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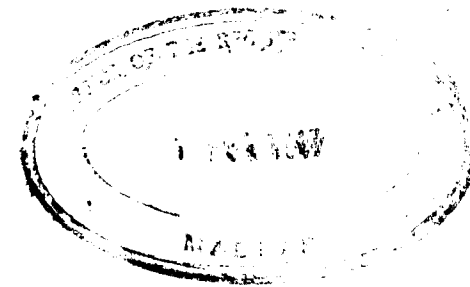


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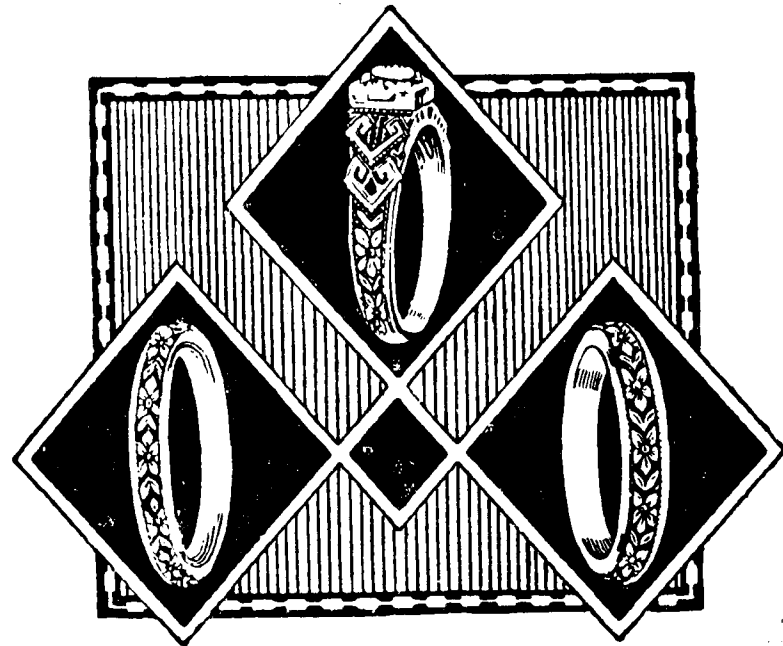
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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S MADHURA BHAVA SADHANA

By SWAMI SARADANANDA

Swami Saradananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the author of the masterly work Sri Ramakrishna Lilaprasanga, depicts for us in the following paragraphs some of the bright features of the Master's Madhura Bhava Sadhana where the Master adopts the attitude of Sri Radha to Sri Krishna.—EDS.

We have briefly discussed in the last article the essence of the *Madhura Bhava* in order that the readers may easily understand the extraordinary excellence Sri Ramakrishna attained in the practice of that Bhava.

It was the usual habit with the Master that whenever any bhava would arise in that pure one-pointed mind of his, he allowed it to continue for some time, himself being totally absorbed in it; and the particular bhava used to exert its all-exclusive suzerain sway upon his nature by driving away all other bhavas for the time being from the mind, and further, it used to bring about a mysterious change even upon his physical body to make it a fit instrument for the fullest expression of the bhava. A study of the Master's mind clearly reveals the fact that this was usual with him even from his infancy. Even in later days when we used to go to him we got the evidence of this trait of his almost every day. How often did we notice that if his mind used to get absorbed in a particular bhava by hearing

some songs or by any other means, and if just then some one would sing or speak words expressive of other bhavas, it used to jar upon him and he felt an excruciating pang within himself, as if it used to bring a sudden stop to the full flow of his mind towards the object of that particular bhava and thus produce a great concussion of thoughts? According to Maharshi Patanjali, the mind that is vibrating with one idea alone is said to be in the state of Savikalpa Samadhi, and the same superconscious state of mind is designated as Bhava Samadhi in the scriptures of the Bhakti school. And it is clear from above that it was quite natural with the mind of the Master to remain in that superconscious state even from his childhood.

Since the days he entered into the life of sadhana, the aforesaid nature of his took a further development. During the sadhana period of his life, we particularly notice that his mind used to be not only all-exclusive and one-pointed but it showed another trait: It not only used to get itself wholly absorbed in a particular bhava to the exclusion of all

the rest but it could never stop short of reaching or realising the very culmination of that spiritual bhava,—he used to remain perfectly merged in that particular bhava days and nights together until he lost absolutely his separate individuality in the consciousness of the deity and thus experienced the supreme Advaita state. The history of the sadhana period of his life unmistakably reveals this fact to us. For instance, he could not take up the sadhana of the Matri Bhava (Motherhood of God) until he finished with the sadhana of the Dasya Bhava, and again he could not take up the practice of the Vatsalya Bhava until he reached the goal of Matri Bhava sadhana.

When the Brahmani came to him, his mind was filled with the Matri Bhava alone. He beheld, nay, literally saw, the expression of the Divine Mother in all objects and creatures of the world, especially, in the woman-kind; so we understand how it happened with him that the moment he saw the Brahmani he summoned her as his mother and he could take food from her hand or behave with her even as a child does with its mother. We have heard from Hriday that at that time if ever the Brahmani would sing some songs expressing the mad hankerings of the Gopis for Krishna, he showed his displeasure and would ask her to sing instead such pieces which breathed Matri Bhava alone. And from that the Brahmini would not fail to understand the inner mood of the Master's mind and would begin to sing songs in praise of the Divine Mother or such pieces which expressed the deep motherly love that Yasoda had for Sri Krishna. This happened several years before the Master began his Madhura Bhava sadhana. However, it is our purpose now to tell our readers something of the days of the Master when he was engaged in the Madhura Bhava sadhana.

The life of the Master reveals an interesting and curious fact to us, that although he was

literally what they call 'unlettered' yet none of his actions ever transgressed the injunctions of the scriptures. Even in the early days of his sadhana when he entered into that strenuous life of spiritual practices, perfectly untutored by any guru, solely guided by the inner promptings of his soul, even then his actions, instead of being divergent, were in full consonance with the mandates of the shastras. There is nothing strange in it. For what are the shastras but a collection of revelations and experiences of pure souls on their Godward march. However, this wonderful concurrence of the experiences of the Master, in spite of his illiteracy, with the spiritual realisations mentioned in the scriptures, adduce one more evidence to the authenticity of the latter. Referring to this fact Swami Vivekananda often used to say that the purpose of Sri Ramakrishna's apparent illiteracy was simply to prove the reality of the shastras.

As an instance of this instinctive tendency of the Master to obey the mandates of the scriptures we may cite his conduct in adopting the different garbs in connection with the sadhanas of different bhavas. The rishis have said in the Upanishads that no one can realise the Atman by penance without adopting the suitable external garb.¹ And we notice in the life of the Master that whenever he engaged himself in any particular Bhava sadhana, he intuitively adopted at the very start its respective garb and other external symbols, conducive to the sadhana of that particular bhava. When he was engaged in the sadhana of the Matri Bhava as prescribed in the Tantras he used to wear red cloth on his body, ashes on his forehead, marks of vermillion and Rudraksha beads. While again he took up the sadhana according to the Vaishnava scriptures he adopted

¹ "This Atman is not to be attained even by improper austerity (devoid of proper mark or sign of the Sannyasa institution)." *Mundaka Upanishad*, III, 3.

the white garb, white sandal marks and tulsi beads as prevalent amongst the Vaishnavites. Then again when he engaged himself in the sadhana of Advaita Vedanta he took regular initiation of Sannyasa, gave up his sacred thread and sikha of his head, and donned the ochre coloured garb of a sannyasin. Further as he wore various garbs while performing the sadhanas that are intended for man, so also when he engaged himself in the spiritual practices that are particularly intended for womankind, he adopted without hesitation or bashfulness the various garbs of woman.

Many a time was the advice given to us by the Master that no one can ever progress in the path of God-realisation unless he shakes off the eight-fold shackles of bashfulness, hatred, fear, prestige of birth and rank and other such vanities of life. And how much he himself followed the same advice in his own life was fully shown by such actions of his as the adopting of various garbs according to the requirements of the particular sadhanas.

When the Master took up the sadhana of the Madhura Bhava he naturally became very eager to dress himself like a woman; and his great devotee Mathuramohan got him according to his desires costly silk *saris*, skirts, jackets and such other lady's costumes. Further, as if to complete the woman's garb of his Master, he dressed him in a long-flowing wig and a set of gold ornaments as is wont with woman. No doubt Mathuramohan must have felt infinite joy within himself to get that opportunity of serving his beloved Master in that way; and the Master too when he was thus garbed, gradually lost himself so completely in the bhava of those cowherd girls of Brindavan of ancient times, who had their minds wholly centred upon the love of Lord Krishna alone, that in course of time he entirely forgot that he had a body of a man. And all his conduct, mode of

speech, actions and gestures and even perhaps thought, became exactly like those of a woman. We heard from the Master himself that he remained in that woman's garb for nearly six months while engaged in the Sadhana of Madhura Bhava.

We have already mentioned the fact before that in the Master there was a wonderful combination of both the bhavas of man and woman. We can well understand that the woman's garb could evoke in him the woman's bhava for the time being. But the wonder of it is that this bhava became so intense and profound that under its influence, his talk, look and gestures and even the modes of thought became so exactly feminine that it is hard for us to imagine it even. We have heard both from the Master and Hriday many a time that it actually happened so. Even when we were frequenting the Dakshineswar temple during his life time we have seen the Master often enacting the part of a woman in fun; and the perfection of his enactment was so complete that even women visitors used to wonder at its naturalness.

During this period of his life the Master used to go and spend some time now and then among the ladies of the house of Mathuramohan at Jan Bazaar. The ladies of the house had already been accustomed to look upon him as some divine spirit in human form owing to his absolutely lustless, pure nature. But now owing to that uncommon manifestation of feminine traits in him, and his genuine love and sympathy towards them they were so much attracted towards him that they actually forgot almost that he had a man's body and took him to be as one of their own kind, so much so that they could not maintain in the least the womanly bashfulness before him. We have it on the authority of the Master himself that, when the husband of one of the daughters of Mathuramohan came to his Jan Bazaar house, the Master dressed the girl and helped her in the toilet,

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and instructing her in various arts of pleasing the husband's mind took her by the hand to the sleeping apartment like a lady-friend. He used to say that they, too, would not feel any delicacy thinking him to be a lady-friend.

Hriday used to say about this period of the Master's life: "While the Master was thus moving amongst the ladies, it would be very difficult to single him out even for those who were intimately known to him. Once Mathur Babu took me to the zenana of his house and said to me, 'Can you tell me who amongst these is your uncle?' Though I have lived in the same house with him for such a long time and have constantly ministered to his needs, yet it took me some time to recognise and identify him. When the uncle would stay at Dakshineswar he would pick flowers from the garden just at day-break, with a basket in his hand. We have then carefully observed that at the time of walking his left leg would step forward before his right, as is the case with women. The Brahmani used to say, 'While he would be thus engaged in plucking flowers, I have sometimes mistaken him for Srimati Radharani.' He would string together the flowers and wreath beautiful garlands, and decorate everyday Sri Radha and Sri Govinda; and, sometimes he would decorate the Divine Mother and would pray pathetically to the Goddess, like the cowherd girls of Brindavan, for getting Sri Krishna as the husband."

Engaged in the worship of the Mother, for attaining the vision of Sri Krishna as the husband, and in adoring Sri Radha and Sri Krishna with a single-hearted devotion the Master was spending the days in earnest prayers and eager expectations. There was no cessation of that anxious prayer throughout the day and night, and disappointment resulting from lack of faith in the ideal could never arise to deviate him an inch from that

eager expectation, even though days, weeks and months rolled away. Gradually, that prayer developed into incessant crying, and that expectation ended in the anxiety and restlessness of a mad heart, and it completely robbed away all his hunger and sleep. And oh, that pang of separation from the Beloved! Just imagine the extremely gnawing pang of the heart of a woman who out of the very frantic love for her lover is madly thirsting for joining him to enjoy his company yet is thwarted in the fulfilment of her desire,—he felt more than that. It did not only bring about the terrible painful changes of the mind and the concomitant suffering, but once more produced the burning sensation and excessive heat all over the body, which he had experienced during the first period of his sadhana. We have heard it from the Master himself that during this period drops of blood would sometimes ooze out through every hair-pore of his body. The joints of his body were felt as if loose and broken and on account of the infinite pangs of the heart, the sense-organs would cease altogether to function, and consequently his body used to lie down senseless and motionless like that of a dead man!

To us, who have identified ourselves completely with the body, love does not mean anything more than the physical attraction between two persons. If through repeated endeavours love can rise a little above this gross physical consciousness and we can feel attraction for the qualities or accomplishments of a person, we at once give it the dignified name of 'supersensuous love,' and speak of it very highly. But, it requires but little reflection to find out that this transcendental love, praised by innumerable poets, is not altogether devoid of gross body-consciousness and a subtle hankering for sensual pleasures. Compared with the genuine supersensuous love manifested in

the Master's life, how hollow, mean and contemptible does it appear!

It has been stated in the scriptures of the Bhakti School that Sri Radha, that queen among the devotees of Brindavan, only experienced the culminating stage of this supersensuous love, and has left behind for humanity its higher ideal. Nowhere in these scriptures can be found a second instance of this love of Sri Radha, who considered herself happy only in the happiness of Lord Sri Krishna by giving up entirely the faintest idea of her own happiness, and by shaking off bashfulness, hatred, fear of social and public opinion, prestige of birth and rank, and such other vanities of life. This is why the scrip-

tures maintain that without the grace of Sri Radha, no person in this world can realise even a fraction of that love and attain the vision of Lord Sri Krishna. For, Sri Krishna the very embodiment of Satchidananda, is for ever bound by the love of Sri Radha, devoid of the least idea of lust, and it is only at her instance that He fulfils the desires of His devotees. Therefore, it can be easily understood that the true import of the aforesaid statement of the scriptures of the Bhakti school is this,—that nobody can attain the Lord as the 'husband' and realise the sweetness of His divine love without attaining the love similar to or of the kind of that of Sri Radha, the embodiment of Love.

We all begin with love for ourselves, and the unfair claims of the little self make even love selfish. At last, however, comes the full blaze of light, in which this little self is seen to have become one with the Infinite. Man himself is transfigured in the presence of this Light of Love, and he realises at last the beautiful and inspiring truth that Love, the Lover and the Beloved are One.

—Swami Vivekananda.

IMPORTANCE OF ACTION

Every action of ours is an overflow of our inner abundance, an earnest of our innate dynamism. Whether we know it or not, every action springs from our will, which again is derived from the mind. Except in deep sleep, the mind is always active, sometimes expressing its activity through external aids and sometimes active within as in the case of thought or meditation. Between moments of routine activity when the mind's part is at the minimum and moments of deep meditation or samadhi when the Mind (as Atman, consciousness) is at its most intense activity giving the appearance of rest, the mind traverses a whole coloured gamut of our life. Mind in this enormous activity, in this variegated career is itself a supreme object of meditation. The mind can liberate us or bind us. Hence a meditation in its essential aspect of dynamism must release us from the bondage and limitations of physical existence. Mind is in the state of *pure act* when without coming to the conative level it combines in itself the three aspects of actor, action and acted. This happens in samadhi consciously, and in ordinary thought unconsciously. It is this ever alert activity and dynamism of the mind that overflows in every act.

So then to say that every action is a channel through which our mental or spiritual abundance flows out is to admit that every action brings us knowledge. A contact with fire turns all objects into fire. A contact with the inner being which is all knowledge turns every other thing into knowledge and what we do in action is to contact the mind, consciousness. It is in this sense that our ancients have said that all actions end in knowledge. It must be asked here, knowledge of what, and the answer is, knowledge of our real nature, of our spirituality. To understand action in these its deeper aspects, to be

conscious that through every action we touch and irrigate our inner quality, and then to engage oneself in action is definitely to put oneself on the path of Karmayoga. For practice of Karmayoga demands that we must do actions in such a way as to achieve yoga or union with our spirituality, to be one with our real Self, which is liberation, bliss, power.

Is it not claiming too much for action when we say that action, an ordinary routine of our everyday lives can lead us to liberation? Action and liberation are diametrically opposed to each other as darkness and light. Action pre-supposes duality and liberation is unitive experience. Action is material; liberation is spiritual. But mystics and prophets in all countries and climes have raised action to the plane of spirituality by emphasising on its transcendent nature. Action ceases to be material when it is made as pure and spiritual as the end towards which it is directed. When action is not throttled by the impatience of desire for the fruit, when it is not stained by vested interest or motive, it partakes of spirituality. When the devotee joins his heart and soul to the divine, desire and motive drop off from his actions and they become spontaneous and spiritual.

In order to invest every action with this spirituality Hindu ancients have said that action is not for the attainment of the object but for the purification of the mind. They enjoined this on us with great insight into human nature, for a mind purified by action spontaneously seeks the truth and truth liberates us. 'Know the truth and truth shall make you free' is an old but ever new wisdom. So, from action to purification of the mind, thence to knowledge of the truth and thence to salvation is definitely a process of transcendence, of self-increase for action. Even after the dawn of knowledge and self.

IMPORTANCE OF ACTION

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realization action persists. All mystics were men of action. Herein lies the self-transcendence of action. Action grows beyond itself, beyond its plane to the plane of spirituality. It is this transcendence of action that Sri Krishna condensed in the words '*sarvam karmakhilam Partha jnane parisamapyate*'—all actions seek transcendence itself. Those who have attained this transcendence do not engage themselves in action. (*Tasmāt karma na kurvanti yatayah paradarsinah*) Those yatis or sannayasins do not engage themselves in action who have experienced the absolute. Not that they sink into inactivity: their action is spiritual, not material. The glory of this transcendence of spiritual action has been sung by all our scriptures. The Gita says, *karmanavahi samsiddhim asthitah janakadayah*—By action alone (action seen in the transcendent scale of action to purity, purity to knowledge and from knowledge to salvation) have men like Janaka attained the supreme. *Kurvanneveha karmāni jijivishet satam samah* says the *Isopanishad*—'A hundred years must be lived doing action; even then action will not bind you or stain you' What does the Upanishad refer to here but to transcendent action which liberates us?

The theory of Karma bases itself on the transcendent nature of action. The above law states the law of self-increase of action. It says that five good (or bad) actions generate in us a power to do the sixth good (or bad) action, the sixth stimulates a seventh and so on. *Mahtayajnascha yajnascha Brahmiyam kriyate tanuh* (महायज्ञैश्च यज्ञैश्च ब्राह्मीयं क्रियते तनुः). By numerous *yajnas* and *mahayajnas*, that is, spiritual actions, we create in us a spiritual body. And when this spiritual man is created within us he legislates for himself. He goes beyond the pale of the law of Karma. क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे: when the Supreme is witnessed

all karmas are blasted. The self-realized man may not observe the usual social norms of conduct. He lives in a world of different values and so he cannot be judged by the norms and laws of this world. He is a law unto himself. He may eat impure food but to compare him to a dog that eats impure food is spiritual blindness. The truth of the matter is that at a certain stage of evolution man blasts all the results of his actions and out-grows them. The fire of knowledge burns up all karmas says Gita except the *prarabdha karma*, which has already begun to bear fruit. (cf. Sri Ramakrishna: Once A blind man bathed in the Ganges and as a result was freed from his sins. But his blindness remained all the same. Also cf. Sankara's commentary on Gita—IV, 37) Witness again the transcending power of action to take man beyond the pale of the law of karma. This is real suicidal transcendence: karma helping man to go beyond its influence, karma digging its own grave.

There are schools of thought in India which basing themselves on the transcendent nature of action establish the unchallengeable supremacy of action as a means to salvation, and rule out divine grace altogether. The Sankhya and Vaiseshika Darsanas have dispensed with God and have emphasised on self-effort and will as things that really bring us to perfection. According to Patanjala Yoga God is only a special variety of man, *purushavishesha* and action is powerful enough to help him on to the heights of God head. Buddhism also rules out divine grace and places supreme stress on right action and right thought. Thus some of the loudest voices in Indian wisdom are unanimous in picturing action in its transcendent colours as being powerful of taking man beyond itself, beyond the plane of material action to the spiritual plane. Action is everything: it is the

kalpataru, the wish-fulfilling tree. It makes Gods of men.

Then, is there no place for divine grace, it may be asked. When we are at the end of our tether, when everything seems lost and the ground from under our feet is cut off, something happens and we are saved. Or when temptations appear and they prove too strong for us, then something intervenes to save us from their teeth. People ask what else can these saving things be if it is not the saving divine grace? Our answer is that it is man's craving for dependence on some external power that makes him call it divine grace. That something which saved us from temptations, from difficult situations was a power self-born. On occasions when we are put to severe physical strain, we have felt strength coming to our rescue from an unknown source. Yes, man has hidden springs of power, not only physical, but mental and spiritual. We may not be conscious of them, but when we are pushed to the end of our resources, then these hidden springs come to our rescue. It is much more practical to believe in a divinity within than in one without. This is the wisdom of our ancients.

Not only that. Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, compassion to creatures, uncovetousness, gentleness, industry, purity, absence of hatred and of pride, these are said to be godly qualities. If our actions are directed to the increase of these qualities, we incarnate and strengthen the God in us. No God then need come from outside to help us in our daily needs or to redeem us from temptations. Why should we then posit a God outside us to come and help us. Seeing some sinner suddenly transforming himself into a saint, some people observe that divine grace has gathered him to God's

hallowed feet. Is this not ignoring the spiritual capital he had amassed by dint of his labour and perseverance?

With all that, we cannot stretch the power and transcendence of action too far. After all the law of Karma is a law. It is doomed to staticity. But the law-giver is always dynamic. The lawgiver is much more than the law which he makes and breaks to transcend it. We have the jivanmukta, the God-realised man who is not a respecter of laws. Man is mightier than his Karma. The freedom man feels within the orbit of the law of Karma is just like the freedom a cow feels within the circle she draws with her rope, or the freedom the stone feels when thrown from the hand. The cow can assert her freedom by breaking her rope and roaming about at her will. That is the God-realised man who has nothing of the earthy standards to restrict him. Or else the owner of the cow can untie her from the post and increase the length of the rope and thus give her more freedom. Those who are not jivanmuktas and hence cannot break the rope of the law of Karma, have got to have faith in the power of God who can untie us from our posts and allow us to roam about and graze. God is the source of all laws that keep this world together. Nay, from Him has come this world with its laws of cause and effect, with its action and knowledge and all its retinue. Unless and until we have discovered in us God and nourished Him to His proper proportions by our Godly virtues, we are powerless to break the rope of Karma and declare our independence. Till then we have to believe in the grace of a God other than us, who helps us in dire distress, who saves us from temptations and who at last, out of mercy and love for us destroys our inner darkness and weaknesses and puts us on his divine throne. Until this culmination comes divine grace is the one thing that takes us

from one milestone to another on the road of our evolution.

All the same we have to deserve divine grace by our Karma. Thus it comes to this that we have got to recognise the importance of both divine grace and self-effort. We have to come by the wisdom of the half and half: 'Trust in God but keep your powder dry. The cosmic will which is God, first decreed and then the world came into being. First came the law-giver and then the law. Let us realise that the law and the law-giver are one. Let us not emphasise the importance of the one to the exclusion of the other. If the water-level in a well is to be raised it is easily done if the springs from within function and the rains from above shower.

To recognise the transcendence and hence the liberating power of action is to go a long

way, for to know action in its transcendence is to know the ultimate reality, Brahman. Action derives itself from Brahman, says the scripture. When action in its transcendent aspect is known it helps us to discriminate action from inaction. For to know the truth is to turn away from untruth. 'We have to know what is action and what is inaction. As to this, even the wise are deluded, says Bhagavan Sri Krishna. And Bhagavan promises to teach Arjuna such action by knowing which he shall be liberated from evil. Action has great liberating power, for action springs from the ultimate Reality, Brahman, the source of all freedom. It is no use doing action without knowing its importance. We have to know its importance, its power, its springs and its range. For only conscious effort purifies and strengthens us and helps us on on the road of evolution.

GRACE AND THE LAW OF KARMA

By Dr. M. HAFIZ SYED, M.A., Ph.D.,

There is a great misconception prevailing in certain quarters regarding the meaning and value of grace in the Hindu scheme of life. On one side we have the law of Karma corresponding to the law of cause and effect working in every department of life with unerring precision. On the other hand in various schools of Hindu religion where too much stress is laid on self-surrender and divine grace, it is believed that man is absolutely helpless and can do nothing for himself. If he is to attain anything by way of spiritual realization he has to depend entirely on the grace of this or that teacher, who expects unconditional obedience to his will before he vouchsafes his help and guidance to him. Either one theory may be

accepted or the other. Both cannot be wholly correct. The truth lies in the *via media*.

No one whether a Hindu, Buddhist or a Jain can deny the existence of an immutable law popularly called the law of Karma which coincides with the scientific law of cause and effect. We should remember that of all the great changes which have come about during the last hundred years in modern thought there is none so profound as the conception of the reign of the Universal Law. Wherever we look, whether with the microscope or the telescope, we find laws. The tiniest electron and the mightiest solar system obey laws which the mind of man can

tabulate. The latest conclusions of modern science are after all nothing more than the proclamations of the Lord Buddha. When we understand what the Lord meant by the word Dhamma or Law, we realize that it is law absolute, which brings under its sway all things great and small. One of the most wonderful conceptions which the Lord Buddha gave is that the moral law is exactly the same as any physical law. When he proclaimed that 'hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love,' he was not uttering a beautiful ideal but was giving a scientific statement of the laws of the universe, visible and invisible.

Similarly the ancient Hindu scriptures have taught the existence of the law of causation which is the expression of divine will, which has its sway over all sentient beings. No one can escape its domination; even the Devas, God's ministers, are not free from its domination. All our acts, mental or physical are influenced and guided by this law.

If we accept its over-powering rule over our lives, physical or spiritual, we have to admit that nothing can come to us which we have not deserved by virtue of our own self-effort, self-exertion and intense desire. In view of this ideal it stands to reason that we cannot wholly depend upon either the intercession, good-will or grace of any teacher however great, for our salvation. We have to exert our will to its utmost capacity, purify our heart of all desires, and concentrate our mind on the ideal of Self-realization before we reach our goal. We should constantly bear in mind what Bhishma taught thousands of years ago that 'exertion is greater than destiny.' In spite of our limit-

ations laid upon us by our own *prarabdha karma* we are free to exercise our will, improve our condition and set fresh causes in order to release ourselves from the thralldom of lower *vasanas* as anger, passion and fear and try to attain the highest achievable goal namely, perfection, and liberation from the rounds of births and deaths.

Everything depends upon our self-effort. When the great ones, saints and sages who are ever watchful of our progress find us ready for receiving illumination, they grant the gift of their grace which we have deserved by virtue of our own good deeds and inner purification. Thus we see that what is called grace is fully in keeping with the law which insures our success in every department of life. If everything is to be left to the divine grace unaccompanied by our self-effort, if divine men were to confer their grace on some in preference to others, that would smack of partiality. It is wrong for us to suppose that those great beings whom we call by various names as *rishis*, *munis*, sages, can ever possibly disregard the existence of this eternal law which rules our life. They always work in conscious co-operation with the divine will and would never do anything to violate it.

Those who are vouchsafed with divine grace have earned it by virtue of their own good Karma. There is no favouritism in it. 'First deserve then desire', holds good in this also. Grace has its rightful place in the spiritual scheme of life; but it is by no means contrary to the law of Karma which works impartially and sternly. It is in this recognition that lies our security, peace and prosperity.

SUPERCONSCIOUS IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

By LEELA SINHA, M.A.

Today the different currents of thought have met on Indian soil. The contact with the spirit of the West has led to the broadening of the range of men's visions and it has helped the growth of scientific psychology in India. It is encouraging to note the critical spirit with which the Indian Psychological Associations are carrying on valuable researches in different branches of psychology. Attempts are being made to understand human nature comprehensively and coherently. As a result of such an attitude, scientific psychology eagerly claims the researches into the field of spiritual experiences as its own votaries.

The recent investigations into the 'spiritualistic' phenomena have begun to shake the traditional faith in the truths which have been accepted by science. Modern psychologists do not agree with the view that mental functions are dependent upon the integrity of the cerebral mechanism which will disappear when the mechanism disappears. Some thinkers in the West with the Easterners are now beginning to believe that the brain is by no means indispensable for conscious activities. Psychologists tell us human mind has other perceptive powers than those served by the senses and they are slowly accepting the view that human mind has not merely the conscious, subconscious, and unconscious levels but also the superconscious. They rightly maintain that if there are levels below consciousness, then it goes without saying that there are levels above consciousness. Hence we claim that if modern psychology has succeeded in unearthing the facts and principles governing the functions of the lower levels, then it is competent to deal with the higher levels of the mind. And such a psychology was

known to the ancient philosophers and psychologists of our country.

Psychology is an old branch of knowledge. In India especially, speculations in regard to the working of human mind with a view to predict human behaviour may be traced to the Vedas themselves which belong to the dim days of the past. But Vedic psychology, though perhaps with proper study, may reveal important psychological facts in regard to the human mental processes, is still to be brought to light. The Upanishads that followed the Vedas are a store-house of information in regard to the knowledge of the human mind possessed by the people of those days. It is really an extraordinary thing to see that at such an early period the thinkers in India could have had such a fund of psychological insights at their disposal. No one can deny the efforts made by them to explain human behaviour as the result of the functions of the lower as well as the of higher mind. The profound insight with which the Upanishads explain not only the waking consciousness, dreams and the state of sleep, but also the spiritual experiences, is remarkable. In no Western system we find such a comprehensive psychological analysis of the workings of the mind. The evolution of the experimental science was, of course reserved for a later date. Yet here and there, even in the Upanishads, we find references to scientific methods of study.

The *Gita* is an important contribution to the growth of psychology. It recognises that senses alone cannot claim reality. The perception of an object is conveyed by the mind (*Manas*) to the intellect (*Buddhi*) and then to the spirit or the soul.

The system of Yoga seems to have influenced the whole of later Indian thought.

With its emphasis on the education of the spirit and the capacities of the self, it showed clearly the successive stages through which the aspirant should consciously guide his mind. The methods of concentration and meditation, and the strivings for renunciation and detachment are the experiences, psychical and mental by which the seeker attains the highest stage of God-realisation. Moreover, the Yogis had a good working knowledge of the science of the super-conscious. They tell us that we can acquire the power of seeing and knowing without the help of the outer senses. They assume that there is a wider world about us than the one we are normally able to apprehend. The Yoga helps us to reach a higher level of consciousness, through a transformation of the psychical organism, which enables us to attain Jivanmukti. Hence the Yogic theory of Self, mind, and Chit. The doctrine of subtle and gross body affords a satisfactory explanation for the spiritual experiences of man. The Indian mind seems to be peculiarly gifted in analysing psychological events. With this inherited wealth of introspective capacity, one does expect that in Indian soil the growth of modern psychology would be much more prominent than in other countries.

