who would attempt to graft a qualification on the broad interpretation of the verse of the *Gita* referred to above. They say, as does Prof. Sarma: "But those who quote this verse should not forget its counterpart repeated with slight alterations twice in the *Gita*, which say,

"Better is one's own Dharma though imperfect than the Dharma of another perfectly carried out. Better death in one's own Dharma: the Dharma of another is fraught with fear." (Chap: III. 5.35). The word used in the original text was *Swadharma* and it has been translated in different ways by different translators of the *Gita*.

Edwin Arnold's translation of the above runs thus: (*The Song Celestial*, Kitabistan Edn. Pp. 20 & 21). "this is better, that one do His own task as he may, even though he fail,

Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.

To die performing duty is no ill;

But who seeks other roads shall wander still."

The Gorakpur *Gita* Press edition of the *Gita* translates thus (P. 98.):

"One's own duty though devoid of merit, is preferable to the duty of another well performed. Even death in the performance of one's own duty brings blessedness; another's duty is fraught with fear".

Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood in their *Bhagavad Gita* or *Song of God* render this verse (P. 62) thus:

"It is better to do your own duty, however imperfectly, than to assume the duties of another person, however successfully. Prefer to die doing your own duty; the duty of another will bring you into great spiritual danger".

But Prof. Sarma (*vide* p. 59 of his *Lectures on the Bhagavad Gita*) says: "Now, coming back to the subject of *Swadharma*, we have to note carefully that the author of the *Gita* explicitly connects it not merely with the caste system but with the individual's own *Swabhava* or nature".

Whatever might have been the state of society at the date of the Gita, which is generally placed by scholars between the 5th and 2nd century B. C., when the caste system might have prevailed in its uncontaminated state and members of each caste were considered to have developed peculiar aptitudes for their caste professions and followed them, it cannot be said now when any man is free to follow any profession he likes, whatever might be the caste in which he is born, that Prof. Sarma's interpretation of Swadharma will hold good, if the Gita is to be taken as a universal scripture for all mankind.

The other translations referred to above have clearly interpreted *Swadharma* as meaning *One's Duty*, pertaining to whatever situation in which one may be placed, irrespective of the caste or religion into which one happens to be born. In this age when so much of fusion of castes and professions is glaringly apparent, it cannot be taken that one should live and die within the religion into which he was born, performing the duties that are said to appertain to it. And much less can the words of the Gita be interpreted in such a narrow way as to hidebound persons in the religion of his caste or that of the family to which he belongs, without allowing freedom to him to adopt some other religion with the help of which, he sincerely feels, he can progress much better in his path towards perfection. If that were so, there can be no kind of

migration from one religion to another even by those who sincerely feel that such a change will distinctly ensure to their spiritual benefit. But all through the history of the world there have been such honest and sincere migrations as a result of which men and women have made genuine spiritual progress.

What may be called an almost classical example of such migration from one religion to another is that of the late Dr. Annie Besant who, leaving the Christian faith into which she was born, as unsuited to her spiritual progress, had assumed the Hindu religion which she had popularised ever so much by her liberal interpretation of its tenets and by her life in accordance therewith. Though an ardent student and expounder of the Gita, she never felt herself fettered by considerations of caste or caste aptitudes and professions which Prof. Sarma wants to import into the meaning of Swadharma.

In this view and giving the words of the Gita the natural, which is also the correct, interpretation thereof, in whatever way man approaches God, He is ready to accept him and as such there can be no restriction to man's choice of the faith or religion to help him in his path towards perfection. So, it may be definitely asserted that the Gita gives the fullest religious freedom to man to follow whichever way, he sincerely feels would be helpful to him in reaching his appointed goal.

THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

GENERAL INTRODUCTION (II): THE UPANISHADS

By SWAMI TYAGISANANDA

The Upanishads form a class of literary works on spiritual topics which have come down to us from remote antiquity. They are supposed to be the works of realised persons called Rishis. The exact date of their production is still clouded in obscurity. Nor do we know much about the personalities

or lives of these Rishis. They modestly left their own selves in the background, and allowed the truths they preached to be taken on their own merits and not on the authority of the teachers themselves. They knew that Truth can stand on its own legs and does not need any support from frail men.

Truth is always impersonal, *apaurusheya* and *nitya*, eternal. It is therefore not surprising that a later generation considered the Upanishads and their teachings as *apaurusheya* and *nitya*. They do not seem to have been produced in any particular epoch in Indian history. Some of them are as old as the Vedas themselves, and some as late as the Mussalman period in Indian history. Thus the *Isha Upanishad* is part of the *Sukla Yajur Veda Samhita*, while the *Allah Upanishad*, must surely have been composed by some enthusiast in Hindu-Muslim unity. Some of these texts again form part of the liturgical texts called Brahmanas. And not a few are independent of any such connection with other texts, though they are piously assigned by the orthodox scholars to one or the other of the Vedas. About one hundred and eight of them have been listed in *Muktikopaniṣad*, but not all of them are considered to be of equal authority in spiritual matters. Many more manuscripts have been recently unearthed from various manuscript libraries in India and abroad. They treat of diverse topics, not merely spiritual but sometimes physiological, psychological, and other topics. Some of them are in prose, while others are in verse. All of them pretend to be of some use in spiritual life and that is how they dare to pass themselves off as Upanishads.

The spiritual aspirant is not interested in many of them. He pays special homage to only such of them as have been accepted as authorities in spiritual matters by the great Badarayana Vyasa, when he discussed their teachings in the *Brahma Sutras*, and a few more of them, which have been accepted as authoritative by the great Bhashyakaras, like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa and others.

Along with the *Brahma Sutras* of Badarayana and the *Bhagavad-gita*, they form the triple foundations of the Vedanta system of thought, culture and life called Prasthanatraya. In fact, only the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Gita* form the oldest expositions of the teachings of the Upanishads. (Cf.) Shankara's remarks on *Brahma Sutra* I. 1. 2.

वेदान्तवाक्यकुसुमप्रथमार्थवान् सूत्राणां also, *Gita* XIII. 3. कृपिभिर्विदुषः गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक्).

The indebtedness of the *Gita* to the Upanishad is borne out by the fact of the same passages occurring in both. It is also acknowledged in the famous verse of the *Gita dhyana*:

सर्वमिति पदो गवो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः etc.

While the *Brahma Sutras* help us to understand the teachings of the Upanishads rationally, the *Gita* deals with its application and realisation in actual life. Thus they form the earliest commentaries on the Upanishads and are complimentary to each other. Any man who thinks he can understand the teachings of the Upanishads without the help of the light supplied by Badarayana and Sri Krishna is sure to miss the spirit of the teaching.

These Upanishads are often technically known as the Vedanta. The reason for this is that some of the most important texts come towards the end of the collections known as the Vedas or the Srutis, which consist of the Mantras and Brahmanas, followed by the Aranyakas and the Upanishad. In the plan of Vedadhyayana, therefore, they come only at the last stage or the final stage. In another sense also they are called Vedanta, because they give out the essence of the whole of the Vedas. In the former case, the word means the end of the Vedas and in the latter 'अन्त' is taken as meaning the essence or the inner secret. In a higher sense, they are entitled to the name of Vedanta, as one of the ultimate results of the realisation of their teachings is the complete transcendence of the rituals laid down by the Vedas. Cf. *Gita* II. 45.

“त्रैगुण्यं विषया वेदाः निर्वैगुण्यो भवाऽर्जुन” etc. and *Brihadaranyaka* IV. 3, 22.

“यत्र वेदा अवेदाः”

In a still higher philosophical sense, they constitute Vedanta, because they point to a stage, in which man goes beyond all intellectual knowledge, involving the *triputi*

or subject-object relation, where all sense of duality and even time, space and causality are transcended. It is this highest realisation of the Absolute Truth that forms the culmination of all Vedantic discipline and culture and it is this which is known as the Para Vidya--the highest phase of the Adhyatma Vidya or Brahma Vidya. In contra-distinction to this all intellectual knowledge which a man gathers from mere meanings of words, even if the latter be the words of the scriptures themselves is considered only as lower knowledge or Aparā Vidya. For, words can convey only meanings and whenever a man understands the meaning, he does it only by forming ideas in his mind. These ideas being always transitory, cannot be the highest Truth, which must be unchanging. Thus the word Vedānta primarily means the highest spiritual experience of the Absolute Truth and only secondarily the texts which help us to attain this realisation.

The very word Upanishad itself brings out this same idea and is very suggestive of the highly philosophical and spiritual character of its teachings. It is usually derived from the root *सद्* with the prepositions *उप* and *नि*. The root *सद्* has got various meanings such as to destroy, to sit, to scatter, to go and to know. *उप* means 'near' and *नि* suggests *निश्चय* or 'certainty'. Thus *उपनिषद्* comes to mean that Vidya which is got by going near a realised man and sitting at his feet, which is effective in scattering ignorance and destroying Samsara and which leads to the highest good through knowledge of the Brahman. Thus Shankara says in his introduction to *Katha Upanishad*:

सदेः श्रानोविशरणमवसादनार्थस्योपनिषदस्य किंप्रत्यया तस्य रूपमिदमुपनिषदिति । उपनिषच्छब्देन च व्याचिख्यासि तत्रैव प्रतिपाद्यवेद्यवस्तुविषया विशोच्यते । तस्मा - द्विषायां मुख्यया वृत्त्योपनिषच्छब्दो वर्तते, ग्रन्थे तु भक्त्यर्थेन ।

Also in Taittiriya Bhashya introduction:

उपनिषदिति विशोच्यते । तस्मैविनां गर्भजन्मजरादि- निशातनात्तदवसादनाद्वा, ब्रह्मणो उपनिषमयितृत्वात्, उप- निषण्णं वास्या परं श्रेय इति । तदर्थेनान्त् ग्रन्थोऽप्युपनिषत् ॥

The following definitions also bring out more or less the same idea:

(१) उपनीय तमात्मानं ब्रह्म अपास्तद्वयं यतः निहन्ति अविद्यां तज्ज च । तस्मादुपनिषद् भवेत् ।

(२) निहत्य अनर्थमूलं स्वाविद्यां प्रत्यक्षया परं नयति अपास्तं संभेदं अतोऽवा उपनिषद् भवेत् ।

(३) प्रवृत्तिहेतुं निरुपेयान् तन्मूलोच्छेदकत्वनः यतोऽ- वसादयेत् विद्या । तस्मात् उपनिषद् भवेत् ।

These definitions, based on the derivation of the word Upanishad, are suggestive of the intimate connection which the word has got with the idea of Upasana and Upanayanam, both of which are more or less cognate and allied in meaning and derivation. The word Upanayanam literally means 'leading near'. The original idea seems to have been to lead the earnest spiritual aspirant near God. As this had to be done only by a realised man acting as guru or guide, a secondary usage, in the sense of taking oneself to a guru and surrendering oneself to his benign guidance came into vogue. The later ritualistic practice seems to be only a preliminary for initiating the young child into the study of the Vedas, so that he may, in the long run, be able to realise God with the help of the guru and the knowledge of the Vedas. The latest view of Upanayanam, as only a preparation for marriage or as a passport to free dinners, never seems to have been contemplated by the ancients. That Upanayana, in the spiritual sense, has more to do with realisation of Atman or Brahman and not with the merely learning of the Vedas by rote, is clear from the fact that the practices which follow Upanayanam are significantly termed Brahmacharyam which means discipline for God-realisation. This is also borne out by the fact that in the Upanishads themselves we find how even Srotriyas went to realised persons and underwent Upanayana and Brahmacharyam under them.

The method of realising the highest Truth is not merely by understanding the literal meanings of the words of the texts nor by ritualistic practices, but by mental *sadhana*

consisting of मनन, and निदिध्यासन, analysis and rational enquiry, contemplation and meditation. This mental effort, as apart from ritualistic effort, is what is suggested by the word Upasana, which literally means 'sitting near' or 'close and continuous association with the highest in thought, word and deed.' That is why 'Upasana' is also known as Vidya. Cf. *Bodhayana Vritti*.

“वेदने उपसनं स्याद् तद्विषये श्रवणाद्.”

Also, Shankara, on IV. I. I.

“विद्युपस्थितोऽथ वेदान्तेष्वन्यत्रैकेण प्रयोगो दृश्यते.”

Thus 'Upanayanam' leads to 'Upasana', which culminates in Upanishad. The teaching that is given by the realised person to his disciples as they sat at his feet drinking in his words of wisdom seems to have been the original source of much of what now passes off as Upanishadic teachings. The texts themselves are only later compilations of these teachings of different teachers handed down through word of mouth in different schools or families, as is evident from the Guruparamparas mentioned in many of these texts.

This intimate connection between 'Upanishad' and 'Upasana' results in the former being used in the sense of the latter in some texts as *Chhandogya* I. 1. 10:

“यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोऽपनिषदा”

The word 'Upanishad' seems to be also used in some of the Upanishads themselves, in the sense of रहस्यं or गुह्यं or secret or essential teaching given privately by teachers to a few select, deserving aspirants at solemn, private sittings: vide Shankara Bhashya on *Kena* IV. 7:

उपनिषद् रहस्यं यच्चिन्त्यं.

In many texts, the word 'रहस्यम्' is used as a substitute for 'Upanishad', as in *Nrisimha Uttaratatani Upanishad* VIII.

अमयं वै ब्रह्म भवति य एवं वेद इति रहस्यम् ।

In other texts they are referred to as 'गुह्या आदेशाः' as an *Chhandogya* III, 5. 2. or 'परमं गुह्यम्' as in *Katha* III. 17.

“इदं परमं गुह्यं श्रावयेत्” etc. or in *Svetasvatara* VI. 22.

“वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यम्” etc.

Svetasvatara V. 6. calls Upanishad

“वेदगुह्यम्”

“वेद गुह्यापनिषन्मु गृहम्”

and in the *Maitrayini* VI. 29. it is termed as गुह्यतमम्. Some western scholars take these expressions as suggesting the secrecy that is associated with the teaching. There is, of course, parallel in western literature to support this interpretation. Cf. (1) Christ's reply to the question as to why he spoke in parables, in Mathew XIII. 11. (2) Pythagoras is reported to have insisted on his disciples Mystic silence. So also, Heraclitus and Plato Cf. Platos' *Phaedrus* (3) Schopenhauer also seems to have insisted on his students qualifying themselves by previous exercise in grappling with the difficulties of Kant. It is true that in ancient India also some such preliminary qualification was required of spiritual aspirants to make them *adhikaris* or fit recipients of Brahma Vidya. Thus, Sankara insists upon *sadhana Chatusthaya-sampathi* and Ramanuja insists on the pre-requisites of *viveka, vimoka*, etc. Cf. also Aitareya III. 2. 6. 9. which prohibits teaching being imparted to anybody who is not an immediate disciple on *anterasin*, who had not finished a disciplined life under a guru. Also, *Chhandogya* III. 11. 5. and *Brihadaranyaka* VI. 3. 12 for similar views. But the suggestion contained in such words as गुह्य, रहस्यं etc. seems to us to be not about the secrecy necessary for the method of teaching, but about the Upanishad itself, it being the secret or the essence of the Vedas, as we have explained before and as suggested by the words Upanishad and Vedānta. The essential teaching of the Vedas is not so apparent or manifest to an ordinary student, but will be clear only when pointed out by a realised man. This is what Narada means when he says that a realised man must protect the Sastras—Sutra 12:—

भवतु निश्चयदादगीत् ऊर्ध्वं शास्त्ररक्षणम्

The experience of the Absolute, is the essence of the Vedas as referred to by the *Muktikopaniṣad* when it says on that Vedānta is well established in the Vedas as oil in sesamum seeds:

“ तिलेषु तैलवत् वेदं वेदान्तः सुप्रतिष्ठितः ”

Just as the oil in the seeds is not manifestly perceived but comes out only when the seeds are pressed, so we must put forth effort to realise the Absolute Truth which is the essence of the scriptures. Bhagavan also refers to this Brahma-Atman alone as the essence of the Vedas, when he tells Uddhava in *Bhagavatam*—XI. 21. 35.

वेदा ब्रह्मसविषयाः ” and in the *Gita* XV. 15.

“ वेदेषु सर्वेष्वेव वेदः ”

Shankara also admits it when he says in *Sutra Bhashya*,

“ अर्थोक्तव्यं विद्या प्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ता आरम्भन्ते ”

The *Katha Upanishad* refers to it when it says “ सर्वे वेदा अपरं अमनन्ति ”—I. 3. 15.

In the *Rig Veda* itself it is said.

‘If one does not realise this essence, namely God, his study of the scriptures has been in vain.’

“ कचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन् यस्मिन् देवा अधिविद्ये निषेदुः । सस्तन्न वेदं किं कुर्या करिष्यन्ति । य इत् नष्टिदुः त इमे समामते ”

This verse occurs in *Setasatara* IV. 8. also. Again it says that there are many who seem to have studied the Vedas but who have not really studied them, for the Vedas reveal the real teaching only to the few as a wife shows her real form only to her husband:

“ उत्तमं पश्यन् न ददश वाचं. उत्तमः श्रवणं न श्रोत्रेणा उत्तममै तनुवं विसमे जायेत पत्ये उग्रनी सुवसाः ”

This supreme secret of the Vedas, namely God or Atman or Brahman, is referred to as the unknown and the unknowable when the Rig Vedic Rishi dedicates a whole hymn with a refrain,

कर्म देवाय हविषा विधेम,

where he speaks of God as a big interrogation mark. In another verse in the same *Rig Veda* I. 164. 4. another Rishi

enquires, who it is that has gone to a realised man, and with his help realised the Atman which is the life and blood of the universe, the subtle substratum of the concrete world?

“ को ददश प्रथमं ज्ञायमानं अग्न्यन्तं यदनम्या विभति । मस्या असु अग्न्य आत्मा कस्मिन् । को विद्वांसमुपमान् प्रमुनेतु । ”

In the famous hymn of creation, the Rishi concludes in despair with the words, ‘who can know him or who can speak about him? Perhaps even the creator himself may not be able to know or speak about it’.

