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VOLUME XXXVIII . NUMBER 7



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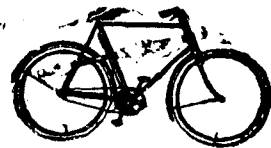
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Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXXVIII

NOVEMBER 1951

No.

A LETTER OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

(Translated from Original Bengali)

ALM

MY DEAR—

16. 9.

Just received your card and knew the contents thereof. ... I am pleased that the work you are engaged in is going on well. Don't be worried or f regarding funds. Remember always that it is the Lord's work that you are. Consider it not as *your* work. You are a mere servant and you must serve to th of your ability. If you too have to get distracted over the question of mone where is then any difference between you and an ordinary man? Knowing that y doing the Lord's work, you must work on without any anxiety whatsoever. Know He is there above all as the Master. As He will deem it meet, so will He gra inspiration. You have only to remain ever-ready for doing your best and you sha absolutely flawless in this regard. This done, you have done your duty.

Take good care of your health, for if the body is not healthy and strong what will you work? You should take care of your body for the sake of the Lord. I am happy to know that you have been able to carry on with your japa meditation. It goes without saying that you must practise japa and meditation. how will you be able to work? It is japa and meditation alone that will give y strength to work. Let the work continue as it is going on now. It will shape its itself. Have no fear or anxiety over that.

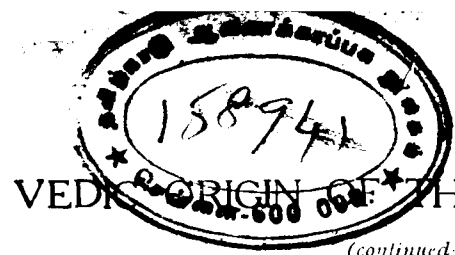
Various calamities are befalling the various parts of the country this year. Lord alone knows His own will. But as far as you are concerned, this is a opportunity for you to serve the Narayanas. Serve full-heartedly and become h. Such opportunities seldom come. Know this and work on.

Mahapurusha has in the meantime collected Rs. 120/- by begging from the A market and the public for helping the East Bengal famine relief work and se amount to the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission. Some more contributi expected. Mr. Frank has been labouring hard for this. ...

My health is now a little better, now a little worse, and it goes on th. How can I expect my health now to be what it used to be previously? Whatever the Lord keeps one in, that alone is beneficial. To be able to keep the mind cent His lotus feet, is the main thing. This body is not a thing to last for ever. To b to continue remembering Him, who is the Eternal Helper, is the supreme gain. ...

My good wishes,

TURIYAN



VEDIC ORIGIN OF THE IDEAL OF 'SERVICE' (C)

(continued from the previous issue)

THE QUINTESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL IMPORT OF THE PURUSHA-SUKTA

The Purusha-sukta (*Rig-veda* X. 90; also be found in the *Yajur-veda* Chapter [XI, in an expanded form), of all Vedic hymns, is unique for various reasons. It marks most clearly the liberation of the Hindu minds from the soteriological bounds, realising the expansion of human consciousness beyond the timid limits of a sort of self-imprisonment. The appeal and the effect of the Sukta on the devout Hindu minds have continued to be more or less diminished down the ages. What is the secret of its power? Indeed, it admits a variety of theological interpretations. But it moves the Hindu hearts, who follow the Commentator Sayana admits its creative character, is its tremendous spiritual import. In a language understandable to the modern man the inner spiritual fire of the Sukta has been revealed in the following inspired words:

Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. The Purusha himself sacrificed himself to create this world. Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your name, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make a bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life. Bring all forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour—green, blue or red, but mix all the colours up, and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. The results will take care of themselves'.¹

This is how Swami Vivekananda interprets the spiritual import of the Sukta as modern man requires understanding it.

Vide: *Thus Spake Vivekananda*, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4, 4th Edn. 1946, p. 67-68.

There has been no great character either in Indian mythology with its typical Dadhichi or in Indian history with its unique Gandhiji, who was not, knowingly or unknowingly, inspired by the mighty spiritual vibrations of this Sukta. The Hindu understands the spiritual core of the Christ of the Cross so well because, he can imagine that somehow, it is the same inspiration of self-immolation for the good of others that made the Crucifix, a Saviour.