Now when we look to the pace of modern psychology in Western countries, we find that it has been making a rapid advance in Europe. The Western scientists have found that the realm of nature is not confined to the physical world which is open to perception, but that it extends over other parts of life, sleep and dream. Men often behave in mysterious ways and have to undergo sufferings which cannot all be traced to possible causes operating from outside. Mental diseases are in this way unintelligible unless we gain an insight into the inner life of the patient, both conscious and unconscious. The psycho-analysis of Freud has been of

great aid in discovering the sources of the queer behaviour of people. His theory, however, has not been universally accepted and other speculations have been put forward which appear better to harmonise with human experience. McDougall while appreciating the genius and the services of Freud has strongly felt that his conclusions suffer from the defect of over generalisation. However, Freud's contribution to the study of the unconscious represents one of the most valuable contributions to psychology. In fact the work done in this field is of paramount importance to scientific psychology. It is when Western psychology is faced with the phenomena of the higher mind that its attitude becomes so much less sure. The spiritual levels it refuses to consider its province; this is the business of religion, theology, of philosophy, of anything in fact but psychology. And even if it deals with the superconscious, it throws a very dim light on the problem. The fact that mystics and ascetics are sometimes of neurotic temperament need not involve a negative conclusion. It is disappointing to see that William James who did more than any one else to explore this region in the West in a scientific spirit, has the following view. He says in his classic work *The Varieties of Religious Experience*:—'If there were such things as inspiration from a higher realm, it might well be said that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity.' And again, 'so it is logically conceived that if there be higher spiritual agencies that can directly touch us, the psychological condition of their doing so might be our possession of a subconscious region which alone should yield access to them. The hubbub of the waking life might close a door which in the dreamy subliminal might remain ajar or open.' Hence the Western psychologists tell us that the superconscious is really the region of the subconscious

For Freud, mostly the repressed desires constitute the content of subconscious which has as its source in the unconscious. Such a theory is far from giving a satisfactory explanation of the problem. Jung would insist that super-conscious or the Samadhi of the Yogi is equivalent to an unconscious state. But the possibility of higher consciousness than the present one is a concrete possibility resting upon evidence and reasoning. Besides, psycho-analysis of the West deals with the experiences of the present life, but the Yoga of India goes beyond and discovers its experiences of the past lives also. The superconscious is a wider region in Yoga than in psycho-analysis.

The psycho-analysis of Freud which is a great achievement of the West, has, quite unquestionably done more for the advancement of our understanding of human nature than any other man since Aristotle. There is much that is of value and relative truth in Freud's teachings. And yet we hold that his conclusions are sometimes highly questionable and even misleading. The fact is that the Freudians are rather incapable of understanding terms other than their own.

Despite the vast differences between Yoga and psycho-analysis, both in theoretical and practical aspects, the theory of the unconscious has been recognised as the fundamental problem of mental study. Both the psychoanalysts and Yoga-psychologists have laid emphasis on the importance of the unconscious over the conscious part of the mind. But while in the West all that has been studied about the superconscious is only during the last few decades. The Hindus in the East had long ago realised the need for a perfected method of training the higher mind by the Yoga practices. Yoga though born in a pre-scientific age and in a spiritual atmosphere has devoted special attention to the analysis of mental facts and has thus

developed a theory of the superconscious which undoubtedly supercedes that of the psycho-analysts.

Psycho-analysis has been reproached time and a gain for ignoring the higher moral spiritual side of human nature. Freud thinks that this reproach is doubly unjust, both historically and methodically. For he asserts that from the very beginning he has attributed the function of repression to the moral aesthetic tendencies in the ego. Hence the super-ego or the ego-ideal (equivalent to conscience) according to him is the special enforcer of moral precepts by a process of transformation of instincts, in which process the identification with the parents plays a leading role. But what this identification is remains obscure. Besides, the theory hardly explains the origin and existence of the higher side of mental life. And many other insoluble difficulties are involved in the Freudian scheme of reducing the superconscious to the unconscious. Since higher nature in man cannot be explained by the lower, we hold that Freud was not justified in formulating his theory of the super-ego. In fact, the mistake of the Freudian psychology consists in its habit of taking particular or logical truth, generalising it unduly, and trying to explain a whole field of Nature in its narrower terms. Moreover, the exaggeration of the importance of suppressed complexes is a dangerous practice of psycho-analysis. Again Freud's excursion into the field of psychology of religion gives no clue to the workings of the spirit in man. In his *'Future of an Illusion'* he asserts that psycho-analysis has traced the origin of religion to the helplessness of childhood and its content to the persistence of the wishes and needs of childhood into maturity. Hence he argues the truth of religion may altogether be disregarded. Again, 'Religion is an illusion that derives its strength from the fact that it falls in with

our instinctual desire.' McDougall rightly interprets that the whole attack amounts to saying that man's nature is such as naturally leads to the development of religions; therefore, religion is purely illusory.

Dr. David Forsyth, a faithful disciple of Freud claims that all religion is the product of imagination, and all imagination is the work of 'the pleasure-principle', which has nothing to do with reality; all thinking about reality being the work of the reality-principle. Hence all the objects of religious thinking, devotion, and aspiration are unreal. Regarding this explanation we feel that it is nothing but one of the flimsiest of Freudian hasty assumptions in which they pretend to find a sufficient and final refutation of all religion. The fact is that psychology has lost no time in performing its duty of investigating the causes of religious illusion. Indeed it might be accused of starting on action before it was properly equipped for the task. That the illusion is a widespread one obviously does not impress the psychoanalysts of the West. For Freud when he noticed certain resemblance between the behaviour of obsessional neurotics and some of the major activities of mystics arrived at the conclusion that the behaviour arises from an unconscious sense of guilt, in connection with some repressed wish or experience. But we protest in the name of psychology that the spiritual strivings of man do not owe their origin to the lower level of the mind, and religious aspiration is not an illusion.

The founders and prophets of the great Faiths have proclaimed the reality of personal communion with the Divine. Saints and mystics all over the world have found ways to attain liberation from the sorrows of earthly life. Men and women scattered over the world have felt the certainty of communion with the spirit that pervades the

universe. Hence the Upanishads and the Vedanta speak of the ultimate reality as the highest spiritual realisation of the Self. The philosophers in the West have described the supreme reality as the Supra-relational immediate experience. These are the functions and the urges of the spirit in man which are still hidden to the Western psychologists. Hindu psychology thus throws a flash of light on the mental adjustments involved in action of conscience, prayer, belief in immortality, religious aspirations and the experiences of the mystics.

The Yogic practices with proper study and practice are bound to yield excellent results in the branches of super-normal and abnormal psychology. Our belief is that modern psychology will be greatly enriched by proper and scientific researches in the field of super-conscious levels. Hence the application of the doctrine of the East to that of the West does not confuse the psychological principles as the former is based on equally scientific and rationalistic explanation.

The right procedure regarding the fusing of the different psychological insights with Hindu psychology is roughly indicated in the writings of Gandhi and Tagore, Aurobindo Ghose and Bhagawan Das. Today many of the Indian thinkers recognise that spiritual experiences cannot be relied upon apart from reason. Prof. Radhakrishnan writes: 'In order to be able to say that religious experience reveals reality, in order to be able to transform religious certitude to logical certainty we are obliged to give an intellectual account of the experience.' This shows that Hindu thought has no mistrust for reason. Religious consciousness is not a myth. On the contrary, in the modern world the mystic experiences of the Yogis of India have been the most fully described and the most carefully studied. One cannot fail to be impressed by the strength of the spiritual striving that animates that school of thought.

Recent times have witnessed in the Hormio psychology of McDougall all the foundations of moral and spiritual experiences. His most impressive scheme is that instead of looking upon art, morality and religious experiences as manifestations of the Freudian unconscious, these urges should be controlled in such a way so that it may not sink to the lower levels of mind. Thus the instinctive impulses, emotions, sex and acquisitiveness should be organised into sentiments and scales of sentiment values. It is true that through a conscious and purposeful direction of mental evolution in the higher levels, man can attain the highest development of his powers. This in a way echoes the theory of the Yogic discipline. But while in the West owing to the exclusive scientific attitude, McDougallian psychology stops at the stage of self-regarding sentiment as the master sentiment, the acme of Yoga is Samadhi, the state in which the highest reality is revealed. In the experience of Samadhi the mind withdraws from its outward activities and expands into wider dimensions of consciousness. Here comes the feeling of identity with the all, with the one into which the many has flowed. Hence the Yogic experience is the return to original condition and not a transcendence of Jiva. Yoga thus teaches like the modern psychology that conscious, unconscious and the super-conscious are not different realities but only the three modes in which one reality acts. Besides, the findings of psycho-analysis, do also make certain principles of Yoga more easily understandable to the modern mind.

Prof. P. S. Naidu in his enlightening works has made an attempt to supplement the McDougallian psychology. He urges that by making the Para-Brahma-regarding sentiment as the master-sentiment, the mind can rise to the highest spiritual levels. What he means is that the sentiments should be organised in such a way as to lead finally to

the submergence of individual consciousness into the cosmic consciousness. Such a valuable suggestion from an eminent psychologist of the present day deserves our attention and appreciation since it shows a way for the modern psychologists to making further progress in this field.

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in regard to his views on Yoga and psycho-analysis rightly observes that if one wishes to transform human nature it is the power of these higher regions to which one must raise both the subconscious unconscious. And truly that is the promise of the greater psychology awaiting its hour before which these gropings of Freudian theory of the super-ego will disappear and come to nothing.

It must further be added that materialism cannot be the last word in psychology. For how can psychology escape its responsibility, when it is the mind that is its field, and when mind shows itself functioning at the spiritual levels as obviously as at the physical? Why does psychology lack the courage to push its investigation to its logical end? Why do they not admit the reason for the existence of super-conscious to lie in the mind itself? As a matter of fact, psychology cannot escape the role of higher mind day by day proclaiming its absolute certainty of its origin. The manifestation of the pure spirit is working in man all over the world with the freedom which is the natural characteristic of the mind at the highest level of its development.

For the development of true personality we must unearth these hidden forces—the inner dispositions, and bring them in contact with outer circumstances, so that a true harmony is established. It is only then that psychology will play its part fully and infuse true light into man's real nature. It will take much time to acquire a correct psychological insight into the workings of the

super-conscious. But whatever the time needed, we have no doubt that it will help psychology to gain a profounder and better understanding of human nature. It is our conviction that a scientific understanding of

the superconscious levels of our mind as revealed by the discipline of Yoga and the recent branches of psychology will enrich the science of psychology and add to its meaning. But this is yet a hope and an expectation.

THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

FROM THE GITA TO SRI RAMANUJA

By S. VASUDEVACHARIAR.

Bhakti, the attitude of fervent devotion to God, may be found whenever men turn to the Supreme Being, in eagerness of desire, or in extremity of despair, away from themselves and away from their own reasonings; but the historical student has to be content with such references to this attitude as he can find in literature. A study of the Indian literature on the subject shows that, so far as the Vaishnavite movement is concerned, a few great names stand out; they are the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Bhagavata Purana*, the works of the Alvars, of Sri Ramanujacharya and of the founders of the later sects in North India who drew their inspirations from Sri Ramanujacharya, while on a line of its own, directing its devotion to God Siva rather than to Vishnu is the Saiva Bhakti movement, with its admirable hymns of the *Thevaram* and *Thiruvachakam*. I shall confine my attention to the first four and examine the important aspects revealed in each one of them.

Sri Bhagavad Gita.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is, for all practical purposes, the source of the Bhakti movement in India. In it the highest Brahman known as Sri Raman Narayana is stated to be capable of being reached by Bhakti, and by Bhakti alone. This Bhakti is brought about

by the proper performance of the actions prescribed for one's caste and stage of life and by the knowledge of the individual Atma in its pure form and by desirelessness. Desirelessness is really an adjunct of what is called Karma-Yoga; but it is an important element in the Bhaktiyoga too, as the obtaining of release from *samsara* depends upon it. Three different kinds of Yoga are mentioned in the text: Karmayoga, Gnanayoga and Bhaktiyoga. Karmayoga consists in the daily performance of certain chosen good deeds as pure acts of worship, such as making pilgrimage to holy streams, doing *tapas*, the making of gifts, making offerings to devotees and the like. Gnanayoga consists in continuously meditating on the pure *swarupam* of the individual Atma with perfect control over the mind. Bhaktiyoga is to meditate, without break, on the Supreme Being with love fixed on Him alone. It manifests itself in the form of external *pūja* to Him, placing flowers at His feet, prostrating before Him etc., These yogas are related to one another. In Karmayoga there should be present the thought of the individual Atma as well as love for the highest Atma. In Gnanayoga, the *karma* pertaining to the yogin's stage of life should be performed and there should also be the love for the highest Atma ever present in it. In Bhaktiyoga the other two yogas should also find a place. In the first

six chapters of the *Gita* the Karmayoga and Gnanayoga are explained; they are the means of attaining enjoyment of the pure Atma. The ordinary course of performance of these yogas is Karmayoga first; then, when he has obtained disgust for the sense-pleasures of objects and has secured perfect control over the mind, he should take to Gnanayoga; the practice of this yoga secures for the aspirant what is called Atma-sakshatkaram, that is the vision of the Self. It is also possible to attain Atma-sakshatkaram by the practice of Karmayoga direct without passing through Gnanayoga in its rigid form. This forms the subject matter of the first six chapters.

In the second section of six chapters, Bhaktiyoga brought about and perfected by Gnanayoga and Karmayogas, is fully described. If this Bhaktiyoga is performed in the way in which its performance is enjoined, the aspirant reaches finally the highest goal. Deep devotion to God is the chief element in this yoga. 'On Me fix thy mind; be devoted to Me; prostrate thyself before Me; harmonised thus in Me, thou shalt come unto Me' says the closing verse of this chapter.

The superior merit of the Bhakta, otherwise technically known as 'Gnani', who knows God and loves Him without expectation of any return, is proclaimed in the following verses:

'The same am I to all beings; there is none hateful to Me. Those who worship Me with devotion, they are in Me, and I also in them.'

'Even if the most sinful worship Me, provided the worship is with undivided heart, he too must be accounted as highly righteous, for he has rightly resolved.'

'Those who take refuge with Me, though of the womb of sin, they also tread the highest path.'

'So worship thou Me. Fix thy mind on Me; be devoted to Me; do sacrifice for Me; prostrate thyself before Me; harmonised thus in Me, thou shalt surely come unto Me.'

This is what the *Gita* teaches. Yet the orthodox commentators belonging to the three higher castes have set these declarations at naught and have made a monopoly of Bhaktiyoga, keeping certain class of people outside its pale. Although these pronouncements of the *Gita* are for these commentators as authoritative as any other pronouncement found in the Sastras, yet they have chosen to strain the original and put a different interpretation on the passage. In fact both Mimamsas have constructed what they call Apasudra-adhikaranam wherein they demonstrate that none but those of the three higher castes are entitled to recite the Vedas or undertake the study of the Upanishads. Do these verses warrant such a conclusion? This is a matter for furious thinking.

Sri Bhagavatam

Let us now turn to the next landmark in our path. *Bhagavata Purana* is the greatest and most popular of all the *Puranas*. Its main theme is the importance of Vishnu Bhakti, especially in God's manifestation as Sri Krishna. It emphasises the value of *bhakti* and *virakti*. Sage Vyasa who had edited the Vedas and had composed the *Mahabharata* did not feel quite happy with what he had done. He was told by sage Narada that he would attain peace of mind if he composed a work dwelling upon the incarnation of Vishnu and singing His glory. Sage Vyasa then began the composition of this *Purana*; and after finishing the work he taught it to his son Sri Suka, who recited it to King Parikshit, the grandson of the Pandavas. It has acquired a wonderful hold upon the minds of the Hindus. The secret of the appeal is in the fact that we find in it the highest truths of religion and philosophy ex-

pounded in appropriate language. The verse has a peculiar charm of its own. There is solemnity and grandeur in the devotional songs, which attract the mind to the high theme. While the western mind prefers to contemplate God in the role of law-giver, the Hindu mind prefers to dwell upon Him in His incarnation as a child, a son, a lover, a hero, a guide and counsellor. Herein lies the secret of the special charm of the Sri Krishna Avatara. The whole work is an inspiring call to heart purity. The vision of God, the realisation of His spiritual presence, the mystic sense of his nearness, His touch, His inspiration, His ministry of grace and sanctity to the moral nature, the consciousness of fellowship with Him as with a friend, the feeling of His being at our side, of having rest in His love, the new interpretation which this illuminating experience gives to all things and the transforming effect of it in the life—all this is depicted in the work in a rush of glowing feeling and musical language which find no parallel anywhere else in the whole range of our literature. To listen to the expounding of the Purana inspires the divine longing that coincides with God's knowledge of our deepest necessities. The results are deep spiritual emotions which words cannot fathom, feelings which struggle for articulation and deep-seated yearnings that cannot be clothed in the symbols of languages.

Certain critics of the modern times have found fault with the Purana that it shares the defects of Puranas generally. They say that, besides containing stories which are incredible, they embody doctrines which are philosophically divergent. As an example, they point to a statement which occurs in the seventh skandha (where sage Narada attempts to explain how Sisupala who was a disbeliever in Krishna and who used to revile him was given salvation) which says that

what secures *moksham* is a mere concentration in God, not necessarily concentration with a feeling of love. One can secure *moksham* whatever be the feeling, whether it be love or fear or hatred, provided the remembrance of the object be incessant. The popular belief that a caterpillar being stung incessantly by the bee becomes a bee itself, is cited as an illustration of the principle enunciated. Not stopping with this the sage goes a step further and declares that hatred operates more expeditiously than love. If this explanation is accepted as literally true, it will contradict not only what is said elsewhere in the work, but also what Upanishads and *Bhagavad Gita* proclaim. The greatest truth which *Bhagavatam* emphasises again and again is the attainment of salvation by love only. The highest conception of *Bhakti* as explained in the Upanishads is a loving devotion to God. How then can it be said that without love God's grace can be secured? Again in the 10th skandha, the question is raised in connection with the conferring of *moksham* on Gopis; and a similar explanation is offered. It is for us who are not prepared to accept that the Purana has faults in it to look into the matter closely and explain the intention of the author. The truth seems to be this. Among religious teachers there is a tendency to emphasise the value of a particular truth by having recourse to a rhetorical exaggeration. For example in the Upanishads sage Narada is reported to have said, 'I know the Vedas, the Itihasas and the Puranas; with all this I know *mantras* only; I have not known the Atma;' This declaration of the knowledge of Atma not being attainable through Vedas and Puranas has no other purpose than to glorify the knowledge of the Brahman which he wanted to be expounded. Analogous to this is the case of sage Sandilya's objection to the Vedas. Sandilya says I have read the Vedas together with all the various auxiliary branches of

knowledge. But in none of them can I see a clear indication of the way to blessedness, whereby I might reach perfection. These are purely rhetorical passages.'

The Divya Prabandham

The next name which stands out in the Bhakti movement is the work of the Alvars. In the *Prabandham* which they have composed, what is conspicuous is a yearning after intimate fellowship with God. In comparison with this fellowship the best that the world can offer is valueless. Wealth, sexual indulgence, the exercise of kingly authority, the bliss of Swarga itself are all treated with contempt. The nature of the personal relationship sought is beyond comprehension. The Alvars seek to express their permanent hunger of the heart for Him under the most intimate terms known to human relationship. Figures drawn from the sex are given to illustrate these extra-ordinary exhilaration. To those whose hearts are not extended to divine love, this may appear to be repugnant. They forget that God is love and love is that which not merely creates and, after brief caress, repudiates and discards; but which sustains, redeems, perfects, and perpetuates. It is therefore natural that when feeling becomes very deep it should find expression in this form. In this connection I am reminded of an anecdote. Saint Nanjiyar had a disciple who expressed a desire to be taught the *Prabandam Tiruvamoshi*. The master began his series. The disciple listened to the discourse with rapt attention as long as the master confined himself to discourse on God in his aspect of the exalted and sublime; but, when the subject got changed and the discourse began to speak of love to God by illustration taken from sex relationship, the disciple turned away from it thinking that the mode of treating the subject was a shock to good taste and he forthwith left the place murmuring

that the discourse had assumed the character of a sexualist's love-conversation. Nanjiyar exclaimed, 'What an unfortunate man is he that he should have failed to realise the deep hidden sense of our altered discourse.' The fact of the matter is that true religion is more of the heart than of the head. The relationship with God by means of loving devotion is the only way to escape from the ills of life. The goal that is sought is the normal human longing for the relation of conscious love and trust between man and God. The reality and eternity of love can alone save these impassioned hymns from being a mockery.

Sri Ramanujacharya

The next name which stands out in the Bhakti movement is the name of Sri Ramanujacharya. In him, the movement has found a competent philosophical exponent, who reconciles in thought the conception of the impersonal Absolute and the gracious helper of man. He succeeded in establishing the Visishtadvaita philosophy which is the strongest alternative to the philosophy of Sri Sankaracharya, the philosophy of monism that enjoys the reputation of orthodoxy. From Ramanujacharya, as from a reservoir into which earlier streams had poured, the many subsequent Bhakti movements branch out again, some with more of emotion, some with less. But all are alike in accepting as substantially true his theory of relation between God and man and the universe. He is not really the 'Morning star' of the Bhakti movement; but in him, Bhakti shines in full splendour of a great philosophical exposition. His saintly and exemplary life and his adoption of the Pancharatna cult contributed largely to his being respected by the community in general and followed by an ever increasing group of ardent followers.

Ramanuja's *Sri Bhashyam* is remarkable for the lengthy discussions on various topics, by

which his actual commentary on the Sūtras is written. In this disposition he treats various controversial points and expounds fully his differences of view from those of Sri Sankaracharya. One of the most important topics discussed therein is the question relating to the means which secures release from the bondage of *samsara*. According to Sri Sankaracharya, the Vedānta Sāstras aim is to destroy completely that wrong knowledge which is the root of all pain, birth, old age, death and other evils of that kind. This wrong knowledge consists in supposing that in the universe there is plurality of existence. And to that end, the Sāstra endeavours to establish the knowledge of the unity of the Self. That which can put an end to this nescience is the knowledge of Brahman which is pure intelligence and antagonistic to all plurality. Such knowledge of unity cannot proceed from performance of works. Sacrifices and works of that kind are helpful only so far as they contribute towards the rise of a desire for that knowledge; they have not influenced in the production of fruit, i.e. knowledge of unity itself.

The process is therefore as follows: As the mind of a man has been cleaned of all impurities through works performed in many preceding states of existence, without a view to special forms of reward, there arises in him the desire for knowledge and thereupon through knowledge itself so originated from scriptural texts, nescience comes to an end.

Meditation too is, according to Sri Sankaracharya helpful only in this manner. It helps towards cognising the sense of these Vedic texts. Meditation means the constant holding of that sense before one's mind so as to dispel thereby the antagonistic beginningless imagination of plurality. In the case of him who through meditation has dispelled the entire imagination of plurality the

knowledge of the sense of the Vedāntic text puts an end to nescience.

To sum up: the root of bondage is the unreal view of plurality. This unreal view has its root in nescience. Knowledge and knowledge alone originated by texts cuts the bondage short. Neither work nor meditation is of help towards the release.

To this argumentation, Sri Ramanujacharya replies: 'we admit that release consists only in the cessation of nescience and that this cessation results entirely from the knowledge of Brahman. But a distinction has here to be made regarding the nature of this knowledge which the Vedāntic texts aim at enjoining for the purpose of putting an end to nescience. Is it merely the knowledge of sentences which originates from the sentences themselves? Or is it knowledge in the form of meditation which has the knowledge just referred to as its antecedent? It cannot be the knowledge of the former kind; for such knowledge springs from the mere apprehension of the sentence apart from any special injunction; and moreover it is not observed that nescience ceases as soon as the sentence knowledge is formed. Hence the conclusion is that the knowledge which the Vedāntic texts aim at inculcating is a knowledge other than the mere knowledge of the sense sentences.

With this agree scriptural texts such as 'Having known it, let him practise meditation.' (Brih. 4. 21.)

That the knowledge intended to be enjoined as the means to final release is of the nature of meditation, we conclude from the circumstance that the terms 'knowing' and 'meditating' are seen to be used in place of each other in the earlier and the later parts of Vedic texts.

'Let a man meditate in kind as Brahman' and 'He who knows this shines through his fame.' (Katha IV. 18.1.)

'He does not know Him, for he is not complete' and 'let man meditate on him as the self.' (Brih. I. 1.7.)

Meditation means steady remembrance i.e. a continuity of steady remembrance, uninterrupted like the flow of oil. Such remembrance is of the character of intuition. This being so, we conclude, that the text 'The Self is to be seen' teaches that meditation has the character of intuition. And this is due to the element of imagination (representation) which prevails in it.

With reference to remembrance, which thus acquires the character of intuition and is the means to final release, scripture makes a further determination in the passage, 'Self cannot be gained by the study of Vedas, nor by thoughts, nor by hearing. Whom the self chooses, by him it may be gained.' This text says at first that mere "hearing" etc. do not suffice to gain the self, and then declares "whom the Self chooses by him it may be gained. Now a chosen one means a most beloved person—the relation being that he by whom that self is held most dear is most dear to the Self. Then the Lord himself endeavours that this most beloved person should gain the Self. Steady remembrance of the kind is according to Sri Ramanuja, designated by the word 'devotion' or 'Bhakti'.

For reasons which ordinary man cannot understand, only those that are born in the three higher castes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas are considered eligible to practise this Bhakti Yoga. The question naturally arises then, are those that are born in the other castes to be eternally damned? The orthodox Hindu maintains that Bhakti-yoga is effective in securing release, only when the knowledge which is the antecedent to it is obtained by a direct study of the Upanishads and that that knowledge, though obtained in full otherwise (from a study of the

Itihasas and Puranas) is not of any use for securing salvation. The members of the three higher castes thus make a monopoly of salvation and keep Sudras and the lower orders outside its pale. In the face of this strict monopoly, it is to the credit of Vaishnavism that it has brought the lower classes into its fold and has extended to them the privilege of knowing God and of attaining liberation.

Among the agencies employed as effecting this silent revolution, one is the doctrine of Prapatti or surrender to God, which is conceived as demanding no caste status or educational qualification. This is peculiar to the Ramanuja School and is considerably elaborated by the religious teachers who succeeded him. This doctrine is considered to have some basis in the Upanishads: but the basis is slight; nor is it explicitly mentioned in the *Sri Bhashya* by Ramanuja. It is practically founded on the *Pancha-ratra*. It is however said to have been accepted and brought into practice by the Saint Satagopa himself and by Nathamuni after him. Some of the details of the doctrine may be mentioned here.

Prapatti, as has already been said is lovingly surrendering oneself to God. In other words, it is the means of unreservedly placing oneself in God's hands and ridding oneself of all notions of securing salvation by self-effort. It is the attitude of mind entirely resigned to His will. Bhaktiyoga, besides demanding a direct study of the Upanishads and obtaining knowledge of God therefrom, is also a means that tries the utmost strength and capacity of mortals. To those that are weak, ignorant, impatient of delay and are kept out by Sāstras this path of Prapatti is accessible. The mental act 'I trust thee, O Lord'—once performed is done once for all, for as soon as it is done, it is accepted by Him. Only it must be done with perfect,

trust in God; whatever series of good deeds which the Prapanna may do thereafter are no more means to secure an end, but they acquire the character of being ends in themselves, in as much as all these acts become but acts or worship to Him and devoid therefore of any selfish motive. The soul does the act with the clear knowledge of its own intrinsic position as liege of the Lord whom it has to serve. This is the true relation between soul and God and from it there naturally follows the recognition of the true means as no other than surrendering faith or extreme loving trust. Surrender of one's self is sacrificing oneself as oblation at God's feet. The self-assertion of Bhakti has given place to the self-negation of Prapatti. The uplift to sublime independence is the fruit of complete surrender to the Supreme Being.

The contrast between Bhakti and Prapatti may be shown as follows. In Bhakti, incessant training of the will to devotional meditation on God, demanding much individual effort, strictly in accordance with prescribed modes, is required; whereas in Prapatti, no individual incessant effort is required; the aspirant in whole hearted devotion unreservedly throws himself once for all at the feet of God. Bhakti is attended with risks inasmuch as when lacking any of the conditions imposed upon the aspirant, he renders himself liable to be rejected by God; whereas in Prapatti the aspirant so unconditionally surrenders himself to God that God, after giving protection does not cast him away. Bhakti is a slender stream of love proceeding from puny efforts, whereas Prapatti is a mighty flow of grace pouring down from God, the creator, nothing withstanding the rush of the torrent. In Bhakti we endeavour to qualify ourselves for salvation; in Prapatti we pray to God that He by His grace give us the diploma and thus make us equivalent to qualified people. For when we surrender ourselves we plead our utter inability to

accomplish any of the means prescribed for salvation and pray that He himself be our means as well as our goal. Is there anything which God cannot or will not grant when prayed for?

'If I ask Him to receive me, will He say nay? Not till earth and not till Heaven pass away.'

Ramanuja has not made any mention of Prapatti in his *Sri Bhashyam*, nor has he interpreted the Charama Sloka, the last stanza of the *Gita*, as inculcating Prapatti. There is a tradition connected with this. Asked the reason for this by one of his disciples, Ramanuja said that the doctrine of Grace was too sacred to be exposed to the profane gaze of all mankind without reference to their preparedness to receive the same; that it could be effective only when imparted to those who were in heart sufficiently sincere to act upon this doctrine. Ramanuja's intention in thus keeping this Prapatti hidden seems to be that without the change of heart leading to entire sacrifice for God, Prapatti should but land the soul in moral turpitude and spiritual bewilderment. Either one must sedulously strive to advance towards God with all the ethical preliminary involved in Bhakti, or by the change of his heart have full scope for the operations of God's free grace. However, what Ramanuja hid in the *Sri Bhashya* he disclosed in his work called *Saranagata Gadyam*.

Among the conditions which Prapatti requires are these two which are most hard to attain viz. (1) an utter sense of helplessness and (2) a complete trust in God that He will save if we pray to Him for safety. Is this not much needed for free grace? A sailor in the wide ocean is found to trust himself to a bit of wood; must not man have some such confidence in God as a means to salvation when he means to launch into that

bigger and endless Divine Ocean? When a disciple who realised the reality of this commodity, was told that the path of Prapatti was easier of accomplishment as it is only a momentary act, he cried out 'You place me in the predicament of a tenant who was called by his landlord to offer as his rent a gallon of oil in lieu of a bag of the oil-seed.'