“ को अदृश वेदं क इह प्रवोचन् कुत आजाता कुत इयं विस्मृष्टः । अर्वाकं देवा अम्य विमर्जनेन अथा को वेद यत् आब्रुवन् । इयं विस्मृतिर्यत् आब्रुवन् यदि वा दधे यदि वा न । यो अम्य अम्यतः परमे व्योमन् सो अज वेदं यदि वा न वेद । ”

Thus however much we may regret it, it remains a fact to be reckoned with, that this Absolute Truth which is the essence of the Vedas and the underlying Reality behind all phenomena is something which can never be understood by the dual, relative consciousness, or expressed in words. This idea is finely put by Sri Ramakrishna when he said that Brahman is the only being which has never been made उच्यते or impure, by being touched by the mouth. The Upanishads themselves repeat again and again that it is not merely unknown but unknowable, though it can be realised. Thus the *Taittiriya Upanishad* says,

“ यतो वाचो निर्वर्तते अत्राप्य मनसा सह ” II. 4.

Kena I. 3. 2. 9.

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाक् गच्छति नोमना न विज्ञा विजानीमो नथा एतन् अनुजिष्यात् । अन्यदेव तद् विदितु अथो अविदिताद् अधि । etc.

So *Katha* VI. 12.

“ नेव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्नुं शक्यः न चक्षुषा ”

And *Mundaka* III. 1. 8.

“ न चक्षुषा दृश्यते नापि वाचा नान्यदेवैः ”

Brihadaranyaka speaks of it,

“ अदृशो द्रष्टा ” etc.—III. 7. 2 3. 3. 8. 11.

Again in II. 4. 14. & IV. 5. 15. as

विज्ञातारं अरे केन विजानीयात्

See also III. 4. 2. and III. 7. 2 3. etc.

The most sublime of the statements however, is in the *Mandukya*, where it speaks of the ‘*turiya*’ as

नान्तः प्रज्ञं न वहिः प्रज्ञं न उभयतः प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं न अप्रज्ञम् । अदृश्यं अव्यवहार्यं अप्राप्यं अलक्षणं अचिन्त्यं अव्यपदेश्यम् etc.

Such being the real nature of this Supreme Entity, it is no wonder, that when the Rishis tried to convey at least some idea of it to others, they were forced to succumb to the painful and inevitable necessity of using words or imagery, which suits only other topics and which can be conceived by mind. They were compelled to employ simile and metaphor, and the language of allegory and parable to suggest vaguely though, to the mind of the aspirant some idea of the goal of life. This is what the *Brihadaranyaka* IV. 2. 2. and *Aitareya* III. 14. mean when they say परोक्षं प्रिया इव हि देवाः etc. and when Bhagavan says in the *Bhagavatam*.

“ परोक्षं वादा कथ्यः etc.”

We thus see what the Upanishads are and what they stand for. If we do not keep this clearly in mind we are liable to get lost in the forest of words. That is why Sankara has warned us in *Vivekachudamani* sloka 60 that ‘the scriptures consisting of many words are a dense forest which cause the mind to ramble merely. The man of wisdom should earnestly set about knowing the true nature of the Atman.’

And in sloka 59, he definitely points out, that the study of the scriptures is useless as long as the highest Truth is unknown and it is equally useless when the highest Truth has already been known.

अविज्ञातं परेतत्त्वं शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला

विज्ञातंऽपि परे तत्त्वं शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला

Therefore, let us approach the study of this subject in a sincere spirit in quest of nothing but the highest Truth or the Atman.

THE OBJECT OF PRAYER

While it is true that any prayer is better than no prayer at all, for the reason that if the finite looks to the infinite some good must result, yet prayer that is psychologically correct is more effectual than prayer that is psychologically incorrect. Prayer, should not be a recital of one's woes or a dwelling upon one's troubles, difficulties, weaknesses, sorrows, sufferings, and failures. In praying we have to remember that we do not have to plead for God to alter, or for life to be made easier for us; what is required is that we should be brought into accord with the Eternal order, with the cosmic pattern. We live in an orderly universe, and all disorder in our life is due to the fact that inwardly we are not in accord or correspondence with the perfect order which is the unchanging reality. The object of prayer is the bringing of our mind into correspondence with the Infinite and Perfect mind, and our thoughts into harmony with the thoughts of the creator of the universe of perfect order.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

OUR RELATION TO THE ABSOLUTE: BY SWAMI ABHEDANANDA. RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA MATH, 19-B, RAJA RAJKRISHNA ST., CALCUTTA. PRICE RS. 6, PAGES 208.

The strength of all strong philosophies rests on two pillars: their conception of the Absolute and the relation they establish between the human psyche and the Absolute. The Absolute to be Absolute must be self-evident (*svayampratyakha*), self-dependent (*svatantra*), all-inclusive, above qualities (*nirguna*) homogeneous (*niravayava*), and luminous (*chaitanya*). According to Vedanta the human psyche or the soul, is absolute in these respects. We have to know its absoluteness by true knowledge and make it its own through a course of meditation and concentration. This process comes within the province of psychology and the author very aptly calls this Vedantic psychology, true psychology and pits it against the so-called psychologies of the West which take only partial views of the psyche.

The author begins by a very necessary exposition of true psychology where he discovers the absolute strands of the human psyche. 'In true psychology' says Swami Abhedananda, 'the psyche or the soul of man, means pure intelligence and nothing else. The soul only knows. It is self-evidence and self-assurance. The soul cannot be destroyed. We cannot think of the destruction of intelligence (p. 12). So its intelligence is absolute. It has also absolute presence, for we cannot think of the beginning of our consciousness.' (p. 12). We have only pictured by a few strokes the nature of our soul and we are already in the centre of the Absolute. To realise this absolute nature of the soul is to establish our relation to the Absolute. It is to live philosophy, to regain the true consciousness. This is explained in the first and second chapters. The following chapters, Powers of the mind, Mind and its modifications constitute a masterly analysis of our mind and its workings. When the mind is freed from its *vruttis*, limitations, by meditation it becomes the Universal Mind and comes to possess great powers of concentration. This is the subject of the fifth chapter. To come by the Universal mind is to drop one's individuality and to gain one's true personality. This ascent is marked by various 'States of existence' (subject of Chapter VII) and these states of consciousness make us aware of our relation *qua* identity with the Absolute.

The closing chapter, Our relation to the Absolute is a very substantial and stimulating one. He

brings together the conceptions of the Absolute in the various religions of the world and establishes the superiority of the Upanishadic conception of the Absolute as the all-comprehensive, impartite stupendous whole, that is Brahman. The moment we realise our relation to the Absolute, we cannot live within the limitations of our selfish motives, selfish ideas and individual consciousness. We must transcend all these, and that is the purpose of religion'. (page 183.) 'We have come from the Absolute and we are going back to the Absolute. If the whole phenomenal universe be destroyed, if the earth is suddenly changed into a nebulous mass, . . . then where shall we be? We shall go back to the causal state. Nothing will be lost. . . . It is all the play of the Absolute. (page 184).

Swami Abhedananda has brought to focus his vast erudition, his knowledge of Philosophy, Indian and Western. The book is printed on good paper and has an attractive get-up.

GOD, SOUL AND UNIVERSE IN SCIENCE AND ISLAM: BY SIR MOHAMMED YAMIN KHAN, KT., C.I.E. ASHRAF PUBLICATIONS, KASHMIRI BAZAR, LAHORE. PAGES 134. PRICE RS. 2-8-0.

The name of the book suggests a comparative study of the underlying conceptions of Islam in the light of modern scientific discoveries. The author has tried to show that science heartily agrees with the monotheistic conception of Islam. In the first chapter the author speaks of the Galactic systems, Universes within Universe, the revolution of the earth round the Sun and then attempts to show that the unlettered Prophet had forestalled these latest discoveries of science by 13 centuries. No doubt science might, in this respect, agree with Prophet Muhammad. But it is not clearly shown whether science similarly corroborates Prophet Muhammad's assertion as to the existence of a Creator of Universes. The author assumes this point and observes that science will one day prove the claims of Islam.

The chapters on the prayer of Muslims and the personality of Muhammad are interesting, revealing as they do, the simple and lofty teachings of Prophet Muhammad. The one feature the book reveals is the growing consciousness among the Muslims to base their outlook on life on sound reason instead of on revelation and authority.

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The author's enthusiasm to establish the superiority of Islam over other religions is to be appreciated. But such zeal will be more appreciated if it is backed up by better understanding and study.

SATYAGRAHA: ITS TECHNIQUE AND STORY: BY R. R. DIWAKAR. HIND KITABS, BOMBAY. PAGES XXII+202. PRICE RS. 5-12-0.

This is a useful contribution to the study of Satyagraha. Literature on the subject is at present largely confined to the speeches and writings of its founder Mahatma Gandhi, spread out in somewhat discursive form over many volumes. The book gives in clear and concise form the main principles and practical implications of Satyagraha both as a way of life and as a weapon of non-violent fight to combat evils, on an individual social and national scale. The author's competence to handle the subject, as manifested by his intellectual acumen, philosophical insight and historical knowledge, is only enhanced by his earnest sincerity and devotional ardour as a disciple of Mahatmaji, trying to live the life of a true Satyagrahi.

The book is broadly divisible into two parts. The first half is devoted to a general exposition of the ideal and technique of Satyagraha, while the second gives a brief sketch of the historical evolution of the movement including a review of the campaigns conducted by others in different parts of the world.

The main principles and philosophical background of the Gandhian gospel are too well known to be discussed here at length. It is based on a firm faith in the innate goodness of human nature and the belief that love and goodness cannot fail to evoke corresponding emotions in the human heart, however debased and brutal it may be in the initial stages. The course of human evolution is from himsa to ahimsa, from the brute man to the human man and then on to the divine man. Hence the Satyagrahi is only working along, 'as part and parcel of the evolutionary urge that is carrying humanity towards greater harmony, better peace and nobler happiness.' Violence only perpetuates violence. Dirt cannot wash away dirt. Fear cannot be banished by infliction of greater fear. These evils can be countered only by their opposites, viz., non-violence, love and truth. To Gandhiji belongs

the distinction of bringing down these spiritual principles from the sublime planes of religion and metaphysics to the spheres of practical life including politics, economics and social relationships and applying them to vast groups of human beings on a scale and in a form hitherto unattempted by any leader or prophet in history. The movement also fits in very well in the present context of the world situation when mankind is menaced by military might in the extreme shape of the Atomic Devil. Hence Satyagraha is the only way out for humanity from tragic destruction. It is the harbinger of a new era of culture and civilisation based on moral and spiritual values. Such, in brief, is the main thesis developed in the book with a wealth of argument, quotation and illustration drawn from relevant sources. In spite of occasional redundancies and repetitions incidental to the author's somewhat evangelistic outlook, the work is highly stimulating. Such an edifying volume deserves to find a place in the library of every citizen of the world.

It is necessary here to bear in mind the word of caution Gandhiji himself recently gave. After expressing his inability to write a treatise on the science of Non-violence, as suggested by a friend, he proceeded to make the following significant observations: 'Any such treatise in my life-time would necessarily be incomplete. If at all, it could only be written after my death. And even so, let me give the warning that it would fail to give a complete exposition of Ahimsa. No man has ever been able to describe God fully. The same holds true of Ahimsa. I can give no guarantee that I will do or believe tomorrow what I do or hold to be true to-day' (*Harijan* 3-3-46).

We may not mislay the import of this warning and decry any attempts at a systematic study of the science of Satyagraha during the life-time of Mahatmaji. As the father of Satyagraha, his life is no doubt intimately bound with the causes. But, as Diwakar himself points out, Satyagraha is above all personalities and stands on its own independent footing. 'Satyagraha would stand or fall by its own merits, only the extent of its application and popularity would depend on personalities from time to time. The main question is whether it supplies a really felt human need. If it does so, it is bound to live and prosper, Gandhiji or no Gandhiji. The principle is always greater than the person who discovers it or applies it. So too is Satyagraha far greater than all Christs and Gandhis. Satyagraha is eternal.'

M. R. RAMASWAMI.

QUELQUES ASPECTS DE LA PHILOSOPHIE VEDANTIQUE: (FRENCH). BY SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA.

This is the second of the series 'Collection: Vande Mataram' and consists of the substance of 13 talks delivered by Swami Siddheswarananda at the University of Toulouse from February to June 1942.

In the preface the Swami pays a well deserved tribute to Marcel Sauton, one of those large hearted souls who dedicate their lives for a great cause. It was he who took down these discourses with meticulous care, thus enabling the publication of this book. Paul Dottin, the eminent Dean of the Faculty of Literature at the University of Toulouse contributes a short and brilliant introduction where he points out that the thought of the East and that of the West can and do meet.

The first talk is on the Indo-Aryan civilisation through history. Its beginnings from Mohenjo Daro and Harappa civilisation are traced. The principal characteristic of the Indo-Aryan civilisation, the spirit of synthesis, is emphasised. Throughout the vicissitudes of history, it has maintained this spirit, this faculty of adaptation. Then the Vedic, Upanishadic, the Buddhistic, the Muhamedan, the foreign and the modern periods are briefly dealt with. The Vedas and the Upanishads form the subject-matter of the second discourse. All the metaphysical conceptions upto the non dualism of Sankara have their origin in the Veda. From the joyful atmosphere of the Vedas, we come to the period of ripe reflections and mature experiences as embodied in the Upanishads. The discovery of the identity of the Atman with Brahman in the Upanishads is the grandest in the field of philosophy and this formula comprehends all the later development of philosophy and metaphysics. The third discourse continues the consideration of the Upanishads. The Hindu attitude of comprehension and synthesis of religions is explained. A brief summary of the principal Upanishads is given, after describing the six philosophical systems. The fourth discourse on the place of the *Bhagavad Gita* in Hindu thought will be very interesting to the general reader, considering the unique nature of the *Gita* and the brilliant mode of treatment.

The psychological problem of perception according to the Sankhya, forms the subject matter of the next discourse.

The notion of Sat according to Sankara is treated with ample detail in the sixth discourse which begins with an appropriate reference to the great work of that national hero, philosopher and saint. The subject is introduced by a translation of the famous *Nirvana Shatka* of Sri Sankara and it is shown that the Vedanta is not merely an intellectual or philosophical attitude but also and pre-eminently a spiritual realisation based on a practical method, to be attained even in this life. Incidentally, the impression prevalent among many, especially in Europe, that the Vedanta denies the existence of the external world, is examined and it is conclusively demonstrated that Sankara combated that theory. In fact the Vedanta does not accept the theory of subjective idealism. The attitude of the Vedanta is neither subjective nor objective, but is that of a comprehensive vision. The difference in this respect between Vedanta and Buddhism is clearly indicated. The ninth discourse treats of Hindu mysticism, a subject of absorbing interest. Sri Ramakrishna is a brilliant example of all the multiple aspects of Hindu mysticism, for he had realised them all in his life. The five forms of the manifestation of human love to the Divine are clearly delineated and illustrated and the unique greatness of Ramakrishna in living in all these manifestations and yet transcending them in the experience of the Absolute is dwelt upon. The next two discourses resume the ontology of the Vedanta and deal with the bliss aspect of Reality. In the 12th discourse suggestions are offered for realising the Supreme Beatitude in different aspects. The thirteenth discourse delivered in April 1938 to the Society, 'The Friends of Buddhism' concludes the series published in this book. It deals with the philosophical consequences derived from a study of dreams. The Vedanta and Buddhism analyse the entire experience of man and devote as much attention to the psychology of dream and sleep as to that of the waking state. The Swami treats the subject exhaustively. The appendix contains an able translation of the commentary of Sankara on an important text of the *Brihadaranyakopanishad*.

The glossary of Sanskrit words employed in the book is very helpful as it gives a clear explanation of many fundamental conceptions of Vedanta.

P. SESHADRI, M.L.
Travancore University.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE INAUGURATION OF THE VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE

A new peak in the Ramakrishna Mission's work in South India was marked when the Vivekananda College, the only First Grade College to be run by the Mission was declared open on the morning of 21st June with due solemnity in the buildings of the Students' Home High School, Mylapore. The preliminary work of admissions to the college and fitting up of laboratories and class rooms have been completed and the college would have commenced regular work by the time this report is in your hands.

The inaugural function commenced with puja and prayer in the common hall of the college before a representative gathering. After the worship, Swami Kailashananda, Head of the Mission in Madras, invoking the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna declared the college open. Sri C. Ramanujachariar rang the college bell to symbolise the commencement of the work of the College. Mr. D. S. Sarma, Principal of the College, then read out passages of the *Gita* as also the daily college prayer. Messages wishing the college success and prosperity were then read out. Swami Virajanandaji, Head of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, had sent his 'prayers and best wishes for the Vivekananda College'. Other messages were from Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, Minister for Education, Sir Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer.

After the reading out of messages, Mr. D. S. Sarma said that no college had raised such great expectations even before it came into being as the Vivekananda College had done. His own request to his colleagues and collaborators in the institution was that they should look upon themselves as members of a religious family, as the 'lay members of the Ramakrishna Order'. It was a happy augury, the speaker continued, that the Board of Management which consisted of eminent lawyers, educationists and statesmen had at its head the Swami of the local Math who himself was an educationist in earlier days. He paid tributes to the untiring efforts and patience of Sri M. Subbaraya Iyer, the Secretary and Sri C. Ramanujachari, but for whom the college would not have come into being. In conclusion the Principal expressed his hope that the College would strive to realise the ideals which Swami Vivekananda taught and lived.

Mr. T. R. Venkatrama Sastri on behalf of the Board of management said that it was his earnest hope that the college would help to inculcate the ancient Hindu ideal of striving after correct knowledge and basing one's action on it. He wanted

them to remember how the differences of caste and creed are producing no end of difficulties in the way of the country's progress and hoped that the spirit of Brotherhood and the light of true knowledge will always be kept burning in the college.

Swami Kailashananda bringing the proceedings to a close said that it was a matter of great pride that Madras which discovered Swami Vivekananda for the world had now the privilege of starting the only First Grade College of the Mission. He invoked the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna on the college so that the college would grow up to a great future.