Total self-immolation for the good of the world is the acme of the ideals of renunciation and of service. And nowhere is the ideal of perfect self-immolation for the sake of others more effectively, though symbolically, preached as it is done in the Purusha-sukta.

Whether or not the Purusha-sukta is an interpolation in the *Rig-veda*, no fair and knowing scholar can ever deny that it is Vedic at any rate. *Yajur-veda* is certainly one of the Vedas. Another proof of the Vedic origin of the ideal of service is thus established.

THE CONCEPT OF DANA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Among the spirituo-social functions of the Vedic Indo-Aryans *dana*, or making gifts (charity) stands out prominently. What constitutes *dana*?

'What constitutes (dana) gift according to the sastra has been discussed from very ancient times. There is a distinction between *yaga*, *homa* and *dana*. The first is constituted by abandoning something that belongs to one, intending it for a deity and accompanying it with Vedic mantras; *homa* is throwing into

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VEDIC ORIGIN OF THE IDEAL OF 'SERVICE'

fire something belonging to oneself over which one abandons one's ownership and which (thing) is intended for a deity; *dana* consists in the cessation of one's ownership over a thing and creating the ownership of another over that thing and this last occurs when the other accepts the thing, which acceptance may be mental or vocal or physical; vide Sabara on Jaimini IV. 2. 28, VII. 1. 5, IX. 4. 32 and the Mitakshara on Yajnavalkya II. 27'.²

Dana, though usually associated with *yaga* typifies an extra-soteriological urge of the Vedic minds. The concern of *dana* is not deity but man to whom the gift is made. Devala defines sastric *dana* as follows:

'that is described as *dana* when wealth is given according to sastric rites so as to reach a receiver who is a fit recipient as defined in the sastra. What is given to a worthy person without an eye to any particular object (to be achieved by such gift) but solely with the idea of doing one's duty, that is called *dharma-dana*.'³

Taittiriya Upanishad (I. 11) counsels about the proper mode of making gifts as follows:

'One should give with faith. One should not give without faith. One should give with plenty. One should give with modesty. One should give with fear. One should give with sympathy.'⁴

² Vide. *History of Dharmasastra* by Panduranga Vaman Kane M.A., LL. Vol. II. Part Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1941, P. 841.

³ *ibid.* P. 842.

⁴ Dr. R. E. Hume's translation, Vide. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1951, P. 282.

⁵ देयमार्तस्य शयनं स्थितश्रान्तस्य चासनम् । नृषितस्य च पानीयं क्षुधितस्य च भोजनम् ॥

चक्षुर्दद्यात् मनो दद्यात् वाचं दद्यात् सुभाषितम् । उत्थाय चासनं दद्याद् एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

⁶ 'Gifts of various kinds and donors have been highly eulogised in the *Rig-veda*. There *dana-stutis* (eulogies of gifts) in Rg. I. 125 (where the gifts made by king Svanaya son of Bhavay to Kaksivat are praised and *dana* in general eulogised in verses 5-7), I. 126. 1-5 (where the praise is continued), V. 61 (where Syavasva praises donors Taranta, Purumilha and Rathav VI. 47. 22-25 (praise of the donor Prastoka Sarnjaya) VII. 18. 22-25 praise of the gifts made by S. Paijavana), VIII. 5. 37-39 (praise of Kasu Caidya), VIII. 6. 46-48 (praise of Tirindira Parasav VIII. 46. 21-24 (Praise of Kanita), VIII. 68. 14-19, X. 62. 8-11 (praise of Savarni). vide. *History of Dharma Sastra*, by P. V. Kane, P. 837.

⁷ 'A notable feature of the etiquette of the Rig-vedic age was the great store set on hospitable. The frequent epithet of Agni, viz., *Atithi*, the beloved guest in human abodes, takes for granted

On gifts the *Mahabharata* says:

'To the sick a bed must be given, to weary of standing, a seat, to the thirsty, a drink, to the hungry food, and to the blind sight; one must give understanding; must give good counsel; standing up must offer a seat—this is the eternal rule

From the above quotations it should abundantly clear that the ideal of service is implicit in any *dana*, correctly do. And *Dana* is typically a Vedic institution. So it is proved once again that the origin of the ideal of service is Vedic.