How terrible is our ignorance of things. We know not who has sent us into this world, nor what the world is, nor what we ourselves are. We know not what our body is, nor our sense, nor our soul. We find ourselves fixed in one corner of this vast expanse with-

out knowing why we are set in this place rather than elsewhere. As we know not whence we came so we know not whither to go. Such is our state, full of weakness and uncertainty. Let us therefore surrender ourselves to the will of Him who has made us all and pass the days of our life without thought of searching for what must happen to us. Let us be devoted to Him in good earnest. Let us cast everything besides, out of our hearts. He would possess them alone. If we do this, we shall soon see that change wrought is us which we aspire after. This is what Sri Ramanuja preaches.

REFLECTIONS ON PROGRESS

By ALDOUS HUXLEY

Evolutionary change is regarded as progressive when it is in the direction of increasing independence of, and control over, the environment. Judged by this criterion, the history of life on our planet has not by any means been uniformly progressive. Primitive forms have survived almost unmodified from the dawn of that history to the present. Man is the contemporary of unicellular organisms which, despite their almost total dependence on the environment, may very likely outlive their more progressive rivals. Moreover many organisms have undergone progressive changes over a long period of time, only to regress towards a new and specialized kind of dependence upon the environment, as parasites upon more advanced forms. And finally even those species which have changed most progressively are all, at the present time, at the end of evolutionary blind alleys, condemned by their high degree of specialization either to remain what they are, or, if they undergo a series of considerable mutations, to die out through inability to adapt themselves, in

their changed forms, to the environment. There is good reason to suppose that all existing higher animals are fossils, predestined to survival without much change, or, if change sets in, to extinction. Except for the human species, evolutionary progress would seem to be at an end.

Biological progress, like every other kind of evolutionary change, is brought about by means of mutations, whose consequences are inherited. Human progress might still conceivably be brought about in the same way; but at least within historical times it has not been so brought about. Moreover, since the great majority of mutations are harmful, it seems unlikely that future changes in the germ plasm will do anything to improve the constitution of species, which is the product of so long an evolutionary development. (Hence, the enormous dangers inherent in the use, even for peaceful purposes, of nuclear fission. Mutations can be artificially produced by the kind of radiation associated with nuclear fission and most mutations, as we have seen, are harmful.)

It would be a very suitable punishment for man's overweening hubris if the final result of his efforts to dominate Nature were the production of a race of hare-lipped, six-fingered imbeciles.) If there is to be hereditary progress in the human species, it will be brought about by the same kind of selective breeding as has improved the race of domesticated animals. It would be perfectly possible, within a few centuries, to raise the average level of human intelligence to a point far above the present. Whether such a vast eugenic experiment could be carried out except under the auspices of a world dictatorship, and whether, carried out, its results would turn out to be socially desirable, are matters about which we can only speculate. Meanwhile it is worth remarking that the hereditary qualities of the more civilized people of the world are probably deteriorating. This is due to the fact that persons of poor physique and low intellectual endowment have a better chance of living under modern conditions than their counter parts ever had in the much severer conditions prevailing in the past. Human progress, within historical times, differs from biological progress in being a matter, not a heredity, but of tradition. This tradition, oral and written, has served as the vehicle by means of which the achievements of exceptional individuals have been made available for their contemporaries and successors, and the new discoveries of one generation have been handed on, to become the common places of the next.

Many and various criteria have been used to measure this human progress by tradition. Sometimes it is envisaged as a continuation of biological progress — an advance in control and independence. Judged by this standard, the progress achieved in recent centuries by certain sections of the human race has been very great. True, it has not been so great as some people like to think. Earthquakes still kill their thousands, epide-

mics their millions, while famine due to drought, or floods, or insect pests, or the diseases of plants, slowly and painfully destroy their tens of millions. Moreover, many of the 'conquests of nature' most loudly acclaimed at one moment have turned out, a few years later, to be a good deal less spectacular than was first imagined—have even taken on the aspect of defeats. Consider, for example, the progress achieved in the most important of all human activities—agriculture. New fields are brought under the plough, produce crops that permit an expansion of the population, and then, almost suddenly, turn into dust bowls and eroded hill sides. New chemicals for the control of insects, viruses and fungi seem to work almost miraculously, but only until such time as mutation and natural selection produce new and resistant strains of the old enemies. Artificial fertilizers produce bumper harvests; but meanwhile they kill the indispensable earthworm and, in the opinion of a growing number of authorities, tend in the long run to reduce the fertility of the soil and to impair the nutritive qualities of the plants that grow on it. In the name of "efficiency," we disturb the delicate balance of nature; by eliminating one of the factors of the ecological mosaic, or artificially adding to another we get our increased production, but after a few years outraged nature takes its revenge in the most unexpected and disconcerting way. And the list could be lengthened indefinitely. Human beings are never quite so clever as they think they are.

But the criteria by which biological progress is measured are not adequate when it comes to the measurement of human progress. For biological progress is thought of as applying exclusively to the species as a whole; whereas it is impossible to think realistically about mankind without considering the individual as well as the race to which he belongs. It is easy to imagine a state of

things in which human species should have achieved a notable degree of biological progress—but achieved it, as the social insects have achieved their progress, at the expense of the component individuals, considered as personalities. Judged by specifically human standards, such biological progress would be a regression towards a lower, sub-human state.

In framing standards, by which to measure human progress we must take into account the values which, in the opinion of individual men and women, make life worth living. And this, in effect, has been done by all the theorists of human progress from the later seventeenth century, when the idea first began to seem plausible, down to the present day. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries biological progress was reconciled with human progress by means of a doctrine of pre-established harmony. It was assumed as practically self-evident that advances in man's control over his environment would inevitably be accompanied by corresponding advances in individual happiness, in personal and social morality, and in the quantity and quality of creative activity in the spheres of art and science. Those of us who are old enough to have been brought up in the Victorian tradition can recall (with a mixture of amusement and melancholy) the basic and unquestioned assumption of that consoling *weltanschauung*. Comte and Spencer and Buckle expressed the matter in respectably abstract language; but the gist of their creed was simply this: that people who wore top hats and travelled in railway trains were incapable of doing the sort of things that the Turks were doing to the Armenians, or that our European ancestors had done to one another, in the bad old days before steam engines. Today, after two world wars and three major revolutions, we know that there is no necessary correlation between advanced technology and advanced morality. Many

primitives, whose control over their environment is rudimentary, contrive none the less to be happy, virtuous and, within limits, creative. Conversely, the members of civilised societies, possessed of the technological resources to exercise considerable control over their environment, are often conspicuously unhappy, maladjusted and uncreative; and though private morals are tolerably good, collective behaviour is savage to the point of fiendishness. In the field of international relations the most conspicuous difference between the men of the twentieth century and the ancient Assyrians is that the former have more efficient methods of committing atrocities and are able to destroy, tyrannise and enslave on a larger scale.

The truth is that all an increase in man's ability to control his environment can do for him is merely to modify the situation in which, by other than technological means, individuals and groups attempt to make specifically human progress in creativeness, morality and happiness. Thus the city-dwelling factory worker may belong to biologically speaking, more progressive group than does the peasant; but it does not follow that he will find it any easier to be happy, good and creative. The peasant is confronted by one set of obstacles and handicaps; the industrial worker, by another set. Technological progress does not abolish obstacles; it merely changes their nature. And this is true even in cases where technological progress directly affects the lives and persons of individuals. For example, sanitation has greatly reduced the incidence of contagious diseases, has lowered child mortality and lengthened the average expectation of life. At first sight this piece of technological progress would seem to be at the same time a piece of human progress. But when we look at the matter more closely, we discover that, even here, all that has happened is that the conditions for achieving human progress have been changed. Sympto-

matic of this change is the recent rise of geriatrics as an important branch of medicine, is the granting of pensions to the aged, is the shift of the balance of population, in countries with a low birth-rate, towards the higher age groups. Thanks to sanitation, the aged are in process of becoming a socially important minority, and for this important minority the problems of human progress in happiness, goodness and creativeness are peculiarly difficult. Even in the medical field, technological progress is never the same as human progress. For though we can say without qualification that it would be a good thing if, let us say, malaria could be abolished, yet the mere fact of improving the health of the victims of this disease would not in itself do more than change the conditions in which human progress is attempted. The healthy are not *necessarily* creative, good or even happy; they merely have a better chance of being so than do the sick.

Advancing technology increases man's control over his environments, and the increasing control is hereditary in the sense that its methods are handed on by tradition from generation to generation. But, as we have seen, this equivalent of biological progress does not by itself constitute specifically human progress. Within the constantly changing situation created by advancing technology, men must try to achieve specifically human progress by means which are not of a technological nature—namely politics and education. Politics is concerned with the organisation of juridical and economical relationships within a given society, and between that society and other societies. Education, in so far as it is not merely vocational, aims at reconciling the individual with himself, with his fellows, with society as a whole, with the Nature of which he and his society are but a part, and with the immanent and transcendent Spirit within which Nature has its being.

The difference between a good economico-political arrangement and a bad one is simply this: that the good arrangement reduces the number of dangerous temptations to which the individuals and groups concerned are exposed, while the bad arrangement multiplies such temptations. Thus a dictatorship, however benevolent its intentions, is always bad, because it tempts a minority to indulge in the lust for power, while compelling the majority to act as the irresponsible and servile recipients of orders from above. If we wish to evaluate any existing or still ideal institution, whether political, economic, or ecclesiastical, we must begin by asking the same simple questions: what temptations does it, or is it likely to, create, and from what temptations does it, or is it likely to deliver us? If it strongly and insistently tempts the individuals and groups concerned to indulge such notoriously deadly passions as pride, covetousness, cruelty and the lust for power, if it forces hypocrisy and servility and unreasoning obedience upon the whole sections of the population, then, on the face of it, the institution in question is undesirable. If, on the contrary, it offers little scope for the abuse of power, if it puts no premium on avarice, if its arrangements are such that cruelty and pride of place are not easily to be indulged, if it invites, not unreasoning obedience but intelligent and responsible cooperation, then, on the face of it, the verdict should be favourable.

Hitherto most political and economic revolutions have failed to achieve the good results anticipated. They have swept away institutions, which had become intolerable because they invited individuals and groups to succumb to dangerous temptations. But the new revolutionary institutions have led other individuals and groups into temptations which were either identical with the old, or, if not identical, no less dangerous. For example, power is as certain to be

abused, whether it is exercised by rich men in virtue of their wealth, or politicians and administrators in virtue of their position in a Governmental or ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Large-scale political changes are made primarily in the interest of an individual, party or class; but a more or less sincere desire to achieve specifically human progress often enters in a secondary motive. How far can such changes produce what is hoped of them? To what extent can a continuing advance in happiness, goodness, and creativeness be achieved by act of parliament? Of creativeness on the higher levels it would be unwise to speak. Why large numbers of men of genius should appear at one period, and why other periods should be without them is a profound mystery. It is different, however with creativity on its lower levels, creativity as expressed in the arts and crafts of common life. It is obvious that in a society where all the necessary household goods are produced by machines in highly organised factories, the arts and crafts will not flourish. The conveniences of mass production have to be paid for by a diminution in creativeness on the lower, popular levels.

Goodness and happiness are notoriously hard to measure. All that can be said is that, given certain political and economic arrangements, certain temptations to evil and certain reasons for misery may be eliminated. Thus, an efficient police can diminish the temptations to crimes of violence, and equitable arrangements for the distribution of food can diminish the miseries attendant on hunger. Again, a paternal government can, by suitable legislation, diminish the miseries connected with periodical unemployment. Unfortunately economic security in an industrialised society has been achieved, up till now, at the expense of personal liberty. The miseries of anxiety have had to be paid for by the miseries of a dependence, which in some countries

have degenerated into servitude. This is a world in which nobody ever gets anything for nothing. Advantages in one field have to be paid for by the disadvantages in another field. Destiny only sells; it never gives. All we can do is to drive the best possible bargain. And if we choose to use our intelligence and good will, instead of our low cunning and our lust for power, we can make political arrangements that shall eliminate many dangerous temptations to evil and many causes of misery without, in the process, creating new troubles no less tolerable than those we have escaped.

Meanwhile we must remember that the removal, by political methods, of certain dangerous temptations and certain reasons for misery will not of itself guarantee a general advance in goodness and happiness. Even under the existing political and economic dispensations there is a minority of persons whose lives are prosperous, secure and untroubled. And yet of these fortunate few how many are profoundly unhappy and how many are actively or passively evil. Within wide limits goodness and happiness are almost independent of external circumstances. True, a starving child can not be happy; and a child brought up among criminals is unlikely to be good. But these are extreme cases. The great masses of the population live in a middle region, lying between the extremes of sanctity and depravity, wealth and destitution. Provided that they remain within this middle region of experience, individuals can undergo considerable changes of fortune without undergoing corresponding changes in the direction of vice and virtue, misery or happiness. Private life is very largely independent of public life and even, in some measure, of private circumstances. Certain classes of happiness and even certain kind of goodness are the fruits of temperament and constitution. There are men and women, of whom it can be said, as it was said, for example, of

St. Bonaventura, that they are "born without original sin". There are children who are congenitally unselfish, like that *Pippo buono* who was to grow up into St. Philip Neri. And to match these inborn and gratuitous virtues, there is such a thing as an unearned joy, an almost causeless beatitude.

Four ducks on a pond,
A grass-bank beyond,
A blue sky in spring,
White clouds on the wing;
What a little thing
To remember with tears —
To remember for years.

Such is the stuff of which a good part of our happiness is composed; and such stuff is the same at all periods, is available in every conjunction of public or private circumstances. Happiness from this kind of source can not be increased or diminished by act of parliament, or even by our own acts and the acts of those with whom we come in contact. It depends on our own innate ability to react to certain unchanging elements in the order of Nature.

The ability so to react depends to a certain extent upon age so well as on the constitution of the individual. An adolescent newly discovering the world is happy with a kind of tremulous intensity never to be recaptured during the years of maturity. And this leads us to a very important point, which is that the life of a man is not in its nature progressive, but raises to a peak, continues for a while on a plateau of maturity, then declines through old age into decrepitude and death. The literatures of the world abound in lamentations over life's inevitable regression from youthful happiness. To an old man who has outlived his contemporaries and is declining into second childhood it is absurd to talk of the march either of biological or human progress. In his own person he can experience

only the opposite of an advance either towards greater control over the environments or towards greater happiness, goodness, and creativeness. And at any given period, however progressive that period may seem to future historians, a third or thereabouts of all the individuals then living will be experiencing the biological and human progress associated with advancing years. Old age under Pericles or Lorenzo the Magnificent was just as sad, just as anti-progressive as old age under Abdul-Hamid or Chilperic. True, the old are in a position to maintain progress, if only because in later life many vices lose their attractiveness; but it is difficult for them to maintain progress in happiness and creativeness. If such specifically human progress is ever maintained it is through a succession of young and mature individuals, whose own lives are still in a progressive phase.

Historians, when they describe a certain age as progressive, never trouble to tell us who precisely it is that experience [the progress in question, nor how it is experienced. For example, all modern historians agree that the thirteenth century was a progressive period. And yet the moralists who actually lived during the thirteenth century were unanimous in bemoaning the decadence of their times. And when we read such a document as the *Chronicle of Salimbene*, we find ourselves wondering to what extent conclusions drawn from the sanctity of St. Francis, the architecture of the Gothic cathedrals, the philosophy of St. Thomas and the poetry of Dante are relevant to the brutish and totally unregenerate lives of the great masses of the people. If the age was indeed progressive, who experienced the progress? And if most of the people living at the time failed to experience anything in the nature of biological or human progress, is it justifiable to speak of the age as progressive? Or is an age genuinely progressive simply

because future historians, using standards of their own devising, judge it to be so?

In the long history of evolutionary change, biological progress has been confined to the upper levels of the vegetable and animal population. Analogously it may be that specifically human progress is a privilege of the exceptionally fortunate and the exceptionally gifted. Thus, while the Elizabethan drama was progressing from Kyd to Shakespeare, great numbers of dispossessed peasants were suffering from extreme malnutrition, and incidence of rickets and scurvy was steadily on the increase. In other words, there was human progress for a few in certain fields, but in other fields and among the destitute many, there was biological and human regress. And yet to-day we rank the Elizabethan age as an age of progress.

The experience of technological and even human progress is seldom continuous and enduring. Human beings have an enormous capacity for taking things for granted. In a few months, even in a few days, the newly invented gadget, the new political or economic privileges, come to be regarded as parts of the existing order of things. When reached, every longed-for ceiling becomes a common floor. We do not spend our time comparing present happiness with past misery; rather we accept it as our right and become bitterly resentful if we are even temporarily deprived of it. Our minds being what they are, we do not experience progress continuously, but only in fits and starts, during the first phase of any new advance.

From politics as a means to human progress we now pass to education. The subject is almost boundless; but, fortunately, in this particular context only one aspect of it is relevant. For, in so far as they are not dependent upon temperament or fortunate accident, happiness, goodness and creativeness are the products of the individual's

philosophy of life. As we believe, so we are. And what we believe depends on what we have been taught by our parents and schoolmasters, by the books and newspapers we read, by the traditions, clearly formulated or unspoken, of the economic, political and ecclesiastical organisations to which we belong. If there is to be genuine human progress, happiness, goodness, and creativeness must be maintained by the individuals of successive generations throughout the whole span of lives that are by nature non progressive and in the teeth of circumstances that must often be unfavourable. Of the basic philosophies of life which can be imposed upon an individual, or which he can choose to make his own, some are favourable to the maintenance of happiness, goodness, and creativeness, others are manifestly inadequate.

Hedonism, for example, is an inadequate philosophy. Our nature and the world are such that, if we make happiness our goal, we shall not achieve happiness. The philosophy implicit in modern advertising (the source from which millions now derive their *Weltanschauung*) is a special form of hedonism. Happiness, the advertisers teach us, is to be pursued as an end in itself; and there is no happiness except that which comes to us from without, as the result of acquiring one of the products of advancing technology. Thus hedonism is linked with the nineteenth-century faith that technological progress is necessarily correlated with human progress. If rayon stockings make you happy, how much happier you must be with Nylons, which are the product of a more advanced technology! Unfortunately the human mind does not happen to work this way. Consequently those who consciously or unconsciously accept the philosophy expounded by the advertisers find it hard to maintain even happiness let alone goodness or creativeness.

More adequate are those political philosophies, which for millions of our contempora-

ries have taken the place of the traditional religions. In these political philosophies intense nationalism is combined with a theory of the state and a system of economics. Those who accept these philosophies, either of their own free will or because they have from infancy been subjected to unremitting propaganda, are inspired in many cases to a life of devotion to the national and ideological cause. They thus achieve and maintain a kind of happiness and kind of goodness. Unfortunately a high personal morality is often associated with the most atrocious public wickedness; for the Nation and the Party are deities in whose service the worshipper is justified in doing anything, however abominable that seems to advance the sacred cause. And even the happiness that comes from the service of a cause greater than oneself is apt in these cases to be somewhat precarious. For where bad means are used to achieve a worthy end, the goal actually reached is never the good end originally proposed, but merely the inevitable consequence of using bad means. For this reason the happiness that comes from self-dedication to such political causes must always be tempered by the disappointment arising from the chronic failure to realise the longed-for ideal.

In devotional religions, such as certain forms of Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, the cause to which the worshipper dedicated himself is supernatural and the

full realisation of his ideal is not 'in this world'. Consequently their adherents have a better chance of maintaining happiness and, except where rival sects are struggling for power, are less strongly tempted to public immorality than are the devotees of the political religions.

Stoicism antedated the Stoics and has survived them. It is the name we give to men's attempt to achieve independence of, and control over, environment by psychological means, rather than by mutation and selection or, on the human level, by an ever more efficient technology. Because it depends mainly on the surface will and because, however powerful and well trained, the surface will is not a match for circumstances, the mere stoic has never wholly realised his ideal of happiness in independence and goodness in voluntary detachment.

The aims of stoicism are fully achieved, not by stoics, but by those who, by contemplation or devotion, lay themselves open to 'grace', to the 'Logos', to 'Tao', to the 'Atman-Brahman', to the 'Inner Light'. Specifically human progress in happiness goodness and creativity and the psychological equivalent of biological progress in independence and control are best achieved by the pursuit of man's Final End. It is by aiming at the realisation of the eternal that we are able to make the best and the best is a continuing progress—of our life in time.

Reproduced from 'Vedanta and the West' January-February 1947.

PERFECTION : INTENSIVE AND EXTENSIVE

(Contributed)

The conception of perfection treasured up by one nation dictates the course of its history and determines the pattern of its civilization. We know how the German ideal of perfection as the Superman wrecked not only one nation but set the clock back by many years for the world. That is a perfection forbiddingly intensive and individualistic. Equilibrium, harmony, these were not the keynote of the German perfection. Concentration of energies, vehemence, intensity, these were its targets.

'It is the concentration of all energies of life on some ethically fruitful moments which the Germanic man treasures, not comfort; hence his abrupt hurrying from one climax to another (*Gipfeltechnik*), disregarding the valleys which he finds unappealing and uninteresting, and the absence of epic and calming intermediate links. The sole theme of life is the counter-motion of heroic will and those fateful obstacles of an inner and outer kind, the struggle of both, which calls forth the greatest exertion and tension, and presses toward vehement release.'¹

Quite different from this conception of perfection was that of Plato. Harmony was the keyword of Plato's perfection. In individual life it worked up for harmony and equilibrium of the parts to the whole, and on the social side it aimed at the reflected form of absolute harmony of an all-inclusive and consistently harmonious state. Herta Pauly in the *Review of Religion* delineates these two conceptions of perfection current in the West and synthesises them in the Christian idea. It will be seen that even the Christian idea falls short of the requirements of an ideal all-inclusive perfection effective both on individual and social planes. Such a conception we get in the Hindu idea of perfection.

¹ German source.

Herta Pauly in part writes:

'The ideal of an intensive rather than extensive perfection is, however, not uniquely Germanic. It is also found, for example' in the Arthurian legends. Nor can it be considered typical only of that period. The idea of a centralised rather than extensive and all-inclusive perfection seems to a high degree characteristic of our whole Atlantic-Western culture. This is especially evident as applied to the evaluation of personality.

Although the three classical periods, the Early Renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in some but not all aspects, the High (Italian) Renaissance, and the classical age of the eighteenth century—favoured the well-rounded personality, the dominant ideal of the Western culture has not been that of all-round perfection. The Greek ideal of *to agathon*, the well-proportioned good, has on the whole, not been that of western humanity, even though the advantages of the balanced and extensively developed personality have always been acknowledged and educationists to this day have tried to cultivate it.

The ideal personality of the pre-Christian Middle Ages in Europe, to judge from the literature they produced, was the hero, that is the person who excels in one or several respects. The High Renaissance, while resuming the Greek aspiration to totality, also preferred the outstanding personality of special excellence. The emphasis was on excellence, not on harmony.

The Romanticists, while heirs to the classical period of the eighteenth century, paid homage to the 'genius', the person of unique talent. Here again, the life ideal is excellence and infinite expansion, not completion and equilibrium.

It must be acknowledged, however, that every age which has valued this type of personality has also recognised its dangers

socially and aesthetically, and modified this ideal by its own criticism. So, the knight inclined toward extravagance, ruthlessness and self-glorification, had to become more disciplined. His craving for *aventure* had to be submitted to a higher objective, lest his life lapse into a meaningless, merely episodic form of existence. The criticism was voiced in terms both Greek and Christian, with the consequence that the perfect knight finally had to satisfy simultaneously the traditional pagan ideal of heroic action, the Greek ideal of moderation and prudence and the Christian ideal of humility. He had to be humbly and wisely active.

Platonism and Christianity, like Augustine's two cities are often hard to tell apart and yet impossible to identify. One fundamental difference, however is that the latter does not share Plato's unconditional dualism of the eternal, and the actual world by the achievement of perfection is ruled out *a priori*. Thus, although Platonism and Christianity converge in a pessimism regarding the possibility of perfection in this world, there is always a question whether its denial from the Christian side represents an 'empirical' fact only, or whether it claims to express a law of existence. Even the vision of the kingdom—sympathetic as it is to the Platonic 'other world'—is never completely and unhesitatingly projected into the beyond, but is in part understood as a potential reality, and an imperative of this world. St. Paul observed, 'If in this life only we have hope for Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (1. Cor. 15.19) How much worth is the word 'only'? St. Augustine in his symbolism of the *civitas dei* and the *civitas terrena* expressed the view that the latter can at best achieve a compromised and incomplete peace. But Augustine also expresses the departure of the biblical view from Platonism, affirming 'that the two worlds do meet in temporal existence especially through divine grace or the order of *caritas*. Hence, while, on the one hand the absolute good becomes spoiled in the temporal world of relative goods and evil, on the other hand, the materials of this world may be changed

transfigured through the creative and redemptive intervention of the divine spirit.

It must be acknowledged now that at this period we can no longer isolate the extensive ideal of perfection as being Platonic in as much as Christianity, in its compromising and unlimited ethical demands, also strives for a consistent, all-inclusive perfection: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect.' (Mat. 5. 58) On the other hand, the New Testament does not, throughout dwell on the extensive perfection of man but insists on the essential perfection of faith, love and a 'better hope by the which we draw nigh unto God,' (Heb. 7. 19)—charity, which is the bond of perfectness. (Col. 3. 14) St. Paul goes so far as to declare, 'my strength is made perfect in weakness.....I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.' Paul's praise of human weakness, both as found within and coming from without, expresses in extreme, if not paradoxical form, one outstanding aspect of the Christian faith: not particular perfection, but a complete commitment of faith is the essential Christian virtue for, as in the story of the rich young ruler particular virtues sometimes may mean no more than a camouflage of the lack of an essential commitment.

Concerning the possibility of total perfection, its Christian symbol, the Kingdom is conceived of as 'to come' or also to be completed at the end of history. (It is not important here whether 'on earth' or in heaven.) The possibility of total perfection in history is thus denied. Concerning total perfection of the individual personality, Jesus when addressed as 'Good Master' replied, 'none is good save one, that is God.' The possibility of a totally perfect personality is thus implicitly denied—even though it is demanded. (cf the Sermon on the Mount).'

It must be remembered here that the Hindu conception of history is just the opposite of the Christian. According to the Hindu idea, history is just the picture of total perfection. History is moving divinity; Maya is the spiritual power of Brahman.

The Hindu idea of total perfection is linked up with that of individual perfection. The Hindu ancients have shown by example and precept that a perfect personality is possible and the realization of the perfect personality is the realization of the individual self as the comprehensive Cosmic Self, the Atman as Brahman.

Now what is the process of achievement that obtains itself in Christianity? Herta Pauly writes:

'There are two basic types of Christian philosophy, redemption religion proper, and gradualism, or attainment religion. It would be futile to uphold either one of them as 'more' Christian than the other, since the New Testament can furnish each with sufficient evidence of authenticity. Gradualism may ignore the limits of human resources and achievement and lose sight of the need of grace in which all biblical faith recognises the ultimate source of perfection. When redemption religion becomes too strongly dualistic, it either 'denies' the world whereby it also distorts the idea of divine grace into a quasi-magical power which it expects to alley the diabolic *perpetuum mobile* of the world. Or it may, in effect, 'deny' the 'other' world and concentrate on making perfect adjustments to the fact of imperfection, as does Plato.

The conception of perfection of the Western world thus reveals a constant struggle between the two types here discussed. This tension is present in every religion or life ideal which tries to come to terms with the two principles, the absolute and the relative. Platonism arrived at two standards of perfection. Starting with the absolute, but finding it unattainable, it posits a substitute standard of extensive, but limited perfection. The *Gipfel* conception of perfection strives against diversity, that is extension trying to reduce it infinitely.

Christianity attempts to include and relate creatively both dimensions, by making the central perfection of the heart the beginning and the unreplaceable foundation of an in-

finite, never complete, process of extensive perfection.'

To see the extensive perfection as a process is to see the world as world, cut off from its underlying spiritual reality. The world seen in its real essence is not a process but the reality; it is the spiritual reality itself, it is Brahman. But Christianity views it as a process, as becoming. And this is the fundamental error in the Christian world-view. Christianity believes in an Utopia that lies far ahead in the future to attain which life in this world is only a preparation. If this world is taken only as a preparation, for some *denouement* in another world then life in this world can not be invested with its proper perspective. Life here loses all ultimate meaning and is reduced to a meaningless space between birth and death. It is indeed a great relief to transfer ourselves on to the Hindu conception. According to it the total perfection is the dazzling reality of our lives. The total perfection is the self realised Satchidananda (Existence-knowledge-Bliss) whose manifestation is the world of forms. Of course, the realization of the world as Satchidananda for the individual self is a process of progressive revelation. But this revelation is here, in this world, *chavia*. Nay, it is in this body. When the individual self *knows* himself as the indwelling spirit, and not as the body, or mind, then it realises Satchidananda. He sees no duality between himself and the world. He sees himself as residing in the world and the world as contained in himself. He experiences the intensive and extensive perfection merging themselves in his own self. This is the realization of the Jivanmukta, the one who is free in this very body. He feels the world as his own body. When the fisherman was thrashed, Sri Rama-krishna felt the blow on his own back which left its mark there. When Sri Vyasa called out for his boy Suka who was leaving hearth and home for a life of renunciation, even the trees answered his call. For the great rishi Suka had attained at-onement with all creation. Here is perfection intensive and extensive packed into one.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Religion of Effective Neighbourliness

At last the die is cast: India is to be divided.

Three years ago when negotiations regarding the division of India into Pakistan and Hindustan were going on between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah we risked a mild prediction. We said editorially that if Gandhiji were to concede to a division it was in pursuance of the Hindu wisdom of sacrificing a gangrenous limb to save the body, of sacrificing a member to save a family. Pakistan is given not without a wrench, not without agony of heart. It is done as a *yajna*, as a sacrifice for self purification for the Hindu society, done to convert and transform the Muslim heart. But is the Hindu society ready for this *yajna* of self purification? When India is divided and Pakistan becomes our neighbour, there is bound to be greater 'run on the banks' of our patience, love, tolerance and more than all, on the virtue of good neighbourliness.