Sri C. Ramanujachari expressed gratitude to all those who had contributed to the funds of the college and to all those who had helped in organising the institution.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS

Report for 1945

The Charitable Dispensary has completed nineteen years of its useful existence. During the year under review its Allopathic Department treated 53,766 cases of which 41,350 were repeated cases and its Homeopathic section treated 23,209 cases of which 18,010 were repeated ones. The latter department, it must be said, is becoming increasingly popular and serviceable.

During the year the receipts came to Rs. 9,202-6-2 and payments came to Rs. 6,275-1-4. The needs of the Dispensary are a permanent endowment fund procuring a monthly income of at least Rs. 500 for the maintenance of the Dispensary and suitable donations in kind or cash for fitting the Dispensary with up-to-date surgical and other appliances. It is hoped that the generous and charitable public of Madras will come forward with substantial donations and thus help to carry on this much-needed medical aid to the needy, the poor and the less fortunate of Madras.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYA-MANDIRA, BELUR MATH

The authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira at Belur are going to start from July next I. Sc. classes in Physics, Chemistry and Biology in addition to the existing I. A. and I. Com. classes. Up-to-date Science Laboratories for practical classes have already been constructed. The Vidyamandira which is a residential college is being run very efficiently since its inception in 1941

after the model of the ancient Gurukul with religious training as its cardinal theme. The alumni live in a pure and moral atmosphere in company with self-sacrificing resident teachers in a big commodious and well furnished Hostel attached to the college and are trained to be regular, well behaved, clean, active and self-reliant and are encouraged to develop a sense of social obligation and spirit of patriotic service. Swami Vivekananda was very keen about scientific education and wanted our young men to be fully equipped with Scientific Knowledge whereby they might shape and build the future destiny of their motherland and raise her once again to her pristine position of glory and prosperity. The authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission have taken up this responsible task in right earnest to realise the dream of the great Swami. Hearty co-operation and help of the public are needed for the success of this noble project.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

(Established in 1928) Report for 1941-45

During the Japanese occupation of Singapore though we did not hear about the work of the Mission, it was carrying on with its usual activities. It is very remarkable that during the years of 1941 to 45 which were very strenuous for the Malayan Peninsula, the Mission maintained its progress in the various departments of work.

Swami Bhaswarananda, the President, conducted twice in a week religious classes on the Gita and the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and other spiritual topics. The birthdays of the chief prophets of religions were also observed.

Medical Relief

Between 1942 and 45 the Mission provided free medical relief to 864 patients besides maintaining the Destitute Relief Camp of 50 male and 30 female inmates. The Mission's special thanks are due to

Dr. L. Swamy and Dr. P. T. Nathan for their unstinting and selfless service.

Educational

Besides the Vivekananda Boys' School and Saradamani Girls' School with an average strength of 240 the Mission conducted a Night School for 90 adults.

The Home for Boys and Girls

The Boys' Home purchased a spacious land of 5½ acres in 1941. The present strength is 99 who are mostly orphans. The present strength of the Girls' Home is 55 most of them being orphans.

Young Men's Cultural Union:

The Mission did cultural work through this Union. It arranged lectures on topics of cultural interest and also conducted a magazine by name, 'Culture'.

The Publication Department

The Mission published two books, *Glimpses of Malayan History* and *A Catechism of Hindu Religion for Children*.

The Mission in Singapore takes this opportunity to thank all those who have helped it to advance in its work. It is hoped that its sympathisers will continue to support substantially this much-needed work of the Mission in the Malayan Peninsula.

THE UPANISHAD VIHAR

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M. A., Ph. D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, writes:—With Kailasagiri as the background and Swarnamukhi river in the front, the Upanishad Vihar, a newly consecrated Ashram in Kalahasti, stands amidst ideal surroundings for spiritual illumination. More details about the centre can be had of, 44, Gengu Roddy Road, Egmore post Madras, on application with three annas stamp.

A CORRECTION

In "Vedanta Kesari", April, 1946, on page 269, from line 31 read.

"No, no, we cannot change the synagogue; the Divine Mother says that she is exceptionally happy to hear her praises sung in a strange language." I then gave in detail the experience of Christ of Sri Guru. maharaj, and how we consider since then Jesus as an Incarnation of God, explaining in detail our idea of Incarnation and showing the difference between the Indian conception and that of the Bible.

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caused the difference. This power is the same as His will. By His will the cause of the world came into being. He is the Lord of Maya. The effect, i.e. the world is in the pale of Maya. Scriptures describe these two as Prakriti and Purusha. Do you know the nature of the difference between these two? Just like standing and moving. That which stops, moves again. The stationary state is Purusha. The moving state is Prakriti. And these two are not separate. That the things in Prakriti gained momentum and are moving is no reason to assign them as different. Now you may ask how this difference is effected. This too is the action of Maya. By its power alone space and time have come into existence. At that stage Jiva (individual soul) takes his birth. Jiva is undergoing birth and death. The play of karma (action) is going on in time and space. If the Jiva cannot go above the range of karma, he cannot cut asunder the bonds of Maya. Not that as soon as this thing is achieved the Jiva becomes one with

Brahman. Yet some difference will remain between them. Sri Ramakrishna used to describe this difference as the one between the fire and its sparks. What difference of power exists between these two, exists between Brahman and Jiva. Hence at this stage Jiva is not completely free from Maya. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that Brahman is beyond cause and effect, ignorance and knowledge. It is absolutely free from Maya. This Brahman which is above Maya cannot be said to be *is* or *is not*. It is in between these two. It is neither one nor two. But it is one without the second, in between one and two.

Chattoopadhyaya: Maharaj, please describe this a bit clearly. We are unable to grasp.

Latu Maharaj: Fie upon you, there is no need of understanding any more. You have understood enough; you will not practise anything. You simply make *sadhus* talk.

Saying these words Latu Maharaj became silent.

Oh, when will dawn the blessed day
When tears of joy will flow from my eyes
As I repeat Lord Havi's name?
Oh, when will dawn the blessed day
When all my craving for the world
Will vanish straightway from my heart,
And with the thrill of His holy name
All of my hair will stand on end?
Oh, when will dawn that blessed day?

— An old song.

BHAKTI: ANCIENT AND MODERN

'Raghunath Das had been a soldier originally in the British Service, as an out-post sentinel, was faithful and good and much beloved by his officers. One night, however, he heard a Ram-Ram party. He tried to do his duty but, 'joya Bolo Ram Chunderki jai' maddened him. He threw away his arms and uniform and joined the worship.

This went on for some time till reports came to the colonel. He sent for Raghunath Das, and asked him whether these were true, and if he knew the penalty. Yes, he knew it. It was to be shot.

'Well' said the colonel, 'Go away this time, and I shall repeat it to no one. This once I forgive you. But if the same thing happens again, you must suffer the penalty.'

That night, however, the sentinel heard again the Ram-Ram party. He did his best, but it was irresistible. At last, he threw all to the winds, and joined the worshippers till morning.

Meanwhile, however, the colonel's trust in Raghunath Das had been so great that he found it difficult to believe anything against him, even on his own confession. So in the course of the night, he visited the out-post to see for himself. Now Raghunath Das was in his place and exchanged the word with him three times. Then being reassured, the colonel turned in and went to sleep.

In the morning appeared Raghunath Das to report himself and surrender his arms. But the report was not accepted, for the colonel told him what he had himself seen and heard. Thunder-struck, the man insisted by some means on retiring from the service. Rama it was who had done this for His servant. Henceforth, in very truth, he would serve no other.

He became a vairagi on the banks of the Saraswati.

Some one asked him if the story of the Ram Ram party were true.

"What is the use of knowing such things," he answered.

"I do not ask for curiosity," urged the questioner, "but only to know if it is possible for such things to happen."

"Nothing is impossible with the Lord" answered Raghunath Das.

The questioner above was not asking for curiosity. He had an honest doubt whether such things are possible. There lives more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds. Today we have progressed beyond that honest doubt of the questioner. We do not doubt whether such appearance of God and doing duty for his devotee is possible or not. We simply say, 'Impossible for such things to happen. In ancient days it was possible. But now times have changed.'

Let us remind ourselves that this is not an ancient *puranic* story. Raghunath Das was with us just forty years ago. Swami Vivekananda in his travels visited his Ashram, two months after Raghunath's passing away. The Swami narrated the incident of Raghunath's transformation to Sister Nivedita who has recorded it for us in her *Master as I saw him*.

Forty years ago Raghunath said that nothing was impossible for the Lord. Today the coming of the Lord is an impossibility to us. How soon have we slipped into this 'impossible' modern times. To declare the above culmination impossible is to declare religion impossible. Religion is realization, seeing God face to face. Time and again has the Lord promised to come to us in human form and help us in our daily needs. But are we ready to receive Him? To question the *bonafides* of Raghunath's transformation will be to cut the divine promise into two. It is said in our sacred books that if man follows the discipline prescribed therein consistently for a fixed period he will have self-realization. And the scriptures give us instances to support their word. That we are not getting the results promised

by them only shows that our means are defective. We escape this inconvenient conclusion by the words, 'Times have changed. In modern times such things are not possible.' The truth of the matter is that we are not ready to receive God.

If the prophets and saints we worship, the Christs and Krishnas were to come to us in flesh and blood, will we recognise them and receive them? We will ask for their credentials and on their saying, 'no', we would turn them out. 'O God, that madest this beautiful earth! when will it be ready to receive Thy saints?'

It will be interesting and profitable to gather the reactions to this episode: for that would give us the cross-section of the modern mind. For convenience of treatment we make two classifications under emotional and intellectual: The Bhakta and the psychologist-cum-scientist.

If the modern Bhakta were to declare the above culmination impossible, ancient Bhakti (with apologies to Bhakti for cutting it up as ancient and modern. There is only one Bhakti, one and indivisible, whether ancient or modern) would declare that he is not a Bhakta at all. For he is ignorant of the ABC of Bhakti. Bhakti, as for that matter, all religious discipline, first demands of the aspirant, *sraddha*, i.e. *astikyabuddhi*, faith that God fulfils himself today as of old in the same way, faith in his infinite, inexhaustible grace that touches and transforms people, faith in the experiences of men like Raghunath. Melana, or union with the Lord is the goal; but the one who does not start with the faith that seeing God face to face is possible, cannot progress nor gain the culmination. *Adau sraddha, tatah sadhu sango, adhah bhajanakriya* says the *Bhaktira-samritasindhu*.

If the Bhakta takes refuge in the words, 'Times have changed. In modern times such things are impossible,' ancient Bhakti would tell him, 'Better be honest, and admit that you have changed. Can you

surrender your uniform and arms to the Government as Raghunath did and I shall show that times have not changed. Why put the blame on time and God? Can the all-merciful, immutable God change his nature? Can, fire change its heat or water its liquidity? Or perhaps the Bhakta may formulate the theory that God's grace is running down with the lapse of time. Then his place is with the scientists and the formulators of the Second Law of Thermodynamics according to which the sun's heat is running down every day and one day the sun will become as cold as water.

What makes the Bhakta of today think in compartments of ancient Bhakti and modern Bhakti? Why is he escaping into his stock argument of the need for Bhakti to adapt itself to modern conditions? It is all his anxiety to cover with roses his incapacity to rise up to ancient standards of *sadhana*. After pursuing certain disciplines our ancients achieved wonderful results and they have bequeathed to us their experiences as beacons on our path. What was possible for them then, must be possible for us also through the same intensity of discipline. If we feel that to meet God face to face is impossible, it only shows that our means are not sound and intense. We cannot get mental poise without meditation, without holy company and reading of scriptures. We cannot sow thistles and hope to reap roses! There is enough evidence on record of men rising to their full heights and realising the supreme through meditation, contemplation, company of holy men, reading of scriptures and such other aids. But we lack record of men attaining such results through cinema, horse-race, drunkenness and debauchery.

Let us consider one of the many courses of discipline prescribed. The *Bhaktirasamritasindhu* of Rupa Gosvamin says:

आदौ श्रद्धा ततः साधु संगः etc.

First must come *sraddha* or *astikyabuddhi*, faith in the existence of God, faith in the

transforming power of His grace. Then will follow faith in the scriptures where the experiences of godly men, experiences which are prescriptions to us are recorded. The aspirant will then go to holy men who can explain these scriptures to him and thus the desire for the company of holy men (a rare thing in these days) follows *sraddha*. He finds the holy men always engaged in chanting the names of God and singing His glory. He joins them in the Bhajans. Thus engaged in hearing of the Lord and singing His glory, his mind is not drawn to the worldly objects. The aspirant in this way gets over the obstacles to a religious life. After following this kind of discipline the aspirant gains a little stead-fastness in his devotions and meditations—*nishtha*—and from *nishtha*, *ruchi* or taste for the Lord ensues. Then comes attachment for the Lord (*asakti*) and from attachment follows *bhava* or divine intoxication. Intoxication engenders *prema* for Him and from *prema* the Bhakta gains oneness with Him slowly and steadily.

Here is the ripest fruits of our ancients' Bhakti realizations presented to us with great psychological insight. The upward movement is slow, but steady and natural, involving no strain or violence to man's faculties. All his faculties as also his physique are called to co-operate and contribute towards the culmination.

Let the aspirant in the path of Bhakti regard the gradual evolution depicted above with a psychological eye and gather faith in the psychological genius of Bhakti. Let him strengthen this faith by the knowledge of, and devotion to, the smooth and natural psychological attitudes prescribed by Bhakti, the *vatsalyabhava*, the *sakhya bhava*, the *dasya bhava* etc, and to the general policy of Bhakti following the natural bent of man and sublimating it. This will give him courage and faith in the capacity of his own psyche to ascend to the heights. Then he will not declare Raghunath's experience a modern impossibility. Then he will not cut up Bhakti into ancient and modern and

maintain that ancient Bhakti is not realisable in modern times.

Now we come to the psycho-analyst-cum-scientist. He admits Bhakti as a discipline that is as effective as his, that can dissolve the knots of man's psyche, make it one and whole and open out his conscious into the unconscious. But he cannot bring himself to appreciate the theistic culmination of Bhakti, God coming in form to do the job of his devotee. He wants to be left alone to do his duty without 'divine intervention.' To him ancient Bhakti says, "Let me speak to you in your own language. Your God is the psyche of sublimated instincts and your ideal a society of individuals without repressions and inhibitions. Now, Raghunath had his own inhibitions; he was repressing his devotional fire for fear of official reprimand and official penalty, death. But at the same time his super-ego was often asserting asking him to join the Ram-Ram party. And finally, he did. He threw all his inhibitions and complexes to the winds, his uniform and all, and joined the Ram-Ram party, to find that he has become one with his true and whole psyche, Ram. And then what are the social benefits. He renounced his old associations, began to feed thousands and became the centre of a society of individuals who always began to strive to make their half-psyches whole. Here is your ideal of a society of sublimated psyches." Let the psycho-analyst fix his eyes on this above evaluation of the incident and specially on the social benefits the Bhakta brings. Then he will realise that it is not all to stop at the disapproval of the theistic culmination. He finds that Bhakti has something socially bright and benign up her sleeve. The Bhakta says 'O Lord, you have become all that I see' and serves all.

One fact emerges from the foregoing: True Bhakti affords the necessary correct vision and sustenance both to the half-baked Bhakta and the psycho-analyst. If the former requires more faith in the efficiency of Bhakti and a

psychological understanding of its discipline, the latter is in need of the eye that sees its social results. Bhakti is thus both the *sadhyopaya* and *siddhopaya* and fills up and over-flows the quasi-traditional and modern mental modes typified in the Bhakta and the psycho-analyst. We see before us the edifying spectacle of Bhakti receiving in itself two streams, of muddy modern Bhakti (still to travel long to come to believe in the coming of the Lord) and of psychoanalysis. Psycho-analysis is the new form of Bhakti for the psyche and when it joins the traditional Bhakti, Bhakti becomes complete for the modern man.

It is profitable to linger a while on the psychological genius of the Bhakti-discipline. We find Bhakti not only goes the full length with psychology but goes a step farther in its positive technique of achieving a whole psyche. There are no 'thou shalt not's' in Bhakti. Repression, the anathema to the moderns and the cause of neurosis is conspicuous by its absence. The *sama-damadi* discipline is not there and the *sama-dana-bheda-danda* technique, (cajoling, yielding, division and punishment) which yoga and psychotherapy prescribe for subjugating the instincts are also absent. Is this not a march over psychology? Bhakti is all affirmation and acceptance. In Bhakti there is no attempt to go against one's grain. The instruction is to follow one's natural bent of mind; but one will have to follow it up to the very source. If beauty attracts, the instruction is to follow the beautiful to its source and reach and enjoy the source of all beauty. If fragrance attracts, if gentle touch allures, if sweet taste enchants, follow them to their very source and have to your fill. Why be satisfied with the bits you get on the way when you can have the whole at the source. And the source is the Absolute, the abode of all good qualities, *ananta-kalyanagunanidhi*, *bhuvana sundara*, the most beautiful in all the worlds. It is the Absolute that attracts us to its side through its manifestations. We have to know that and go to the source.

Witness again the positive technique of Bhakti. It gives all the natural human relationships a God-ward turn. Bhakti tells man 'you are loving a woman. To supplant the Lord in her place in the beginning and to love Him will be rather too difficult for you. But you can practise seeing the Lord in her and love her as such. Then you will not love her flesh and be attached to her body; but will idealise her and will continue to love her even after her physical disappearance from the world. If you are in a mood of hero worship, then why worship Hitlers and reap world wars. Worship the Lord as your Master and consider yourself as the servant (*dasyabhava*). Or if you are in a paternal mood, look upon God as your child (*vatsalya bhava*). Are there not enough children in the world to call your own? Why should you be a father so that some children will hang about you calling you, father, father. The Lord is in every child. And we have enough historical evidence of men transforming themselves by cultivating these new 'personalities' these *bhavas*. Such a one was Sri Ramakrishna who cultivated many of them.