THE INSTITUTION OF ISHTA-PURTA

Another concept closely connected with the ideal of *dana* is *Ishta-purta*. What is *Ishta-purta*?

'Apararka (290) quotes the *Mahabharata* defining *Ishta* and *Purta* "whatever is offered in a single fire (i.e. *grihya* fire and what offered in the three *brahmana* fires and the *made* inside the *vedi* (in *brahmana* sacrifice) called *ishta*; while dedication of deep wells, oblong large wells and tanks, temples, distribution of food, and maintaining public gardens—these are called *purta*." Apararka quotes Narada also "Honouring a guest, the performance of *vaisvadeva* constitute *ishta* while the dedication of tanks, wells, tem

(continued to the next)

places for public distribution of food and gardens is called *purta* and also gifts made at the time of eclipses, or on the sun's passage in a zodiacal sign or on the 12th day of a month". Hemadri quotes Sankha that nursing of those who are ill constitutes *purta*. Manu ordains (IV. 226-227) "one should always assiduously perform *ishta* and *purta*, which when done with *sraddha* and with wealth justly acquired become inexhaustible. One should ever resort to *dharma dana* (that mode of *dharma* which consists in gifts) which is either *ishta* or *purta*, according to one's means, after meeting a worthy person (as recipient) and with a pleased attitude of mind."⁸

It is evident from the above definitions of *ishta* and *purta* that the ideal of service is both implicit and explicit in *ishta-purta*. Now if the idea of *ishta-purta* existed in the Vedic times, it should go without saying that the ideal of service permeated the life-scheme of the people of the times of the Vedas. Is there any reference of *ishta-purta* in the Vedas?

That word has a high antiquity. It occurs in the *Rig-veda* and the sense seems to be "the cumulative spiritual result or merit due to a man's performance of sacrifices and

charitable acts." Rg. X. 14. 8. is addressed to one recently dead "may you join the pitris, may you be united with Yama and with your *ishta-purta* in the highest heaven."... In the *Atharva-veda*, the word occurs "may the *ishta-purta* of our ancestors save us (from our enemy) I sieze yonder (man or enemy) with divine wrath" (II. 12. 4). Vide also *Atharva-veda*, III. 29. 1. The *Taittiriya Samhita* V. 7. 1-3 has the interesting observation "when he comes by the Devayana paths, then make ye his *ishta-purta* manifest to him; whatever sacrifice was offered, whatever was handed over, whatever was given and the *dakshina* offered, may Agni present in all actions place all that in heaven among the gods for us." The *Taittiriya Brahmana* II. 5. 5. says "may *Ishta* and *purta* last for endless years; having sacrificed with an offering that is ever-lasting, a man ascended to the highest and ever-lasting world" and *Taittiriya Brahmana* III. 9. 14 remarks "the Brahmana should sing 'you made gifts, you performed sacrifices you cooked food (for serving to others).' Indeed *Ishta-purta* belongs to a Brahmana; he makes him (the king) prosper by *ishta-purta*." The *Vajasaneya-samhita* XV. 54 says, "O fire, may you be awake (or kindled), may you be watchful for us, join with *ishta-purta* (the sacrificer) and him with his *ishta-purta*. The *Kathopanishad* I. 1. 8 states that when a brahmana guest is allowed to stay in a house

of affection and respect generally shown to a guest. No wonder that in later literature detailed descriptions of the merits of hospitality should occur, and that hospitality to a guest should be elevated to a rank of a religious duty, as one of the five great daily sacrifices (*pancha-mahayajnas*). Vide, *History of the Indian People: The Vedic Age*, vol. 1, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1, p. 384.