The Hindus have always believed in reform and progress by the peaceful method of love charity and tolerance. The voice of history speaks in clearest tones that whenever political reform has been effected through violence, it has not only failed to achieve its purpose but has created violence and revolution. On the contrary, when charity, love and non-violence have carried through a reform, it has always led to real progress. Real progress has resulted only from progress in charity. It is this wisdom that inspired Mahatmaji to be suicidally charitable to the Muslims and concede Pakistan. 'Charity suffereth long' no doubt. And reform by consent is slower, more expensive and wasteful than reform by compulsion. How much more expensive and wasteful must it be to reform others by self-purification, austerity and love. But such has been the Hindu method. The Hindu seers saw that force, coercion and violence were woeful failures as socially cohesive

factors. These divide and never unite. So they laid down that if the Hindu society is to live, it must live by the sovereign social virtues of forbearance, good neighbourliness, tolerance and self-forgetting love. The concession to Pakistan is a call to the Hindus to practise what they preach, to show that the term Hindu stands for certain ideals of life, for a living religion.

Today in the context of Pakistan becoming our neighbour the whole of our religion seems to flow into the practice of good and efficient neighbourliness. As a matter of fact there is no religious virtue that does not glow with new brilliance at the touch of neighbourliness. All the divine qualities (*daivi sampat*) like non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion to creatures, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, forgiveness, purity, absence of hatred, all these acquire new meaning when we approach them with the idea of harnessing them for neighbourliness. These are not passive virtues, but active ones. We must understand the needs and tendencies of our neighbour to appreciate them and make the necessary sacrifices to fulfil them. We must be able to adjust ourselves to their demands, placing our neighbours' claims as primary and ours as secondary. For honest practice of the above accommodation and understanding, we will have to press into service many of the qualities enumerated above as non-injury (it is injury not to yield to the legitimate claims of another) absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, uncovetousness and the like.

Side by side with the practice of these spiritual (Brahminic) virtues, equal, if not greater emphasis, must be laid on the practice of Kshatriya (martial) qualities as bravery, boldness, fortitude, promptness, not flying from battle, generosity and lordliness. The greatest disservice one can do to his neighbour is to be oneself weak. Our weakness excites the cupidity of our neighbour

who is left restless with thoughts of conquest and robbery. If we are a strong nation, with all the virtues of a Kshatriya listed above, not only do we banish from our neighbour's mind thoughts of greed and rapacity, but we inspire courage and strength in him also. Today the Hindus as a nation have gone down in the Kshatravirya, in their sterling, manly qualities. We have often shown that we cannot stick to our post in the field of battle. This has encouraged our rapacious neighbours to pounce on us time and again. So then acquiring strength is a double service, to ourselves and to our neighbours.

Today the Hindus are called upon to practise effective neighbourliness to Muslims. And if they want to acquit themselves creditably they will have to keep before them the spiritual virtues and more the Kshatriya virtues.

Linguistic Provinces

Presiding over the inaugural meeting of the All-India League of Linguistic Provinces at Madras on 12th May, Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee made a strong plea for the linguistic division of Madras presidency into four units, so that the language, literature and culture for which each unit stands may be developed to its fullest extent unhampered by any kind of compromise connected with a common administration. Dr. Mukherjee pointed out that India's culture is a synthetic complex built of diverse elements. These elements are chiefly represented by the different languages of India. The regional languages which have developed as the vehicles of particular types of ideas revealing the manners and customs, the thoughts and ways of racial and cultural groups, have richly contributed towards the synthetic diversity that is Indian culture. A national government, Dr. Mukherjee averred must foster this diversity of India's culture. And to that end it should foster the linguistic diversity.

He said: 'Linguistic diversity is, therefore, to be maintained and fostered on principle by a national Government which must stand for the diversity of national culture. The Madras Government is charged with the responsibility of promoting four principal languages and the cultures they represent. Tamil ranks next to Sanskrit in the value of its thought and contents, its originality, diversity, and antiquity traced to the early centuries of the Christian era. Kannada is almost equally old; Telugu goes back to about 1000 A.D., while Malayalam is a young sister of Tamil. All these four Dravidian languages derive their words of higher thought from Sanskrit which links them with the Northern Aryan languages except Urdu. There is, therefore, a case for a linguistic division of the Madras Presidency into four units, so that the language, literature and culture for which each unit stands may be developed to its fullest extent unhampered by any kind of compromise connected with a common administration. What is needed for the purpose is what may be called the cultural autonomy of each linguistic unit to enable it to make its complete contribution not merely to South Indian culture, but also to the culture of India as a whole.'

But—and it is a big But—from the economic point of view will it be advisable to divide the province purely on the linguistic basis? It is evident that linguistic areas cannot be economically independent and self-contained. Dr. Mukherjee is alive to this difficulty, but consoles us saying that it may still be possible to assure to these linguistic provinces their separate cultural evolution by suitable administrative arrangements. We are afraid Dr. Mukherjee is banking too much upon the application of the federal principle. He says that the application of the federal principle to the Provincial Government which may be constituted as a sort of a Federation distributing among its different cultural regions fairly and equitably its financial resources and administrative attention will obviate the limiting condition

imposed upon by the economic factor. But then this remedy can be applied before the amputation is done. If federalism can see to the fair and equitable distribution of financial resources to different linguistic units after division, why not it be done before division. It is the mutual suspicion and fear between units that the legitimate funds and attention are not going to them, that is now pressing for a division. Let the application of the federal principle see to the proper distribution of money and administrative attention to linguistic areas and restore the lost mutual confidence and let the division be averted. We are getting awfully sick of divisions. We have had enough of it. Now this fell tendency must be stopped.

New Targets for Education

The South-East Asia Regional Conference of the International Students Service which held its sessions at Madras in the middle of June turns a new page in the history of Asia's educational co-operation and co-ordinated aspirations. Almost all countries of South-East Asia, Burma, Siam, Indonesia, Vietnam and Ceylon had sent in their delegates. There were visitors to the Conference from France, Holland and Czechoslovakia. Dr. Zakir Hussain, the genius behind the Basic Education presided over the sessions. The Conference adopted the reports of the commission on 'cultural programme' and Relief to war-affected areas. The report of the commission for Relief to war-affected areas suggests very necessary and fruitful lines of educational reform and show that they mean business.

Dealing with India, the report of the commission pleaded for the establishment of residential universities, and for increasing hostel accommodation in the existing universities. The Commission expressed the view that the location of universities in big cities, where the cost of living was high, had prevented a large number of middle class people from taking advantage of University education. The need for more colleges for woman,

specially for Muslim woman, was stressed. A suggestion was made that a programme of rural education to be undertaken by University students should be chalked out. Scholarships to the needy and aid to disabled students were also urged.

But perhaps the highlights of the conference were the very thought-provoking speeches delivered by Dr. Zakir Hussain. The one he gave at the opening session gave new targets for education in Asia.

He observed: "Your pre-occupation with politics and economics during these your students' days will be justified mainly by your concern for right education. It has been so ever since Plato. As those undergoing education in its higher stages and those destined to be the intellectual and educational leaders of your people, you can never be too vigilant about the way education is organised in your country. Good political organisation and a sound economic system are necessary to make good education possible and good education is essential to the maintenance of good political and economic institutions and to ensure their steady and healthy growth. You should, therefore, be desperately in earnest about how education is shaping in your country".

Pointing out that every democratic society should organise its educational work in accordance with the demands of the axiom of adequacy or correspondence between the objective and subjective mind, Dr. Zakir Hussain said that it would be obvious to them that they would have to transform their schools from "places of theoretical intellectual one-sidedness into those of practical human many-sidedness, from centres of mere acquisition of knowledge to those of its right use, from places of passive receptivity into those of creative activity, from places of individual self-seeking to places of devotion to social end. The key-note of University work should be social responsibility—but social responsibility freely undertaken and

not under duress. Your influence in the shaping of educational endeavour in your country should be exerted on the side of essentially democratic principles. From individuality through character to personality in the service of great ends, doubting in humanity and believing in humility, a full harmonious individual development and a dedicated life—that, as I see it, is your road."

Concluding, Dr. Zakir Hussain said: "On this road we will have many fellow-travellers some weary and worn, some who have lost their bearing owing to the ravages of war. You will help to re-establish their intellectual centres and dispel the darkness and the fears around them. Co-operation in constructive activity, in service of the highest human

values, will be the strength and inspiration of the cultural relationships you will form and out of this will grow those deep sympathies which are far stronger links than the transient accord of material interest. Your research will be an endeavour to discover the hidden harmonies between the past and the present. It will be a sum total of diverse, ill-assorted pieces of work, but an organic composition evolved by living minds. All your plans must have a broad firm base. You will be artisans who work not for the day or for their time but for a limitless future. May you have the courage that never fails, the patience that grows stronger the more it is tried, the vision that sees and captures the vision glorious to be".

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDUISM AND MODERN SCIENCE: BY DR. M. A. KAMATH, M. B., C. M., FOREWORD BY DR. C. KUNHAN RAJA; PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR AT MANGALORE. PAGES XLIX + 216, PRICE RS.4/8.

If the Hindu hearts are drooping today for want of strength and courage to face aggressive attacks from outside or to solve their pressing problems, it is because they have not cared to get at the 'map of life' bequeathed to us by our ancestors. Our ancestors had a good grasp of the fundamentals of life and had shown how to make life intelligent, effective and powerful both in the individual and national spheres. It is refreshing to find Dr. Kamath of the Madras Medical Service, bringing to brilliance the Hindu map of life in all its variegated colours aided by the knowledge and insight afforded by modern science and research.

The author rightly holds that the Vedas are meant for mankind in general and not exclusively for the Hindus. Thus all the human beings are free to derive benefit from the truths revealed in them. The art of healthy living, we are told, is the religion of the Hindus and the laws of hygiene and sanitation form two essentials or limbs of the religion. "It is these latter that have been incorporated in the Smritis of the ancient law-givers like Manu, Yagnavalkya and Parasara, but in the name of religion" (p-13). None need quarrel with this view of the Vedas and Smritis held by a medical

man. Sanitation and hygiene are no doubt limbs of religion but only two of the many that support the body proper. The 'Laws of Nature' which according to the doctor, are revealed by the Vedas relate not so much to the material as to the mental moral and spiritual planes of life. If there is any partiality in the *Śruti*s and *Smṛiti*s it is to the supreme science of sciences, to the *Ātma-Vidyā* in whose light every other science was made to march. Even the discoveries of modern science, as the author shows, only follow, though haltingly in the wake of the discoveries made by the ancient *Rishi*s ages ago, in the forest universities of India.

Dr. Kamath is not unaware of the dominance of the spiritual ideal in Hindu culture and civilization. He is only anxious to show how even in the practical details of daily life and material progress the ancient Hindus anticipated in a remarkable way the latest conclusions of modern science in the fields of medicine, hygiene, sanitation, physiology, biology, eugenics, physics, chemistry, mathematics and astronomy.

The author begins by pointing out that India was the mother of civilization and culture in the East and that the roots of Western civilization too are to be traced to the flood of ideas that flowed from ancient India to Greece, the cradle of culture in the West. He then proceeds to describe at some length the daily practices of the Hindus, as laid down by Manu and other law-givers and examine their soundness in the light of modern theories of social hygiene and sanitation. The

same mode of treatment is followed in the description of the Hindu's dietary, the Hindu ideal of marriage, the Varnasrama system and the Hindu idea of cosmos. In the last section the author shows how Patanjali with his theory of Jatyantaraparinama was the real father of the idea of evolution and the latest theories of modern physics about matter being but a form of energy.

Regarding the institution of caste the author upholds the view that it has served wonderfully to preserve the life and ideals of the Hindus in the past and that the evils that have crept into it today do not justify total abolition of the system, but only require for their removal a return to the ideal from which the Hindus have swerved, and a process of purification directed to restore the original spirit of mutual regard, brotherliness and co-operation.

The plan adopted by the author is very comprehensive and no subject of any importance bearing on the vast theme of Hinduism fails to find a mention in the volume. Towards the end the rationale of Suryanamaskar and sun-worship is explained in the light of the discoveries of modern medical science. The sections on worship and prayer, japa, tirtha-yatra, fasting, fear and worry, faith and hope, thought as a force and Auto-suggestion contain useful information that is not ordinarily available to those outside the medical line. Prof. Kunhan Raja's foreword is a brief but forceful plea on behalf of ancient Indian civilization and the practical importance of making a proper study of its main features in the present day. The book—it deserves a better get-up—is on the whole, a valuable aid to the understanding of the ancient Hindu way of life and thought.

M.R.R.

POEMS: SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. ADVAITA ASHRAMA MAYAVATI, ALMORA, HIMALAYAS. PRICE RS. 1-6-0 PAGES 67.

'His brain was teeming with thoughts, he said one day, and his fingers would not rest till they were written down. It was that same evening that we came back to our houseboat from some expedition, and found waiting for us, where he had called and left them, his manuscript lines on 'Kali the Mother'. Writing in a fever of inspiration, he had fallen on the floor when he had finished—as we learnt afterwards—exhausted with his own intensity'. Here is a picture from Sister Nivedita of the intensity of feeling Swami Vivekananda poured into every poem of his. He lived every letter of what he wrote and that too intensely.

Poet, the Swami was; but he was a saint among poets. He was at his best when he wrote on themes relating to spiritual life. The song of the Sannyasin, the Song of the free, Kali the Mother, Hymn to the Divinity of Sri Ramakrishna are perhaps his most inspiring.

The Advaita Ashrama have done a real service by bringing together these poems scattered over many pages in such a handy volume.

THE POWERS OF THE MIND; THOUGHTS ON THE GITA; WORK AND ITS SECRET: BY SWAMY VIVEKANANDA. ADVAITA ASHRAMA, MAYAVATI. PRICE AS 7, AS, 5, AND AS. 6. RESPECTIVELY.

These are small pamphlets reprinted from the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. They serve a special purpose as appetisers for the study of the larger volumes.

We cannot but admire the wisdom behind this plan of bringing out the Swami's works in pamphlet form. The modern is busy and has no patience for big tomes. He is a lot nervous about them. But he is quite at home with small bits of wisdom. Why should I care how many cups of wine are in the jar, I have my cup that intoxicates me. This is his philosophy.

The publishers must be congratulated for the tasteful selection and display of colours on the covers of these pamphlets.

INDIAN STATES IN FREE INDIA: BY KEVALRAM C. OZA. VORA & Co., PUBLISHERS LTD 3, ROUND BUILDINGS, KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY 2. PAGES, 78 PRICE RS. 2/-

In this brief but illuminating sketch the author, who is a retired Deputy Political Agent, draws attention to the many intricate questions connected with the vital problem of Indian states in a free India. In spite of the repeated declarations of interested politicians and propagandists to the contrary, India is essentially one from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. The differences in administrative regimes in the several parts, whether under Indian or foreign domination, do not affect this basic unity. This fact has asserted itself in shaping our past history and is bound to

make itself felt in the future as well. When freedom comes it cannot be confined to any particular province or provinces, but must flood the whole land, even as when slavery crept in one corner in the past, it insidiously spread its blighting shadow over the whole country.

Kevalram Oza is happily a firm believer in this organic unity of India. Hence he deals with questions like paramountcy, sovereignty and autonomy in a broad spirit conducive to the presentation of this unity. He envisages the future of the states as an integral part of the Indian vision that is to come and suggests several lines along which mutual realignments have to be made in the plane of politics, culture, economics and education to ensure central cooperation and safety. He pleads for the early introduction of responsible governments in the States so as to catch up with the rest of India in democratic advance. Popular freedom under the aegis of the Princes he thinks will only help to strengthen both the Rulers and the people by remedying the evils now corroding their administration. There is no inherent contradiction between the power and welfare of the people on the one hand and the potentiality of the Princes on the other for popular leadership. The alternative to cooperation between the people and the Princes, warns the author, is common doom. He finds in the Princely order a valuable asset to safeguard the safety of the nation against external and internal enemies. They also constitute, by birth and training a *Corps Diplomatique* that will find ample scope for expression of their outstanding personal attainments in international councils and ambassadorial capacities in foreign lands. In a separate chapter the author deals with the all-important question of the Paramountcy of the Indian Union over States in the future order. He conceives paramountcy more as a beneficent principle of public policy and a bulwark of the Princely order than as a regulative mechanism acting on the simple corrective principle. It behoves us all to view it as a positive factor in national solidarity and an upholder of the international position of India" (P. 42). Paramountcy constitutes a central trust of the nation's affairs, consisting of all the residual powers of the provincial and state limits that compose the Indian Union and the author thinks that in availing themselves of this trust the component units only stand to gain by ensuring their own and mutual interests. The several proposals for amalgamation, attachment and grouping of States confederally and federally as well as their fusion with the provinces are considered in the chapter on political and cultural realignments. The economic issues are discussed in another chapter with the full realisation of their reaction on the political side.

Relevant extracts from the Cabinet Delegations statements and other state papers bearing on the questions dealt with are given in three appendices.

Many printing mistakes mar an otherwise well got up volume. M. R. R.

IQBAL, THE POET AND HIS MESSAGE: BY DR. SACHCHIDANANDA SINHA, D. LITT, BAR - AT - LAW; RAM NARAIN LAL, PUBLISHER & BOOKSELLER, ALLAHABAD. PRICE RS. 8/-

Sir Muhammad Iqbal is one of the considerable figures in the realm of Indian literature. Nine years after his death, it is time to present a critical appraisal of his works and of his message. Dr. Sachchidananda, has done this labour of love for the benefit of all lovers of Urdu literature, in general, and Iqbal, in particular. I have used "Urdu literature" significantly in the present context. I know, and every real lover of Iqbal knows, that his work was not confined to Urdu literature alone. He excelled remarkably in Persian poetry, and yet, I have used "Urdu literature" because in India, leaving aside a handful of Persian scholars, Iqbal is known to have done poetical wonders in Urdu. Little wonder Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha thinks, and thinks rightly, that Iqbal must have evidenced his real genius if he had confined himself to Urdu Poetry.

In his introduction to Dr. Sinha's "IQBAL" Mirsa Yar Jung 'Sami Ullah Beg observes: 'Dr. Sinha thinks that Iqbal made a mistake in choosing the Persian language as the chief vehicle of his thoughts and that if he wrote more in Urdu, he would have been understood by a larger section' of his countrymen, and would have thus been more useful. There is much force in this criticism.

Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha's literary equipment and critical acumen have rightly detected a certain artificiality in the poetry and the message of the poet. Regarding Iqbal's style he observes: "Be that as it may, there can be no two opinions that the style adopted by Iqbal in by far the greater part of his poetical works in Urdu whether it is the result of patriotism, or of anything else, is highly artificial, in the sense that his vocabulary is borrowed, to an extent not approved by good sense or good usage, from the resources of the languages of Iran & Arabia, to the almost complete exclusion of words of Indian origin". Or mark his pronouncement on Iqbal's political philosophy: "Iqbal's political doctrine offers no more than another Utopia to the world more idealistic than practicable and new generations require new methods to work out their

salvation." Or read this: "It is thus clear from the statements of the interpreters of Iqbal that there was hardly any room in his system for anything unconnected with dogmatics."

As one reads these passages, one remembers the words of William Lloyd Garrison. "I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will be heard." This is just my picture of Dr. Sinha a critic of Iqbal and his Poetry. It is possible, almost inevitable, that lovers of Iqbal will disagree with Dr. Sinha's thesis. To them Dr. Sinha might appear as severe. There is a reason for this disagreement. The fashion of Iqbal is yet with us. There is a definite air of hero-worship in India. But a time will come when real lovers of Iqbal will realise the wealth of wisdom contained in this weighty book, all along documented and surcharged with learning and scholarship.

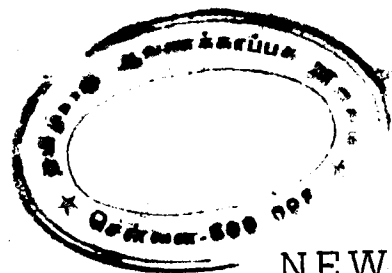
In all there are 28 chapters, dealing with Critical Appraisal, Iqbal's Career, his Greatness, Iqbal as a poet of India, His political Background, His Urdu poetry, Iqbal and the Cultural Unity of India, Iqbal and Humanism, Iqbal's Works and Non-Muslim Readers. These present a complete picture of Iqbal and his message to the discerning reader. To my mind the chapters in which Dr. Sinha analyses scientifically the problem of the cultural Unity of India are simply grand and are scintillating with that ever shining internationalism and freedom of thought that go inseparably with this great public man. Dr Sinha writes: "One intellectually so great as Iqbal, who was deeply conversant with the literatures and philosophies of the East and the West, and who was withal endowed with poetic genius, could have achieved a great position for himself in the cultural evolution of India. But evidently, owing to his mental pre-possessions, he did not share Mahatma Gandhi's view, with the inevitable result that howsoever great his position in the culture of Arabia and Iran, he has scarcely any in that of India" (352)

Dr. Sinha has suggested very intelligently that an author's roots must be firmly set in the country he lives in, and where he is blossoming into greatness. If he looks to distant lands there might be some enchantment in his presentation but there will be no substance and as such he will not be a perennial joy to posterity. According to this view, Iqbal will be studied with delight and profit only by the learned few, and not by those who are immediately or even distantly thinking in terms of India's march to freedom and greatness. One cannot, even remotely, think that Iqbal could have shared the view of Mahatma Gandhi. The Mahatma is great because he is working for the greatness of India as a whole. Vivisection is a word not found in his dictionary of politics and religion. It could not have been possible for Iqbal to say with Gandhiji that "Indian culture is neither Hindu, Islamic, or any other, wholly...and every one who calls himself an Indian is bound to treasure that culture, be its trustee, and resist any attack on it."

Admirers of Iqbal who do not think for them, selves, might point to a desire, all intense and pure on the part of Iqbal to found a new religion of harmony, a "New Temple" of faith. And so Iqbal wanted all to forget their traditions and their religions. This is too much. This is going against God, and I may add, this is turning our back upon reason. And so Dr. Sinha writes: "Has any such appeal been ever made in any age, or country, by any one poet...to a people, to make efforts for unity with other communities in a land, on these terms the forsaking of their traditional customs and religious beliefs and worship, on the grounds mentioned by the poet?" If Iqbal wanted unity he could have preached freedom of religion and toleration in all intensity. Such an appeal by Iqbal was a mere Utopia.

Altogether, the book is a splendid achievement splendid in design and in execution, and for year, to come will remain a precious treasure of literary and critical exposition of a great mind by a great mind.

B. S. MATHUR.



NEWS AND REPORTS

The birthday of Swami Ramakrishnananda, the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras, falls on Wednesday, the 16th of July.

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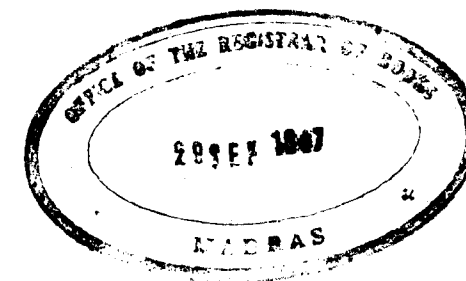
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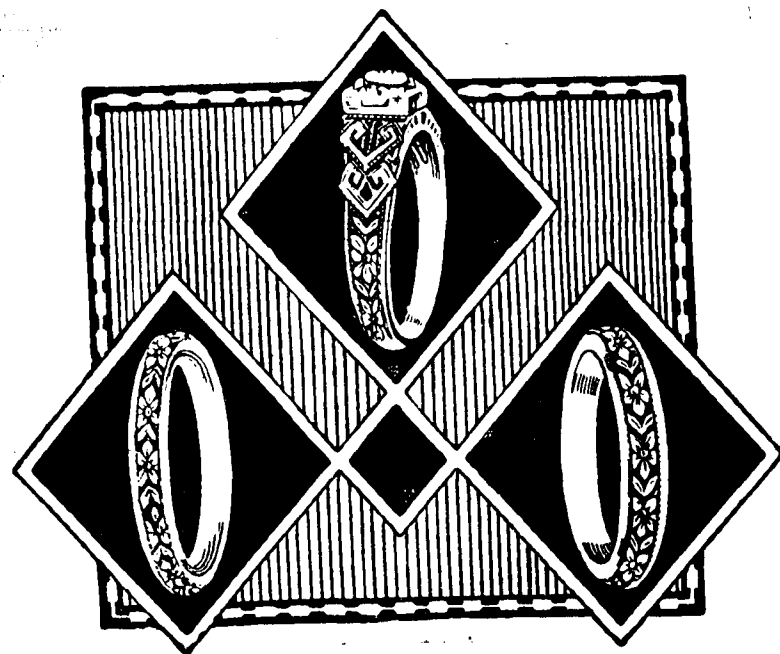
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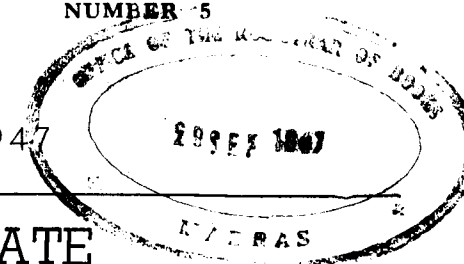
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THE IDEAL STATE

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

[The saint and patriot in Swami Vivekananda visualised the dawn of Indian independence fifty years ago and reassured us in the words, 'The longest night seems to be passing away.....the day is approaching; the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury'. The nation-builder in him had very fresh ideas of constituting an ideal State from the various elements of Indian society. He said: 'If it is possible to form a State in which the knowledge of the priest, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal State.' Is not the present cabinet of the Indian Dominion a rosy realization of Swamiji's dream?]

If it is possible to form a State in which the knowledge of the priest, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal State. But is it possible?

Yet the first three have had their day. Now is the time for the last—they must have it—none can resist it. I do not know all the difficulties about the gold or silver standards (nobody seems to know much as to that); but this much I see that the gold standard has been making the poor poorer, and the rich richer. Bryan was right when he said, "We refuse to be crucified on a cross of gold". The silver standard will give the poor a better change in this unequal fight. I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system but half a loaf is better than no bread.

The other systems have been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried—if nothing else, for the novelty of the thing.

A redistribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having pains and pleasures...Let every dog have his day in this miserable world.

All the members of a society ought to have the same opportunity for obtaining wealth, education or knowledge.. Freedom in all matters, i.e., advance towards Mukti, is the worthiest gain of man.... Those social rules which stand in the way of the unfoldment of this freedom are injurious; and steps should be taken to destroy them speedily. Those institutions should be encouraged by which men advance in the path of freedom.

Remember that the nation lives in the cottage.

The peasant, the shoemaker, the sweeper, and such other lower classes of India have much greater capacity for work and self-reliance than you. They have been silently working through long ages, and producing the entire wealth of the land, without a word

of complaint. Very soon they will get above you in position. Gradually capital is drifting into their hands and they are not so much troubled with wants as you are. Modern education has changed your fashion but new avenues of wealth lie yet undiscovered for want of the inventive genius. You have so long oppressed these forbearing masses; now is their retribution. And you will become extinct in your vain search for employment, making it the be-all and end-all of your life.

If the labourers stop work, your supply of food and clothes also stop. And you regard them as low-class people and vaunt about your own culture! Engrossed in the struggle for existence they had not the opportunity for the awakening of knowledge. They have worked so long uniformly like machines guided by human intelligence, and the clever educated section has taken the substantial part of the fruit of their labour. In every country this has been the case. But times have changed. The lower classes are generally awakening to this fact and making a united front against this, determined to exact their legitimate dues... The upper classes will no longer be able to repress the lower, try they ever so much. The well being of the higher classes now lies in helping the lower to get their legitimate rights.

When the masses will wake up, they will come to understand your oppression on them and by a puff of their mouth you will be entirely blown off. It is they who have introduced civilisation among you; and it is they who will then pull it down. Think how at the hands of the Gauls the mighty ancient Roman civilisation crumbled into dust! Therefore, I say, try to rouse these lower classes from slumber by imparting learning and culture to them. When they will awaken—and awaken one day they must—they also will not forget your good services to them and will remain grateful to you.

How my heart ached to think of what we think of the poor, the low, in India. They have no change, no escape, no way to climb up... They sink lower and lower everyday, they feel the blows showered upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow comes. They have forgotten that they too are men. And the result is slavery. Thoughtful people within the last few years have seen it, but unfortunately laid that at the door of the Hindu religion; and to them the only way of bettering is by crushing the grandest religion of the world. Hear me, my friend, I have discovered the secret through the grace of the Lord. Religion is not at fault. On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it was the want of sympathy—the want of heart. This state of things must be removed, not by destroying religion, but by following the great teachings of the Hindu faith, and joining with it the wonderful sympathy of the logical development of Hinduism, Buddhism... A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with the eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the downtrodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising up—the gospel of equality.

Your duty at present is to go from village to village and make the people understand that mere sitting about idly won't do any more. Make them understand their real condition and say, 'Oh, ye brothers, all arise, awake! How much longer would you remain asleep!'... So long the Brahmanas have monopolised religion; since they cannot hold their ground against the strong tide of time, go and take steps so that one and all in the land may get that religion. Impress upon their minds that they have the same right to religion as the Brahmanas initiate—

all, even down to the chandalas, in these fiery mantras. Also instruct them in simple words about the necessities of life, and in trade, commerce, agriculture etc. If you cannot do this, then lie upon your education, and culture, and lie upon your studying the Vedas and Vedanta.

Let the New India arise—out of peasants' cottages, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fishermen, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emerge from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves and forests, from hills and mountains. These common people have suffered oppression for thousands of years, suffered without murmur, and as a result have got wonderful fortitude. They have eternal misery, which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of oatmeal, they can convulse the world; give them only half a piece of bread

and the whole world will not be big enough to contain their energy; they are endowed with the inexhaustible vitality of a Rakta-bija. And, besides, they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such peacefulness, such contentment, such love, such power of silent and incessant work, and such manifestations of lion's strength in times of action—where else will you find these? Skeletons of the past, there, before you, are your successors, the India that is to be. Throw those treasure chests of yours and those jewelled rings among them as soon as you can; and you vanish into air and be seen no more—only keep your ears open. No sooner will you disappear, than you will hear the inaugural shout of renaissance India, Kringing with the voice of a million thunders and reverberating throughout the universe—Wah Guru ki fateh—Victory to the Guru!

THE QUALITY OF OUR FREEDOM

Freedom from political subjection is at last ours after a long and painful vigil. But freedom from poverty, from disease, from illiteracy, from gross economic inequality and alas! from social inequality—these are not yet ours. Our leaders have assured us time and again on the eve of our independence that these shall be their immediate objectives. The one lesson we have been learning these years is that without political freedom none of the other freedoms can be attained, try however much we may. And the one thing we have to bear in mind now is that if this political freedom is not used for achieving freedom, from inequalities and poverty, the former is sure to die a natural or unnatural death. If we are

not going to use this freedom (and, use it with restraint, as the Mahatma has advised us) for forging a nation, efficient and strong, we can not be sure of retaining this political freedom for long in so competitive a world as ours. One fact emerges from the foregoing: these freedoms, in their own interests must be directed towards the creation of an efficient and free nation. This means that we can be sure of our end only if we make sure of the quality of our means, the quality of our freedom. The quality of freedom like the quality of many other things decrease when it is extended. Freedom becomes license when stretched too much and license is corrosive to life. Let us not dull its quality by misuse, by lack of restraint. Even as life's

best fruits cannot be enjoyed without self discipline and control, freedom's best cannot be ours if we don't pledge ourselves to the practice of restraint.