Bhakti knows how to turn our normal needs and functions to divine account. Read the Lord's *lila* and hear about Him, says Bhakti, if you are anxious to hear the stories of some hero. 'Beg of the King, if you have to beg at all' that is Bhakti's motto. Glorify Him, worship Him, serve the King of kings, and not a king. Then you won't come to grief like Wolsey.

When the Bhakta advances in this wise he slowly ascends the step of Para-Bhakti or supreme devotion when rituals and other external aids are left behind. He begins to say 'O Lord, I am the machine and Thou art the operator. I am the instrument and Thou art the Doer. I do, as Thou makest me do. Thou art the circle and I am the arc in the circle. Thou art the ocean and I am the salt doll that went to measure thy depth but never returned. Thou art my very self,

and thy Divine consort is my mind. My vital forces are Thy servants and my body Thy temple. My sense-enjoyments are Thy worship and my sleep is *samadhi*. All my movements are perambulations, and all my words are Thy praises—All that I do is Thy worship alone.' When the devotee comes by this vaster and spiritual vision of himself, the Lord who is the devotee's own larger and truer self replaces him in all his movements and duties. Such was the experience of Raghunath Das. This is the state of Para-Bhakti and this was experienced by Sri Ramakrishna throughout the latter period of his *sadhana*.

When the Bhakta gets this firm conviction that God alone is the Doer and he is His instrument, he is whole; he passes beyond all limitations, all sin. Sin is nothing but the consciousness of our limitation, of our finiteness. The Bhakta realises that it is not he that does, or says, but the Lord. How can there be sin in the Lord? A parallel and very signal contribution has been made by psycho-analysis. The greatest contribution of psycho-analysis has been the banishment of the consciousness of sin. Psycho-analysis starts with the very healthy realistic note that instincts are natural to man and concludes by saying that to achieve the maximum of sublimation—which is the goal—we shall find it necessary to be more tolerant to the demands of instinct than has hitherto been the case. With what scientific skill has psycho-analysis thrown overboard the conception of sin. To admit to the necessary* demands of the instinct is considered sin. Psycho-analysis points to a goal beyond the pale of sin, the goal of sublimation which signifies at once mental health for the individual and cultural progress for society. Psycho-analysis has made us realise, however, that the achievement of sublimation is not an easy task, but is on the contrary an end which can only be attained by slow and gradual steps. Neurosis comes about

* Cf. *Dharmaviruddho bhutesh Kamosmi*: I am the instinct, says Sri Bhagavan, where it is consistent with righteousness.

largely through a sort of moral impatience on the part of the individual and society. To achieve the maximum of sublimation we shall find it necessary to be more tolerant to the demands of instinct. This tolerance to the legitimate demands of instinct is no sin. Sublimation itself is an unconscious process which is outside the sphere of voluntary control. All we can do is to provide the means for its occurrence, remembering meanwhile the inevitable gradualness of the whole process.

Psycho-analysis has by its righteous accommodation to the demands of instinct, banished the morbid psychological state known as sin. When the Bhakta says, 'I am beyond the sinfulness of sin, for my devotion is to the Iswara who is sinless' (*sa paranurakti-risvare*), the psycho-analyst says, 'I have also passed beyond sin, I have sublimated my instincts, dissolved the complexes, and regained my free and 'whole' psyche.' Thus ancient Bhakti and modern psycho-analysis meet and recognise that both are blood brothers, the obverse and reverse of the same coin. For did not Bhagavan Sri Krishna after exhorting His devotee to have one-pointed Bhakti for Him, follow it up by telling that He is seated in every heart. Not only that. When a division in the psyche is brought about by attachment to *bhoga* and *isvarya* (enjoyment and its sources) the experience of the whole psyche, *samadhi*, becomes impossible. Great lessons flow to the educator and the social reformer, to the psychologist and to the Bhakta from this organic confluence of Bhakti and psycho-analysis. The Bhakta must be convinced of the need of acquiring a psychological understanding of Bhakti's nature, structure, and the steps leading to its culmination. The psychologist without stopping at his disrelish of its theistic fruition must see Bhakti in its full perspective including the social benefits and transformations a Bhakta works up from his final beatitude. Has not the Lord said that the true Bhakta always seeks the welfare of all beings, *sarvabhootahiteratah*?

To those who contend that Bhakti is out-dated and falls short of modern requirements, we say that the modern half-Bhaktis, the Bhakti for the quasi-divine Nation, and the Bhakti for the deity of technocracy are but the modern offsprings of the old Bhakti. A mysterious sense of belonging to the whole has brooded over man ever since he came, each generation defining this mysterious wholeness in their own way. Let us not forget that all Bhakti in all times have been irrigated from this main stream of emotion. As an emotion that makes us conscious of our real wholeness, Bhakti is a philosophy, a religion, an ethics, a complete psychology. The distinctive contribution of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda to Bhakti was to make us see Bhakti in this multi-coloured setting. In Sri Ramakrishna's pithy saying 'Jiva is Shiva' is given us this vast setting which affords the arsenal for the Mission's social work and the religion-cum-philosophy of individual salvation along lines of world uplift.

Bhakti from start to finish is supremely sweet and herein lies the danger of Bhakti-marga. The devotee may remain satisfied with something short of the highest manifestation of the Absolute, because the joy coming from the Absolute although through the *upadhis* or veils is still sweet. This is exactly what is happening to us today. We have stopped mid-way, satisfied with the sweetness of our patterns of half-Bhakti, our Bhakti for the quasi-divinity, the Nation, our Bhakti for smaller gods of cinema advertisements and modern art. We have enough music today. But its eyes are always fixed low and not on the absolute. Music is a sure guide to the absolute; but not in its modern filmic setting.

Let us see the reality behind these forms of half-Bhaktis, the great fire from which sparks came to illumine the world as artists, seers and prophets, our Vyasas, Valmikis, Tyagarajas, Krishnas and Sri Ramakrishnas. Let us not stop at way-side fountains, but go to the source itself.

How can you say that the only truth about God is that He has form? It is undoubtedly true that God comes down to earth in a human form, as in the case of Krishna. And it is true as well that God reveals Himself to His devotees in various forms. But it is also true that God is formless; He is the Indivisible Existence—Knowledge—Bliss Absolute. Satchidananda is like an infinite ocean. Intense cold freezes the water into ice, which floats on the ocean in blocks of various forms. Likewise, through the cooling influence of bhakti, one sees forms of God in the ocean of the Absolute. These forms are meant for the bhaktas. But when the sun of Knowledge rises, the ice melts; it becomes the same water it was before.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

THE WRATH OF MAN-MADE GODS

We have known the raging wrath of the elements, the killing creed of neighbouring Kings. Floods, droughts and famine have been India's inseparable companions; her invaders became her friends and later on her admirers. We have heard of the wrath of gods from our forefathers who sought to appease the gods and who taught us likewise, through elaborate ritual sacrifice. We have heard of God offering himself as a sacrifice to purify man, and to reconcile him with God and with himself. In many mystery religions and in Christianity especially (Christ courted crucifixion so that man may be saved) God sacrifices himself to win over man to God and raise him to Godhead. We know also of the sacrifice of man for transforming man. In our own day we know of God-men like Sri Ramakrishna suffering vicariously to heal the guilt of others and men like Mahatma Gandhi undertaking fasts and penance to transform others. Sacrifice of God for man, man for God and man for man we have either heard or known, but not sacrifice of man for appeasing the wrath of man-made gods. In Bengal to day we are being taught this hitherto-unknown and gruesome lesson in vast and grisly detail. To what other God did Bengal's five thousand make a holocaust of their lives than to the man-made Molochs of Communalism and sectarianism? And this new Moloch on Indian soil is asking for more children!

To whom shall we pray for pacifying this blood-thirsty Moloch? Prayers to God will not help us, for he is not God's creation. He is man's. We can appeal to man only, to what remains of his good sense, to his reason.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PSYCHO-THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES AND YOGA

By KUMAR PAL, M.A., *Sarvadarshanacharya*

(Continued from August Issue)

Self-Realisation in Psychoanalysis and Yoga

For psychoanalysis as well as for Yoga a free psyche and perfect harmony constitute the one goal and self-realisation is the sole means thereto. The whole difficulty lies in the inability of man to disentangle himself from his own emotional experience (asakti or kama). This kama is due to the primal ignorance, Avidya or Maya, which is the root of all suffering and evil in the world. Both psychoanalysis and yoga therefore strive to dispel this nescience and bring about a withdrawal, a disentanglement from the former identification with emotional experience and a reference to the self as the experience and the emotion as objective experience. Otto Rank justly estimates the importance of psychoanalysis when he says that it lays down for us new 'paths to self-knowledge.'¹⁸

Freud tells us that the last thing man desires to know and understand is himself. So long the consideration of the problem was confined to philosophy. Psychoanalysis has now made it the most practical question for all. Whereas the yoga method could prove helpful to only a few, analysis gives a lever to all. Starting from the standpoint of psychoanalysis one realises after a disgust with the reign of misery and squalor all round that 'the greatest enemy that any individual has is himself and one's self is the thing to be most feared.'¹⁹

We are faced with nature red in tooth and claw. Sorrow and suffering stare us in the face from every nook and corner. 'Nature and man can never be fast friends',—says: Mathew Arnold. 'Whatever we are intended to do we are not intended to succeed, failure is the fate allotted'—says Stevenson. The des-

tiny of man seems to be struggle, unrest and baffled hope. Life appears to be a vale of tears so long as we are at discord with the world. So the problem is set for psychoanalysis characteristically in the words of Tansley, 'Can we point to anything which may again bring the mind into harmony with its environment? We must advance still further in the knowledge of ourselves as in the knowledge of the external world.'²⁰

Indians realised this thousands of years before Tansley and Freud did. *Ajnana* was the sole source of all miseries and *jnana* was the one way out. Without self knowledge freedom is impossible. Moksha can be attained only through self realisation.

कृते ज्ञानान् मुक्तिः ॥

मिथ्ये हृदयग्रन्थिः छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्ष्टे परावरे ॥

Mundaka Up.

तस्मादज्ञानं संभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

छित्त्वेनं मेशयं योगमातिशान्तिप्रदं भारत ॥

Gita IV 42.

हेतुर्विहरणं तेषामात्मविस्मरणादते ।

न कश्चिद्वश्यते साधो जन्मान्तरफलप्रदः ॥

Yogavasistha III 95-14.

बहुकालमियं रुढा मिथ्याज्ञानं विपृच्छिका ।

जगन्नाम्न्यविचारारुह्या विना ज्ञानं न शाम्यति ॥

Yogavasistha III 82.

ज्ञानेन सर्वदुःखानां विनाशः उपजायते ॥

Yogavasistha V 93-18.

ज्ञानवानुदितानन्दो न कश्चित् परिमज्जति ।

Yogavasistha V 93-24.

सर्वदुःखशिरच्छेद आत्मावलोकने जायते ॥

Yogavasistha V 75-46.

Psychotherapy obtains self knowledge by breaking down our shell of fantasy. Yoga seeks to attain it by destroying nescience. But this destruction entails the pulling down

of the whole structure raised upon the foundation of ignorance. The passions must be annihilated. The attachment to the world and to the body must go. Even the sense of egoism must be done away with. In short, the whole mind (*manas*) must be reduced to nothing. That is why in the *Yoga Vasistha* we find a number of injunctions for *vasana kshaya* and *manovilaya*. It is to this end, in fact, that all the Yoga sadhanas ultimately lead. Even the purely physical discipline of Hatha Yoga is acclaimed by the Upanishads themselves to finally bring about a dissolution of complexes and a realisation of the self.

आहार शुद्धौ सत्वशुद्धिः सत्वशुद्धौ ध्यानास्मृतिः ।

स्मृतिप्रलब्धे सर्वग्रन्थीनां विप्रमोक्षः ॥

Freud too referred to 'this annihilation of the instincts as taught by the wisdom of the East', but spoke of it as an extinction of life. He remarks, 'Thereby we may sacrifice life and attain peace'²¹ But he has in reality, misunderstood the true nature of liberation attained thereby. Extinction can have no charm for us. For those who cannot think of any life other than that of the 'Ego', liberation may look like total extinction, but in fact it is an initiation into the Life Eternal, for the individual is united with the Infinite Reality. Ranade describes the immediate effects of this state which coincides with the realisation of self and communion with God as follows: 'the entire abandonment of bodily excitement, the resolution of all doubts, the obtainment of infinite power, the enjoyment of illimited joy, the destruction of all fear and the fulfilment of any end that may be contemplated by the mystic.'

In the Upanishads we read :

यदा सर्वे प्रमिद्यन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि स्थिताः ।

अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥

Katha Up.

वासनाक्षयं विज्ञानमनोनाशैः महामते ।

विभज्यन्ते चिराभ्यस्तैः हृदयग्रन्थयो दृढाः ॥

Muktika Up.

Repression Versus Inhibition or Nirodha

Repression has been regarded in psychoanalysis as a mechanism for the production of neuroses. It is considered as an unwholesome way of meeting the difficulties. It is bad tactics to turn our face upon the enemies at our back and let them work havoc in the rear. So Freud did not favour repression of our instincts. It was only during his later and maturer writings that he realised the implications of his position, fled in horror from the sensualistic slogans of his admirers and found some grounds for recommending repression as an essential social, cultural and personal safeguard against the cruelties of nature.

Psychologically speaking yoga also regards repression an extremely difficult task as we have seen. A forced control of mind is compared to the binding of an elephant with a yarn.

विमृडा कर्तुमुद्युक्ता ये हृदयचेतसो जयम् ।

ते निवर्तन्ति नरोन्द्रमुन्मत्तं विसतन्तुभिः ॥

Yogavasistha V. 92, 38, 3.

None the less a free hand to our impulses, a license of passions was never favoured by any system of yoga. Mental laxity adds to our miseries. Passions become our masters when humoured as a horse when pampered gets the better of its rider. But early discipline prevents mutiny and keeps the hold in the hands of reason. So does the sage Vasistha declare:—

मनः प्रमादाद्बद्धन्ते दुःखानि गिरिकूटवत् ।

तद्वशादेव नश्यन्ति सूर्यस्याग्रं हिमं यथा ॥

Yogavasistha III. 99, 43.

Goethe also observed: "The passions are like those demons with which Ahrimanes sailed down the Orus. Our only safety consists in keeping themselves asleep. If they wake, we are lost." "It is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follows it."

"The desires of men increase with his acquisitions," says Dr. Johnson.

¹⁸ Otto Rank: *Trauma of Birth*. P. 178.

¹⁹ Morgan: *Psychology of an Unadjusted school Child*. P. 218.

²⁰ Tansley: *The New Psychology*. P. 265.

²¹ Freud: *Civilisation and its Discontents*. P. 32.

"O fierce desire the spring of sights and
tears
Relieved with want, impoverished with
store,
Nurst with vain hopes, and fed with
doubtful fears,
Whose force withstood, increaseth more
and more."
— Brandon.

"And O' when passions rule how rare,
The hours that fall to virtues share."
— Scott.

It is with this moral consideration in view that the Charaka Samhita prescribes repression of undesirable tendencies and our shastras enjoin strict observance of the social and ethical duties. Social life demands some sacrifice and suffering on the part of the individual:

लोके व्यवयामिपमयसेवा नित्यस्तु जन्तो न तत्र चादना
व्यवस्थितिस्तं विवाह यज्ञ मुराग्रहेषु निवृत्तिरिष्टा ॥
Bhagawata XI. V. II.

Conditioning and Patanjala Yoga

The unconscious *samskara*-Vasana complex or Karmasaya of yoga, as has been stated elsewhere is not inaccessible to conscious influence. Freud formerly held his Unconscious to be beyond all approach, but he too in his later days renounced this opinion. The unconscious is not unalterable. It is merely a prolongation of the conscious and while the conscious strengthens the unconscious, the latter ensures the recurrence and strength of the former.

According to yoga each *vritti* whether good or bad produces its disposition or *samskara* in the mind. The repetition of a particular *vritti* (*abhyasa*) in the conscious sphere increases its potential power in the *samskara* and increases the chances of its projection as *vritti*. The detachment from or avoidance of the contrary *vritti* (*vairagya*) which would go to strengthen the undesirable *samskara* gradually tends to weaken it.

So if we have to mitigate the evil effect of a detestable *samskara* in the unconscious,

we ought to put up a vigorous and continued mental effort wholeheartedly श्रद्धवीर्यं नेरन्तर्येण to cultivate a special kind of interest by habit with reference to the opposite types of mental states, प्रतिपक्षभावेना. Instead of stifling the impulses, which is a very doubtful mental process, one should try to habituate oneself to indulge in such emotions as are opposed to those passions which are intended to be suppressed. An opposite response should be conditioned, in the words of Pavlov to replace the original one. The unconscious wishes can be repressed not by repressing forces outside, but by similarly unconscious but opposite wishes in the super-Ego. The new *samskaras* will then gradually so overwhelmingly prevail even in the unconscious as to stultify the momentum of the undesirable *samskara*.

The unconscious will then play the part of friend instead of a foe. This explains the numerous cases of mental regeneration due to good association, and degradation due to bad company. Freud too stopped later on to draw hard and fast distinctions between the conscious and the un-conscious and discovered an unconscious component of the Ego.

Free Association and Confession

The Free Association method has been likened by certain religious minded persons to the Christian ceremonial of confession. In fact, the two have much in common. Free Association as mere talking can have no effect. It must be preceded by a total relaxation of all inhibition and hesitation. The patient must be in earnest with himself. He must first surrender his true self to the analyst as the sinner does to the priest in his own words. He has to relate all his sins before a sympathetic reliable and esteemed well-wisher before the burden of the sins becomes light.

The Hindu religion also prescribes three steps of *pashchat.tapa*, *prakhyana* and *prayashchitta*—repentance, confession and expiation of the sins.

ख्यापनेनानुतापेन तपसाऽध्ययनेन च ॥
पापकृन्मुच्यते पापात् प्रायश्चित्तेः पृथग्विधैः ॥

Mahabharat XI. 46.