"Hindus held undoubtedly very generous ideas about the duties which one owes to one's guest. They are second to none in the magnificence of their conception of hospitality. The guest-worship was a regular institution, it was an integral part of the duties of both house-holders and non-house-holders. "In men's house, their well loved guests was glorified." (*Rig-veda* VI. 2. 7.) The best room was reserved for him. (*Rig-veda* I. 73. 1.) The *Atharva-veda* has a hymn in which kind treatment of guests is considered equal to a sacrifice in point of merit. "When in truth the lord of guests meets with eyes the guests, he looks at a sacrificing to the gods. When he greets them, he enters upon consecration; when he offers water, he brings forward the sacrificial waters... When they fetch a gratification—is just the same as an animal for Agni and Soma that is bound (for a sacrifice). In that they prepare offerings, they so prepare the seat and oblation-holders." (*Atharva-veda* IX. 6. 3-6 etc) The Upanishads are more emphatic: "Let the guest be to you a deity!" (*Taittiriya* I. 11.). Vide: *The Principles of Hindu Ethics* By M. A. Buch M.A., 1921. p. 420.

We need hardly point out that hospitality was essentially an institution of service.

⁸ *History of Dharmasastra* by P. V. Kane, P. 844-5

without being served with food he destroys the *ishta-purta*, the issue and the cattle of the house-holder."

A close scrutiny of the above references will reveal the fact that the ideal of service was no mere passing fancy with the Indo-Aryans of the Vedic times. It was no mere custom or social behaviour. It was the compulsory spiritual practice of every knowing decent man who viewed life with an amount of seriousness. Then who was not serious about life in the Vedic times?

THE UNIQUE TESTIMONY OF A SUKTA IN THE RIG-VEDA (X. 117)

Finally, we shall now quote an inspiring Sukta from the *Rig-veda* with translation¹⁰, one of the few didactic pieces of the most ancient treatise of humanity, as the most dominating and convincing proof of the Vedic origin of the ideal of service. The name of the Rishi of the Sukta is Bhikshu.

न वा उ देवाः क्षुधमिदं ददुस्ताशितमुप

गच्छन्ति मृत्यवः ।

उतो रयिः पृणतो नोप दस्यत्युतापृणन् मर्दितारं
न विन्दते ॥ १ ॥

Providence has not surely ordained death only for the hungry and the ill-fed, for death in various forms does make short work even of such as have enough to eat. It is also certain that the wealth of him who (out of his resources) helps the needy does not get exhausted, whereas he who does not succour the poor has none to console him in time of trouble. (1)

य आधाय चक्रमानाय पितृवोऽन्नवान्सत्रफितायोपजग्मुषे ।

स्थिरं मनः कृणुते सेवते पुरोतो चित्स मर्दितारं

न विन्दते ॥ २ ॥

That man, surely, will have no one to con-

⁹ Vide *History of Dharmasastra*. P. 843-44.

¹⁰ The English translation (more or less popularly done) of this Sukta is quoted in *Anthology of Vedic Hymns* by Swami Bhumananda Sarasvati, The Lalal Kapur Trust, Anand, Lahore, 1935, P. 238-48.

sole him in time of trouble who, having plenty to eat, does not give a morsel to the indigent person that reduced to straits and, oppressed with hunger, comes to him for help, but hardens his heart and eats in the very sight of the poor man. (2)

स इमोजो यो गृहवे ददात्यन्नकामाय चरते कृशाय ।
अरमस्मै भवति यामहुता उतापरीषु कृणुते सखायम् ॥ ३ ॥

That man really enjoys his food who feeds also the poor emaciated beggar that goes about oppressed with hunger begging from door to door. He will have plenty of wealth as a result of such philanthropic deeds and charity will secure him friends in his old age. (3)

न स सखा यो न ददाति सख्ये सचाभुवे

सचमानाय पितृ

अपास्मात्प्रेयान्न तदोको अस्ति पृणन्तमन्यमरणं

चिदिच्छेत् ॥ ४ ॥

He is not a true friend who does not feed a man of his own persuasion who, oppressed with hunger, goes to him for help. One must not go to such a one but leave him forthwith, for, his house is really not a human dwelling. One should go to some other person who can be more easily approached if one wishes to help without much bother. (4)