It will be argued that restraint and self-discipline cannot be practised on a nation wide scale. To this we say that virtues are first practised by individuals before they become national virtues. If the virtues of restraint and social well-being are the targets of a few individuals in India, evils of corruption bribery and black-market which have become a national shame would have been blotted out. If the virtue of restraint and social tolerance be the target of the self constituted cultural Brahmins, the social inequality which has become an ineffaceable blot on India's fair face would have been effaced. Freedom like peace and prosperity is indivisible. We cannot have a nation where one half enjoys the blessings of freedom and civilization while the other half remains sunk in poverty, illiteracy and disease. This is the shockingly urgent lesson of the times. The new freedom that has come to India can never be the monopoly of a section. In that case it is sure to die in no time. But, if it is made the common property of the cobbler, the sweeper and the farmer, they will make such rich contributions to it that the nation will rise to its feet once again in all glory.

How can we make the masses feel that the new freedom is theirs, that it is their chief concern. Most of them do not know what has actually happened, and what is the significance of August 15th. To make them conscious of this significance they must be educated. Education continues and will continue to be the one magic cure for all the ills of India. Along with general education must be imparted the knowledge of what this change-over of power to Indian hands means to India and ultimately to the masses, of what is expected of them in a free India. The masses must be taught the history

of their country written by patriotic Indians; they must be brought up in the consciousness of Indian traditions. And now that we are free, nothing stands in the way of our national government achieving these objectives.

Side by side with education must come a reasonably equal distribution of the amenities of life and culture and the ironing out of these economic and social differences. In India unfortunately social inequalities have taken cover under religion. But no religion preaches such universality, oneness and love and tramples over the necks of people as the religion of India. This shameless vagary must be put down as mercilessly as bribery and black-market. It must be the duty of a national government to kill the pretenders to the throne and the first pretender that deserves the guillotine is the pretender to the throne of religion.

Amongst the many obstacles in the way of a society achieving an equitable distribution of happiness and sources of happiness, none has been found so insurmountable as the lack of the consciousness of social oneness. Why is it that in countries where science has brought about the maximisation of production and solved the problems of distribution, equitable distribution of life's essential goods has not yet been done? The answer is: Lack of the consciousness that all belong to one family, that all natural resources are common property; lack of the consciousness that to amass and pile up more necessities than is required for a decent life is to deprive ten others of their food, that to hoard is to cause the stagnation of the blood of human necessities that must be allowed to circulate the entire system of the social body. Those who hoard or amass forget that by so doing the stagnation they cause is sure to produce a gangrene which will kill them. Hoarding and black-market are a violence on the social body, a

sin against its health. India long ago got over this adamant wall of self-centredness and lack of social oneness when our ancients said that the different sections of a society constitute one body and if one member non-cooperates with the social economy and clogs the circulation by hoarding he creates a poison in the social body that in time kills that member. Has not India said that food is the common property of all and he who monopolises it or hoards it is never free from evil? India's social philosophy has always placed on the top the individual and the age-old quadri-type organisation is just the social machinery designed to promote and in the end achieve the highest spiritual quality in the individual.

We must guard ourselves against making the chaturvanya, the stronghold of social inequality. It was never meant by its wise authors to be so. It gave each section the consciousness and prestige of being a necessary limb of the social body. So was the Sudra, so was the Vaisya. Nay, not only necessary limb, but with the potentiality of becoming the head. Let Swami Vivekananda speak: There is a law laid down on each one of you in this land by our ancestors, whether you are Aryans, or non-Aryans, Rishis or Brahmanas, or the very lowest out-castes. The command is the same to you all, that you must progress without stopping, and that, from the highest man to the lowest Pariah, everyone in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmana..... Such is our ideal of caste, as meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realisation of the great ideal of the spiritual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure and meditative.' Here is a society designed for the progressive spiritualisation of mankind and to say that it is meant for perpetuating social inequality is both injustice to its originators and lack of understanding of its purpose.

Caste, by which we do not mean the present system, but its original form, gives us not only the model for functional organisation but enough socialistic potential to satisfy modern needs. 'From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need' is the motto of caste. In it rights and responsibilities flow from duties. In it there is social cohesion, respect for the demands of another, love for social good and the consciousness of social oneness. Societies without these foundations tried to be socialistic, but failed. Man can never become virtuous by acts of parliament. Love alone exorcises his cupidity and desire for conquest. Russia tried the socialistic society; but in Russia socialism is dead except for export.

All that we have said above regarding caste is just to show how when social and economic inequalities are rounded off, society becomes the nursery of the highest culture. So was Hindu society in its hey day. It was the ideal society with the maximum of social dynamism, taking the lowest man slowly to the top. Only when inequalities of all sorts are banished can society generate social dynamism which gives birth to leaders and great men. Nowhere was this sociological truth so beautifully illustrated as in Hindu society. If Hindu society could throw up teachers and great men from time to time it was due to the equalitarian genius inherent in Hindu society. That society is the highest where the highest ideals are practised. From such society springs teachers and prophets who give us the first breath of freedom and rejuvenate not only the country of their birth, but also the world. Witness for instance the latest phenomenon of the Hindu society throwing up a man like Mahatma Gandhi who has made India conscious of a new meaning to freedom by achieving it through means not employed by any other country in the world. 'Don't be thinking that the British will hand over freedom to

you, one fine morning. You will have to take it yourself, you will have to claim it". Thus the Mahatma used to educate us in the spiritual quality of our freedom. The freedom which is the gift of another cannot stay, nor can it be enjoyed. Real freedom is self-born; it is a process of self-discovery. To-day the freedom that has come to India is to be used for the discovery of the ideal India. India had never used her freedom for aggression of conquer and never will she use it for the good officers, of peace and spiritual enlightenment. Herein comes the signal difference between Indian freedom and western freedom. It is earnestly hoped that India would move on in her traditions, would make her freedom the common property of her masses and would make use of it for achieving in herself a high level of material well-being and spiritual quality that would enable her to continue her spiritual ministry. India's masses have great strength and potentiality in them. And their gifts are the most generous. If they are made to partake

of this new freedom they will make such substantial contributions to the country's well-being as will surprise the world. Freedom is an inexhaustible treasure; it increases as we give it to others or enjoy it ourselves. India knows this secret as she knows its quality. She knows that to feed its quality is also to feed its quantity.

And before freedom starts proving its quality by freeing us from inequality social and economic, from poverty material and spiritual, it must address itself to a more urgent task of freeing us from the greatest sin of a slavish nation, jealousy. We have hardly got into responsible positions than we have begun attributing motives, or picking holes in one another. Jealousy! leave us; we are a free nation today. Let us not pull down each other; that way we can ill afford to stand freedom's test. Nothing like each one of us feeling that the real quality of freedom is *freedom*. Nothing succeeds like success.

TRUE FREEDOM

Is true freedom but break
Fetters for our own dear sake
And with leathern hearts forget
That we owe mankind a debt?

No! true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be
Earnest to make others free!

SPIRITUAL ADMONITIONS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

Compiled By SWAMI VEDANANDA

Who cares for spiritual experience? The ordinary man is fully engrossed in the things of the world which conduce to his sense enjoyment. His mind is ever tossed to and fro with thoughts of how to live a life of pleasure with his wife and children. He wanders restlessly in quest of momentary enjoyments.

Rare indeed are those who really believe that there is the Supreme Being who keeps the universe going. Many do not even care to believe in the existence of God. How then can they take to a spiritual life of prayer and meditation with all their heart and soul to realise Him discarding the pursuit of other things?

When a man is beset with various misfortunes, troubles and tribulations, and finds no relief elsewhere, he turns to God to help him to overcome his difficulties. Very rare are those souls who seek God of their own accord led by an inner prompting alone. The majority of mankind are absorbed in the pursuit of the pleasures of the senses. Those who care not for such pleasures and toss them aside seeking God alone are but handful.

There is not even the faintest trace of selfless devotion to be found in the minds of many who are engaged in the external observances of religion. The men of the world can seldom resort to God disinterestedly. With every salutation they make, they harbour many selfish desires. They are not sincere in their devotion to God. They are shopkeepers, seeking return with compound interest for every service they render.

To call on the Lord is not a joke. It is because they carry a big cart load of evil thoughts and tendencies in their hearts that ordinary men cannot turn their minds towards God. The desire for sense-enjoyments takes a man away from God. The mind of man is restless and strays about seeking the

objects of sense-gratification. Thus he cannot concentrate on God. As long as evil tendencies sway him, he cannot turn a new leaf and become spiritual. The man of the world wastes his whole life in the vain pursuit of sense-pleasures. If he could but spend a sixteenth part of his time in the thought of God, he would be reformed and refreshed.

Very few are really convinced that misery predominates over happiness in this world. Such only will try whole-heartedly to break the bonds of Samsara (relative existence). Unless one feels in the core of his heart that the vanities of the world are transient, one cannot realise God.

You are still young. Worldly thoughts have not taken a firm hold on you. If you do not exert now, you cannot have spiritual realisation. We had the great blessing of associate with Sri Ramakrishna from our early days and hence we have been saved from the afflictions of world life. Did any one prompt us to go to Sri Ramakrishna? It was an innate intuition that attracted us and eventually led us to him. We were not instructed by anyone to seek him and strive for religious realisation.

If we learn to mould our lives in purity and goodness, we shall be free from the ills of life which will never worry us or throw us off our balance. What is there in the worldly life (of relativity)? Viewed superficially, this earthly existence is a bed of roses flowing with milk and honey. But there is no escape from its inextricable though bewitching coils once you fall in its trap. Hence, turn your minds Godward even from your teens. Call upon Him knowing that He looks after you and cares for you infinitely more than you do for yourself. There is no peace anywhere except in Him and by His Grace. He is the source of all peace and blessedness.

No period of life is too early to begin to walk in the way of God. Childhood is the best time to take to spiritual practices. If one wastes that precious period of life, he will have to repent afterwards. With advancing age, the body will become weak and unfit to stand the strain of Sadhana. All sorts of diseases creep in and destroy his mental poise. How can such a one fix his mind and concentrate on God?

The worthy candidate for pursuing the higher stages of Sadhana such as meditation is born endowed with a proper body and mind. Ordinary men cannot sit in a steady posture for seven or eight hours consecutively engaged in the continuous contemplation of God. Only a handful can stand the strain and they are the fit Sadhakas. Their minds are ever steady, calm and introspective without the faintest trace of any evil tendency.

Those who are easily excited by trifling things or sink in despair at the slightest shadow of misery can never progress in the path of God. The minds of irritable natures are always unbalanced and can never become calm and steady. Can one concentrate on God with such a mind? The invalid, the idle and the gluttonous can never hope to become real Sadhakas. The body fit for practising Sadhana is of a different type altogether. An unhealthy body is a great obstacle in the path of Sadhana.

Sit up in the early hours of the day and night resorting to a sequestered spot and call on the Lord with an yearning heart. Pursue this steadily every day and you will progress. There should not be any relaxation in the practice at any time. It won't do to sit for an hour or two at a time and then turn to worldly affairs. You should maintain the purity of the thought of God at all times.

The mechanical repetition of the name of God without the mental thought behind during the whole of your life will not lead to much progress. Call upon the Lord with your

whole heart and soul and pray to Him to free you from the shackles of Samsara. Individual souls falling under the trap of Maya feel helpless and miserable and turn to God hoping to be saved from their afflictions. But the observance of external forms without faith and devotion is of no avail in the realisation of God.

The nature of the mind is such that it is very hard to keep it in control. When we are engaged in some work or when we are in the company of others, the mind would seem to be quiet and restrained. But as soon as we close our eyes and seek to concentrate on God the mind begins to stray and roam about the whole world. The erratic movements of the mind are so subtle that in many cases we do not know when it has got away from our control and concerned itself madly in the train of vain thoughts. The only course left for us is to draw it back and fix it again on the contemplation of God. This has to be practised on every occasion and at every time the mind strays away.

With the lessening of evil thoughts and tendencies, the mind can be easily brought over to the contemplation of the Lord. The sovereign means to drive out evil thoughts and tendencies is to fill the mind with good thoughts. The reverent study of the lives and teachings of great souls who have realised God will aid the mind to keep steady and remain in a pure atmosphere. These three are powerful aids to steady the mind:— the study of good and holy books, the contemplation on good topics and the company of pure and high souls.

The more we think good thoughts, the greater will be our concentration on God. If we keep up a continuous train of good thoughts evil tendencies will gradually fly away from us for good. There is no other means to check the mad course of the mind. Malice, deceit and crookedness should be utterly given up. Without purity and sincerity, one

cannot realise God. There is no use in following external observances if the mind has not been thoroughly cleansed. Inner purity is most essential.

If the mind does not become steady when you sit up for meditation, recite exalting prayers and cry to him with an yearning heart. Keep a large picture of your chosen Deity (Ishta Devata) in front of you and fixing your gaze thereon pour forth your heart in prayer. In the beginning, the mind is likely to be unsteady. Hence, prayer, japa and meditation with the gaze fixed on the Ishta-Devata will be easy, as the mind will not have to endure much tension. Continuous practice in this manner for a length of time will steady the mind.

No Sadhana is of any avail without chastity (Brahmacharya) purity and renunciation. There can be no progress without self-control, devotion to truth and purity.

In the early stages of Sadhana, the rules and observances thereof should be strictly adhered to. Do you think that Brahmajaneana will dawn upon you by practising japa for two or three days? Gossip, talking ill of others, interference in affairs not concerning oneself, the seeking of acquaintances and wasting one's time idly in the company of others are very injurious to a Sadhaka. All these things distract the mind and drag it to the external world. It is only those who do not take to Sadhana seriously that indulge themselves in the above manner. Without practising restraint in food, sleep and talk, the mind will never become steady. It will not be difficult to concentrate the mind if one takes to solitude and the contemplation of good thoughts from one's early years.

Japa does not mean the mere mechanical repetition of the name of your chosen Deity. You must fix your mind on the meaning of the mantra you recite and see with your

mind's eye the blessed form of that Deity. Otherwise the mind will not be concentrated.

Distractions and discomfitures are inevitable in the early stages. The mind cannot be brought under control in a day. It is only a few months since you began this practice. Can anything be accomplished in such a short period of time? You have to continue the practice unflaggingly with all your energy, year in and year out. If you have the proper spirit of renunciation, your perseverance will win through the day and the mind will attain concentration. Then there will be no break in the contemplation of your chosen Deity. The Sadhana of those who have faith, devotion and ardent yearning towards the Lord and who are not under the thralldom of evil thoughts and tendencies will never be in vain.

All sorts of evil tendencies accumulated in countless births, remain stuck up in the bottom of the mind. When we try to concentrate, they begin to manifest and toss the mind to and fro. These will not allow the mind to become concentrated. But these distractions are only in the early stages. One need not fret and fume over it. One should persevere with all his might and main. There is no cause for worry. Perseverance in Sadhana will gradually cure these ills.

If you keep up the recollection and meditation on God in the course of your other works and studies, it will not be difficult for you to keep your mind steady. Hence, it would be useful and beneficial to remember the Lord at all times even when you are not engaged in formal meditation and japa. To be absorbed in the contemplation of God at the time of japa and meditation depends on the good thoughts you keep on during the whole day. If all the time is wasted in gossip and idle and frivolous thoughts, the mind will become restless and unsteady when you retire

in the early hours of the night to contemplate on God.

What is ordinarily known as meditation does not deserve the name. The mind is upset by various evil thoughts and tendencies, and worldly matters turn the mind away from the contemplation of God. To attempt time and again to draw the mind inward and fix it on God is the case with the majority of spiritual aspirants. Such a state is usually styled as meditation. Really it is Pratyahara, drawing inward the outgoing mind. To keep the mind in the contemplation of similar thoughts for a short space of time is itself the effort of many days. This stage is called Dharana, holding the mind in a certain thought. When all the outgoing tendencies of the mind are restrained and the mind flows continuously as a current in the contemplation of God, that stage is called Dhyana or meditation. At this stage, the mind forgets all external things and surroundings—even one's own body. It leaves the region of the senses and rises, to the supersensual plane. It is at this stage that Divine visions begin to unfold themselves to the Sadhaka.

What is the use of sitting in a yogic posture and closing the eyes if the mind is occupied in attending to what takes place around you, what others say and do. If you desire to listen to the talk of the persons near you, why do you pretend to sit for meditation? Hypocrisy is the deadliest of obstacles in the path of God. Is it to serve any selfish end that you behave as if you were a seeker of God? Sitting in a yogic posture and closing the eyes by themselves do not amount to meditation. Otherwise, every one can be a perfect adept in meditation.

Meditation is not an easy affair. He who has truly attained to the state of meditation has well-nigh reached the goal of spiritual endeavour (Sadhana). Once this stage is attained the mind will no more be pulled

down by the attraction of sensual pleasures. It will turn inward completely without any tendency to externalise. To have reached the stage of meditation is in effect to be on the step next to the direct realisation of God.

Those who are weighted with a load of anger, hatred and malice can never rise to the state of meditation. It is impossible for the wicked, the calculating, the crooked and the double-dealing to collect their mind in the contemplation of God. If there be the least tinge of sensual desire, one cannot concentrate on God. Discrimination and renunciation must go hand in hand with the study of the scriptures. Otherwise it will lead to vanity and egoism and the man will only degenerate. Without Sadhana and control of the senses, the study of the scriptures is in vain.

To realise God, the proper methods of Sadhana should be learnt first. Only a perfected soul can reveal the secret of Sadhana. He alone is the real Guru. He who has not realised God cannot lead another in the path. To get a correct knowledge of Sadhana, we have to seek one who has had himself the direct realisation of God. It is by a blessed privilege resulting from the earnest efforts and aspirations of many lives that one comes into contact with a perfected soul. Such souls who have realised God are not found everywhere. They are very very rare. Equally rare is the earnest soul endowed with the spirit of renunciation who truly seeks Moksha.

Even though one is initiated by the greatest teacher, one has to exert oneself to reach the goal. What can the teacher do? He points out the proper path. But you have to follow his advice and tread the path with unflagging perseverance. If you do not at all care to heed his advice and walk in the path, whose fault is it? Has any one attained Moksha at any time without Tapasya, severe spiritual Sadhana. Every one from

an Avatar to an ordinary Siddha had to undergo rigorous austerities to attain the goal. And you want to realize God without any Sadhana whatsoever. Is it reasonable? Those who truly pursue their Sadhanas in the proper manner are very few. All others are but pretenders making of it a mere profession or display to serve some sordid selfish interest.

The experiences of the Sadhana, such as, what you feel, what stands in the way of your attaining to concentration and the visions you have, should be revealed only to your own Guru. Do not go about proclaiming these to others. Otherwise, your Sadhana will be hindered. The Guru who has attained perfection will give you the proper instructions to overcome the difficulties you meet with in the path. Such a Guru can unerringly detect the thoughts coursing through the mind of the Sadhaka. Implicitly following the directions of such a Guru will ensure the reaching of the goal.

If the disciple is impure, the blessings of even the great Gurus will not fructify. It is vain to impart spiritual instruction to impure souls. Merely receiving initiation is of no avail. Many evil tendencies are heaped up in the mind and hence there is no progress in Sadhana. It is sheer waste of time and energy for a Guru to instruct such disciples. Earnest souls filled with the spirit of renun-

ciation and yearning for Moksha are the proper Sishtas.

The results of Sadhana depend on your exertions. It is unjust to blame the Guru for your not attaining the desired end. If you work with your whole heart and soul exerting to your utmost, you will get the maximum result. Otherwise you will not advance one step. Those who have no desire for enjoyments (sense-pleasures) and are pure in mind keeping a continuous train of good thoughts and call on the Lord with an yearning heart will progress. If there be the tendency to sense-enjoyments lurking in your hearts, the use of rosaries and the counting of beads will be in vain.

Residence in the celestial regions with all enjoyments and the attainment of Moksha are two different things altogether. One has to descend down to earth even from these regions. If one has not realised the self, he will have to revert to the cycle of births and deaths. Those who have realised the self are forever freed from the bondage of rebirth. They are released from the effects of works, including even *prarabdha* which brought this body into existence.

The object of human existence is to realize God. This state is attained by the effect of Sadhanas pursued assiduously for many lives. He who has attained to this state is the really blessed man.

In speaking of the complete act, we have stated thus in our previous article: 'If the act remains in suspense in some manner, the living force restrained in it will become desire, just as the living force of a spring whose motion when hindered becomes pressure. There will be an internal contradiction, the consciousness of an obstacle as well as the consciousness of a desire; there will be the perception of a time which fills up the interval between desire and fulfilment and which can be measured by the strength of the obstacle. Lastly, the effort of desire against the obstacle will reveal a self which knows itself as the agent of that effort.'

A consideration of the above statement will suggest a new way of envisaging the complete act. If the existence of an interval between desire and fulfilment brings about incompleteness, the absence of that interval should lead us to the complete act. The latter can, therefore, be defined as the fulfilment of a desire as soon as it is formed, so that there is no psychologically perceptible interval between desire and fulfilment.

A doubt may arise whether the above definition, which introduces the notion of desire in the complete act, does not go against our previous analysis which made us exclude all effective sense of desire from such an act. The answer is in the negative. Though desire may still subsist as a logical cause or source of the movement implied in the act, it is no longer a fact of consciousness. The very notion of desire cannot be formed unless a perceptible interval separates the application of the will to an already conceived act from the actual fulfilment of that act. Desire and fulfilment cannot be distinguished except in so far as they remain separate. From the moment they become constantly coincident,

¹ Translated from French by Sri P. Seshadri Iyer, Travancore university.

there can be, properly speaking, neither desire nor fulfilment, but only a flux of persistent action, a continual conscious transformation, which constitutes a dialectic transcendence of the antitheses, desire and realisation.

Our present definition of the complete act is, therefore, perfectly compatible with our earlier affirmation, according to which there can be no conscious desire in a complete act. The difference between the two is only that the previous affirmation was purely static while the present definition is essentially dynamic, introducing a movement in the complete act which appears henceforth as a complex and graduated process. It is like the play of fluid substitutions, a permanent

reduction of perpetually reviving contrasts. Everything that seemed unchangeable changes in the crucible to become and reveal new aspects.

The continuity of the complete act is thus a continuity in the gushing out of successive desires which are fulfilled as soon as they arise and are extinguished in their very fulfilment. Hence they do not attain a durable or distinct existence. According to this hypothesis, the interval between desire and its object always remains psychologically so infinitesimally small that it cannot be perceived. Viewed in this light, the complete act appears as the addition, the integral of elementary steps just as in geometry a continuous curve is reduced to an endless juxtaposition of rectilinear and infinitesimal elements.

If, during the effectuation of an act, the interval between certain instantaneous desires or rather certain instantaneous expressions of desire and their corresponding elementary fulfilment widens and becomes permanent, then suspensions appear in the activity. From

that moment the act cannot be complete. There will be moments when desire will be present and there will be no fulfilment of the desire. Such moments will be moments of passivity, dissatisfaction, and incompleteness. There is no possibility of such moments in a complete act. The latter will, therefore, be not the interrupted passage from desire to fulfilment, but a continuous and gradual transition. Its movement is not intermittent and hampered, but continuous and flowing like a curve with endless variations.

Since all desires tend to be fulfilled without delay, the existence of a perceptible and settled interval between desire and realisation attests to the presence of an obstacle. The nascent act is checked and hindered. The agent experiences the feeling of a constraint.

On the other hand, the continuous passage from desire to fulfilment signifies the absence or the continual reduction or the perpetual effacement of obstacles. In other words, it is a synonym of the freedom of the act.

We have already shown in our previous article that the complete act is a free act; but the freedom envisaged therein was static, consisting in the absence of internal contradictions. We have also indicated that if that freedom becomes permanent, it is not possible to experience that feeling. The freedom we are now considering does not lie in the absence of internal contradictions, but in the fact that the contradictions which can surge, remain in a nascent state, and are being constantly resolved. Such a freedom can be always experienced even if it becomes permanent. It is accompanied by a feeling of the perpetual rupture of limitations that arise only to be transcended and obstacles that seem to have only so much of consistency as to reveal the power which easily gets over them. These limitations and hindrances are fragile, and appear only to vanish and

vanish only to reappear. They widen at each remanifestation, describing circles which ever grow in extent and luminosity. None can envisage a limit to that growth. Thus there appears an eternal movement of action, which raises characteristic obstacles (a point misunderstood by Mr. Wells in his *Time Explorer*) But these obstacles become a starting point for a new *elan*, constituting the spring-board for a rebound, like the stones encountered by a wave which only serve to raise it to a height it could not have reached by itself. At that stage, there is no more any barren satisfaction or painful tension of a restrained effort, but the illimitable progress of a moving equilibrium between pressure and resistance, a sort of pulsation where waves spread spontaneously and indefinitely. It is the inexhaustible effusion of a vibrating serenity, returning always to the invisible fountain-head. A positive feeling of liberty follows from this. It is the sensation of flowing, expansion, ceaseless effusion by the force of an internal pressure which easily surmounts all obstacles and introduces in the experience of life, a dynamic elegance and a perfume of delightful reality. Thus the sense of the only liberty which can be constantly and directly experienced is the feeling of what Krishnamurti calls the movement of life.

We see that the liberty which was passive and unverifiable in the static view of the complete act has now become active and permanent; there is now the perception of a movement freed from all the shackles which could constrain it. What we have termed the absence of internal contradiction, a pure unity, shows itself as contradictions constantly manifesting and constantly surmounted. These contradictions are resolved as soon as they are formed and cannot really be called contradictions. They are in fact established in the unity of a movement which includes in itself at one and the same time two polarities, contrary and surmounted.

The infinite or, if you will, the static non-finite of the complete act appears now as a perpetual transcending of limits, a ceaseless progress. Further, the limits are but apparent outskirts of an endless extension. The simplicity manifests itself as a resolved complexity.

We have defined the complete act as the transcendence of the antitheses of desire and fulfilment. Now this opposition was the result of the fragmentation of the act in and by time. The continuity of the act is thus broken and at the points of rupture, there is the insertion of an undesirable interval constituting a sort of foreign matter, a recess of relative inertia, a dead presence in the living flesh of the act, an obstacle to its natural course. The elimination of this time-obstacle restores to the act its essential purity and constant homogeneity. We thus find anew the idea that the complete act is a pure act perceptible as a simple and irresolvable movement.

From the moment desire and fulfilment are not separated, the notion of time as a distance between desire and fulfilment disappears. We realise how the complete act is beyond time and how it can be reconciled with a real becoming. We also understand why Krishnamurti could speak of a pure, timeless becoming. Far from being destroyed, empiric change becomes pure change. What is destroyed, is the time defined as a 'duration in view of progress' (Krishnamurti).

That definition agrees with that which envisaged time as a distance between desire and fulfilment. Where the notion of progress intervenes, the notions of growth, completion and fulfilment implicitly come in. If one progresses, it is towards an end which is the fulfilment of a desire, consciously or unconsciously formulated.

What we have said of the continuity of the complete act cannot be regarded as a move-

ment inherent in the act, an ever uniform movement. If the movement is really without rupture or any imposed check, it can still admit of slackening in the presence of an obstacle and acceleration when the obstacle is surmounted. It is therefore a rhythmical movement and the rhythm can create an increasing exaltation. It can make a sort of dazzling gallop, a triumphal circuit surmounting obstacles with accelerating speed. We know not then whether we go to the universe or the universe comes to us. We are not aware whether we desire that which comes to us or we get exactly that we desire. We cannot tell whether our thought becomes reality or the reality submits to our thought.

A comparison with our previous article will lead to the question: 'What concept of the complete act reveals its fundamental nature, the static or the dynamic?' We answer: 'Neither the one nor the other, but both together at the same time.' The complete act is the synthesis of the two points of view which reveal therein each of these real aspects. The static aspect is perhaps more profound; but if it alone existed, there would be no perception. Liberty, eternity and infinity will cease to be objects of consciousness. We have already observed this in regard to the liberty envisaged statically and we have defined it as the absence of internal contradiction which manifests itself indefinitely and hence cannot be verified or become an element of distinct experience. There will be an impoverishment in the contents of life. In the complete act, there will be a transfiguration and not a pure and simple destruction of the notions that emerge from the common activities, the incomplete activities. The mournful and imperfect elements are eliminated, but a perception which can be called perfect in a dynamic sense abides.

We can say that the static definitions are appropriate in regard to an act which has been already accomplished while the dynamic definitions are suited to an act in the making. The former characterise the act in its totality and the latter the act in each moment of its effectuation. If we compare the complete act to a musical measure, the static definitions describe the entire measure while dynamic definitions describe the movement from one note to another in the measure.

MEMOIRS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA¹

By SWAMI AKHANDANANDA²

In the summer of 1883/84 I met the Master at Dakshineswar for the first time. It was on the eve of the Calcutta International Exhibition and the times of Lord Ripon, the Governor-general of India. Calcutta was then the capital of India. I was then 15/16 years old.

On the very first meeting the Master seated me by his side with great love and the first thing he asked me was, 'Did you see me before?'. In reply I said, 'Yes, I saw you once in the house of Dinanath³ Bose' when I was very young.' Swami Advaitananda was present on the occasion. The Master called him and said smilingly, 'Oh Gopal, hear, hear. He says that he met me once in early boyhood. This little one had an early boyhood! I spent the night at the Kali temple at the instance of the Master. When the sun was going down he told me to go to the Panchavati after making salutations at the Kali and Vishnu temples. It was night when I returned to the Master's room from the Panchavati.

Then from the two nahabats of the Kali temple music was being played and the vast compound reverberated with the melodious sound of the Vesper bells. As I was about

to enter the Master's room I found it dark and full of the fragrance of burning incense. The Master was seated on his cot almost lost to the outside world.

The next morning when I was about to leave for Calcutta he asked me with a smile to come again on the following Saturday. Then Swami Advaitananda alone lived with him. After a few days I went to him for the second time on a Saturday. He did not allow me to return home that day also,

In the evening when the Vesper service was over he stripped himself completely naked in the western verandah of his room and handing over a mat asked me to spread it. When I did so he brought a pillow and stretched himself on it. Before this he asked me to loosen the cloth round my waist and said, 'You are now to me as a son with a mother.' Then he seated me in a comfortable posture and made me meditate saying, 'It is not good to sit leaning forward or holding the body too straight and stiff. Whichever way you may eat the served rice, your stomach will be filled up'. He then wrote something on my tongue with his finger and gave me initiation. Stretching his legs he then lay down on my lap and asked me to shampoo them. I used to wrestle daily at that time. No sooner I began to press his legs a little hard than he cried aloud in agonized tones, 'what are you doing? The legs will be torn. Press them mildly.' I felt how soft was his body as if the bones were covered with butter! I was taken aback and asked with fear, 'How to shampoo then?' He said, 'Simply pass your hands over them without pressure.' I did as directed. Then he remarked, 'Niranjan also first did like you?'