Sama—Dana—Bheda—Danda

We have already observed that instincts are regarded by Hindus as the internal enemies of man. It is our bounden duty to curb them if we have to make spiritual progress. Ordinarily the Ego by its nature tends to turn its back upon them. But it is unsound strategy to let the foes take the rear. Severe battles are being fought inside our minds between the Ego and the Id and it is seldom that we achieve a complete victory or suffer a complete defeat. The ego can employ five means in overcoming the alien forces behind its back.

The Vedantins and the Buddhists are specially bent upon exterminating them by showering a huge fire of knowledge upon them, ज्ञानाग्नि. But generally we adopt the famous four items of the shrewd and unparalleled policy of Chanakya, namely, *sama*, *dana*, *bheda*, *danda*.²² The best course is an open reconciliation by mutual understanding whereby the instincts may be gratified in an approved social way. If *sama* fails we should try to bribe the enemies in order to persuade them to surrender. Let the instincts have direct satisfaction on certain occasions or in a particular type of actions. It was for this occasional satisfaction of crude primitive and mostly sexual propensities that their outburst was not regarded as evil and taboo on certain festival days like Holi (which is a festival of cupid, *kamadeva*), and on some *parva* days or at the time of marriages and fairs. If they do not submit even then, we must punish them by a stern

hand and inflict a severe defeat till they are so maimed as not to raise their heads. In case, even repression fails, the last course advised by the adroit strategist, Kautilya, consists in creating a rift in the ranks of the enemies and in setting up a feud inside the enemies' territory itself between rival instincts. We should encourage or create such impulses as are contrary to those intended to be controlled. Only opposite wishes can repress each other.

All this talk of struggle may sound mere verbal imagery to a student of psychoanalysis. But he should carefully note that Chanakya begins where Freud stops. The sole aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious material conscious, to bring the enemies to light, or in other words to expose the revolting elements inside the mental realm. Jones says, "Translation of an unconscious complex into consciousness is followed by those consequences. The complex becomes accessible to the influence of numerous conscious considerations bearing on it but with which it has previously been out of contact. Consciousness can deal with and control a mental process that is conscious far better than one that is not". But no analyst specifically state the ways of dealing or controlling them.

The real problem for the Indian begins here. It is true, many a time, mere discovery of the rebels or conspirators serves to silence their activities. Yet no less frequently this does not end the whole matter. As Freud says the conflict is merely "transferred to the conscious plane. The ego has to deal with these previously repressed and hidden forces as well as it can. It may discard them away as negligible; it may consciously repress them by reinforcing the battalions of the unconscious with the divisions at the disposal of consciousness, or they may be partially gratified by various sublimating activities".

²² See Madhusudani Tika on Gita II. 37.

MAN'S DUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

By PROF. AKSHAY KUMAR BANERJEE

[*Narayana, the Universal Self, dwelling in the innermost heart of every individual, makes this insistent demand upon his individual consciousness: Love Me in all, Serve Me in all, live and die for Me by living and dying for all. This incessant demand of the universal consciousness upon the individual consciousness, the writer poetically describes as Sri Krishna's Flute, attracting all individuals towards the realisation of perfect blissful union with Himself, by the sweetness of its music and irresistibility of its spiritual power.*—Eds.]

Man's is a dual consciousness. There is in him an *individual consciousness*,—a consciousness which makes him an individual among countless individuals, which separates him from his environments, which is the source of his egoistic feelings, impulses, desires, ambitions and actions, which puts him in a relation of competition and rivalry with his fellow-beings and engages him in a continuous struggle for self-preservation, self-development and self-fulfilment in an apparently hostile world. At the same time there is in him a *universal consciousness*,—a consciousness which inwardly unites him with all other individuals and with the universe as a whole, which is the spring of his altruistic and benevolent feelings, impulses, desires, ambitions and actions, which constantly urges him on from within to be in a relation of permanent peace, harmony, cordiality and fraternity with his human, animal and physical environment, which makes him seek for unity in the midst of all diversities, for the universal behind all particulars, for the changeless behind all changes and for the ultimate ground and cause of all temporal and spatial objects, and which inspires him with the ideal of transcending all limitations, conflicts and bondages, rising above the narrow exclusive egoistic consciousness and perceiving the essential identity of himself with all, and all with himself. These two consciousnesses embracing and at the same time thwarting each other, together constitute the human consciousness. In the Hindu religious literature, the individual consciousness has been described as *Nara* or *Jiva*, and the universal consciousness as *Narayana* or

Paramatma. Every man is essentially *Nara-Narayana* or *Jiva-Paramatma*.

Accordingly, man at the same time lives, moves and has his being in two worlds,—the world of diversities and the world of unity, the world of matter and the world of spirit, the world of contradictions and conflicts and the world of reconciliation and harmony, the world of changes, limitations and bondages and the world of eternity, infinity and freedom. In our normal life the individual consciousness appears to be in the forefront and stronger than the universal consciousness, and on this account the former of the two worlds, the world of material diversities, contradictions, limitations, bondages and conflicts, appears to be the *real* world, and the world in which we dwell by virtue of the universal consciousness, the world of spiritual unity, harmony, peace, freedom, infinity and eternity,—appears to be merely an *ideal* world,—a world that ought to be, but is not,—a world satisfying our imagination, but not presented to our experience.

But even in the ordinary course of our life we feel the reality or at least the influence, of the ideal world, in as much as nobody can feel any rest in and remain contented with what is actually experienced as the real world. Our knowledge, our feeling, our will,—all testify that we do seek for and cannot help seeking the truth of the real world in what is regarded as the ideal world. Our knowledge, as it is evident from the courses of science and philosophy, always seeks for unity as the explanation for diver-

sities, for the changeless as the explanation for changes, for the spiritual as the explanation for the material. That which explains is certainly not less real, but probably more real, than that which is explained by it. Our feeling shows that we do not find true pleasure and satisfaction in conflicts and rivalries and hostilities, even when we are temporarily able to vanquish others, but we find them in love, friendliness, cordiality, peace and the sense of unity with others. Our feeling judges reality by the standard of what is the source of the deepest and most permanent happiness and bliss. According to this standard also, the ideal is more real than the actually real. Our will and active nature also never finds rest in the actual world,—the world which our individual consciousness presents before us. It seeks for the good, the better, the best; but it finds the highest good and enjoys the blessing of self-fulfilment not in the world of conflicts but in the world where the interests of all coincide, where the self-fulfilment of each contributes to the self-fulfilment of all, where everyone sees and enjoys himself in all, and all in himself.

Thus the individual consciousness, though for the time being occupying the front-door of the human nature, cannot rest in peace and comfort cannot bear to think of its own world as the world; it feels impelled to transcend its own world of differences and conflicts and limitations and sufferings, and to enter into and be a permanent dweller of the world of the universal consciousness,—the world as unity, peace, freedom, love, goodness, beauty and bliss, or to convert its own world into such a perfect world. The universal consciousness, operating mysteriously from behind the individual consciousness, sets up before it the ideal of an infinite eternal all-comprehending, all-enjoying perfect personality to be realised by itself by dint of its free intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual efforts and draws it powerfully and incessantly in that direction. The universal consciousness seems to be always trying to universalise the individuality of man, to awaken in everyman

a sense of identity with every other man, with every other living being, with every force and object of nature, with the whole universe. It is the inspiration of the universal consciousness which creates an insatiable want in the nature of every individual, which makes every individual restless and discontented in the world of his actual experience, which urges every individual to expand his self-consciousness beyond the body and its immediate concerns, which creates in him a deep yearning for the infinite.

The universal consciousness is the same identical Absolute Spirit manifesting itself in and regulating the thoughts, feelings and activities of all. This incessant demand and governing influence of the universal consciousness upon the individual consciousness is poetically described as Sri Krishna's flute, attracting all the individuals towards the realisation of perfect blissful union with Himself by the sweetness of its music and irresistibility of its spiritual power. The individual consciousness cannot help steadily advancing in the direction of being perfectly united with the universal consciousness. This is the spiritual urge in man.

In spite of this urge, the human mind cannot get rid of its egoistic impulses, feelings, dispositions, and desires all at once. The disuniting influence of the egoistic consciousness has to be fought and overcome by the uniting power of the universal consciousness. It is not till the egoistic consciousness completely surrenders itself to, and becomes perfectly united with, the universal consciousness, that the ideal immanent in the human nature is fully realised, the knowledge and feeling of identity with the universe is fully attained, all limitations and bondages and sorrows are got rid of. Hence the human life is necessarily a life of strenuous struggle and unstable equilibrium. It is a life of continuous war between the ideal of unity presented by the universal consciousness and the tendencies of disunion associated with the egoistic consciousness.

In the practical life the individual consciousness advances toward self-identification with the universal consciousness progressively through self-identification with the family, the society, the nation, the Humanity and ultimately the entire universe. A man progressively discovers his true self in the self of the family, in the self of the society or the nation, in the self of the human race, in the self of the entire world of the living and the non-living. The sense of inner unity with them all grows in his consciousness.

In its contemplative life the individual consciousness withdraws itself from the outer world which sets limits to it and in relation to which the sense of individuality is developed. It seeks to satisfy its craving for universality by diving into itself. The more it becomes free from sensuous and mental propensities and sensuous and mental connections with the objects and affairs of the outer world, the more does it become free from the sense of limited individuality, the more does it perceive the universal consciousness reflected upon itself, and ultimately when its self-concentration is complete, it realises itself as identical with the universal consciousness.

When after this self realisation, i.e. this realisation of the identity of the universal and the individual in the deepest meditation, the individual consciousness again comes down to the plane of normal experience and perceives the outer world of diversities extended before itself, it finds the universal consciousness shining in and through all these diversities, the whole world with all the various orders of existence within it appears to it as the manifestations or reflections of the one infinite eternal absolute spirit. The realisation of the universal within is followed by the realisation of the universal outside,—in all men, all animals, all plants, all rivers and mountains and forests, all suns and stars and planets. All individuals, whether outwardly conscious or unconscious, moving or inert, great or small, ordinary or extraordinary, appear as the embodiments of the same all-

pervading non-dual Spirit, differing only in names and forms. The individual consciousness, being, then merely a shadow or reflection or individualised manifestation of the same Absolute consciousness, the differences between men and men, between communities and communities, between nations and nations, and even between men and animals, between conscious and unconscious beings, between higher and lower orders of existence appear as unsubstantial, groundless, illusory. The world of unity alone appears real.

In the emotional life of every individual the call of the universal consciousness finds expression in the demand for love. Every man naturally wants to love and to be loved. The sense of individuality, with its subjection, to various propensities and passions and to particular physical and mental interests keeps the emotion of love within narrow limits,—within the limits of biological relations, communities of interests, geographical areas, and so on—and surrounds it with the feelings of the hatred, aversion, hostility, fear etc. What are in the normal moral planes regarded as ignoble feelings are in reality limitations of love. Love constitutes the deeper nature of the self. It is through the intensive and extensive culture of love and the conquest of the feelings which stand in the way of its full development and expansion, that the individual consciousness progressively shakes off its narrow sense of individuality and steadily approaches the universal consciousness. Progressive destruction of the barriers of love means the progressive realisation of universality within the individual consciousness.

Narayana, the universal self, dwelling in innermost heart of every individual, makes this insistent demand upon his individual consciousness: —Love Me in all, serve Me in all, live and die for Me by living and dying for all, and it is by these means that you will be consciously united with Me and the whole world, you will find in Me and the whole world your true self, you will enjoy

the bliss of perfect self-fulfilment and attain eternal peace within yourself. It is in the realisation of the identity of the individual self with the universal self and the attainment by it of a deep sense of unity with the entire universe through the culture of true knowledge, unadulterated love and all-sacrificing service, that every *Nara* can get rid of all wants and imperfections, all bond-

ages and sorrows, all rivalries and hostilities and can enjoy the truth, beauty, goodness, infinity, eternity, prosperity, peace and bliss of his own real self. This eternal demand of *Narayana* upon *Nara*, of the universal Self upon the individual self, and the eternal longing of the individual self to realise the universal Self within itself, is the basis of all morality and reality.

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

By P. MANIKKASWAMI MUDALIAR

Sometime in the year 1897 I heard that an English educated Swami was holding religious classes in Chintadripet. I was told that the Swami at the end of the class welcomed questions which elicited answers revealing the vast erudition and religious fervour of the Swami. I got interested in the Swami's classes, and was gradually drawn to him by his sweetness, scholarship and spiritual zeal.

Before I touch upon the spiritual stature of Swami Ramakrishnananda let me try to give you an idea of how he looked externally. Sasi Maharaj had an attractive personality. He looked younger than he was. He appeared only about twenty-five years of age; but he was really thirty-four. The smiling and tender face was very winning; his face was long and round with a strong and firm chin. His lips were thick, and his eyes though not large were beaming with intelligence and sweetness. He had a broad chest, and a good round belly. He had strong and stout limbs, and his walk was majestic. When going to classes, he would put on a long coat which would come below the knee, and a turban with its long end hanging over his shoulders. I have not seen him with shoes on, nor was he in the habit of carrying a stick with him. He was a man grand to look at.

Sasi Maharaj was well-versed in Eastern and Western philosophy and his method of

teaching was unique. He knew that the students were new to religious subjects and so would scrupulously avoid technical terms. He made it his point to express his thoughts in simple language so that even a beginner can follow him. I remember the Swami devoted many classes to explain fully the implications of the sloka in the Gita, '*Matrasparsastu kaunteya*'. Without some knowledge of psychology this sloka cannot be fully understood and so the Swami was particular to give it in the class. There was a thoroughness about his explanations. And when occasions arose the Swami did not hesitate to differ from the author or the commentators. I remember how when the *Panchadasi* was being taught the Swami criticised some points in it and as a consequence two of his students stopped coming.

Sasi Maharaj taught only principles and studiously refrained from referring to either Sri Ramakrishna or Holy Mother who were the embodiments of these principles. He did so lest he would lay himself open to the charge of founding another 'ism'...The Swami would lose no opportunity to picture to the students the glory that is in Hinduism. In the class he would often stress on Jnana and Bhakti coupled with *vairagya* or renunciation, so much so that the students began to ask him whether to lead a religious life renunciation of family, home and all was absolutely necessary. It would appear that

his preaching of renunciation to youths got him into trouble. One day when I had gone to the Math to meet the Swami I heard him say with a lionine heart, 'What do I care for these big wigs. I am a Sannyasi and can live on the *pial* of one of my student's house. Am I to teach what I learned from Guru Maharaj or what these big wigs like.' I could not quite follow the Swami. Later on I learnt that some big wigs threatened to withdraw their financial support if the Swami continued to teach renunciation to the young men and spoil their minds as well as spoil the hopes the parents were building on these young men. The public of Madras perhaps wanted that the Swami should give instruction on Yoga and such other Sadhanas which could be followed without prejudice to family life. But the Swami used to say, 'God and Mammon cannot be simultaneously worshipped'. So in the long run the public of Madras was apparently not satisfied with the Swami's teachings and hence attendance in the classes began to dwindle. Whenever the students pressed for some practical instruction the Swami would say, 'next time'. But that next time was never to come. Was not the Swami aware that the soil was not ripe for the spiritual seedlings?

When the Komaleswarampet class was closed three of us went to him and pressed him for practical instruction. We went on a day fixed by him when he made Homa and made us take some pledges before the Homa fire. But the Swami did not initiate us in any *mantra*. Even to those students who were very devoted and useful to him, for instance, the late Rao Saheb Ramaswamy Iyengar and his cousin brother, Rao Bahadur Ramanujachariar, the untiring secretary of the Madras Branch of the Mission, he did not give initiation. Apparently the Swami did not want to assume the role of a spiritual guru or perhaps he thought that the ground was not yet ripe.

I now pass on to picture to you the odds the Swami had to face in going to his classes.

In the time of Sasi Maharaj's sojourn in these parts there were no buses and tram-cars. There was a peculiar kind of jutka not of the type we have now. It was a sort of small box into which three will have to squeeze themselves: one will have to sit at the entrance, and the other two opposite to him, just at the back side of the driver's seat. The entrance into the jutka was very narrow and the box was fitted in a slanting way so that the passengers had always to learn the lesson of alertness not to slip and knock against one another. It was funny sight to see Sasi Maharaj entering the jutka with his stout and robust body, squeezing himself and bending his head. These jutkas were not available near the Ice House and often the Swami had to walk up to the jutka-stand, a mile off in the Triplicane bazaar. Nor had he the requisite money to hire one. He had therefore to go all the way on foot to Chintadripet which could be reached only through the Mount Road. Mount Road was then a low lying place and was often under water and the Swami had to wade through knee-deep and sometimes hip-deep of water to go to the classes. Through the grace of his Guru whose protecting arm he always felt and on which he fully depended, a jutka-walla who was a Harijan came forward to take the Swami and ever since used to appear at the appointed time, take the Swami to the class and bring him back to the Math.

The Swami would return from the classes dead tired to cook his own food. In the early days there was none to help him in the management of the Math affairs. He was his own cook, his own servant. He was the *pujari* and the teacher. There were days when he returned to the Math after a day's hard work to find that there was not a drop of ghee to fry the chapattis. There were days when on his way back from the class he had to ask one of his students to get a bread for his night meal. In short the personal difficulties he had to undergo were many. But through all these he waded, with unimaginable fortitude and serenity of mind. In fact the circumstances were such

that he would not have come in for blame if he had shifted the centre of his activities to some other place in the province. But he was a great Karma-yogin and had such a great faith in his Guru that he was quite confident that all difficulties were sure to disappear soon and so he stuck to his post of duty assigned to him by the leader, Swami Vivekananda. Yes, the difficulties did vanish. Some students came forward with monetary help. One student took him to the optician and purchased a pair of glasses for him. A Brahmachari was sent to assist him in the Math work. Then came Ramu and Ramanuju who shouldered the full responsibility and thereafter the Swami's life was free from anxiety. My idea in stressing this aspect of the Swami's life is to impress upon you the ideal of devoted service and strenuous work which the Swami has placed before us by his exemplary life. Sasi Maharaj was a man who had given up everything. He would at the same time strain every nerve of his to carry on the work entrusted to him by Swami Vivekananda, his trusted leader.