पृणीयादिन्नाद्यमानाय तव्यान् द्रावीयांसमनु पश्येत पन्थ

ओ हि वर्तन्ते रथ्येव चक्रान्यमन्यमुप तिष्ठन्त रायः ॥

A strong man who can afford to help weaker seeking for help should surely succour the latter. He should, in doing so, look the long road he has still to cross on the journey of life during which, no one is sure of what may happen, for, riches go on revolving the wheels of a chariot—now going to one owner now to another. (5)

मोघमन्नं विन्दते अप्रचेताः सत्यं ब्रवीमि वध इत्स त

नार्यमणं पुष्यति नो सखायं केवलाद्यो

भवति केवलादी ॥

He who does not feed either a respectable guest or a (poor) friend in distress but eats

alone, has only sin to his credit. To speak the truth that wicked man gets his food in-vain. It is not food, but it is his death.¹¹ (6)

ज्ञेयाल आशितं कृणोति यन्नध्वानमप वृद्धे चरितैः ।

१ ब्रह्मावदतो वनीयान् पृणन्नापिरपृणन्तमभि प्यात् ॥ ७ ॥

The peasant provides himself and others with food only by cultivating the soil. A man learned in the sacred scriptures who teaches is superior to him that does not teach. A person of charitable disposition and ready to succour one in need, is superior to one who does not help. Therefore every man should make it his duty to perform his journey in life only by means of daily righteous dealings with all.¹² (7)

गन्धूयो द्विपदो वि चक्रमे द्विपात्विपादमभ्येति पश्चात् ।

पादेति दिपदामभिस्वरे संपश्यन्

पङ्क्तीरुपतिष्ठमानः ॥ ८ ॥

A rich man tries to walk on the same path as he who has twice as much wealth and the latter wishes to run after him who has thrice as much. When a still wealthier man appears on the scene the second class bourgeoisie leave both their superiors and inferiors behind and cringe before him and laud him. (8)

चिद्धस्तौ न समं विविष्टः संमातरा चित्र समं दुहते ।

तेश्चित्र समा वीर्याणि ज्ञाती चित्सन्तौ

न समं पृणीतः ॥ ९ ॥

'Charity purifies the perpetrators of forbidden acts; current, the river; earth and water, these articles that are worthy of being purified; and renunciation the twice-born. Austerity (purifies) those that are well-versed in the Vedas; forgiveness, the learned; water, the body; recitation (of the sacred verses) those who have their sins concealed; and truth, it is said, the mind. ... Knowledge is the purifier of intellect; and the knowledge of God is the purifier of individual souls.'

Yajnavalkya-Smriti, III, 32-34.

¹¹ How profoundly the Sukta in general and this mantra in particular influenced the teachers of dharma in India will be evident from the following two quotations:

अद्य स केवलं भुङ्क्ते यः पचत्यात्मकारणात् । यज्ञशिष्टाशनं ह्येतत्सतामसं विधीयते ॥

'He who gets his food prepared for himself only and eats alone, does really eat sin and not food. The principle laid down for the righteous is that one should eat after having utilised a portion of the food for some charitable purposes.' *Manu-Samhita*, II. 118.

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः । भुङ्क्ते ते खद्यं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥

'The good eating the remnants of Yajna, are freed from all sins: but who cook food (only) for themselves, those sinful ones eat sin.' *Bhagavad-Gita* III. 13.

¹² The ideological nativity of *Pancha-mahayajna*, a superb service-scheme of life, practised by Hindus down the ages, can be traced here.

The two hands of a persons are equal, but both of them do not do the same amount of work. Two cows born of the same mother do not yield an equal amount of milk. Two persons may be twins but their powers will be different. In the same way two persons though born in the same family cannot be opulent to the same extent. (9)

Have we not here a blazing proof of a highly advanced sense of altruism of the Vedic Aryans and their mature and lofty ideal of service? Even if there were no other testimony in the Vedas in support of our thesis, this one proof should have been enough to convince any rational mind about the Vedic origin of the ideal of service. But notwithstanding the fact that we have submitted a number of testimonies mainly from the *Rig-veda*, we do not claim that we have exhausted all the available evidences. Surely there is scope for much more elaborate work on this topic. As to the thesis proper, however, sufficient testimonies have been offered to carry conviction to any open mind.

WHAT IS REALITY?