Generally I went to him in the afternoon and spent the night with him and came

¹. Translated from the original Bengali by Swami Jagadiswarananda.

². Swami Akhandananda was a monastic disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the third president of the Ramakrishna Order.

³. Dinanath and his brother Kalinath were followers of Keshab Sen. It is Keshab who took the Master to Kalinath's house where a Brahmo festival on a small scale was held. Thence the Master was taken to Dinanath's house along with Hriday and other devotees and a number of Brahmos. Then the Master looked emaciated and passed into Samadhi at slight emotion. That day he went into Samadhi hearing the song which begins with 'Shyama, dance now holding the flute instead of the sword.'

way next morning. Then I took one meal a day, preparing the same myself. None could persuade me to take even the sacramental food offered to Lord Vishnu in a Brahmin house. As I did not dare to prepare my own food there and fearing I would have to eat the sacramental rice of the temple, I left him in the morning. Then I used to bathe four times a day in the Ganges without applying oil on the head or body. Consequently the hair on my head was dishevelled and dry. I was in the habit of eating myrobalan after meal and that in an unusual quantity. This habit was enhanced by the two verses in Sanskrit chanted by Hari Maharaj meaning:

“O King, take daily a piece of myrobalan which is as beneficent as the mother. Mother sometimes gets angry but never the myrobalan gone to the stomach. To wash off the internal dirt, mental and physical, remember God, take myrobalan, repeat the Gayatri and drink the Ganges water.”

When I was visiting the Master, Latu and Harish were spending much of their time with him. One day he said to me, ‘You are a youngster. Why have you imbibed these old ideas? This is not good.’ Even before going to the Master I was practising *Pranayam* during the performance of Brahminical devotions. Daily I increased the number of *Pranayam* till I got perspiration and shivering. Diving in the Ganges I held one or two pieces of stone lying on the bottom and retained the breath inside for some time. By daily practice I grew more and more interested in it. I told the Master about it who forbade me to do so. He said that too much practice of *Pranayam* may bring in some fatal disease. He instructed me to repeat the Gayatri daily saying, ‘Repeat it as much as you can’. Though I did not speak out to the Master, he intuitively knew that I had to leave him every time reluctant-

tly lest I should leave to take food in the Kali temple and thus break the vow of my eating self-cooked food.

On an Ekadasi day I fasted and reached the Master from Calcutta just after the noon, throwing one side of my cloth round the neck and carrying in my hand a ripe melon for him. It was summer and the hot rays of the sun scorched my young face and made it reddish. As I offered the melon to him and bowed down, he was highly pleased and asked, ‘Will you go away now?’ I replied in the negative. Next morning he asked me to take a jug of water and follow him to the Panchavati. I went to the Panchavati. There he asked me to meditate sitting on its eastern side and turning my face eastward. Saying this he went away to ease himself and on his return came to me and setting my body erect said, ‘You become bent a bit during meditation.’ Then I returned to his room along with him.

Coming to his room he told me to accompany him to the spacious ghat on the Ganges. While going he asked me to take a Kamandalu with me. I gave him a bath with the Ganges water on the ghat. He returned to his room with wet cloth and asked me to sprinkle Ganges water on a piece of cloth and put it on after being naked. There was a picture of Kali of the Kalighat temple in his room. He went to the picture and put into his mouth as well as mine a few grains of the sacramental offering of the Kali temple kept there. Then repeating ‘Om Kali’ several times he clasped his hands close to his breast and stood there with half-closed eyes for some time. After opening his eyes fully he found the offered fruits and sweets sent from the Kali and Vishnu temple. He sipped a little drink of the bael fruit and ate a bit of fruits and sweets and gave me the rest to eat. I remember very well to have sipped

the sweet drink prepared from the bael fruit. Then he sat on the smaller cot and smoked.

When the night offerings to the dieties of the temples were over, the master took me to the corner of the eastern verandah of his room and said, ‘Go and partake of the sacramental rice offered to Kali and cooked with the Ganges water. It is very holy. Go and eat it.’ I assented and went. As I was going along the verandah, I happened to turn back and see him standing there and watching whether I was going to the kitchen of the Vishnu or Kali temple. I thought within myself that the Master could have asked me to go to the Vishnu kitchen too, but instead, he told me to go to the Kali kitchen where fish, meat etc are cooked. I wonder why he asked me to go there: But at last I had to go to the

Kali kitchen. Though I went to the Kali kitchen I took vegetarian food that night. I remember well the thick dal was one of the preparations I ate. Those who had the opportunity to witness the daily festival of the Kali temple at that time will be surprised to see the present state of affairs there. In those days 250/300 Sadhus, Vaishnavs, Brahmins, visitors and the poor got sumptuous meal every noon. In comparison with the poor food received nowadays that was a royal diet. Many saintly persons belonging to various religious sects migrated there to take the sacramental food of the temple, and to live a secluded life in that sacred place. During the Master’s stay the Kali temple radiated a holy atmosphere like that of heaven.

(To be concluded.)

ECHOES OF INDEPENDENCE

There was a tremor in the voice of our leaders when they pledged themselves to the service of our country in the Constituent Assembly at midnight on 14th August on the eve of Indian Independence. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly, addressing the house, said:

“In this solemn hour of our history, when after many years of struggle we are taking over the governance of this country, let us offer our humble thanks to the Almighty Power that shapes the destinies of men and nations and let us recall in grateful remembrance the services and sacrifices of all those

men and women, known and unknown, who, with smiles on their faces, walked to the gallows or faced bullets on their chests, who experienced living death in the Andamans or spent long years in the prisons of India, who preferred voluntary exile in foreign countries to a life of humiliation in their own, who not only lost wealth and property, but cut themselves off from their near and dear ones to devote themselves to the achievement of the great objective which we are witnessing to-day.

Tribute To Gandhiji

“Let us also pay tribute of love and reverence to Mahatma Gandhi who has been

our beacon-light, our guide and philosopher during the last 30 years or more. He represents that undying spirit in our culture and make-up which has kept India alive through vicissitudes of our history. He it is who pulled us out of the Slough of Despond and despair and blowed into us a spirit which enabled us to stand up for justice, to claim our birth-right of freedom and placed in our hands the matchless and unfailing weapon of Truth and Non-violence which, without arms and armaments, has won for us the invaluable prize of Swaraj at a price which, when the history of these times comes to be written, will be regarded as incredible for a vast country of our size and for the teeming millions of our population. We were indifferent instruments that he had to work with. He led us with consummate skill, with unwavering determination, with an undying faith in our future, with faith in his weapon and, above all, with faith in God. Let us prove true to that faith. Let us hope that India will not, in the hour of her triumph, give up or minimise the value of the weapon which served not only to rouse and inspire her in her moments of depression, but has alone proved its efficacy. India has a great part to play in the shaping and moulding of the future of a war-distracted world. She can play that part, not by mimicking from a distance what others are doing or by joining in the race for armaments and competing with others in the discovery of the latest and most effective instruments of destruction. She has now the opportunity and, let us hope, she will have the courage and strength to place before the world for its acceptance her infallible substitute for war and bloodshed, death and destruction. The world needs it and will welcome it, unless it is prepared to reel back into barbarism from which it boasts to have emerged.

"Let us then assure all countries of the world that we propose to stick to our historic

tradition, to be on terms of friendship and amity with all, that we have no designs against anyone and hope that none will have any against us. We have only one ambition and desire, and that is to make our contribution to the building up of freedom for all and peace among mankind.

Greetings To Pakistan

"The country which was made by God and Nature to be one, stands divided to-day. Separation from near and dear ones, even from strangers after some association, is always painful. I would be untrue to myself if I did not at this moment confess to a sense of sorrow at this separation. But I wish to send on your behalf and my own our greetings and good wishes for success and the best of luck in the high endeavour of Government in which the people of Pakistan, which till to-day has been a part and parcel of ourselves, are engaged.

"To those who feel like us but are on the other side of the border, we send a word of cheer. They should not give way to panic but should stick to their hearths and homes; their religion and culture and cultivate the qualities of courage and forbearance. They have no reason to fear that they will not get protection and just and fair treatment and they should not become victims of doubt and suspicion. They must accept the assurances publicly given and win their rightful place in the polity of the State where they are placed by their loyalty to it."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moving the resolution prescribing the oath said in an inspiring address:

"At the stroke of midnight hour when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. (cheers). The moment comes, it comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long

suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity."

Pandit Nehru continued: "At the dawn of history, India started on her unending quest and trackless centuries are filled with her strivings and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike, she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. And we end to-day a period of ill-fortune and India discovers her-self again. The achievement we celebrate to day is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumph and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?"

Responsibilities of freedom

"Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon the Assembly, a sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom, we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

"That future is not one of ease or resting, but of incessant striving so that we might fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take to-day. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long work will not be over, And so we have to labour and to work and work hard to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams

are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together to-day for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible, so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments."

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, supporting the resolution, said.

History and legend will grow around this day. It marks a milestone in our democracy's march. A significant date it is in the drama of the Indian people who are trying to rebuild and transform themselves. After a long night of watching and vigilance, a night full of fateful portents and silent prayers for the dawn of freedom, during which our sentinels kept watch, at last the dawn is breaking and we greet it with utmost enthusiasm.

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It is true that some people who are responsible for the administration of the country upset the purposes and tried to accentuate communal consciousness and bring about the present result which is the logical outcome thereof. But I would not blame them. Were we not ready victims, so to say, of any kind of attitude adopted by them? Should we not correct our national faults and character, our domestic tyranny, our intolerance which has assumed different forms in the body politic, our narrowmindedness and spiritual degradation? Are we not the victims of these very faults which are responsible for placing us into the hands of those who are not our friends? Therefore, I should like to take this opportunity to tell us that it is an attitude of humility that we should adopt, an attitude of heart searching. We have gained, but we have not gained in the manner in which we wished to gain. If we have not done so, the responsibility is ours. When this pledge says

that we have to serve our country, we have to serve our country by removing these fundamental things which vitiate the body politic.

"Avoid Passion"

So far as divided India is concerned, my attitude is, 'Avoid words of anger. They lead you nowhere. Avoid passion. Passion and wisdom never go together.' The body politic may be divided but the body historic continues. Political division and physical partition are merely external, but the psychological divisions are deeper. Cultural cleavages are the more dangerous and what we should do is to preserve those cultural ties, those spiritual bonds which have knit this people together into one organic whole. The discovery of points of view common to both, communication, defence, foreign policy, these are things which, in the daily run of business, are bound to grow up. It is by developing this idea that we can once again regain the lost unity of this country. That is the only way.

"To-day our opportunities are great," Dr. Radhakrishnan continued: "But let me warn you that when power outstrips ability, a great calamity will overtake us. The op-

portunity is there. How are you going to utilise this opportunity? From midnight to-day, we cannot throw the blame on the Britisher; we have to assume responsibility on ourselves. We must destroy corruption, profiteering and black-marketing which has spoiled the good name of this country. These things will have to be destroyed if we want to make any headway. (Cheers.)

Asoka's Message

Pandit Nehru referred to the great contribution which this country will make to the promotion of world peace and welfare of mankind. This chakra of Asoka, the Asoka wheel, which is there, embodies that great idea. Asoka is the greatest of our monarchs. Look at the words which H. G. Wells has used: Highnesses, Magnificences, Excellencies and Serenities crowd history. But among them all, there is only one figure which stands unique, shining like a luminary—Asoka the greatest of all Monarchs. He cut it into the rock that if there are differences, the way in which we have to solve them is through concord. 'Samavaya Eva Sadhu'. This is the only way by which we can get rid of differences. There is no other method which is open to you.

RAMPRASAD, THE MYSTIC-POET

By SWAMI RITAJANANDA

It is often seen that forms of art burst forth into glorious efflorescence when fertilised by religion. Some of the finest specimens of architecture and sculpture that are found in temples and churches and the immortal hymns that were sung by mystic poets bear testimony to this power of religion to immortalize art. All the poet-saints felt their talent as 'the sacred fire that lights up the altar of the mysterious Unknown'. They packed their passionate longings for God in their songs. The people made these songs their own, for they found in them an echo of the searchings of their soul, of their thirst for God. Why is it that the lyrics of the Alwar saints and the Saiva mystics and the sublime songs of Tyagaraja continue to be the unfailing sources of spiritual sustenance and inspiration to the people of South India? They poured forth not only their own emotions, but the popular emotions as well in their songs. There is a familiar yet sweet refrain in Tamil which says: 'How beautifully did those saints Appar and Sundarar sing; I shall also sing like them'.

It is a matter for regret that even with the advancement of education and communications, the songs of Tyagaraja and the musician-saints of the South are very little known in North India, even as the songs of North Indian mystics like Ramprasad are not well-known in the South. We cannot come across a person in Bengal who cannot repeat at least a few lines of the compositions of Ramprasad. They are enjoyed equally by the pandits and peasants.

By clothing his mellow devotion in the language of the common people, Ramprasad has made his songs the property of the whole nation. Sri Ramakrishna used to go into ecstasy, whenever he began to sing in his melodious voice the out-pourings of Ramprasad.

Ramprasad's was a life completely dedicated at the feet of the Divine Mother.

Halisahar or Kumarhatti is a village on the banks of the Ganges, not far from Calcutta. About two centuries ago, it was a flourishing village and it had many scholars and poets. About the year 1718 A.D. Ramprasad was born as the son of Ramrama Sen, belonging to a respectable and pious Vaidya family of the village. The grand style of their worship of the Divine Mother was well known to the neighbouring villages. Ramprasad went through the usual course of education in Bengali and Sanskrit. His father wanted that he should take up the family profession of a physician and succeed him. But the boy enjoyed the study of poetry better than medicine and the noble father allowed him to have his own way. He also studied Persian, the court language of the times. At the proper age, Ramprasad was initiated into the worship of Kali, their family diety and this kindled the spiritual fire that was latent in him. He learnt the various methods of worship prescribed in the scriptures and engaged himself in the quest of the Divine Mother in all earnestness. But he could not lead that sort of life very long, due to the sudden passing away of his father. The burden of the whole family fell on him and he had to find the means for supporting it.

He left for Calcutta and very soon secured a place of an accountant in a zamindar's house on a monthly salary of Rs 30/-. His poetical temperament could hardly adjust itself to the irksome clerical duties and the mind used to play the truant running away to the Beloved Mother. Finding that his devotion was manifesting itself in beautiful lines, he recorded them in the account books of the zamindar spread before him in all places. Negligence of his work and the scribbling of songs attracted the attention

of the other officers, who complained to their master. Ramprasad was soon called for along with his books. On opening the pages, the following song caught the eyes of the zamindar.

"Appoint me your treasurer,
O Mother, I am not the one
who forgets the salt he has eaten.
All people loot the store house of

gems, how to endure the sight!
You have entrusted it to the
forgetful Bhola (Siva) the
Destroyer of demons.

"He is easily satisfied and always
ready to give and yet you have
made him keep your treasure.

"He has Half your body and still
you pay him so highly.

"I am only a wageless servant with
claims on the dust of your feet.

"If you be like your father I am lost;
but if you take my father's nature
I shall soon reach you¹"

"Prasad says: Let me die in the
saving grace of those feet that
remove all curses and by which
I am free from all danger."

Turning a few more pages, the zamindar found that the pages were all studded with songs and the one cry of 'Mother, Mother,' ran through the lines of the songs. He, himself being a devotee of the Divine Mother, immediately realised the greatness of Ramprasad and calling him aside said, "Oh, I find that you want to become the treasurer of the Divine Mother!. You can do so. This mean worldly job is not fit for people like you, the children of God. You are free to go home and serve Her with your poetic genius. Do

¹. Kali or Uma is the daughter of Himalaya, and hence her nature is said to be stony. Ramprasad often teases his Mother saying that she being the daughter of Himalaya is stony and hard-hearted, While Siva, whom Ramprasad claims as his father, is easily pleased and kind to his devotees.

not worry about your salary which will be regularly sent to your home from this office."

Ramprasad could hardly believe that the divine grace would come down upon him in such an unexpected manner and free him from the slavery of a few rupees. He returned to Halishahar and engaged himself in spiritual practices once more. Besides the regular worship, he used to offer a song of his composition every day to his diety and this song was sung in the morning at the bathing ghat. Large crowds used to gather round him and enjoy the treat of sweet music. One day, while the Rajah of Murshidabad, Krishna Chandra was travelling along the river, he heard these songs and being highly impressed by their charm asked Ramprasad to follow him and accept a place in his court. Although he had no desire to serve any one but God, he had to comply with Krishna Chandra's request and became one of his court-poets. The pompous life of the court and the sensual compositions of the poets were uncongenial to the devotional nature of Ramprasad. There he was asked to write a poem on the popular theme of "Vidyasundari", a love story. In this work he shines best in his prayers rather than in the presentation of sensual love. The work was not a success. But still the Rajah treated him with all honour, gave him the title of Kaviranjan and after some time permitted him to return to his native place with many presents. After this he did not serve any one else.

Now freed entirely from wage-earning duties and worldly influence, Ramprasad sought the communion of the Divine, without any obstruction. From this time onwards his life was one of constant prayer and strenuous meditation. He performed all the Tantric sadhanas in all their details and 'sank into the depths of the ocean of spiritual discipline and only in intervals of rest was he moved by the breeze of emotion to sing his songs." Little by little the attraction for

material life faded and he renounced the world as we understand from his song:

"No more shall I call on you
O Mother; Endless are the
sufferings you have given.
I was a householder and you have
made me a mendicant and I do not
know what more you can do."

He became a well-known figure during his life time and there are many legends which refer to his mystic experiences and visions. Once Kali is said to have taken the form of his daughter and helped him in repairing his fence and this is mentioned in the song:

"Why do you leave the feet of
the Mother, O Mind: Think of
Shakti, you will get mukti
(liberation). Tie yourself with
Bhakti (devotion.)

How unfortunate you are: You
have eyes and still you did not
see Her when She, tricking Her
devotee came in the form of his
daughter and mended his fence."

* * *

He, that meditates on Thee,
O Mother: with steadfast mind
wins Thee.
Come then as his daughter and
build the fence of Ramprasad.

All devotional literature mentions the different attitudes taken by the worshipper, when he approaches his Ishtam or chosen ideal. The attitude of self-surrender is often compared to a child, which entirely depends upon the protective love of its mother. This is the method of approach taken by Ramprasad. The intensely emotional nature of a child with its varying moods in its relation to its mother, never found better expression than in the lyrics of Ramprasad. 'Like a child?' says Sister Nivedita 'he is now grave, now gay, some times, petulant, some times despairing. But in the child all this is

purposeless: in Ramprasad there is deep intensity of purpose. Every sentence he has uttered is designed to sing the glory of his Mother...No flattery could touch a nature so unapproachable in its simplicity. For in these writings, we have perhaps alone in literature the spectacle of a great poet, whose genius is spent in realising the emotions of a child. William Blake, in our own poetry, strikes a note that is nearest to his, and Blake is no means his peer. Robert Burns in his splendid indifference to rank and Whitman in his glorification of common things, have points of kinship with him. But to such radiant white-heat of child-likeness it would be impossible to find a perfect counter-part. His years do nothing to spoil this quality!" He was able to go deep into every feeling of a child and present them like a master-artist.

Let me see Mother how you will escape?
Do not think it is so easy as snatching
a banana from the hands of a child! I
shall so hide myself, Mother, that
withal your search you will not find
me. You will have to run after me
like a cow after its calf.

Prasad says: You can play such tricks
if your son is a fool. If you do not
save me, Mother; I tell you, Siva
will be your chastiser.

The child is annoyed when his calls are
not answered.

"Mother, I cry and yet again Mother, but
you are deaf and blind.

While the mother lives and if the child
suffers, what is the use of the mother
to him.

Ramprasad says; Is this the mother's
way—being mother to be the child's
foe? Day and night I muse; what further
you will do. Perhaps you will force
me to endure the pangs of birth again
and again.

Ramprasad worshipped Kali, the frightful aspect of the Divine Mother. But the terrible form never aroused the emotion of fear. He says, 'can aught evil befall a true worshipper? Rather in his delight he finds all things are good. By the power of the dread-visaged One thy prayers are made effectual, thou dost conquer both in this life and the next. Ramprasad, a poet and Her slave is swimming in a sea of happiness. Can misfortune come to one, who worships? What care he for the dreadful things? He sits in the Virasana for his devotions and takes the name of Kali for his shield'. With the devotee's eyes he perceived only the sublime beauty of the Divine.

He went through all the forms of worship mentioned in the Tantric texts. But very soon he realised their hollowness.

From the land where there is no night
Has come One unto me.

And night and day are now nothing
to me, ritual worship has
become forever barren.

My sleep is broken. Shall I sleep
any more? Call it what you
will—I am awake—Hush: I have
given back sleep unto Him,
whose it was. Sleep have I put
to sleep for ever.

The music has entered the
instrument and of that mode
I have learnt a song.

Ah! that music is playing ever
before me,

For concentration is the great
teacher thereof, Prasad speaks.
Understand, O soul; these
words of wisdom.

He found that all places of pilgrimage are
at the feet of the Mother.

Why should I go to Benares?
My Mother's lotus feet
Are millions and millions
Of holy places.

The books say, man dying in Benares
Attains Nirvana.

I believe it, Siva has said it.
But the root of all is devotion
And freedom is her slave.

What good is there even in Nirvana?
Mixing water with water—!
See, I do not care to become sugar
I want to eat sugar.

What beautiful sentiments are packed
in the last two sentences!

With a deep insight into the method of
Tantric worship, he explains the symbolic
expression of the outward rituals and points
out the superiority of the conception of the
Divine far above name and form and which
can be reached by intense devotion of a pure
mind.

"Mind, why art thou anxious?
Utter Kali's name and sit in meditation.
From all this pompous worship the mind
grows proud.
Worship her in secret, that none may
know.
What is thy gain from images of metal,
stone or earth?
Fashion Her image with the stuff of your
mind.

And set it on the lotus of your heart.
Parched rice and plantains, how vainly
do you offer these!

Feed Her with the nectar of your
devotion and satisfy your own mind.

Why seek to illumine Her with the lamp,
lantern and candle?

Light the jewelled lamp of the mind, let
it flash its lustre day and night.

Why do you bring sheep and goats for
sacrifice?

Saying, 'Victory to Kali', Victory to
Kali, sacrifice the six passions.

Prasad says—What need is there for drums
and tom-toms?

Saying 'Victory to Kali' clap your
hands.

And lay your mind at Her feet.

By his intense sadhanas he was able to
realise the grandeur of the Divine form
which fills 'the three worlds'. A realised
person has no fear of death. 'Herald of
Death, Avaunt; I am the son of the Almighty
Mother. I can be the death to death if I
remember the Almighty Mother's name, says
he. Even though Ramprasad speaks in the
wailing tone of a child, his words emit the
fire of ideals of sadhana and spiritual illumi-
nation.

Ramprasad lived most of his life in a
village and it is no wonder that his poetry,
with a wealth of local colour and sublime
simplicity should become part and parcel of
the life of the villagers. The range of his
ideas may not be wide, but the wealth of
metaphor collected from the life of the
agricultural people present charming pictures
of the rural life of the times. The fallow
fields of the farmer, who does not know
how to cultivate, the damaged hut blown off
by the tempest, the sinking boat overloaded
with goods, the blind folded ox going round
the oil-mill are some of the scenes that are
most familiar even to children. Along with
these, he mingled the popular legends connec-
ted with Siva and Uma, catchy to the
village-folk. Although nearly two centuries
have elapsed since Ramprasad left the world,
his songs are sung with great devotional fer-
vour by village folk who derive spiritual
solace and inspiration from them.

Ramprasad lived and died a poet. Even to
the last moment he sang the praise of the
Divine Mother. It is said that he passed
away in the year 1775 on the last day of
Kali worship in his house. He must have
been fully conscious that his last day has

come as is evident from some of his songs.
'The day has set and my life that sees this is
trembling. You who are the shelter of the
shelterless, World's Mother give me a place,'
sings he.

The worship of the Mother was over and
the image was being carried to the river for
immersion, followed by Ramprasad, whose
mind was absorbed in ecstasy. The man
carrying the image waded into the river and
Ramprasad also followed. There in waist
deep water he began to sing:

"Tara! do you remember any more?
Mother! that you have kept me
happy here; is it the same hereafter?
Had Siva's words been true, I should
not be beseeching you. O Mother!
delusion after delusion; But good
omens are visible. If I had any other
place, I would have never sought you.
O Mother: you have filled me with
hope, cut my bonds and lift me up.

Prasad says—My mind is firm and great
is the power of Kali! Mother; My
task is finished and I have offered my
dakshina.'

He repeated the last lines two or three
times and in the end he shook off the
mortal coil to be ever in the bosom of his
beloved Mother. The final scenes of the
worship of the Mother coincided with the
last scene of the life of her devotee.

Although Ramprasad is said to have
composed many songs, his fame mainly rests
on his *Padavali* or Songs on Kali and Aga-
mani or advent songs of Sri Durga to Her
parental home. His other works, excepting
'*Vidyasundari*' are very few in number. He
was succeeded by Kamalakanta and Nila-
kanta and a host of others, who followed his
method, but could not attain the same
prominence as Ramprasad. The genius of
poetry in one language can never be trans-
lated into another, without robbing it of
much of its pristine beauty. This is more so in
the case of the songs of Ramprasad, who
had full control over the language and whose
songs abound in alliteration and puns, the
charm of which does not yield to any trans-
lation. But his greatness does not rest on
the artistic poetry of his songs but on the
spiritual fervour which is the soul of his
music.

1. *Dakshina* is the last item in worship.

HEROINES IN THE DRAMAS OF KALIDASA

By PROF. HARIHAR MISRA, M.A.

Survival of the fittest is a biological law that works not only in the world of living beings but also in the world of books. There are books which like season flowers flourish for a season and then fade out of existence. And there are books which have the power of surviving all vicissitudes of fashion, taste and civilization. They have in them the power of appeal that crosses the borders of time and country in which they were born. The dramas of Kalidasa have this quality in abundance. That is the reason why his dramas, though composed and staged many centuries ago, are still an unfailing source of delight and inspiration to cultured minds not only of this country but also of far-off lands. His dramatic technique, his high flight of imagination, his scrupulous choice of diction and the peculiarly mellifluous and chaste style are the unparalleled virtues of his dramas. But the dramatic genius of Kalidasa finds its highest fulfilment in the perfect characterisation, particularly of his heroines.

A study of the characters of Kalidasa's heroines is interesting and profitable not only for their perfect and artistic finish but also for the fact they reveal to us of the gradual process of the psychological growth and development of the poet's mind. Three dramas of Kalidasa, e.g. the *Malavikagnimitra*, the *Vikramorvasiya* and the *Sakuntala*, have come down to us and all of them are love dramas. In the *Malavikagnimitra*, Malavika, the unfortunate princess of Vidarbha is the heroine. Her brother Madhavasena is captured and dethroned by his cousin Yajnasena. She escapes with the minister Sumati who, while escorting her in order to give her in marriage to Agnimitra, the king of Vidisa, is attacked and killed by high-way robbers. It was only an accident that later on Virasena, the minister of

Agnimitra, found her and handed her over to the queen, Dharini.

One day the king happens to see her portrayed in a picture and falls in love with her at first sight. In that drama we are first introduced to her when she appears before the royal audience to exhibit her skill in music and dancing. The exquisite beauty and graceful movements of the maiden simply enchant the king. He is maddened with her wonderful skill in dancing, acting and music. She is made to sing a very suggestive song which means: 'My beloved is difficult to be attained; do not expect anything from him, my heart'. She elicits the king's most passionate admiration more than once and her exit from the stage leaves the king restless and love-lorn. She proves to be the most poisonous arrow of cupid to him, and she completely conquers his heart.

For the second time she is introduced to us in the pleasure-garden. It is spring time; the vernal breeze has made the sylvan regions all the more enchanting. Fortunately for the king, the circumstances prove most favourable. He minutely observes the youthful physical features of the girl and maddened with passion opens his heart to Malavika through Bakulavalika; but further progress is checked by the sudden appearance of the queen, Iravati. In the meanwhile the queen, Dharini is alarmed at the love-lorn condition of the king and in her anxiety to save the king from the snare of love she imprisons the innocent girl, Malavika. This reveals one of the weakest traits in the character of Dharini. But the tactful Vidusaka brings about the release of Malavika who is again introduced to the king in the *Samudragraha*. There, the amorous talks which pass between the loving pair show, beyond any shade of doubt, that the charming bashfulness of the maiden has sadly given place to the

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weakness of human flesh. Malavika is too eloquent in her love affairs. To her royal lover, to whom she talks for the first time, in reply to his love proposal, she frankly expresses consent. It is due to the fear for the displeasure of the queen that she cannot carry out in action what she desires most. One expects more coyness under such circumstances, because silence is more than eloquence in amorous games. The king embraces Malavika, an affair in which she is not less willing; and when the king wants to come out on hearing the cry of Vidushaka, Malavika beseeches her royal consort not to leave.

The king always feels that the queen Dharini is a great obstacle in the way of his union with Malavika though later on Dharini herself arranges the marriage. Thus in the character of Malavika we find no appeal to our higher sentiments and feelings. She is concerned only with the gross, biological aspect of that most dominant animal disposition called 'love'. The dire misfortune which had overtaken and ruined her paternal family and which had cost the valuable life of Sumati does not seem to influence and purify the intense passion and desire which dominate her character throughout the drama. The youthful age and disposition of the dramatist is not less responsible for such delineation of Malavika's character. At the time of the execution of the drama the dramatist was perhaps at a stage of life when the higher aims of marriage are apt to be lost sight of. The creation of worthy progeny, and the sacrifice of personal pleasures for the sake of others have not yet been admitted as the highest ideals of married life. In the *Taittiriya Upanisad* the preceptor after teaching the Veda enjoins the pupil "do not bring about extinction to the continuance of your lineage." In fact this is important even from the national point of view. The culmination of love is in the creation of progeny. But our great dramatist

has brought the episode to a close after a passionate description of a love episode and consequent marriage of the royal pair. Naturally the softer and more feminine aspects of the heroine's character have not found full play in the character of Malavika.