About six years passed in this wise and Sasi Maharaj was still in the Ice House. How long could Guru Maharaj continue without a habitation of his own? One Konda Chetty, a student of his, came forward with a gift of land in Mylapore for erecting a Math. On that plot, just where the Vilva tree of the Math now stands, a small building was put up with public subscriptions and Sasi Maharaj moved into it with Sri Guru Maharaj. His joy in getting a house for Guru Maharaj was reflected in his face and became manifest slowly in his actions also.

I remember with extreme gratitude the solicitude the Swami used to bestow on me. Especially I can never forget the way of serving *sadhus* into which he initiated me. Whenever I used to visit him at the Ice House, I would simply salute him with folded hands with the words, Namaskaram. The Swami would return with the words, Nara-yana. Perhaps he was observing the manner of my salutation. One day when I had sat

down for conversation, he said, "will you shampoo my legs a little". I did so very willingly and derived the greatest happiness. I understood him as teaching me how to do service to a *sadhu*. On another occasion I heard the Swami using the word *susrusha* in this talk to the attendant who was then fanning him. The Swami was very careful to give instruction to his students in matters of daily habit. Thus he exemplified in his life the great maxim that the spirit and not the letter of the law is to be followed.

The Swami's tolerance for other creeds deserve mention. He was a very orthodox Hindu. But when he visited the Church at St. Thomas Mount, he knelt down at the altar and prayed in right Christian fashion. He who would not eat anything which was not offered to Guru Maharaj had no scruple to eat a loaf got from a bakery. I remember how he accepted my invitation to the wedding of my niece, contrary to the tradition obtaining in the Ramakrishna Order. Not that he had no respect for the tradition, but he had a warm corner for the request of a devotee. He exemplified in his life the great maxim that the spirit and not the letter of the law is to be followed.

The Swami would never allow any visitor to leave the Math without giving him Prasadam. I used to go to the Math at odd hours of the day just to see what the Swami would be doing then. One day I engaged him from 12 noon to 2 p.m. I was about to take leave when he said, 'Wait, Guru Maharaj is taking his tiffin. I shall give you a little Prasadam.'

This made me discuss with him the value of Prasadam. I held diametrically opposite views regarding Prasadam. But he instanced to me the case of Swami Vivekananda who had no faith in the efficacy of Prasadam and would refuse to accept anything that was given him by Guru Maharaj as Prasadam. Sri Guru Maharaj therefore used to thrust a

grain of rice from Puri Prasadam in a plantain and give it to Swamiji. Prasadam, Sasi Maharaj used to say, has got such great efficacy. I have ever since reposed great faith in Prasadam.

Sometimes I have heard the charge being placed at his doors of not having made San-yasin disciples. Those who had been fortunate to receive his transforming touch, might not have through some reason or other, changed the colour of their clothes, like myself, but are carrying with them the fire of his ideas and working out his ideas in their own humble way.

Some of my friends who saw Sasi Maharaj in the Math remarked that he was not a *tyagi*, but one living in luxury equipped as he was with a few chairs, tables and cots. I was requested by them to ascertain from him whether and if so, what *sadhana* he was practising. When I put the question to Sasi Maharaj he replied, 'Tell them that my Guru had done all *sadhanas* for me'. What a bold and quick repartee!

Sasi Maharaj was a strict disciplinarian and yet he was not slow to forgive and forget when forgiveness would result in good. I know the case of a Bengali youngman who somehow fell in the company of wandering Bairagis and could not get away from them. When this group of Bairagis happened to sojourn at Triplicane this young Bengali having heard of Sasi Maharaj broke loose from them and sought Sasi Maharaj's protection. His name was Jogen. Sasi Maharaj with his mellow heart granted it and allowed him to stay in the Math. But a few days afterwards the truant in Jogen made him run away without Sasi Maharaj's permission. He soon returned to the Math, repented bitterly for what he had done. Sasi Maharaj forgave him and admitted him in the monastery. Jogen in due course was accepted as a monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

I give below some of Sasi Maharaj's familiar utterances which were original.

"Man is not three and a half cubits body.

Mind is matter mixed spirit.

Pleasure and pain are a contradiction.

In the division of time as Present, Past and future, the present is Parabrahma.

Mammon and God cannot be simultaneously worshipped.

Maya is like a varnished harlot appearing on the stage. The moment she is detected to be an old woman, she gives up her tempting coqueties.

A true Bhakta is greater than God for he is a giver and not a taker.

A Jnani is like a spring full of water; but a Bhakta is like an overflowing spring.

A Jnani wants to become sugar but the Bhakta wants to taste sugar.

A man fully under water cannot see the bank, but a man with the head about the surface sees it. So while immersed in Maya what is outside it cannot be known.

Mind's real nature is dull and inert *i.e.*, *jada*.

The present birth pre-supposes previous existence.

If you grant and believe in your existence, you must grant the existence of all other things.

Desire concretised is body.

Desire to be desireless is harmless.

Pleasure and pain are contact born.

Do not be overconfident that you can withstand the impact of the Karma in the company of women.

Who are you to set things right in the world. Does not God know when and how to do it.

Man is Savid consciousness Absolute.

You are first and then others follow.

To remove the eye trouble put on green spectacles instead of painting the whole

world with a green paint. So set the mind right and not attempt to right the world. Religion is not in churches, mosques or temples but in the mind. Creation, preservation and destruction are done by Maya in the presence of God and not by God, just as the hair grows in the body not at the wish and instance of the man but in his presence.

Memory is always about the past things we have experienced and when we say we slept well it is a thing of the past and therefore must have been experienced. In sound sleep the mind was active, but it was not engaged in comparing thoughts as it does in the waking state but was witnessing darkness or ignorance.

Suppose there is a light in a room. So long as the doors and windows are open it is visible to us. But the moment the doors and windows are closed the light is not seen. It is thus clear that the light is inside the room and not outside. Similar is the world inside us. If the five gates namely the senses are shut the world is not visible outside. It is therefore inside. The knower can never be known.

Behave like a bee and not like a dung fly. Respect and honor the rich not for his riches but for the Punyam or meritorious acts which got him the riches.

Naked we came and naked we have to go."

Sasi Maharaj consecrated his life for the service of the South Indians whose

spiritual welfare was his sole and anxious concern. He worked disinterestedly and very hard, content with what providentially came his way for keeping the body and soul together. He had no thought of the morrow, and stuck doggedly to his post, preaching without fear or favour. For fourteen years he toiled hard, taking classes, undertaking lecture tours, starting Maths in Bangalore and elsewhere. He dexterously tilled the rocky soil entrusted to him for cultivation, made it alluvial, manured it, leaving the sowing of the seeds to his successors. His neglect of physical necessities, and the hard and exacting life he led brought on serious ailment. The doctors diagnosed and declared it consumption. In spite of his illness he did not seek a change until he was pressed by the Belur Math authorities to go over there for treatment. As befitting a true Karma-Yogin, he obeyed the call, and went to Calcutta. Though the best medical aid was summoned he shuffled off his mortal coils in 1911 to enjoy eternal peace and happiness at the feet of his beloved Master. His passing away has created a void in the hearts of his admirers and devotees in Madras—a void which still remains a void and will remain so till the world lasts.

His successors have sown the necessary seed in the ground prepared and kept ready by him and we see before our very eyes the rich harvest they are reaping. All credit to Sasi Maharaj. All Glory unto him. —(Based on the paper read at the Birthday celebration).

ALL THE DIFFERENCE

A: What is a cynic?

B: A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

spiritual center of man. It reaches the center of personality and unites man not only with his God and with himself, but also with other men and with nature. Reconciliation in the center of personality results in a reconciliation in all directions, and he who is reconciled is alone able to love. Love is the first and last fruit of religion. Salvation is the healing religion does to the cosmic disease which prevents love.

MEMORIES OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

By SWAMI APURVANANDA

It was during the later years of Swami Shivananda's life that I became his personal attendant. At that time he seldom slept at night. His greatest spiritual moods were most manifest during those hours, and he would spend the greater part of the night lost in ecstasy, completely absorbed in divine joy. So intense was this joy at times, that many of the devotees who visited him during the day were conscious of it. It seemed to emanate from his entire body. Sometimes while talking, he would be in such a high spiritual mood that very few could understand and appreciate the full depth of his words. Seeing this, he would say, 'To whom can I talk on these matters? How many can understand? You are still babies in the kingdom of the spirit. Ah! had Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) been living now, he would have rejoiced with me!'

Out of the fullness of his heart he would sometimes hum or sing religious songs, or chant verses from the scriptures, while at other times he would remain very still and silent. One night, after spending many hours in meditation, he broke the long silence by slowly chanting a verse from the Gita:

"Water flows continually into the Ocean
But the ocean is never disturbed.
Desire flows into the mind of the seer
But he is never disturbed:
The seer knows peace.

The man who stirs up his own lusts

Can never know peace.

He knows peace who has forgotten desire.

He lives without craving:

Free from ego, free from pride.

Becoming suddenly conscious of my presence he looked at me and said: 'know for certain that the man who stirs up his own lusts can never know peace. However, without the grace of God cravings are not completely rooted out. Out of his abundant mercy Sri Ramakrishna has wiped away every trace of desire and craving from my heart. I have realised my true being—*shuddha* (pure), *buddha* (awakened), and *mukta* (free). I have no desire left in me, while the body continues to exist to serve the Lord in his mission, I can truly say that most of the time I am unconscious of its existence. I remain almost constantly merged in the bliss of God'.

As he said this his whole face lighted up and a divine smile played about his lips; he looked like a different person as he once again became silent, diving deep into the ocean of Brahman. After a long time he murmured to himself; "The Divine Mother has filled my heart. I have nothing more to ask. Through Her grace I have attained the All. What else is there to attain? As Sri Krishna truly says in the Gita, 'Now that he holds it, he knows this treasure above all

others.' Only Mother knows why she still keeps me in this body'.

Another night the Swami was seated on his bed as usual, deeply absorbed in meditation. Occasionally he became conscious, opened his eyes for a moment, and then closed them again. This continued for several hours. Suddenly a cat came into the room and began to mew. Hearing it, the Swami opened his eyes, and folding his hands together, saluted it. I could scarcely believe he was actually saluting the cat! Seeing my amazement he explained: 'You see, Sri Ramakrishna has so lifted up my consciousness that everything I see, I see as formed of pure consciousness. Brahman, the one, eternal Pure consciousness I see playing in all beings and all things. Their difference lies in name only, behind the names and forms I see the one Reality. I try hard to hide this, but I cannot! Pure consciousness everywhere! And it is that I see manifest clearly in this cat. Sri Ramakrishna has filled my heart with this experience. People come to visit me, and I have to talk to them; I eat, drink, sit, walk,—but all these actions I perform from sheer habit. The moment I withdraw my mind from them I see again the play of the Divine consciousness. Names and forms—these exist only when the mind is on a lower plane. Raise the mind, and, ah! everything is pure consciousness. It is impossible to make this experience understandable to others. He only knows, who experiences it.'.....

One night the Swami was in a more talkative mood. He said: 'Service to the Guru is extremely important. It is through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna that you are serving one of his children, but, my child, you must practise meditation and *japam* also. If you practise these regularly, and follow the spiritual disciplines, then only will you realise what Sri Ramakrishna is. When the mind becomes pure through the

practice of stern disciplines, then only is the true nature of God revealed. Even though we saw Sri Ramakrishna, even though we associated with him and found his grace, still he made us practise strenuous spiritual disciplines. Even we who saw him could not realise in the beginning that he was God Himself, incarnated to give liberation to the world. It was only after much spiritual practice that this understanding became firm and sure. Of course, without his grace this understanding does not come. We have known that he is God, the veritable God of the universe. In his grace he has made his true nature known to us.

Practise *japam* and meditation at dead of night, great good will follow—your mind will be filled with joy. Indeed, you will find so much joy in your meditation, that you will be reluctant to stop. You are here to keep watch over me and to serve me. Why not make *japam* during these long hours? My needs are few, only very occasionally I require your services, so practise *japam* earnestly; dive deep, don't live on the surface. If you practise *japam* with an absorbed mind you will find the joy of it. You have renounced the world and have come here to realise God. That is the whole purpose of life; you must never forget that ideal.

"Work hard now. Practise *japam* and meditation unceasingly. Let the Lord become firmly established within your heart, then will come great peace and joy. When, through the regular practice of these spiritual disciplines you realise your chosen Ideal, within your heart, then also you will realise that the chosen Ideal and the Guru are not separate. You will see that the Guru also resides within the heart: with the death of the Guru's body the Guru does not die.

If those of you who live with me think that you alone are serving me, you are very much mistaken. All those who are earnestly doing

the work of our Lord and worshipping him within their hearts—even though they may be thousands of miles away they are also serving Guru; they too are very dear to us. They please the Lord by serving Him, and so please us also. If the Lord is pleased, the whole world is pleased."

When, as young monks, we were living at the Baranagore monastery with Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda), I had a very strange experience. Our beds were poor makeshifts, and we all slept together inside the one large mosquito net. One night I was sleeping beside Swamiji, and at about midnight I suddenly awoke and found the whole room illuminated. I turned to look at Swamiji, but, to my amazement, instead of seeing him lying there as I expected, I saw several beautiful young boys, about seven or eight years old in his place. The thought crossed my mind as I saw them lying there, that they looked just like so many Shivas, and I saw that it was the light of their bodies that lighted the room. I rubbed my eyes, thinking they, perhaps, were deceiving me, but the vision persisted. Dumbfounded as I was, I could not go to sleep again. I passed the rest of the night in meditation. Early in the morning when I looked again I saw that the figures had gone and Swamiji was lying there sound asleep. When he awoke and I told him of my vision he laughed at me. However, a few days later when I was reading the different prayers to Shiva I actually found in one prayer a description of Shiva exactly resembling my vision; this convinced me that I had not been mistaken; my vision was

true. You see, Swamiji was born of the Spirit of Shiva!.....

When the Swami was staying at the Benares monastery, he occupied a room on the second floor. One morning when one of the disciples came as usual to offer his salutations, the Swami said: "Last night I had a strange vision. While lying down, there suddenly appeared before me a figure, white in body, with three eyes and matted hair. The face was beautiful, the eyes were full of grace, and the light from his body filled the room. As soon as I saw him I went into Samadhi. I was filled with intense bliss; the visionary form dissolved, and in its place I saw Sri Ramakrishna standing before me. He pointed his finger at me and said with a smile: 'you have still to live on in the body for a while. I have work for you to do yet.' As he said this my mind came down to normal consciousness. Everything is his will—but in that experience I found an indescribable joy!....."

As time passed the Swami became quite seriously ill. He could not walk much, so that each day a disciple came to give him a report of the activities of the monastery. One day when the disciple came as usual to give his report, he noticed that the Swami was sitting quietly. His face was grave and his eyes were half closed, and he appeared not to notice the disciple standing before him. Some time passed before he finally became aware of the presence of the disciple, and then, as he opened his eyes he said slowly: "You see, this world has no longer any reality for me; Brahman alone exists."

[Reproduced from "Vedanta and the West"]

THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

INTRODUCTION III—SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

By SWAMI TYAGISANANDA

We have seen that the essence of the Vedic teaching is the realisation of the Absolute Truth—the Brahman Atman, which itself constitutes the fundamental essence of the entire universe, objective as well as subjective. This essential teaching is summarised in certain pithy statements called Mahavakyas, found scattered through the Upanishads. In fact, it is these that form the real Upanishads. The body of the Upanishadic texts only explain, expand, introduce or draw out the suggestions and implications of these statements. As examples of such Mahavakyas may be mentioned such statements as:—अहं ब्रह्मस्मि, I am Brahman, त्वत्समि (Thou art That), अस्मान्म ब्रह्म (This Self is Brahman), एवम् ब्रह्म (Pure consciousness is Brahman) मयं ब्रह्मन् ब्रह्म (Absolute Truth, pure consciousness and infinitude is Brahman) etc.

The essence of all these Mahavakyas is contained in the syllable 'Om', which symbolises and represents the absolute in all its pure and manifested aspects. cf. *Prasna* V. 2.

एतदे सत्यकामा पं नावर् न ब्रह्म यदोक्तम् । "—What is 'Om', O Satyakama, is verily the higher and the lower Brahman. Vide also *Katha*, II. 15 & 16, "सर्वं वेदं यत्पदमात्मनस्तितन्ने पदं संमतेष्व ऋषिभि ओमित्येतत् । "एतद्ब्रह्मैवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्ब्रह्मैवाक्षरं परम् ।" The goal which all the Vedas proclaim, I tell it to thee in brief: It is 'Om'. This syllable is Brahman, this is also the absolute. *Mandukya* I also says ओमित्येतदक्षरं इदं सर्वम् etc. All this world is the syllable 'Om'. All Vedas may therefore be considered as an elaborate exposition of the inner significance of this mystic syllable called 'प्रणव' or 'उद्गीथा'. An exposition of it in a concentrated form is

found in the *Mandukyopanishad*, which is therefore, considered as the quintessence of all Vedantic teaching as admitted by Sankara, when he characterises the *Mandukyopanishad* in his introduction to it as वेदान्तार्थसार संग्रहम् । This justifies the claim of the *Muktikopanishad* I. 26 that the *Mandukya* alone is sufficient to lead an aspirant to realisation. "संप्रहृदयमेकमेवाहं सुमुहूर्णं विमुक्तये ।" It would be well therefore, if the student of the Upanishads tries to understand their teachings in the light of the *Mandukya*.