THE OBJECTIVE AND THE SUBJECTIVE APPROACH

By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

That is real in the true sense, in the Vedantic view, which in all ways is, which is uncaused, which undergoes no change, which is not dependent on or contradicted by anything. The real is self-existent. It is unconditioned by time, space, and causality. It prevails at all times, in all places, in all events. It is also beyond time, beyond space, beyond the chain of cause and effect, beyond all distinctions, external or internal. Reality is eternal, infinite, absolute existence. Vedanta identifies reality with being. Whatever fails to be has but apparent existence and is, therefore, unreal. 'That which exists not, in the beginning or in the end exists not, even in the middle,'¹ says Gaudapada; because it is a mere appearance like a mirage. What is fleeting is unreal. What is constant is real. It is said in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, 'Of the unreal there is no being, of the real there is no non-being'.²

Is it then that Vedanta views the world of experience, where nothing can be considered permanent, as a mere appearance without being, a shadow without substance? No. Vedanta is not nihilistic. Vedanta does not view the world as a non-entity. Rather it contradicts the void doctrine (sunnyavada) of the Buddhist Nihilists (Vai-nasikas).³ In the Vedantic view there is no void; it is all being. The aim of Vedanta is not to prove the unreality of the objective universe, but to maintain the supreme reality of the absolute Being underlying it. The world of appearance, no doubt, obscures our vision of the ultimate

Being and its nature; yet we have a faint gleam of its presence in every object of experience. In truth, whatever we experience is characterized by being. Everything is perceived as existing; the sun exists, the sky exists, the earth exists, a tree exists, light exists, darkness exists, man exists, cloth exists, a pot exists, and so on. Had non-being or non-existence been the fundamental nature of things, then existence or 'isness' would not be a constant element in all that we perceive. Even when we say, 'there is nothing', we acknowledge the existence of space. The word 'there.' Indeed, existence is one fundamental fact that we face in each and every act of perception, and whatever we experience appears to be real. No one ever perceives anything, it mirage or dream, as unreal. Any illusion is real to the experienter. Its unreality is an after-thought.

It is not proper to consider existence as a mere abstraction achieved by intellect or imagination. A pot, for instance, its existence are inseparable, but not indistinguishable. They are not, however, distinct realities related to each other as substance and attribute, as in the case of a blue lotus. A lotus can be without blueness, and blueness without a lotus. But there can be no pot without existence, although there can be existence without a pot. Apart from existence a pot has no reality. In fact, it is one existence that manifests under various names and forms, such as sun, sky, earth, tree, man, etc.

¹ *Mandukya Upanishad Karika*, II:6; IV:31.

² II: 16.

³ *Vide Brahma-Sutras*, II:2. 26, Sankara's Com.

adow, and so forth. While names and forms change, existence ever remains the same.

Nor can it be maintained that existence inheres in objects as a universal feature. Truly speaking, distinctive forms, universal and particular, adhere to being and not to forms. We recognize the impermanence of the different aspects of an object but not the impermanence of its being. While the aspects change, its being endures. Otherwise, there could be no relation of cause and effect. We can discuss all distinctive forms, but not the being which sustains them. We can think of the modes of existence, whether in the form of an object, or an attribute, or an action, but not existence itself. The cognition of existence persists some way or other, whether any objective form subsists or not. Absolute non-existence we cannot conceive. We cannot deny anything without positing something. The truth is that the one and the same substratum, existence, is the reality in all distinctive forms. Our cognition of distinctive forms is partial, but the cognition of existence remains constant. It follows, therefore, that the distinctive forms are finite and fleeting, whereas existence is invariable and all-pervasive. 'Know that to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded,' says Sri Krishna.⁴ Non-contradiction is the mark of reality, according to Vedanta.⁵ The real is that which does not contradict itself nor is contradicted by anything else. Any object of experience is subject to two-fold contra-

diction. It falsifies itself and is also falsified by others. Apparently, things are independent and self-sufficient. But, actually, they are dependent and relative. No finite object can account for itself. For instance, an earthen pot has no existence apart from earth. It is all earth, pot is merely name and form. Even as such it is confined to particular space, particular time, and a particular state of consciousness, namely, waking. As we know, our waking experience is contradicted by dream-experience, and dream-experience again is contradicted by the experience of dreamless sleep. Similarly, what we call earth is also but name and form. Thus, in the last analysis, all concrete objects prove to be mere names and forms, pure existence being the only reality underlying them. As observed by Swami Vivekananda, 'Existence is the very ultimate generalisation which the human mind can come to'.⁶