But in the *Vikramorvasiya* the dramatist shows greater artistic finish, more sober judgment and definite improvement in ideals. Unlike in the *Malavikagnimitra* here a nymph is the heroine. She is introduced to us in the first act under tragic circumstances. She was being kidnapped by the demon Kesiin. Fortunately the king Pururavas, while returning from heaven, happened to hear the shriekings of the nymph and saved Urvasi. But the unique beauty of the heavenly nymph sows the seed of love in the heart of the king. He pays high meeds of praise and admiration to her.

She also returns her love for the king by casting longing and lingering looks while leaving for heaven.

The advent of the spring makes the pangs of separation all the more painful. The king accuses her of indifference and apathetic attitude towards his sincere feelings. The dramatist takes recourse to the super-natural powers of the nymph in order to bring about the union of the lovers at this stage. She comes to the royal pleasure garden, overhears the talks of the love-lorn king and suddenly appears on the scene and is united with her lover, only to be separated again. The king's glance upon a Vidyadhari girl rouses the jealous wrath of the nymph who disdaining the king's apologies enters the forbidden grove sacred to Kartikeya and is transformed into a creeper. But ultimately the metamorphosis is undone by the Sangamaniyaka jewel and the lovers are united.

The extreme sensitiveness and highly improper jealousy of the heroine really detracts from the charm of her character, particularly when we picture in our mind the eager prostrations of the king. In fact

this unbecoming trait in the character of any lady makes one lose all sympathy or admiration for her. But we should not forget at the same time that nothing better could have been expected from a heroine who is a mere courtesan.

In the *Vikramorvasiya* our great dramatist is quite conscious of the higher aims of married life. In the beginning of the fifth act the Vidushaka is made to say, 'nothing is wanting except the fact that the king is without a son.' Thus the creation of progeny has been recognised as the culmination of married life and, in fact, a worthy son is shown to be born as the result of the happy union. But the fact that the royal child was kept away from the palace, lest it should hamper the amorous sports of the happy pair, leaves an indelible blot on the character of the heroine as a mother. It takes away from the charm of her feminine nature and evinces the burning passion that runs rebel in her heart even after she has become the mother. The sacrifice and unselfishness that married life should necessarily entail have not been depicted in her character. Here again her role as a courtesan offers some explanation to this strange psychology.

Thus the characterization of Urvashi, though marking definite advance over that of Malavika, is certainly lacking in perfection. The highest conception of womanhood, however, finds expression in the character of Sakuntala. This time our great dramatist has for his heroine neither a princess nor a harlot who had to pass their lives either in luxury or license, but an ascetic girl who has passed her entire girl-hood in the serene environments of a hermitage under strict discipline and self-control. She is introduced to us while sprinkling water on the shrubs of the hermitage. The king happens to see her and is struck with her exquisite beauty at the very first sight. He cannot believe his own eyes. Such manifestation of natural

beauty and charm he sees for the first time. But what appeals the reader most in the character of Sakuntala is not her physical beauty but mental perfection. All the distinctive traits of the female mind are illustrated in Sakuntala. Her timidity gives the king an opportunity to introduce himself. Being annoyed with, and afraid of, the bees, she cries for help and the king takes this opportunity and appears on the scene. The majestic appearance and the gait of the king at once sow the seed of love in the heart of the ascetic girl. She is intensely curious to know more about him, but the keen sense of decorum and modesty prevents her from being eloquent. When the king highly admires her beauty she hangs down her face and observes studied silence. In fact throughout the first act she has never exchanged a single word with the king and it is in the third act that we hear her speak to the king for the first time. Her extremely tender heart is full of affection even to the inferior creation. The trees and shrubs of the hermitage are like brothers and sisters to her. In the fourth act while being sent away to the royal palace 'the flora and fauna' of the hermitage are, as if, unwilling to be separated from her. As a wife Sakuntala seems to have resolved to live up to the ideal held before her by sage Kanva. We have no occasion to judge her in relation to her elders, co-wives and attendants. But as regards her husband the celebrated line, 'even if your husband behaves rudely, be soft and composed' has never since been uttered before a more worthy pupil. In the face of the gravest insult when she was most meanly cast away she could not use a word harsher than, Anarya, (unworthy of an Arya) towards her husband. When the fatal decision was finally announced she blamed not her husband as the author of her misery, but her own destiny. And even after the repudiation she observes austerities out of most genuine regard for her husband, quite in keeping

with the Hindu ideal and thought. During the days of separation the child is the only solace of her life. So when she sees the king, initiated beyond recognition out of repentance, embracing the boy, she has misgivings lest the unknown contact will defile the purity of the boy. Her filial love has found fine expression in the fourth and the seventh acts of the drama. Thus love, creation of

progeny and above all sacrifice, as the true ideals of a wife of any race and clime have been very skilfully delineated in the unique character of Sakuntala. This wonderful creation of the mature mind of our great dramatist becomes all the more charming when we appreciate the real significance of it.

A DAY IN A CHRISTIAN HOME

By A WANDERER

It was not my first experience of Christian homes, though it was the most authentic and fruitful. For the first time I saw Christianity at one of its best approximations, Christianity in its prayerful and practical aspects. I learnt many things which a Hindu, without any sense of inferiority-complex, should take note of, and learn from Christians and Christian homes. To be true to myself, I must, with apologies to my kind hostess, risk this remark: It was a Hindu experience for me. Is it because I was a Hindu that I could earn only a Hindu experience from a Christian home? Any true religion at its best confirms other religionists in the experience of their own respective faiths; when it converts or coerces them into its belief it falls from its high estate. My sojourn at the Christian home was just an opportunity for me to see Christianity proving its genuineness that way, by awakening in me some dormant Hindu convictions. It was also an opportunity for me to compare notes, -to become painfully conscious of Hindu failings and foibles and to think furiously of stopping them. A Church or a Christian Home is in its truest moments when it affords a Hindu, a Hindu experience, and a Hindu scripture is at its best when it nourishes the faith of a Christian reader in his Bible.

I was the guest of a hospitable Christian home on the West coast for a day during

these monsoon months this year when unceasing rains made indoor life compulsory but yet enjoyable. My hosts were not rich in the common sense of the term: their riches were hospitality, love, contagious contentment and cheerfulness. Cleanliness was the ornament of their house, even as modesty was the ornament of its inmates, a modesty not more brilliant than their gold ornaments. With a few exceptions the neighbours were all Hindus whose constant visits to the home made me sometimes feel that I was in a Hindu home.

After supper I was preparing to retire—for the day was rather strenuous for me—when my kind hostess came and announced that there will be a common prayer and readings from the Bible. I said I shall hear from my bed as I was too tired. A common prayer, and that before retiring! There was a feeling in me of an ancient sweet wish come true. I remembered what I read in some Hindu Epic, the story of a devotee who thought too highly of his devotion, being sent by the Lord to learn from a householder. To the great chagrin of the devotee he found that his ideal had no time to pray during the whole day which he ended by a very brief prayer just before retiring. I fed my Hindu vanity with the thought that these Christian friends have taken the cue from that story. But at the same time I could not help being

reminded of the Hindu homes where no common prayer rounds off the day; why, where any common prayer is conspicuous by its absence. This was too hard a knock on the head of my Hindu vanity, but I bore it in silence as a true Hindu! I thought of the Hindu homes where the practice of common prayer is made impossible either by members keeping irregular hours or by want of faith in the efficacy of common prayer. The Hindus have too much freedom of faith and worship that they tend in freedom from worship. They have the choice of a wild variety of forms that they either swing to the one extreme of a multitude of forms or to the other of complete negation of them. Extremes have not helped man: one wonders why the Hindus with their genius for a wise via-media hardly practise their own wisdom.

I was soon awakened from this reverie by the peace radiating from the prayer that was then in progress. It was an atmosphere of utter dedication to the Divine. A whole family rising as one man and raising their hearts to God for acceptance. How true it is that a community is strongest when forged in the presence of God in prayer! How true it is that the bonds of love, the oath of allegiance and common endeavour—the bonds that keep a family together—are unbreakable when made in the presence of God. Here is a family who took the pledge not only to bear the cross of their Redeemer but the cross of the household together and in unison.

I could read a double pledge in that prayer: the pledge to practise the four cardinal Christian virtues and the promise to practise the virtues of a good Christian home. One merged imperceptibly in the other. The four cardinal Christian virtues of justice, temperance, prudence (wisdom) and fortitude came in handy for the home to be pressed into service for household purposes. What home can hope to be knit together by love and understanding, if justice and temperance are not its gods? What home can hope for efficiency, regularity and an atmos-

phere of common endeavour if wisdom and fortitude are not its targets? And what exactly are these four virtues?

Justice:

Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; Custom to whom custom; honour to whom honour (Rom 13/7) "Present your members as instruments of righteousness unto God (Rom. 6/13) Be blameless as God's steward; a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, temperate. (Titus 1/7-8)

Temperance:

For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think but so to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each a man a measure of faith (Rom. 12/3)

Prudence:

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise think on these things. (Phil. 4/8)

Fortitude: Stand fast in one spirit, with one soul.

The home not only thought on these things but meditated on them and practised them.

And more so on the words: Love, which is the bond of perfectness. (col. 3/14)

The household is a cooperative adventure and if temperateness, fortitude and prudence do not express themselves in regularity, tolerance and service, and a sense of sharing common burdens, the household turns out into a piece of misadventure. One man's late hours, uncleanness, or other sins against corporate life are reaped by the whole family, (how little Hindu households realise this truth of family life!) even as one man's glory is shared by all. Was this fundamental law of household life getting confirmation from Lord Jesus himself? For I could hear the young daughter of the home reading the Bible in her devotional accents:

"Well then, as one man's
trespass issued in doom for all,
So one man's act of redress
issues in acquittal and life for all.
Just as one man's disobedience
made all the rest sinners
So one man's obedience will
make all the rest righteous.
(Romans, 5),

When I put my mind back and visualised the day, I could see the picture of a flock herded by 'My Lord, the Shepherd' moving in unison and with devotion to their respective duties, carrying in all meekness the cross of the household, 'each giving according to capacity and each taking according to need' to make the common cause, the home a success. I could see them raising their household life to the level of a holy act, an offering at the feet of the Lord. And so their prayer has come as the final act on a day of dedication, a day of corporate life lived in the presence of God. Prayer is a fruitful reality when it rounds off a day of sincere striving and dedication. It is a mockery

when it closes a day of God-denials and disorderly, unclean life.

I said at the start that it was a Hindu experience for me: yes, I was made conscious of my being a Hindu by Christian strength showing me Hindu weakness. I felt humbled to think how Hindu homes failed to enshrine many of the domestic virtues of this Christian home, virtues of domestic economy, cleanliness, regularity and combined responsibility.

I could not set aside the thought of Hindu homes where the paths and pathways are paved with good intentions but with bad hygiene. I was reminded of the Hindu whose civic and religious conscience is clean if he sees filth cross his boundary, but lie right in the centre of the quadrangle of his neighbour! The Hindu homes lack the cheer and contentment of corporate living. I wondered how much of Christian practical sense in corporate and happy household life, and in domestic economy could easily be imported into Hindu homes with safety to their faith. The Hindu may hitch his wagon of idealism to the stars, but has got to keep his feet on *terra firma*.

THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD:

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION (ii) DATE AND AUTHORSHIP

By SWAMI TYAGISANANDA

According to tradition, all the Upanishads are supposed to be attached to one or the other of the four Vedas. Of the one hundred and eight Upanishads mentioned in the Muktikopanishad list, ten belong to the *Rigveda*, nineteen to the *Sukla-Yajurveda*, thirty-two to the *Krishna Yajurveda* and thirty-one to the *Atharveda*. Only sixteen are said to belong to the *Samaveda*. They are the *Kena* the *Chhandogya*, the *Aruni*, the *Maitrayani*, the *Maitreyi*, the *Vajrasuchika*, the *Yogachudmani*, the *Vasudeva*, the *Mahat*, the *Sannayasa*, the *Avyakta*, the *Kundika*, the

Savitri, the *Rudraksha-Jabala*, the *Darsana* and the *Jabali* Upanishads. (vide *Muktikopanishad* II-4):

केनच्छान्दोग्यारुणिमैत्रायणिमत्रैयीवजसूचिका
योगचूडामणि वासुदेवमहत्संनयासाव्यक्त कुण्डिका ।
सावित्रिरुद्राक्ष जाबालदर्शनजबालीनां सामवेदगतानां
षोडशसंख्यकानामुपनिषदामप्यायन्त्विति शान्तिः ॥

It is not known why all these sixteen are considered to belong to *Sama-Veda*. With the exception of the *Kena* and the *Chhandogya*, none of them seem to have any connection

with the Saman chant, or the *Sama-Veda Samhita* or Brahmanas. Perhaps they were composed or compiled by rishis belonging to the Sama-veda sakhas: or they might have been current in Sama-vedic schools; or they might have recorded the teachings of some of the Sama-vedic rishis. The only distinctive sign which enables us to allot them to the *Sama-veda* is the Santi-patha, which all these have in common, and which is said to be specially characteristic of the Sama-vedic Upanishads as per the Muktikopanishad quotation given above. There seems to be some doubt as to whether the *Maitrayani Upanishad* really belongs to the *Sama-Veda*. Some consider it as attached to the Maitrayani sakha of the Black-yagus. The *Chhandogya* and the *Kena* are certainly the oldest amongst these sixteen. It is only these that have been commented upon by Sankaracharya, and considered as authoritative by Badarayana in the *Brahma-Sutras*. Of all the Upanishads that Sankara has commented upon, only the *Kena* has got the honour of having two Bhashyas from his pen. It belongs to the Jaiminiya sakha of the *Sama-veda*. It is also called the *Talavakara Upanishad* and is attached to the *Jaiminiya-Upanishad Brahmana*. The others are of later origin, and deal with much heterogeneous matter which have no bearing upon Vedanta as such.

The *Chhandogya Upanishad* is one of the major Upanishads and perhaps the most important among them, with the exception of the *Brihadaranyaka*. It is attached to the *Chhandogya Brahmana* or the *Upanishad-Brahmana*. Most of the discussions in the *Vedanta-sutras* are in clarification of its teachings. According to Prof. Deussen's classification of the Upanishads into four chronological groups, it belongs to the first and the most ancient group. Various principles of classification are adopted by scholars in ascertaining the age of the Upanishads, and critics are not agreed with regard to the relative anteriority or posteriority of this various texts. But whatever principles may be adopted the *Chhandogya* will certainly be

found one of the oldest of the Upanishads. Its archaic language and style has more in common with the language and style of the Brahmanas, of one of which it forms a part. The association of its teaching with the sacrificial ritual shows that it must have been composed at a time when the rituals were actually alive as in the days of the Samhitas and the Brahmanas. The many ideas as well as teachers which it has in common with the Samhitas and Brahminical literature show that most probably it might have been compiled or composed in the same period as the Samhitas and Brahmanas.

Some of the rishis mentioned in the *Chhandogya* are also met with in the *Mahabharata*. Thus Baka-dalbhya of the *Chhandogya* I, ii 13, is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* to have been present at the court of Yudhisthira and as having performed a yajna for punishing Dhritarashtra for his rude behaviour. (vide Salya-parva chapter 41) This shows that the rishi must have been a contemporary of the Pandavas. The mention of Krishna-devakiputra in the *Chhandogya* is also suggestive of the Mahabharata age. Uddalaka Aruni, one of the prominent rishis of the *Chhandogya* is described as a disciple of the sage Dhaumya in the *Mahabharata* (Adiparva chap. 3) This Dhaumya is mentioned as the purohit of Yudhisthira (Adiparva, chap. 183 and Sabhparva chap 53, 80, Vanaparva chap. 3) and is also mentioned as the brother of Asita-devala (Adiparva chap 183) who is one of the Vedic rishis who has some of the Rigvedic mantras to his credit. (vide *Rigveda* Mandala I, sukta 5—24). Ghora-angirasa, mentioned as the teacher of Krishna-devakiputra, (*Chhandogya*, III, XVII, 6) is mentioned in the *Kaushitaki Brahmana* and the *Kathaka Samhita* of the *Yajur-veda*. Aitareya and Kaushitaki, who were the authors of the Brahmanas are also mentioned in the *Chhandogya*. Many of the ideas of the *Chhandogya* such as the warfare between the senses, also appear in the *Mahabharata*. (vide Anugita in Asvamedha parva) The

story of Asvapati kaikaya, the teacher of the Vaiswanara Vidya in the *Chhandogya* is also mentioned in the Santiparva 77-8 where the exact words of the Upanishad नोमे स्तेनो जनपदे are actually reproduced. These correspondences might be due to the fact of both texts being produced in the same period.

There are also certain astronomical data which help to determine the age of the *Chhandogya Upanishad*. The *Maitri Upanishad* quotes many passages and ideas from the *Chhandogya* as the opinion of ancient rishis (vide Maitri II-2,6. III: 3, IV, 6 etc.) This shows that *Chhandogya* must have been an ancient Upanishad even at the date of the *Maitri Upanishad*. Now, this *Maitri Upanishad* (VI,14) refers to Udagayana or Uttarayana, as beginning with the Aslesha constellation and ending with about the middle of Dhanishta. From astronomical calculations based on this statement, it is argued by scholars like Tilak and Dikshit that the date of the *Maitri Upanishad* should be earlier than that of the Vedanga Jyotisha which is placed by scholars at about 1400 B. C. The latter work mentions Udagayanam as about half a constellation behind what is mentioned in the *Maitri Upanishad*. As about 480 years are required for the Udagayana to recede by half a constellation, it is argued that the *Maitri* must be at least 480 years earlier than Vedanga jyotisha. So the approximate date of the *Maitri Upanishad* may be about 1900 B. c. The *Chhandogya* being considered as an ancient Upanishad even at the time of the *Maitri*, it must be considered as some centuries older than 2000 B. c. If the Mahabharata war took place at the beginning of the Kaliyuga about 3100 B. c. and if the *Chhandogya* was compiled or composed at about the same time, then the *Maitri* has every right to think of the *Chhandogya* as a very ancient Upanishad. All the facts noted above will also substantiate the guess that the *Chhandogya* and the *Mahabharata* might have been compiled during the same period and perhaps by the same rishi. If we take that the *Mahabharata* was compi

led or composed by the great sage Krishna Dvaipayana-Vyasa, who arranged the Vedas also, we may not be far wrong if we make a justifiable claim that perhaps the compilation of the *Chhandogyopanishad* might have been made by the great sage Vyasa himself when he undertook the arrangement of the whole Vedas and the compilation of the *Mahabharata*, from among the materials traditionally current among the Vedic schools, as well as amongst the masses. This is strengthened by the fact that Vyasa himself is mentioned as one of the Sama-veda Acharyas, as already noticed in our previous article on the basis of the *Sama-Tarpana Vidhi*.

According to Madhvacharya, however, Rama Devi praised Vishnu with the words which came out of the mouth of Hayagriva and the *Chhandogya Upanishad* constitutes these words. (vide Madhva's Introduction to Chhandogya Bhashya (हयग्रीवमुखोद्गीर्णगीभिः देवीरमापतिं अस्तुवत् विस्तृतगुणं भोगिप्रस्तरशायिनं । It would thus seem that, according to the Madhvas, the prime author of this Upanishad is Hayagriva, and that it has come down to us through Rama Devi; (Compare Vedesha's commentary on *Madhva Bhashya* अनेनास्य हयग्रीवोमुख्य ऋषिः । रमातु अवान्तर ऋषिः शेष शायी देवता इत्युक्तं भवति, For this view Madhvacharya quotes the authority of a book which he calls *Mahasa-mhita* whose words are quoted by him thus;

उक्तं च महासंहितायां हयग्रीवोद्गीतवाक्यैः रमादेवीरमापतिं ओमित्येतत्सुखैर्देवं अस्तुवत् सामवेदगैः ।

The *Chhandogyopanishad* itself does not pretend to contain only the teachings of any one single rishi, unlike the *Prasna*, the *Mundaka*, the *Katha* or the *Svetasvatara* Upanishads which are attributed to single teachers. Like the *Brihadaranyaka*, it is rather a Samhita or a compilation of the teachings of the various rishis about the spiritual life and its goal. In the last chapter, it gives a Vamsa-Vrikha or traditional list of teachers, through whom the teachings had come down to the time of its compilation.

According to this the apostolic succession is traced back to Brahma himself who gave it to Prajapati and the latter to Manu, who in his turn, gave it to the succeeding generations. The succession of teachers from Brahma to Manu may appear, at first sight, to be more or less mythical. But, if we remember that it is a custom amongst the Hindus to give the names of Gods to men, there is nothing wrong if we consider these names as only those of human rishis. This is corroborated by the fact that Prajapati is the rishi of *Rigveda* III-55. This rishi is called Prajapati Vaiswamitra, which shows that he was a son of Vaiswamitra. Similarly another rishi named Prajapatirvachyah is mentioned as the rishi of *Rigveda* IX-84. This Prajapati must have been the son of Vak. Prajapati seems to have had children also, for, one rishi, Samvarana-prajapatya is mentioned as the rishi of *Rigveda* V-33; another Hiranyagarbha-prajapatya of *Rigveda* X-121; still another Yakshmanasana-prajapatya of *Rigveda* X-161; and Prajavan-prajapatya of *Rigveda* X-183. Vaivaswata Manu is also a human rishi, who is the seer of *Rigveda* VIII-27 to 31 and of *Sukla-Yajurveda* 33 to 91. Another Manu called Manurapsava is mentioned as the seer of some of the mantras in *Rigveda* IX-106. That Brahma himself might have been only a rishi of that name may be seen from the fact that his son and wife are mentioned as the seers of *Rigveda* X-109, as *उद्गृह्यजाया* and *ब्राह्मजन्मनामा*; and *रक्षोहृद्वाजा* of *Rigveda* X-162. Again Swayambhu Brahma is the rishi of *Sukla-Yajurveda*, chapter 32. Innumerable mantras in *Atharvaveda* are also attributed to the rishi Brahma; vide I-17, 19, 22 etc., II-15 to 17, III-11 and 12, IV-5, 16, etc. All these show that the names mentioned in the *Chhandogya* might have been only the names of human rishis, and there is no necessity to consider them mythical. The Vamsa-vriksha may also be considered only as symbolical of the fact that the revelation came from God himself through a purified budhi to the human mind and the senses. In this view Brahma represents God, and Prajapati, the purified

buddhi. That Prajapati is used in the sense of pure heart may be seen from *Brihadaranyaka* V-3 एषैवैप्रजापतिः यत् हृदयं. Sankara himself quotes the passage पुरुषएवउक्तं अयमेवप्रजापतिः in his Bhashya on *Chhandogya* I ii. 1, and explains Prajapati on the basis of this passage as कर्मज्ञानाधिकृतः पुरुष. Similarly, Manu, in Vedic language, means thinking faculty, from the root *man*, to think. (Compare *Nirukta* अनुमननात्. So adhyatmically, this Vamsa-vriksha may signify only the coming down or manifestation of the highest spiritual truths in the purified hearts of the rishis, from God himself as the first teacher, (Compare Patanjali's *Yogasutra* संपूर्णमपि गुरुः. He is the Guru even of the ancient rishis) and their intellectual formulation by their thinking faculty for the benefit of the future generations.

Whichever view is taken about Brahma, Prajapati and Manu, the teaching has come down to us only through great spiritual personalities mentioned in the various Vidyas. Thus Uddalaka-aruni is the expounder of the Sadvidya in the sixth chapter. He was the son of Aruna and was therefore known as Aruni. He belonged to Gautama Gotra and so he is sometimes also called Gautama. Thus in chapter V of the *Chhandogya*, when he goes to Pravahana Jaivali for learning Panchagni Vidya he is referred to as Gautama, and his son Svetaketu is referred to as Aruneya, the son of Aruni. In the Vaiswanara Vidya of the same chapter we find him mentioned as a disciple of king Asvapati Kaikeya, to whom he goes for instruction about Vaiswanara. He seems to have learnt Madhu Vidya from his own father as mentioned in the third chapter. The *Brihadaranyaka* (VI-iii, 7) refers to him as the teacher of the Prana Vidya to the famous sage yajnavalkya himself. In *Brihadaranyaka* (III-vii, 1) he himself says that he was a disciple of Patanjala Kapyas, and that while studying the scriptures relating to Yajna, he was taught the knowledge of Sutatma and Antrayamin by Kabandha, a Gandharva who had possessed his teacher's wife. *Brihad-*

aranyaka (VI-iv, 7) also mentions him as a teacher of Brahmacharya for grihasthas. The *Kathopanishad* and the *Mahabharata* mention him as the father of the famous Nachiketas, and he is said to have performed the Viswajit sacrifice. *Kaushitaki Upanishad* (I-i) represents him as officiating as a priest for the king, Chitra Gangyayani, and to have studied the Devayana Pantha under the king. The *Satapatha Brahmana* (XI-iv-1, 1) and *Gopatha Brahmana* (I-36) mention how he traversed the northern country in search of debates on spiritual topics, and how he was defeated in argument by a great sage, Svaidayana of Saunaka Gotra, and how he became the latter's disciple. *Mahabharata* (Adiparva, chap. 3) represents him as a disciple of Dhaumya who was the Purohita of Yudhishtira. All these show he was a universally respected rishi in Vedic times, and how he was well-versed in the fundamentals of spiritual life which he imbibed at the feet of the various experts in the line and which he handed over in his turn to great rishis like Yajnavalkya and Svetaketu.

The seventh chapter mentions Sanatkumara as a teacher, and the great sage Narada himself as a disciple who goes to him in search of realisation of the Infinite Bliss. This Narada, as we have already pointed out in our last article was one of the Sama Veda Acharyas as per the *Sama-tarpana-Vidhi*. It is he who has written the *Naradiya Siksha* dealing with the Sama Veda music. He is also mentioned as the rishi of *Rigveda* VIII-13, etc. which shows that the doctrine taught by Sanatkumara to Narada must have been as old as *Rigveda* itself. He is represented in the *Harivamsa* (II, 169) as having acted as the Udgata in some sacrifices, which shows his special connection with *Samaveda*, and in the *Mahabharata* he is represented as the disciple of the Great Narayana Himself. In *Bhagavata*, he is represented as having been the son of a maidservant who had been serving some rishis. And it was through the grace of these rishis that he became interested in spiritual matters. He is thus an example

of one who, though of low birth, struggled up to the highest heights of spiritual realisation and came to be recognised as Devarshi later on. The *Chhandogya*, seventh chapter, represents him as well versed in all the scriptures and other sciences and as having been still discontented with all this knowledge and to have been in search of the Atman. The teacher Sanatkumara is also represented in the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* as being eternally only five years old. This of course is only a poetic description of his having realised the eternal Atman and of his having been thus free from old age or विज्र in the language of the Upanishads. The same Purana also describes him as one who never subjected himself to the vedic ritualistic samskaras, and who was the disciple of Narayana himself. Compare वयसापंचदशयनः, अचूडोऽनुपवीतश्च, वेदसन्ध्याविहीनकः.....यस्य नारायणो गुरुः ।

He was also known as Sanatsujata, and the *Sanatsujatiya* of *Mahabharata* purports to record his instructions to Dhritarashtra at the request of Vidura. In the course of his instruction the rishi defines a Brahmana as one who is devoted to Truth.

सएव सत्याज्ञापैति स ज्ञेयो ब्राह्मणस्त्वया

This fully accords with the view of the *Chhandogya* Upanishad. It is singularly interesting to note the great scholar Narada going in search of Atmajnanam to one who is completely devoid of all pretensions to Vedic scholarship and Vedic ceremonial purity. The *Vamana Purana* honours Sanatkumara by considering him as the son of Dharma himself by his wife Ahimsa, and by describing him as having been adopted as son by Brahma himself. All this is only a poetical exaggeration based upon the sage's realisation of Brahman through Dharma and Ahimsa.

धर्मस्य भार्याहिंसारव्या तस्यापुत्रचतुष्टयम्...ज्येष्ठः सनत्कुमारोऽभूत्

The *Harivamsa* also corroborates that Sanatkumara was so called because he was the 'eternal child'. यथोत्पन्नस्तथैवाहं कुमार इति विद्धि मां, तस्मात् सनत्कुमारेति मामैतन्मे प्रतिष्ठितम्

'Know me only to be a child just as I was born, and hence my name Sanatkumara was given to me.' Thus the teacher and disciple proclaim by their lives that mere Vedic study and Vedic samskaras were absolutely of no necessity in themselves for spiritual realisation and that one could have spiritual realisation even without them, if one has renunciation and self-control, devotion to Truth and purity of heart. Vide Ch. Up. VII-26,2.

The Upanishad points out that such people like Sanatkumara are entitled to be called Skanda as they have leapt over the preliminaries of Vedic study and samskaras and at one jump cleared the abyss of samsara and realised the Atman by their innate renunciation, purity of heart, self-control and devotion to Truth like Sri Ramakrishna.

Two other great teachers mentioned in the *Chhandogya* are Pravahana Jaivali, the king of the Panchalas and Asvapati, the king of the Kaikeyas. They were Rajarshis who realised Brahman, although they were rulers of Kingdoms. Great Brhmin sages like Uddalaka-Aruni and Vedic scholars like प्राचीनश्राल औपमन्यव, सात्ययज्ञः पौरुषिः, इन्द्रयुम्नः भालवेयः, जनश्रार्कराक्ष्यः, बुडिलः आश्वतराधिः did not consider it beneath their dignity to sit at the feet of these royal sages for spiritual instruction, in spite of their being Brahmins. It is also interesting to note that in the kingdom of Asvapati there was not even one who was not a Vedic scholar (अविद्वान्) and who did not practise Vedic rituals (अनाहितानि). This shows that under the enlightened king, no man was prevented from study and spiritual practice, because of caste or sex and that every one of his subjects was equal in his eyes because of his समत्वबुद्धि, resulting from the realisation of the whole world as the वैश्वानरब्रह्म. As his very name suggests, Asvapati was the lord of asvas or senses. Compare : इन्द्रियाणि हयान्याहुः— (*Kathopanishad*.)

Mahidasa Aitareya is the name of another great rishi mentioned in relation to Purusha Vidya in the third chapter. As his very

name suggests he was a dasa or a sudra by birth. According to Sayana's introduction to the *Aitareya Brahmana*, he was the son of a Brahmin rishi by इतरा or a low caste-woman. The story says that, being thus low-born, the rishi did not give this son the same privilege of sitting on his lap as he gave to his sons by his other wives. The mother was very much piqued and prayed to her tutelary deity मही or earth, who appeared in response to her prayer, placed the boy on a throne, and blessed him to compose the Brahmanas and the Aranyakas. Anandatirtha in his notes on the *Aitareyopanishad* takes him to be an avatara of Vishnu, born of Visala and Abja. He was called Mahidasa because even venerable people (महिनः) became his slaves at a solemn celebration at which he presented himself. These stories also corroborate the view that low birth did not stand in the way of achieving divinity in those ancient days.