The Upanishads do not content themselves with mere statements of fact, but are interested also in explaining the means of realising it. This means of realisation is known as Vidya. The fundamental essence of Vidya is the purification of the Buddhi, and the utilisation of this Buddhi in the investigation of the unchanging reality behind the phenomenal world. This word Buddhi is sometimes translated as 'reason', and sometimes as 'intuition'. The implications of these two words in the English language are often misleading. There is no word in English which can convey the exact meaning of the word 'Buddhi'. It denotes the natural power of the mind to realise the truth. As Sri Ramakrishna has pointed out on pages 102, 275 and 451 of the Gospel, Pure Buddhi and Pure Atman are one and the same. It is the nature of the Atman to be aware of itself. When one's ordinary mind is purified, it becomes the pure Atman itself, and this Atman recognises itself. Realisation which is the goal of spiritual practice is thus practically a self-recognition, and all other spiritual practices are only intended to aid this self-recognition by way of removing the obstacles that stand in the way. Intrinsically, therefore, spiritual practice is more or less a negative

process of cleansing the mind. For, as soon as this cleansing is completed, truth shines of its own accord. But, before this culmination, every step in purification involves a corresponding relative vision of Truth. And therefore, in the stage of ascent each step in the aspirant's practice partakes of a positive as well as a negative character. The various negative aspects of practice at every stage of progress are all covered by the general name of *tyaga* or renunciation, and the various positive aspects are known by the common name of '*yoga*' or communion.

Spiritual practice is essentially one, and in every practice both these aspects of *tyuga* and *yoga* are involved. The essence of *tyaga* is the conquest of egoism resulting in what western scientists call 'Self-elimination' or 'de-personalisation'. The essence of *yoga* is concentration on, sustained inquiry into, and investigation of, Truth, pure and simple, as it appears in the various stages of progress, until the highest is reached. Vidya however, affects all the three functions of the mind—intellect, emotion and will. The intellectual aspect of Vidya is known as 'Jnana', the emotional as Bhakti and volitional as 'Dharma'.

These practices also fall into three subdivisions *Kayika* or physical, *vachika* or 'oral', and *manasa* or mental. As realisation is primarily a mental process, the mental processes are the immediate means of such realisation. *Kayika* and *vachika* practices are only auxiliary to the *manasa*. Sometimes they are outward expressions of inner processes, but very often they are only symbolic representations, suggestive of the latter. The *manasa* practices are therefore called अन्तरङ्ग साधन or spiritual practices *par excellance*, while the *kayika* and *vachika* ones are called बहिरङ्ग or subsidiary. In actual practice, they are often found associated together in the various

Vedic rituals. The external actions are primary in these rituals, but they should always be accompanied by or lead to or based upon the Antaranga or spiritual Sadhanas. These latter are absolutely necessary as Badarayana points out in *Brahma Sutra* III. 4-27. शमदमाद्युपेतस्याद् तथापि तु तद्विधेः तस्य अवश्यानुपेतत्वात् - Even though, there is no injunction to practise ritual to attain knowledge one must possess calmness, self control and the like since these are enjoined as helps to knowledge. On the other hand he points out in the two previous Sutras that there is no necessity for ritualistic sacrifices and that these sacrifices are to be performed only for the attainment of knowledge, if at all. अथ एव च अग्नीन्धना यनपेक्षा सर्वापेक्षा च यज्ञादिश्रुतेर अश्ववत् । The Sruti passage referred to in these Sutras, is *Brihadaranyaka* IV. 4-22 तमेन वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मण विविदिषन्ति यजेन दानेन तपसानाशकेन. The Brahmanas seek to know It (the Atman, through the study of the vedas, sacrifices charity, austerity and dispassionate enjoyment of sense objects; and *Brihadaranyaka* IV. 4-3. तस्मादेवं विद् शान्तो दान्तः उपरतस्तिष्ठुः समाहितोभूत्वा आत्मन्येवात्मानं पश्यति । Therefore, he who knows It as such becomes self-controlled, calm, withdrawn into himself, enduring and concentrated and sees the self in his own self. These passages show the intimate relation between the Antaranga and Bahiranga Sadhanas. In fact, the rituals and other Bahiranga practices provide only the training ground for the Antaranga practices and they have to be transcended in the higher stages of spiritual life. So Manu says towards the conclusion of his smriti,

वेदाभ्यासः तपो ज्ञानं इन्द्रियाणां च सयमः ।

अहिंसा गुरुसेवा च निश्चयसकरं परम् ॥

सर्वेषामपि चेतेषां आत्मज्ञानं परं स्मृतम् ।

तत् त्वय्यं सर्वविद्यानां प्राप्यते त्वमृतं यतः ॥

वैदिके कर्मयोगे तु सर्वाण्येतान्यशेषतः ।

अन्तर्भवन्ति क्रमशः तस्मिन् तस्मिन् क्रियाविधौ ॥

यथोक्तान्यपि कर्माणि परिहाय द्विजोत्तमः ।

आत्मज्ञाने शमे च स्याद् वेदाभ्यासे च यत्नवान् ॥

The external practices, though enumerated as *yajna*, *dana* and *tapas* in the *Brihadaranyaka* passage quoted above as well as in the Gita all form part of the Vedic rituals called *karma*. All the mental practices which are often classified as *sravana*, *manana*, *nitidhyasana* etc., as well as the *sama*, *dama* of the *Brihadaranyaka* passage quoted above, are known by the common name of *jnanam*. The Upanishads are mainly concerned only with these *jnana* practices. It is in the earlier portions of the Vedas that we get an exposition of *karma*. Therefore, the former is called *Jnanakanda* and the latter *Karmakanda*. Sometimes, from the standpoint of textual arrangement, as well as the sequence in practice they are respectively known also as *Uttarakanda* and *Purvakanda*. Thus Sayana speaks of Veda as consisting of two *kandas*, one dealing with Brahman and the other with *yajna* in his introduction to *Sama Veda*—

यज्ञो ब्रह्म च वेदेषु द्वौवर्गौ काण्डौ द्वौयोः ।

The Mimamsakas are interested more in the *Karmakanda* and the Vedantins in the *Jnanakanda*. Sometimes the name Veda is confined only to *Karmakanda* while the *Jnanakanda* is described as *Vedanta* or *rahasya* as in Manu-वेदः कृत्स्नो अधिगन्तव्यः स रहस्यो द्विजन्मना । Sometimes to distinguish the practices prescribed by the *Purvakanda*, the special name of *Trayi-Vidya* is used and the expression *Brahma-Vidya* or *Atma-Vidya* is used to denote the practices prescribed by the Upanishads.

The *Purvakanda* consists of two distinct classes of work, Mantras and Brahmanas. cf. Apastamba मन्त्र ब्राह्मणयोर्वेदनामधेयम् and Sayana मन्त्र ब्राह्मण समुष्टि वेदः. The word 'Mantra' is

defined by the *Yoga-shikhopanishad* II. 8. thus मननान् त्राणान् चैव मद् रूपस्यावबोधनाद् मन्त्र इत्युच्यते ब्रह्मन् मददिष्टानतोऽपि वा । According to this definition Mantra consists of a group of sounds or words or sentences which save a reciter of it from *samsara*. According to this the derivation would seem to be मननान् त्रायत इति मन्त्रः । The insistence on *manana* shows that the saving power depends upon the proper understanding of its significance and constant *japam* and meditation on the meaning. That is why Patanjali says in his Sutra I. 28 — तज्जपस्त्वर्थभावनम् । 'Its repetition and meditation on its meaning is the way'. Yaska condemns the use of mantras without understanding their meaning when he says :

स्यागुर्यं भारहृरः क्लिप्तमृतं अधीत्य वेदं न विजानाति यो अर्थम् । यो अर्थज्ञः इत् सकलं भद्रमश्नुते सनाकमेति ज्ञानं विभूतं पाप्मा ॥ Herein he describes a man who has learned the Vedic mantras by heart without knowing their meaning as having only the benefit of the burden on his head and says the effectiveness of mantras depends on the knowledge of their meaning. The primary meaning of all mantras is Brahman-Atman. Ramanuja even goes to the extent of saying that all Vedic words mean only God. To know the meaning of mantras and to meditate on the meaning is nothing but to meditate on God. Therefore the *Yoga shikha* definition includes मद् रूपस्यावबोधनम् as one of the characteristics of mantras. This requirement as well as the previous one shows the intimate connection of the mantras to *jnanam*. The third requirement in the definition, Madadhithana shows that the mantra is the abode of Brahman, thereby suggesting that if we want to realise Brahman we must seek it in and through the mantras. This use of the mantras in spiritual practice represents the verbal or *vachika* aspect of it and the very definition shows its dependence upon the

manasa or the *jnana* aspect of it for its efficacy.

The word is sometimes derived from the root मन् meaning to 'deliberate' or 'ponder over'. Even this derivation suggests the necessity for meditation on the meaning. Sometimes the word is derived from the root मन् with the suffix त्रन् when it means an 'instrument of thought'. The Mimamsakas find it very difficult to define what a mantra is from the ritualistic standpoint and therefore, Jaimini in II. I. 29 defines it as तत्त्वोदकेषु मन्त्राभ्याम् meaning thereby that the character of mantra depends upon the certificate of the expert teachers and ritualists. Sayana also quotes *Nyayavistara*: याज्ञिकानां समाम्यानि लक्षणं दोषवर्जितम् to the same effect. Although this appears to be a little too mechanical a definition the underlying suggestion behind it is worthy of consideration. This requirement of the testimony of experts suggests that any and every word will not have a sanction behind it for producing spiritual effect. It is only such word and words whose efficacy has been tested over and over again in actual practice that deserve to be called mantras and to be used in *japa*.

These mantras are often used in independent *japa* and sometimes in association with other ritualistic acts. Such independent use apart from ritual is as old as the Vedas themselves. *Vide Rig Veda* VII. 112.—अस्य जानन्तो नामचिन् विवक्ताना-महस्ते विष्णो सुमतिभजामहे—Desirous of obtaining realisation we only take thy name, O Lord.' So also *Sama Veda* I. 2. 9. 2. न किं देवा इनीममि न कथयोपयाममि मन्त्रश्रुत्यं चरामसि—we use no sacrificial stakes, we slave no victims, we worship entirely by repeating mantras.' This independent use of mantras is sanctified by the name of Brahma yagna. (Manu II. 87) says जप्येनैव तु संसिद्ध्येत् ब्राह्मणो नात्र मंशयः कुर्यात् अन्यन् न वा कुर्यात् मंत्रो ब्राह्मण उच्यते

The *Tantra Sara* says जपनिष्ठो द्विजश्रेष्ठः सर्वयज्ञफलं लभेत् । These authorities show the efficacy of repetition of mantras by themselves without any relation to rituals. Most often, however, they are made use of as parts of ritual.

The mantras thus used in sacrificial ritual are classified as Rik, Sama and Yajus. Jaimini defines Rik as तेषां ऋक् यत्र अर्थवशेनपाद व्यवस्था I. 35. Amongst these those are Riks which are metrical and convey a meaning. According to him the Saman is defined as गीतिषु सामाख्या II. I. 36. The name Saman is applied to songs, the rest according to him are Yajus, शेषे यजुश्चाहः II. 1.37. *Katyayana Srauta Sutra* I. 3.2. characterises yajus as a *mantra* which has no restriction as to metre. Sometimes some of the yajus are distinguished from the ordinary yajus and called Nigada from the fact that the ordinary yajus is recited in a low voice whereas Nigadas are uttered loudly. These three represent in ordinary language poetry, prose and song or music. Sayana also says पादुपस्थेन अर्थेन चोपेताः मन्त्राः ऋचः, गीतिरूपा मन्त्राः सामानि, वृत्त गीति वर्जितत्वेन प्रष्टिष्यति मन्त्राः यजुर्वि. All Vedic mantras belong to one or other of these three types. Therefore, the spiritual practice which is taught through these three types of *mantras* is called Trayi-Vidya. All mantras are collected together mostly in three Samhitas and they are respectively called *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda* and *Yajur Veda*. The mantras of *Rig Veda* are all Riks, the mantras of Saman are those Riks which are set to music, and, the mantras of Yajur veda are predominantly yajus although Rik and Sama mantras are not entirely absent. There is also a fourth Samhita or collection of mantras which is called *Atharva Veda* or *Brahma Veda*. Although the mantras of this Veda belong to one or the other of the three categories mentioned above they are sometimes distin-

guished from the mantras of the other Vedas and called by the special name of Atharvan or Brahman, *vide Atharva veda* XV. 6. 8. ऋचस्तामानि यजुषि ब्रह्म च अनुव्यचक्षन् । where Brahman is mentioned as a class separate from the other three.

The very names of these Vedas are suggestive of their spiritual significance. Thus the word ऋक् is derived from ऋच् अर्च् to praise or adore: the word यजुस् comes from the root यज् to worship; The word सामन् means, स्यति छिनत्ति दुःखम् । According to this it is derived from the root सो to destroy and means destroyer of misery. Some derive it from साम, सान्त्वने, to pacify or tranquilise. The *Kaushitaki Upanishad* gives some fanciful derivations in II. 6. According to this Rik is adoration, Yajus is communion and Saman is self-surrender. Yaska derives the word Atharvan in Daiva Kanda II. 2. 17. as.

अथर्वणिो अथर्वणवन्तः अर्थतिथरति कर्मा तन् प्रतिषेधः । The *Gopatha Brahmana* I. 4 यद्वीन् अथर्वीन् येन एतामेवाप्तु अन्विच्छेति तदथर्वीभवन् । According to these derivations the word Atharva suggests the lighting of the inner fire of spirituality as opposed to physical and social activities. The word Brahman speaks for itself. All these mantras though employed in ritual are helpful only for the realisation of Brahman-Atman through purification of the mind. This is further certified to by the fact that these Vedas are supposed to have yielded their essence in the form of the *pranava*. cf. *Chandogya* II. 23. 2 & 3.

Although the mantras are of various varieties the contents of mantras are classified by Sayana thus: Some of them are *anushtihana smarakas* or reminders of what is to be done; some are of the nature of *stuti* or praise, some are invocations, some are of the nature of directions, some are of the nature of *vichara* or philosophical reflections, some are

expressions of sorrow, some are enquiries and others are answers to enquiries.

The Brahmanas which form the other section of Karma Kanda purport to be expositions of the teachings of the mantras. But the emphasis is on the *Kayika* side of practice. They are called Brahmanas because they deal with Brahman. Their very name therefore, suggests that their aim is also realisation of Brahman. These expositions were found necessary when purification of ritual was necessitated by all kinds of abuses creeping into it as the religion spread among the uncultured foreign tribes. The same thing happened to Buddhism when it spread among the wild central Asian tribes whom they attempted to civilise and spiritualise. Much foreign element crept into the old, pure, spiritual culture surreptitiously. The obvious purpose of the Brahmanas was to bring back the contaminated ritual to its old pristine purity. That is why we find the rituals prescribed by the Brahmanas as specially in vogue among the Aryans as opposed to those of the Asuras. This explains also the words ब्रह्म वादिनो वदन्ति in many places in connection with the teachings. These words suggest that words recorded there are of the spiritual-minded persons.

They are almost all in prose and contain two main sub-divisions, *vidhi* and *arthavada*. The former consists of injunctions and the latter more or less *obiter dicta*; the former are authoritative by their own right whereas the latter are authoritative only through the *vidhis* to which they are attached. The *vidhis* form the crux of the Brahmanas as the Mahavakyas that of the Upanishads.

We thus see how the whole of the Vedas have one purpose in view namely to lead man to the realisation of the highest Truth namely Brahman-Atman.

AN OCCIDENTAL EAR LISTENS TO INDIAN MUSIC

By D. P. LINGWOOD

I am not a musician, and my knowledge of the technicalities of music is limited to a few hints derived mainly from programme notes and books and articles written more particularly for the layman. My knowledge of the technicalities of Indian music is naturally more limited still. It follows therefrom that my approach to music is purely that of a listener to melodious sounds in which are enshrined the aspirations of one of the noblest orders of humanity. I listen to it in the same spirit as I would hearken to a wood full of thrushes and nightingales.

When I arrived in India I found that the majority of my compatriots likened Indian music to the howling of jackals in the jungle. I have since learned that the average Indian returns the compliment with respect to our European music. But I have always been animated by the profound conviction that whatever work of art or system of religion or philosophy that has ever been produced anywhere in the world is capable of being a guiding and sustaining force not only to the people and the age by which it was produced and which it helped to produce (or at least to perfect), but to all peoples and to all ages as well. Provided it contains within itself a spark of the fire divine it will not die, but remain coeval with our common humanity. Consequently I determined that in spite of its apparent strangeness I would make a strong effort to understand and appreciate Indian music as soon as an opportunity to do so offered itself.

Most of my contacts with the spirit of Indian culture have been through the very transparent medium of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The case of music was no exception to the general rule. When I was in Colombo, Ceylon, I attended a series of festivals and functions, organized by the Mission, in which music played a prominent

part. There were songs by Rabindranath Tagore, sung by three Bengali ladies; there were Hindi and Tamil songs, as well as in Sinhalese in praise of Lord Buddha. I was particularly fortunate in having the music explained to me by a learned Tamil pandit belonging to the Order of Ramakrishna, and by a few of the musicians themselves. I became acquainted with the names and notes of a number of musical instruments, such as the *mridangam*, *sitar* and *vina*. The European violin and harmonium were also extensively employed, to my great amazement.

Soon I learned to distinguish between the Northern and Southern Indian style of music. The Hindi and Bengali musicians seemed to be very fond of prolonging their compositions from delicacy to delicacy until they had made them miracles of finely-wrought art, with long series of incredibly skilful modulations in which the softest and shyest whispers of the soul seemed to find expression. Tamil music I found on the contrary much more vigorous and virile. It swept along from climax to climax of emotion with tremendous impetus and energy. The difference can be put in a nutshell by saying that one style is feminine, the other masculine.

The musical events which I attended in Ceylon and India seemed to be much more colourful and joyous than the concerts which we have in the West are usually. The bright *saris* of the lady performers, the beautifully shaped and gaily painted instruments, the rich rugs on which the musicians were seated, and the tasteful decorations of flowers and pots of palms, all contributed to the splendour and gaiety of the scene. It is perhaps a significant fact that at the rear of the platform on which the vocalists and instrumentalists were seated, on an altar, and garlanded

AN OCCIDENTAL EAR LISTENS TO INDIAN MUSIC

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with fragrant flowers, there was usually a portrait of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna.