The distinction between the real and the unreal is thus pointed out by Sankara: 'Every act of experience involves a twofold consciousness, the cognition of the real and the cognition of the unreal. Now, that is said to be real which never drops out of our cognition; and that to be unreal which does drop out. Thus, the distinction between reality and unreality depends upon our cognition...The cognition of an objective form, such as a pot, is fleeting; therefore its content is unreal. The cognition of existence, on the other hand, is constant; therefore its content is real.'⁷ That is to say, objective forms are unreal, the all-pervasive existence alone is real. Thus, there is one reality in all that we experience.⁸ We vaguely apprehend it

⁴ *Bhagavad-Gita*, II; 17.

⁵ *Vide: Panchadast*, III; 29.

⁶ 'Reason and Religion,' *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, p. 371.

⁷ *Bhagavad-Gita*, II; 16, Com.

⁸ It is interesting to note that modern science is gradually recognizing the fact that there is one fundamental reality behind the world of phenomena. Einstein's Generalized Theory of Gravitation leads to such an underlying unity. (*Vide* Dr. Albert Einstein's *The Meaning of Relativity*, Appendix and his article in "Scientific American," April, 1950.)

as mere existence even though our senses fail to discern it as it is. Kant conceives it as *ding-an-sich*, the thing-in-itself. It strikes our thought as something abiding and sets us to the search for Truth. There cannot be any quest of the absolutely unknown.

Thus Vedanta recognizes one immutable, immovable, indivisible being as the ground of all multiplicity and movement. It is the ultimate principle that supports and sustains all shifting forms. Diversities and changes are related to forms and are therefore apparent. The supreme cosmic principle is the sole reality. The world is real not as it appears but as pure being. The reality of the sun is not in its appearance as the sun but in pure being. The reality of light is not in its appearance as light but in pure being. The reality of beauty is not in its appearance as beauty but in pure being. The reality of virtue is not in its appearance as virtue but in pure being. The reality of thought is not in its appearance as thought but in pure being. Thought exists because of pure being. It is that which makes thought possible. It is the innermost essence of all. Vedanta calls this Atman (Self), the all-pervasive principle. It does not view the ultimate being as an objective reality external to thought.

Evidently, the Vedantic view of reality is quite the reverse of the Heraclitean, which denies being and upholds the process of becoming as reality itself. According to Heraclitus (535-475 B. C.), reality is a condition of unrest. 'We are and we are not,'

observes the Greek philosopher, who envisages the universe as an endless alternation of being and non-being.⁹ In the view of the Buddhist teacher, Nagasena, who flourished in India about 300 years later, there is nothing permanent in the entire physical and psychical universe, since everything sentient or insentient, is only becoming and has strictly no being. So he says: the Greek King Milinda (Menander): 'That which has not been, becomes; as soon as it has begun to become it dissolves away again.'¹⁰ A staunch advocate of the philosophy of change in the modern age is Henri Bergson, who says, 'Things and states are mere views, taken by our mind, of becoming. There are no things, there are only actions...In vain we seek beneath the change the thing which changes...the reality is movement.'¹¹ In the human mind, however, the idea of reality is ever associated with stability and permanence. What is changeable and perishable is regarded as unreal. What is constant and durable is regarded as real. Is there no basis of truth in this innate tendency of man? Is it quite contrary to fact?

Generally speaking, philosophers have maintained two different views of the world of experience. According to some, it is real; according to others, it is apparent. The former hold that we know things as they are in themselves; the latter, that we know things not as they are in themselves but as the senses perceive and as the mind conceives them. But whether the world of experience is viewed as real or apparent, in neither case can its eternal basis be determined. How can there be a continuous flow

⁹ *Heraclitus on the Universe*, LXXI, (Hippocrates, Vol. IV, The Loeb Classical Library, New York).