Raikva, the teacher of Samvarga-Vidya in the fourth chapter, also does not seem to have belonged to any of the higher castes. Most probably, the descriptions given about him as living like an out-caste, outside the bounds of the village, may suggest that he might have been even an untouchable. Like Sanatkumara he was not certainly observing any of the Brahminical rituals, customs and traditions, and was not a follower of the orthodox Varnashramadharma as alluded to by Sankara himself in his *Bhashya* on III, iv, 36, where he quotes Raikva as one of the rishis who attained Brahmajnanam in spite of the fact of his not observing any of the Aohrama rules—अनाश्रमित्वेन वर्तमानोऽपि विद्यायां अधिक्रियते कुतः। तदष्टेः रेकवाचकवीप्रभृतीनां एवं भूतानां अपि ब्रह्मवित्पुत्र्युपलब्धेः। Janasruti Pautrayana who goes to Raikva as a disciple, is also only a sudra, as specially mentioned in the text itself where the guru calls the disciple a sudra. (vide IV, ii, 3&5). Thus this low birth as a sudra was not a bar to his Brahma Vidya. That Janasruti became an all-knowing seer is mentioned by Sankara himself in

Chhandogya Bhashya on I, vii, 1, श्रूयन्ते हि उपस्ति जानधुति प्रभृतयः सर्वज्ञकल्पाः।"

Satyakama Jabala is another great rishi mentioned in the fourth chapter in connection with the Shodasa-Kala brahma Vidya. As is mentioned in the text itself he was the son of a slave-girl, and was of uncertain parentage. But he was very eager to realise the highest truth, and went to the great sage Haridrumata-Gautama for spiritual instruction. Although he did not belong to the higher caste, the guru considered him fit for Vedic study and Brahma Vidya, when he found him intensely sincere in his search for truth and in his readiness to speak out the truth even about his questionable parentage. This is a clear indication that the sage Haridrumata-gautama did not consider low birth as a disqualification, provided the aspirant was a man of sincerity, and, good character and a lover of truth and in this he was one with Sanatsujata whose definition of 'Brahmana' we have given above. He is also reported to have been the teacher of the doctrine of the Akshi-purusha to Upakosala. *Brihadaranyaka* I, vi, 6, refers to him as having held the doctrine that Manas is Brahman. *Brihadaranyaka* VI, III, 11.12, describe him as having learnt the Prana Vidya from जानकिः आयस्थूणः and as having taught the same, in his turn, to his disciples.

Sandilya who taught the Sandilya Vidya according to the third chapter, appears as a great teacher in *Satapatha Brahmana*, khanda 6-10, dealing with Agnichayana. The *Brihadaranyaka*; II, vi, 1, mentions many, Sandilyas. Which of these is the rishi of the Sandilya Vidya is not certain. The *Sandilyopanishad* represents him as a student of the sage Atharva who taught him Ashtanga-yoga. One Sandilya is represented as the author of the *Bhaktimimamsa*. Whether this Sandilya of the Sandilya Vidya is the same as the sandilya of the *Sandilyopanishad* and the Sandilya of the *Bhakti mimamsa*, is also not certain. Any how he seems to be

one of the earliest rishis who realised God in everything without distinction of caste creed, or colour, and formulated the doctrine that the future can be controlled by the present effort in the direction of realising this divinity of the whole world.

Ushasthi Chakrayana is among the other teachers whose names are mentioned in the first chapter. He seems to have been no respecter of caste-restrictions in matters of food, and is represented as having taken forbidden food from the hands of a low caste man, in *Chhandogya* I, x, The *Brihadaranyaka* (III, iv, 1) represents him as one of the rishis taking part in the discussion with Yajnavalkya in the court of Janaka. He is there described as requesting Yajnavalkya to expound Brahman that is immediate and direct, the self which is within us all. Ushasthi's question there to Yajnavalkya shows his clear grasp of the highest truth which is beyond subject-object relationship and beyond words.

From a perusal of the list of teachers mentioned above it would seem that the compiler must have definitely had some object in view in choosing only such rishis who were liberal in their outlook on caste, and countenanced caste only by character. This is quite understandable if we consider Vyasa himself as the compiler. It is well-known how, out of his infinite compassion for the lowly masses he was prompted to explain the whole of the Vedas in popular language in the *Mahabharata*, which was henceforth called the Panchama Veda. *Bhagavatam* I, iv, 24-25 and 29 make mention of this fact. त एव वेदादुर्मैधैः धायेन्ते पुरुषैः यथा। एवं चकार भगवान् व्यासः कृपणवत्सलः। स्त्रीशूद्रद्विजबन्धूनां त्रयीनश्रुतिगोजरा। इति भारतमारव्यर्न कृपया मुनिना कृतम्। भारतव्यपदेशेन चाम्नायार्थश्च दशितः। दृश्यते यत्र धर्मादि स्त्रीशूद्रादि-भरप्युत "Finding that the women, sudra and unintelligent Brahmanas are not capable of understanding the meaning of the Vedas, Bhagavan Vyasa, in his infinite mercy, made the

teachings of the Vedas available to them also in the form of *Bharata*, so that they may also be spiritually benefitted." Santiparva chap. 327, verses 48-49, also corroborate this 'सर्वस्तरतु दुर्गाणि सर्वमिद्राणि पश्यतु श्रावयेन् चतुरोर्णान् कृत्वा ब्राह्मणमग्रतः । वेदस्याध्ययनं हीदं ब्रह्मकार्ये महत्स्मृतम् ।' 'Let everybody get over all obstacles to spiritual progress. Let everybody attain the highest welfare. Let the four varnas learn the Veda through the Brahmana as teacher. This propagation of the Veda among all castes is the paramount duty of the Brahmanas. A perusal of the whole chapter makes it clear that this injunction of Vyasa to his disciples is with regard to the Vedas which he taught them and this injunction was made only when he found that his disciples were eager to confine the knowledge to themselves without propagating it for the benefit of the world at large, and that it has no reference to the teaching of *Mahabharata* as is sought to be made out by some interpreters. That Vyasa's compassion was not confined to men only but extended even to insects, is described in Anusana-parva, chaps. 117 etc., where it is pointed out how he helps even a worm to attain divinity. In Santi parva, chap. 60, verse 19, he clearly says on the authority of the Sruti that a sudra, named Paijavana, performed the 'Indragna' ceremony which is a preliminary to Soma yaga, in the case of one whose ancestors have not drunk soma for three generations. 'शूद्रः पैजवनो नाम सहस्राणां शतं ददौ । ऐन्द्रग्नेन विधानेन दक्षिणां इतिः श्रुतम् ।' The whole chapter deals with the sudras right to perform yajna. Nilakantha in his commentary on this chapter points out that even the sudra has got the right to perform yajna. तेन सर्वेषां वर्णानां ब्राह्मणजत्वात् अस्त्येव श्रुदस्यापि यज्ञाधिकारः इत्यर्थः । Santiparva, chap. 318, verse 89, reports the opinion of yajnavalkya that all varnas are Brahmanas as they are born of Brahman and therefore every

varna always studies the vedas.' सर्वे वर्णाः ब्राह्मणाः ब्रह्मजाश्च सर्वे नित्यं व्याहरन्तेच ब्रह्म । This is supported by the words of Bhrigu to Bharadwaja in Santiparva, chap. 188, verses 10-16. 'न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत्.....धर्मो यज्ञक्रियावेषां नित्यां न प्रतिविध्यते । वर्णाः चत्वार एतैः एषां ब्राह्मी सरस्वती । This makes clear that there was no prohibition in ancient days which prevented anybody from learning the Vedas and performing yajnas. Being himself born of a fisher woman and of Parasara, who was himself a son of a chandali Vyasa could not certainly be a respecter of caste by birth, and could countenance caste only by character.

That is why he gives the literal teachings of so many teachers of low birth like Vidura and Dharma Vyadha in the *Mahabharata*.

शूद्रयोर्नो हि जातस्य सद्गुणानुपतिष्ठतः ।

वैदयत्वं लभते ब्रह्मन् क्षत्रियत्वं तथैव च ।

आर्जवे वर्तमानस्य ब्राह्मण्यमभिजायते ॥

—(vanaparva, chap.) 212. etc. etc.

This also explains why he makes Yudhishtira say in the Ajagara parva, chapter, 179, that caste by birth is unascertainable on account of intermixture of blood and that character is the only test.

जातिरत्र महासर्प मनुष्यत्वे महामते ।

संकरात् सर्ववर्णानां दुष्परीक्ष्येति मे मतिः ।

सर्वसवास्वपत्यानि जनयन्ति सदा नराः । etc. etc. ।

यत्नेदानीं महासर्प सस्कृते वृत्तं दृश्यते ।

तं ब्राह्मं अहं पूर्वमुक्त्वान् भुजगोत्तम ॥ etc. etc.,

This is again the reason why he makes Sri Krishna say in the Anusasana parva that the devotees of God can never be sudras and that every devotee is a vipra and that everyman who is not a devotee of God is a sudra to whichever varna he may belong.

न शूद्रा भगवद्भक्ताः भागवताः स्मृतः ।

सर्वे वर्णेषु ते शूद्राः ये ह्यभक्ताः जयादने ॥

TO THE HINDUS IN PAKISTAN AND INDIA

Hardly have the Hindus got over the shocks of Noakhali, Punjab and N. W. F. Province when they are again faced with what appears for the time being to be nothing short of a tragedy. The Hindus of Sind, N. W. F. Province, West Punjab, East Bengal and the Surma Valley of Assam find themselves politically cut off from their natural moorings. And the fear has come to their hearts that legal, economic, cultural, social, moral and religious bonds, too, will similarly be rent asunder—The untoward incidents that are still rampant without any check do not augur well.

Moved as we are by these regrettable events, we cannot but warn our co-religionists in Pakisthan against being panicky. A bad situation requires cool thinking and firm action. In the name of Sri Ramakrishna and swami Vivekananda and all that is great is our ancient religion, we implore our brothers in Pakisthan not to lose heart in this hour of trial. They must assert themselves all the more and hold their ground with confidence and determination. Hinduism cannot die. As Sri Ramakrishna said, "The Hindu religion alone is the Santhana Dharma...It has always existed and will always exist." We are proud of Hinduism not only because we are Hindus, but also because Hinduism has in it some intrinsic and unique value which the world cannot afford to lose. Because of this inner strength Hinduism defied the cataclysms of the past, and it will survive the tragedies of the future. Here are the prophetic words of Swami Vivekananda: "Believe, believe the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord had gone forth—India must rise...Rejoice: The flood of spirituality has risen. I see it is rolling over the land resistless, boundless, all-absorbing."

In fact, the situation cannot be hopeless unless we make it so. In the past, smaller, nay, microscopic minorities not only protected their own, but even made history. Mere number is not the decisive factor. The more cogent factor is the dynamic spiritual force which can revitalise all social forms. In the words of Swamiji, what we want are "Energy, love of independence, spirit of self-reliance, immovable fortitude, dexterity in action, bond of unity of purpose and thirst for improvement."

With this moral background the Pakisthan Hindus should turn to their concrete problems. We are aware that many people are thinking of leaving their hearths and homes. It is natural that under present unsettled conditions men in isolated pockets should try to protect their children and the honour of their women by moving to safer places like district or sub-divisional towns. It is also reasonable and necessary to transfer surplus cash and valuables from rural areas to reliable banks in safer regions. But there can be no wholesale exodus. For movement on such a gigantic scale involving millions of people is beyond the competence of the mightiest Government. Besides, such a defeatist mentality will carry the Hindus nowhere. On the contrary, it will spell disaster. We also deprecate the partial migration of the upper ten thousand: for that will make the poorer people all the more helpless and expose them to exploitation and conversion. Moreover, it is cowardly.

The more reasonable method is to reorganise Hindu society and knit it into a compact whole so that the Hindus may face the situation effectively. For this we have to uproot many social excrescences such as untouchability, caste, privileges and social exclusiveness. The services of priests as also barbers and washermen, for instance, should be available to all Hindus. Public temples, tanks, educational and other Hindu cultural and religious institutions should be thrown open to all Hindus. Restrictions about domestic servants on grounds of caste should be considerably relaxed. We should now judge the worth of a man not by his birth, but by his character and conduct."

Hindu women must be more heroic than they have hitherto been. They should take all possible means in their power to defend their honour. Resistance under all circumstances shall be their watchword. They should behave in such a way that assailants will find it too dangerous to molest them.

We remind the Hindus of Pakistan that no Hindu ever lose his or her religion by the mere fact of forced conversion, eating of prohibited food, abduction, etc., through the violence of miscreants. Such victims should be forthwith taken back into the fold and treated with greater respect.

Then the Pakistan Hindus must be self-reliant. The rest of the Hindu world will not forget them; rather it will help them. Nevertheless, the Pakistan Hindus must have their own constructive programme. There are enough persons of light and leading among them for this. It will not do to depend entirely on others.

And we need not totally lose faith in the majority community from the very beginning. For the good of the State, if not for any other reason, Pakistan, faced with the task of running a Government, will have to conciliate such a big and influential minority as the Hindus. Besides, two communities who interpenetrate at every turn, cannot remain inimical for a great length of time. There is also the moral factor to be considered. We believe that through the force of circumstances sense will soon return to the misguided fanatics, and they will behave more like rational beings. The moral, cultural and spiritual strength of the Hindus will also gradually influence the sister community. The leaders of Pakistan are waking to the gravity of the situation.

So Pakistan Hindus should make a combined effort to maintain their legitimate rights. They cannot die so long as they are determined to live as Hindus without yielding to threat or enticement and without causing internal disruption or unnecessary aggression.

To the Hindus of West Bengal and East Punjab we appeal in the name of the common heritage and ties of love that exist between the two halves of the provinces. In Bengal the strong affinity once unsettled is a settled fact; East Bengal and West Punjab must be made to realise that the other half has not left them in the lurch. The underlying unity must assert itself in various forms of monetary succour, protective help and spiritual encouragement. In fact, West Bengal and East Punjab must ever act as an elder brother to a younger.

Belur Math (Howrah)
July 26, 1947.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA
General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission,

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Three Martyrs To Hinduism

It was on August 4th that we learnt from the daily press of the gruesome murder by Muslims of the two brothers, Ramasimhan, Manasimhan and his wife at the deceased's house in Perinthalmanna in Walluvanad taluk. Ramasimhan, the elder brother was known as Kilimanni Unnian Sahib and was a leading jenmi in Ernad and Walluvad taluks. He was attracted early to Hinduism and was converted to Hinduism last year in spite of strong opposi-

tion from Muslims. He assumed the name of Ramasimhan and was leading an exemplary Hindu life using his wealth for charity, for the renovation of temples and for building a Hindu temple near his house. All these acts were making enemies for him in the ranks of his muslim relatives and friends, who made life very difficult for him. He bore with those hardships and stoutly refused to submit to reconversion. It was recently that his brother also got himself converted to Hinduism and

married a Nambudri girl. This was a sufficiently provocative evidence of Hindu influence spreading with Ramasimhan as the centre. Ramasimhan was proving to be an increasing danger to Islam and so he was done away with along with his brother and the innocent Hindu wife who paid with her life for Hindu tolerance.

We have not yet heard of any acts of retaliation from the Hindus, the Hindus as usual following the policy of masterly inactivity or of 'let-us-wait-and see'. We don't know how many houses would have been burnt down and families rendered homeless, if anything like this had happened to one who is a first-hand Muslim or a second-hand Muslim. All that the Hindus have done is to issue statements or to lead a humble delegation to the Madras Government asking them to depute a senior police officer to investigate vigorously in the matter and to bring the offenders to the book. Is all self-respect and devotion to Hinduism dead in the Hindus that they will be content to leave the matter there? We think that they must know better and act with more manliness in the name of these martyrs to Hinduism.

At this rate no man is safe to follow the religion he likes. Ramasimhan and his brother became converts to Hinduism by their own persuasion, not by external pressure or coercion. Religion is a deep personal matter, more personal than honour. To be true, it must be able to defy coercion of the most extreme type. A modern civilised state must not only allow its people to have the freedom of following their own respective religions, but must protect them against the insult and provocations of other religionists who are fishing for converts. India is predominantly the land of religious freedom and in a Free India, we are sure, every man will have the maximum of it. It is very encouraging to note that the Government of the Indian Union has already on the anvil a measure penalising all kinds of religious conversions. In the meantime the Hindu leaders of Malabar must focuss the attention of the Government on the cause of these three martyrs who gave their lives for Hinduism. They must make it an all India issue.

A little straw shows which way the wind blows. If this is not nipped in the bud, it may develop into a big conflagration, the like of which is consuming the North in spite of the Herculean efforts of the Government to quench it.

The Devadasi System in Temples

The Devadasi system (Devadasi literally meaning maids dedicated to God or in the language of Mr C Vijayaraghavachariar of Salem, eternal maids who by their accomplishments maintain a school of attractive vice under the shadow of holy temples) was in the beginning a nursery of dancing, music and other arts. Later on it degenerated and became the emotional backwaters of society. An agitation nearly half a century old, is still being carried on to abolish this vice, this blot on Hindu religion and society. Much credit is due to Dr. (Mrs) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi who has been the chief moving figure in this agitation since the last twenty years. She was the first woman member to bring this matter before the Madras Assembly and to move a resolution asking the Government to undertake immediate legislation to abolish this evil. In a recent letter to the *Hindu* she writes:

A friend writes to me enclosing a cutting from a Delhi newspaper. The writer of the article was good enough to refer to my reform activities in the Madras Assembly twenty years before to put down the Devadasi evil. A short history of this legislative effort for the last half a century or more will be of interest to the younger generation.

The Hindu consciousness did realise the serious nature of this evil more than of a century before. Even as back as 1892, Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar of Salem, speaking in the Pre-Montague Supreme Council, expressed the hope that "the subject of these eternal maids who by their accomplishments maintain a school of attractive vice under the shadow of holy temples would be dealt with when the Government saw its way to attend to the long-standing national grievance, the reform of law relating to religious endowments." The Indian

State of Mysore totally prohibited this practice as early as 1910. It must be said to the credit of our Indian reformers that the agitation to eradicate this practice has been going on constantly in the Central Assembly. The Government of India had been actively interesting themselves in this question of Devadasi legislation since 1906-07, when signing the International Convention for the suppression of immoral traffic in women and children.

The Bills were introduced in the Central Assembly which were referred to the Select Committee and the reports were all in favour of this reform. Consequently, Provisions 372 and 373 of the Indian Penal Code, were enacted to prosecute and punish guardians and trustees of the temples for dedicating girls as Devadasis. But sad to say, this law applied only to girls under the age of 18. Hence both the guardians and the trustees of the temples have been evading the law by postponing the ceremony to older girls and women after the age of 18 or so. Hence, this law proved ineffective in abolishing the dedication *in toto*.

On 5th November, 1927, after the introduction of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, the first woman member brought this matter before the Madras Assembly and moved a resolution asking the Government to undertake immediate legislation to abolish this evil still widely prevalent in all the temples in South India. The resolution was accepted unanimously by the Assembly. Two Bills were introduced, one of which was an amendment to Section 44 of the Hindu Religious Endowments Act, on the same lines as the Mysore G. O. empowering the trustees to enfranchise the inams in favour of the Devadasis and thus release them from the obligation of their service in the temples. This Act was certainly beneficial to those temples where the management was enlightened. The other Bill aimed at the prohibition of the ceremony of dedication itself. Not only the inam-holding Devadasis but also others who had nothing to do with the temples dedicated girls for the purpose of prostitution.

CUSTOM ABOLISHED IN SOME PARTS OF INDIA

To supplement the above Act and to complete the work of the necessary reforms in the temples, a Bill was introduced for totally prohibiting this practice of dedication in the temples and thus penalise the parties, both the guardians and the trustees of the temples in 1929. It was circulated by a dilatory motion by the then Government for public opinion and the women organisations and the public gave their whole-hearted support. After 1930, the Bill was not proceeded with owing to the non-co-operation movement. It is a matter for congratulation that while the agitation and the demand for urgent reform in the temples was going on in this Presidency, the Indian States of Travancore, Cochin and even Portuguese Goa, and recently Pudukottah, had passed measures for the immediate abolition of this custom. Also, the Bombay Government followed suit and passed a law in 1934 for wiping out this system in their Province.

Gandhiji wrote in "Young India" in 1927 and in the "Harijan" of the 25th September 1937, as follows:—"I wholly agree with the mover of the Bill that the reform is as urgent as prohibition. I hope with her that before many months have passed, the Devadasi system will cease to have legal sanction."

Srimati Ammannappa Raja re-introduced the Bill, during the last Congress Ministry in 1937, which was referred to the Select Committee and the Select Committee also unanimously reported in favour of this reform in the temples. The Ministry resigned owing to the intervention of the War and the Bill was left in the Select Committee stage.

Now, we are thankful to the present Madras Ministry for having taken up this reform in earnest as there are still certain temples in the

City itself and outside permitting dedication within their precincts, in spite of protests from women organisations and vigilance bodies and repeated circulars from the Hindu Religious Endowments Board. There are also small temples in the South which do not come under the jurisdiction of the Hindu Religious Endowments Act, which will only respond to the law penalising the practice.

Therefore, now when India has attained Independence and we are under a National Government, there cannot be any excuse for non-interference with pseudo-religious customs and practices, detrimental to public decency and morality. We are sure that the next Assembly session will pronounce its verdict once for all and thus end the ancient evil, a blot on Hindu religion and society.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE VISION OF INDIA: BY
SIR KUMAR MITRA PUBLISHED BY CAL-
CUTTA CULTURE PUBLISHERS, COLLEGE
STREET, CALCUTTA, PRICE RS. 3. PAGE 231

The two brilliant thought jewels that have decorated the crown of India from the earliest times are the oneness of all existence and the divine destiny of man. India's early fathers saw in the depths of their meditation this divine efflorescence waiting for man when man will realise that he is infinite existence knowledge. Bliss and 'Heaven and Earth equalised join hands in the bliss of the Supreme.' From this sublime seeing have come down all India's philosophy, religion, the essential things of culture, the beginnings of the future spirituality of her people. And with this vision has India attempted to solve the most vital of her problems, the problem of harmony between life and spirit.

India had this vision from Rigvedic times to the present day, though some times she lost it or it got blurred, but got it back rejuvenated by the help of her great sons. Nothing helps us to gain this glorious vision as a retrospect into, and appraisal of India's cultural past. By so doing we get opportunities to see the spirit of India fulfilling herself in various ways when vicissitudes threatened her. The author in this book has given us such a retrospect and helped us to recapture the vision that is India's. The retrospect is mainly inspired by the thought of Sri Aurobindo, an attempt being made in it to study from the standpoint of evolutionary history the progress of man towards his divine destiny, as envisaged in the Masters vision of the future. Each chapter tends to focus this vision on a particular aspect of man's cultural evolution—the first on the spiritual adventure of India, the second and third on unity, the fourth on art, the fifth on a new world, the sixth on history and its record of the march of man towards his supreme goal.

In the first chapter the author has traced the discovery and affirmation of Satchidananda in terrestrial life from the time of the *Rigveda* to modern times in supermen like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo. How did they discover this? The author answers, by knowledge, which to the Upanishadic seers was always knowledge by an identity with

the object of knowledge in a higher than the mental plane of consciousness.

That it is in a consciousness beyond mind that our harmony between life and spirit is effected and that man is reborn as divinity is a wisdom as old as the Upanishads. It is the same wisdom Sri Aurobindo claims as his special contribution, the gaining of the Supermind. The author has ably and impressively presented the thesis of Sri Aurobindo but has evidenced the common weakness of Aurobindoites, namely, lack of understanding of Sankara and his philosophy. The author writes: 'He (Sankara) affirmed the impermanence of life, and tried to substantiate this pessimistic view in the light of his own one-sided interpretation of the ancient scripture, (p. 28) Sankara only affirmed the relative impermanence or unreality of the world side by side with the reality of Brahman, which to him was the absolute unchallengeable reality. As a matter of fact, Sankara had no world-view. His was Brahman view. The whole of the beginning portions of his Sutra Bhashya is devoted by him to refute the Sankhya view that the world derives itself from the inert lifeless Pradhana and for establishing his thesis of the spiritual view of the world. For those of lesser understanding Sankara gives his Vivartavada which means that the world is, as it were, an emanation from Brahman. And for those of better understanding he gives the Advaita teaching that all is of the same Brahman, Sarvam Khalu idam Brahma. It is only lack of understanding of this philosophy that makes one say that this is a pessimistic view or one-sided interpretation of the ancient scriptures.'

In the second chapter the author makes a powerful plea that India is one geographically and culturally. To day, more than ever when India is cut up is this vision of oneness the supreme need. Among chapters that follow, the vision of Ajanta is an appreciatory and comparative study of Ajanta frescoes, and the one entitled 'Integral vision in History', a presentation of Sri Aurobindo's view of history as a progressive self realisation of Satchidananda. The book bears ample testimony to the author's integrating vision of India's chequered history and culture and deserves to be read by all lovers of India and her culture.

CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION : BY SWAMI SHIVANANDA. PUBLISHED BY THE SHIVANANDA PUBLICATION LEAGUE, RIKHIKESH, HIMALAYAS, PRICE RS. 5 PAGES 412.

In the nine well constructed chapters that comprise the book, the author has given very practical hints on spirituality. If the modern world tests religion by the power and efficiency it can give, Hindu religion has got enough in its treasures to prove its quality in the test. It says, learn the art of meditation and concentration and then if you are a student, you will be a better student, if you are a doctor, you can be a better doctor. And more than all, they can make you a better Man. It is such practical religion that the Swamy presents in this book, a religion which none can afford to ignore if they want to lead an efficient and effective life.

To a large extent the author has followed the traditional path of Ashtanga Yoga discipline where sage Patanjali gives the eight-limbed yoga comprising of yama (internal control) niyama (external control) asana (right posture) Pranayama (control of breath) pratyahara (withdrawing the mind from external objects) dharana (keeping the mind on the object of meditation) dhyana (uninterrupted meditation) Samadhi (self-absorption and bliss through meditation). Quite in the orthodox style the author warns us of the modern obstacles to meditation and concentration and gives the encouraging and rosy results that crown the efforts. None has found out till now any shortcuts to perfection. Those who have achieved it have gone along the uphill path of hard discipline and daily practice. But we want perfection but not the things that make for perfection. The present book more than being a guide affords us the promise and encouragement for launching ourselves on such self saving endeavours.

ONENESS WITH GOD: BY MINOCHER K. SPENCER. PUBLISHED BY THE SPIRITUAL HEALING CENTRE, R. S. PURAM, COIMBATORE. PRICE not mentioned, PAGES 338

Union with God, the highest reality and bliss is the goal promised by all religions. In

NEWS AND REPORTS

EAST PUNJAB REFUGEE RELIEF

and

CHITTAGONG FLOOD RELIEF

Ramakrishna Mission's Appeal

The public are now too well informed of the horrors in Punjab to need any reminder. The number of refugees and the dead and wounded is mounting daily. It is becoming almost impossible even for the Indian Government to cope adequately with the task of rendering relief to the sufferers. And yet no feeling heart can stand silently aside.

The Ramakrishna Mission has, therefore, decided to start Relief work in East Punjab, where it will work, as far as possible, in co operation with all other private organisations and the Government. The Mission has sent some of its trusted workers to organise the work, which will be expanded in accordance with the resources available.

regard to the means also there is general agreement between religions though there may be differences in language. The path lies through purity, self naughting and spirit-affirmation. The author in this work has taken pains to show how both in regard to the means and the end the great religions of the world speak with one voice. It must be said to the credit of the author that he has drawn largely upon Hindu religion and has dwelt at length on the yogas. But the quotations which the author uses in abundance hang loosely and defeat the purpose of coherence and clarity. As an attempt to popularise the general notions about the various religions, the book is to be encouraged.

A DISCIPLE OF SRI RAMA-KRISHNA : BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA. PUBLISHED BY BUDDHADEV CHATTERJEE, VIVEKANANDA SANGHA, BUDGE BUDGE, 24 PARGANAS, BENGAL. PRICE ANNAS SIX. PAGE 26.

Manomohan Mitra, the subject of this booklet occupied a prominent place of among the lay disciples Sri Ramakrishna. In his introduction to the Bengali life of Manomohan Swami Virajanandaji writes: What characterised Manomohan was his profound and fiery absorption in the words and thoughts of the Master. When he used to talk about Sri Ramakrishna he got inspired and an apostotic fervour was noticed in him by all.

Manomohan was attracted to the Master very early in life and had the precious fortune of receiving the special affection of the Master. Manomohan's life was full of adversities and reverses, but his faith in the Master kept him up cheerful and optimistic. He had rare spiritual experiences. Towards the end of his life Manomohan became more and more absorbed in the meditation of the Master and left this world in the consciousness of the Master.

This is the only account in English of the life of this lay disciple. Swami Jagadiawananda has done a real service to the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna by making the details of this great and pious life available to them.

The Mission is also starting Relief work in the floodstricken areas of the Chittagong Division. Our workers are already in the field. The loss of houses and property in the area is immense in comparison with the poverty of the people, and a substantial amount will be needed to put them on their feet again.

We appeal to the public to help the Mission in cash and kind to enable it to discharge the humanitarian task effectively and efficiently. Donations earmarked for either of the above activities will be thankfully received at any of the following addresses: (1) The General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah; (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta 13; (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta 3. **SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,** General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.

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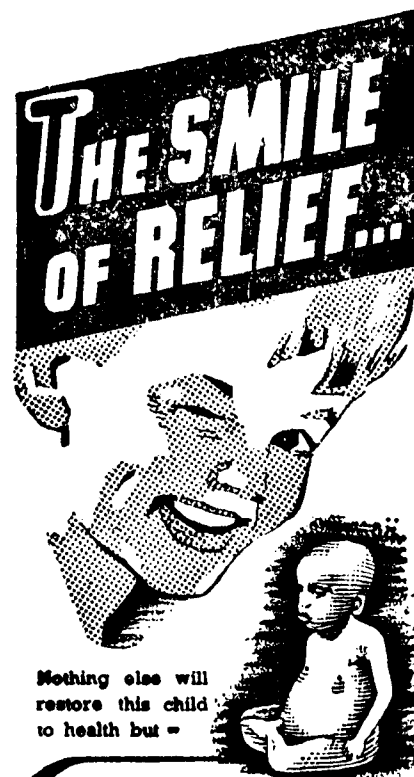
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