I think this is the most noteworthy thing about Indian music: I mean its spiritual background. Of course I speak of the best classical music composed in the traditional manner, and not the hybrid products of the confluence of Indian and European streams of musical inspiration. Perhaps I can more accurately point out the main difference between Indian and occidental music if I make use of an illustration. European music generally moves along as a mass, and its emphasis is on the harmony between the timbre and tone-quality of the instruments employed and the different melodies they play. Indian music consists of a magical melody lightly but surely sketched against a static background of (for instance) trembling strings of the *sitar* or soft continuous drone of the harmonium, punctuated and accented by the staccato rattle of the drums. The comparison is crudely generalized, but this is the use which I wish to make of it. European life moves along *en masse* without relating itself to any abiding reality behind. Whereas Indian life is ideally always lived

within hearing of the sustained note of Deity. Indian music is greatest when its inspiration is most spiritual. No one will ever play the *vina* as it was played by the Divine Sage Narada. No one will ever play the flute as Sri Krishna played it.

These few lines are obviously not a criticism or a survey, but only a tribute. The study of Indian music has opened another gate for my soul to walk through into the garden of the beauty of God. I have not tried to grasp it with my mind, but to open my heart to its influence. Beethoven, one of the greatest of our musicians, wrote on the front page of the score of one of his finest compositions: "From the heart it came; to the heart may it go". I venture to apply this wish not only to works of art, but to every scripture; religion and philosophy that the soul of man has ever produced; and in all humility, to these few lines of appreciation from one whose occidental ear has gradually been able to attune itself to the beauties of Indian music, and whose heart has thereby been made more keenly aware of the Eternal Beauty which walks in brightness behind all the shadows of the world.

What need is there of penance if God is worshipped with Love?
What is the use of penance if God is not worshipped with Love?
What need is there of penance if God is seen within and without?
What is the use of penance if God is not seen within and without?

—Naradapancharatra.

HYMN TO THE HOLY MOTHER

By D. P. LINGWOOD

O Perfectest Pujari,
Motherless Mother thou!
The peace of God's eternity
Shines moonlike from Thy brow

Thy life is integrated
To the Locus of all life,
And sweetly consummated
In Him who called Thee wife.

Mother of all, yet maiden;
Servant, yet sovereign queen;
Glad, with man's sorrow laden;
The Secret-for-Ever, yet seen.

Thy thoughts are fixed on Thy Lord,
And our thoughts are fixed on Thee.
Oh lift us with Thy longing
Beyond diversity.

Thou art the Light of that Sun,
That gem's soft sheen is Thee.
Thou art the whiteness of the Milk
Of Immortality.

Essence of adoration,
Calm endless diffusion of love!
Deific incarnation
With pity from above.

Bound to Thy Lord in worship,
Yet art Thou ever free.
Thou art one with Ramakrishna;
May we be one with Thee.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SELF-KNOWLEDGE: (ATMABODHA)
AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF SANKARA-
CHARYA'S ATMABODHA WITH NOTES,
COMMENTS AND INTRODUCTION. BY
SWAMI NIKHILANANDA, RAMAKRISHNA-
VIVEKANANDA CENTER, NEW YORK.
PAGES 228. PRICE NOT MENTIONED.

"There exist three great misconceptions regard-
ing Sankara's philosophy, both in India and in the
West' observes the author in his Preface. 'The
first of these is that he discourages the performance
of duties and advocates the discipline of non-
action for the realization of Truth. Secondly, it
is contended, especially in the West that because
of Sankara's staunch loyalty to the non-dualistic
ideal of Brahman or the Absolute, he is an enemy
of the gods and goddesses of popular religion.
Thirdly, it is said by some of Sankara's Western
critics that he moved away from the teachings
of the seers of the Upanishads. The Upanishads,
these critics contend, hold forth an optimistic and
affirmative view of life, whereas Sankara through
his doctrine of Maya, describes the world as a snare
and a delusion'.

It is but small work for Swami Nikhilananda to
blast these misconceptions, the cankers to a correct
understanding of Advaita-Vedanta as taught by
Sankara and he does it in his learned Preface. The
two greater tasks to which he addresses himself
are, the tracing of the development of Vedantic
thought from the Vedic days to its culmination in
Sankara and secondly the presenting of the
devotional strand in Sankara's personality. The
first he does in the brilliant and scholarly Intro-
duction and the second in the Appendix where the
hymns to gods and goddesses ascribed to Sankara
are given in translation. The translation of
Atmabodha affords an opportunity for the
author to present the full Sankara on the Vedantic
setting.

The Introduction starts by giving general ideas
about Hindu religion and philosophy, about the
ideal society envisaged by Hindu seers and the
ideal life prescribed by them. Then it explains
the fundamental tenets in practical religion like the
guru, the four qualifications of the pupil, self-
control and gives correct notions of terms like
Maya, upadhi, Isvara, Jiva, Turiya. Vedantic
cosmology and psychology are then treated of.
The practice of Meditation and a description of
the final realization or release of the illumined
soul round off this exhaustive and very useful
Introduction.

Then follows the translation of the text in prose.
The text of the treatise though only consisting of

sixty-eight small stanzas is a brilliant epitome of
the Non-dualistic philosophy and has brought
into bold relief its cardinal principles like divinity
of the soul, unity of existence, spiritual nature of
the world, the oneness of Godhead etc., Here as
also in the hymn section the sanskrit texts are
not given. The translation in prose is racy and
simple and the exhaustive notes have in view
the requirements of the beginner.

This sumptuously got-up volume is well fitted
as a text book on Advaita Vedanta for students
both Eastern and Western. But the Swami seems
to have planned it more to suit the needs of the
western students.

Copies of the book are not available in India
for sale. Hence it will be welcome news to Indian
readers that the Madras Math is soon bringing out
an Indian Edition with all sanskrit texts.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONG-
RESS: By J. B. KRIPALANI, Pp. 65.
PRICE, RE. 1/- PUBLISHERS, VORA & Co.,
LTD., BOMBAY 2.

This book is an admirable presentation of the
present political constitution of the Indian
National Congress. It is mainly concerned with
the various misconceptions that have arisen as a
consequence of the stand taken by the Congress
during the War, and the disturbances of August
1942. The main question that then came up was
whether the congress is concerned with the com-
plete independence of India first, or whether it is
an organization fighting for a certain political
ideology, like the communists and the Socialists.
The author has shown that the Congress is mainly
concerned with the task of freeing India from all
foreign influences and the establishment of a
democratic government. It is a national organiza-
tion first and last, fighting for the Indian people.
The national Independence that it envisages is
not of the type known in ancient times, independ-
ence under a king or dynasty, a religious com-
munity or territorial oligarchy. The democratic
government aimed at does not tolerate a capitalist
ridden society, but advocates full economic
equality.

The peculiar position of the congress is deter-
mined by its past history and the future goal.
Since independence is the primary goal, the
Congress does not wed itself to any form of
socialism or communism. Any such avowal will
only weaken its cause, because socialism and
communism by their very nature insist on the
bifurcation and annihilation of certain social

elements. This will only create internal differences in the presence of a powerful foreign power. The foreign power will fully utilise it for its own purpose. Rather, the Congress by advocating the Constructive programme and Harijana Seva is enlisting the co-operation of the majority of the population, by removing the particular discontent from which they are suffering.

The next question that is effectively dealt with is the existence of parties within the Congress. Parties function within the Congress so long as they subscribe to the fundamental aim of the congress. Any difference of opinion that may exist must be as to the method of achieving the goal, not about the goal itself. Thus the Congress is not a platform for the circulation of ideas, not officially recognized by it; nor can it be a popular front consisting of a collection of heterogeneous elements gathered together by the force of circumstance, with no common idea or goal. Thus the Congress always acts as a united body under a firm and united leadership. The author is to be congratulated for having shown clearly and concisely that the constitution of the Congress is firmly rooted in the soil of India, in keeping with the best Indian traditions, uninfluenced by any cramping foreign ideology. It is to be noted that the Congress leaves the people of India to choose the form of government they like best, after the attainment of independence. That is, the post-independence development will be determined by the past history of the land and not by this or that particular form of social pattern previously determined by people entirely ignorant of India and Indian life.

POLITICS OF CHARKA: BY
ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI, VORA & CO.,
PUBLISHERS, LTD. — PP. 100 — PRICE
RS. 1/4.

The Constructive Programme of Gandhiji as an effective part of the National Struggle is hardly recognized by many. Most people see in the Charka only a pathetic attempt at giving temporary relief to suffering humanity. Its innocence often costs Charka its tremendous political significance. The main part of the book is concerned with the economic effects of the Charka scheme on peasant life and its indirect consequences on the political life of the country.

Having de-centralisation as its basic principle, the Charka scheme, unlike all centralised production, distributes labour among greater number with lesser amount of capital. The produce of such a de-centralised production is consumed by

the producers themselves. Thus the distribution of produce is automatically planned and adjusted, without giving rise to any undue accumulation of power in one hand as is usually the case when distribution is not planned and production is planned. Thus the charka saves the peasant from any grinding system of wage labour, under a powerful capitalist or zamindar. Any increase in the out put of the industry naturally increases the purchasing power of the community which is engaged in the industry, as a whole and thus it furnishes a powerful instrument for forging a greater sense of unity among the disunited peasants. At the same time the Congress is afforded an immense opportunity for greater mass contact and propaganda. The Charka forms, as it were, a spearhead between two powers: one the powerful foreign vested interests and the other the internal zamindari domination. It achieves in a non violent way what the Radicals and the Revolutionaries want to achieve in a more violent way, and which at the same time will be of disastrous consequence to the fundamental aim of complete independence... The Charka thus forms a unique and novel weapon of the national fight. Its role is completely positive. Its effect is wholly beneficent. Its use involves no loss of life, but quite the contrary.

Clarity is a distinguishing feature of the book. The get-up is splendid.

**HANUMAN: THE HEROIC IDEAL
OF HINDUSTHAN:** BY SWAMI MAITHILYANANDA. PUBLISHED BY BRINDABAN
DIAR AND SONS LTD., 5, COLLEGE
SQUARE, CALCUTTA. PAGES 84 PRICE
RE. 1-4-0.

The heroes of a nation's legends take us by the hand into the heart of its national genius. If Hercules, the hero of prodigious strength gives us an idea of the Greek and Roman ideal of life, Hanuman with his Herculean strength, self-control, self-sacrifice and burning love for God gives us the true type of Indian national hero. To-day Hanuman is worshipped as a god all over Hindusthan and this ascent to godhead is not a little due to the sovereign spiritual virtues Hanuman enshrined. Though Hanuman is deified, his parts as councillor, orator, practical philosopher, Prime Minister, General, fighting ambassador and envoy are not well known. Swami Maithilyananda by his research work in the Ramayana has discovered these less familiar aspects of Hanuman's personality and built up the complete personality, a type true to the spiritual genius of India. He was a Karma-yogin, a Raja-yogin and

Jnanayogin in one. Who else but a Jnana-yogin of the highest order could have answered Rama who questioned him as to Hanuman's idea about Rama in the words 'O Lord, when I consider myself as body, I am thy servant; when I do so as a Jiva, I am thy part and when I am conscious that I am the self, I become thyself. This is the idea rooted in my mind'.

At no time perhaps did India stand in bad need of such selfless heroes of action like Hanuman as she is today. 'You must now make the character of Mahavira your ideal'..... Says swami Vivekananda. 'If you can do that other virtues will manifest themselves in course of time'.

We look forward to such ideal pictures of the other heroes of Ramayana from the pen of the author.

LETTERS OF SWAMI RAMDAS:
VOLUME II. PUBLISHED BY ANANDA
ASRAM, P. O., VIA KANHANGAD, S.I.RY.
PAGES 184. PRICE RS. 2-8-0.

The letters of great persons often hold up the mirror to their greatness. This is quite true of this volume of letters of Swami Ramdas. The ever-blissful simple Ramdas is in every page, in one place sharing the joys and sorrows of the devotees and consoling them, in another giving spiritual instructions, in a third, speaking like a child, funny things about himself, that he is going about in a langotti and so on. 'Unless ye be children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of God'.

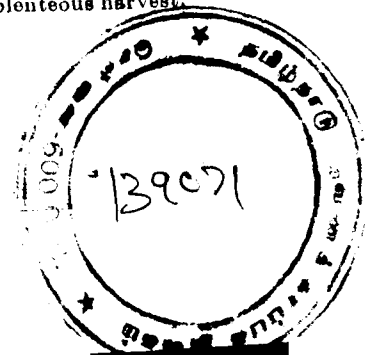
Swami Ramdas gives according to capacity. He gives Advaita to one and Bhakti to another. But this above all seems to be his last word. 'Please don't harass your mind with philosophies. Repeat Ram-mantram and surrender yourself entirely into the hands of the all powerful Mother and Master of the universe who dwells in your heart and everywhere. (p. 111). In another place, 'Satsang means association with Sat i.e., Truth—this truth is ever within you. To be conscious of It always, is the highest form of satsang'. Such valuable gems are strewn in every page of the book.

The publishers have done a real service to aspirants and to all interested in practical religion by making available these blissful letters of Swami Ramdas.

THE FLOWING STREAM, REFLECTIONS ON THE MIDDLE WAY:
BY CLARE CAMERON. PUBLISHED BY
THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY, LONDON, 106,
GREAT RUSSELL ST., W. C. 1. PP. 48.
PRICE 1s. 6d.

Students of Vedanta naturally will be deeply interested in the dissemination of oriental religious and philosophical ideals in the West. They will naturally wonder if the flower of Eastern wisdom is able to bloom on the battlefields of Europe or amid the mad rush of American life. This little book will help satisfy part at least of their curiosity. It is a selection of editorials published during the last few years in the pages of *The Middle Way*. As Secretary of the Buddhist Society, London, the authoress has taken an active part in the steady infusion of spiritually invigorating ideals into the bloodstream of English cultural life. One is able to see the practical spirituality of the East literally "under fire" in the West. The authoress remained in London and continued steadily with her work throughout the six long years of war. Inevitably the clouds of strife cast their dark shadows even over the brightness of the spiritual life. But like all clouds, they are soon gone, and the sun shines forth once more with undimmed brilliancy. In the last editorials included in this volume we are conscious of the steadily growing volume of the sound of the triumphantly marching feet of the armies of truth. The Flower of Life springs in perfect beauty from the Womb of Light. The Flowing Stream merges at last in the great Ocean.

The title of this volume is exceptionally appropriate. The writer holds (?) to a fluid, plastic, dynamic ideal of spiritual life. She is careful always to separate the sweet kernel of living experience of truth from the hard dry husk of creed and dogma. Consequently she emphasises the virtues of unfailing spiritual honesty, integrity and necessity for clear perception of what is essential and what unessential in the cultivation of the religious life. Here is a book which is the fruit of actual endeavour, not of idle speculation. We heartily recommend it to all who are interested in the sowing in the West of that rich Indian seed which one day we trust will spring up and ripen to plenteous harvest.



NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI KRISHNA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

The advent of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, the wonder-child of Vraja was observed at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore with due ceremonial solemnity. On the 19th of August, the Tithi day, special worship of Sri Krishna was conducted at night. On Sunday, the 25th instant, a public meeting was convened in the Math Hall. Sri S. Vasudevachari giving a beautiful exposition of the Avatara idea according to Visishtadvaita, observed that a great dharma of the Lord is to offer himself as an object of worship to his devotees. The Lord fulfilled his devotees' supreme need by accepting the divine incarnation as Sri Krishna. He said that Bhagavan's coming to restore righteousness to its place was an act of his own will and when he came he came in all his divine splendour and that was Krishna, thief of the Gopi's hearts, the subject of the Yogis' meditations. Swami Aeshananda also spoke on the different aspects of the Krishnavatar and pointed out the special significance of his message to modern times.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, THE VILANGANS, TRICHUR (COCHIN STATE) Report for 1945

Just twenty years—and twenty years is nothing in the life of an institution—and the young and feeble Ramakrishna Gurukul is today a remarkable youth of a centre for Harijan uplift and rural reconstruction. What a splendid record of selfless work stands to the credit of the youngmen who rallied round its banner of sacrifice and service! Every stone in its structures is a young aspiration, a rosy hope, a reply to the urban argument. Its High school which is partly residential, its Industrial school which was reorganised in June '45 on a factory—cum—school basis, its Gurukul and Matrimandir (the residential sections for the boys and girls respectively) and its newly-opened dispensary—all working in full-efficiency are but a few of the developed channels of its activity. It has up its sleeve more fruitful schemes of rural progress and welfare.

The High School was 630 strong during the year under report, of which 513 were Hindus including 354 backward and depressed class pupils and 117 Christians. Out of the 28 students sent up for the S.S.L.C. examination in 1945, 12 came out successful with 3 first-classes.

The important events of the year were the opening of the New High School Building by Sir G. T. Boag, the Dewan, on the occasion of the anniversary celebrations, the opening of the Dispensary, the starting of the Adult education section with sixteen pupils and the reorganisation of the Industrial School. Eleven looms have been working full steam in the Industrial school and one loom is set apart for Khaddar production. Spinning and carding are also being taught in the Industrial school. The total strength for the year was 62. A qualified doctor attends to the patients thrice a week (with a dresser to assist him) and a resident compounder daily dispenses medicines. About 30 to 40 patients are served on an average and the monthly expenditure comes to about Rs. 250/-. This is bound to be a great boon to the poor villagers.

Along with the above items of work the Ashrama conducted religious classes, and celebrated the birthdays of saints and prophets. The Ashrama gave training to religious aspirants and Brahmanas.

The following seem to be the most urgent needs of the Ashrama:

Rs. 3,000/- for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

Rs. 12,000/- Building fund for Matrimandir.

Rs. 10,000/- for completion of the Industrial school building and equipments. Rs. 12,000 for the dormitory for boys.

The management of the Ashrama while rendering their grateful thanks to its sympathisers and supporters, appeal to generous public to come forward with substantial help and strengthen its hands to carry on this much-needed useful and philanthropic work for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA'S VISIT TO INDIA

Information has been received here that Swami Siddheswarananda who has been doing Vedanta work in France and the continent for the last nine years will be arriving in India by the first week of September. It will be remembered that he left India in August 1937. It is likely that he will be in India for a few months.

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