¹⁰ *Milinda Panha*, II: 3. 3, (*The Questions of King Milinda*, The Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Vol. 35).

¹¹ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, pp. 270-1, 327-8, The Modern Library, New York.

permanent events without a permanent background? Continuity implies a connection, a relation between the preceding and succeeding fact. If the antecedent vanishes before the subsequent arises, how can there be a relation? The sequence of cause and effect cannot hold in case everything is momentary. The seed must persist when the sprout grows in order to be the cause. This means that the seed undergoes change at the time in certain aspects but does not cease to exist altogether—its being endures. Further, as observed by Sankara, in case the things are momentary, they cannot have any existence beyond origination and destruction; so the two processes must be identical. Now, if there is any difference between the two, then it must be admitted that a thing lasts at least more than one moment. Therefore the doctrine of momentariness is untenable.¹²

Since both the physical universe and the mental are in a state of flux, one can pertinently ask: Do the ever-shifting elements gain themselves? Do they not require an eternal basis to sustain and integrate them? There must be something abiding, self-sustaining, to sustain all that is transitory. Moreover, movement is possible only in relation to something less moving or relatively unmoving. The series of the relatively unmoving will lead ultimately to the absolutely unmoving. So the ever-changing universe of mind and matter must have an unchanging background.

Then again, in case the world-order is appearance, it must have a basis of reality. There cannot be a mere appearance

without a substance. Appearance means something appears as other than what it is, as in a mirage the desert appears as a lake. 'No illusory perception is possible without a substratum,' says Sankaracharya.¹³

So the entire world of phenomena has one ultimate being as its ground and basis. This appears as manifold. This is the sole immutable essence of all changing forms, physical and psychical. But it is not a dark, dead, material entity, nor a dry, dull, stark abstraction. It is the ideal reality and can be realized as such. As the very being of the universe, pure existence is man's innermost self. So by realizing one's true self one can realize that. Indeed, the innermost self of man is the only unchanging principle in this universe of change. It is the sole witness of all physical and mental events. Changes can be known only by an unchanging observer. Being the knower *per se* the self cannot be known as an object. Still one can realize the self, inasmuch as it is of the nature of consciousness and self-shining. So says *Panchadasi* 'Though not an object of knowledge still the Self can be directly experienced because it is self-luminous.'¹⁴ Several Western philosophers beginning with Parmenides have acknowledged an immutable being in the order of becoming. Their views regarding the absolute being and the mode of reaching it, however, differ. According to some, the absolute is to be assumed or believed but cannot be known. Some say the absolute can be an object of knowledge. But very few of them regard the absolute as the supreme ideal attainable by man.

In the *Chhandogya Upanisad*¹⁵ the sage

Uddalaka teaches his son, Svetaketu, how one can know everything by knowing pure existence, and how one can know pure existence by knowing the self. Having studied the Vedas with his teacher for twelve years Svetaketu returned home at the age of twenty-four. His father noticed that he was very proud of his learning and said to him, 'Svetaketu, did you ask for that instruction by which the unheard becomes heard, the unperceived becomes perceived, and the unknown becomes known?' 'How can there be such an instruction, sir?' enquired Svetaketu.

Uddalaka: Just as, my child, by knowing a single lump of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, since all modifications are mere names arising from speech, the truth being that all this is clay; just as, my child, by knowing a nugget of gold all that is made of gold is known, since all modifications are mere names arising from speech, the truth being that all this is gold; similarly, by knowing the One we know all. Such is that instruction, my child.

Svetaketu: Surely, my venerable teachers did not know this. For, if they had known it, they would have given it to me. Kindly give it to me, sir.

Uddalaka: Be it so, my child. In the beginning it was Existence only, One without a second. Some say in the beginning there was non-existence only and from non-existence the universe arose. But how could that be? How could existence be born of non-existence? No, my child, in the beginning there was Existence only, One without a second... Of all these created things and beings, my child, pure existence is the origin, pure existence is the support, pure existence is the end... In that subtle essence all this has its being. That is Reality. That is the Self. That thou art, O Svetaketu.

Svetaketu: Please explain to me further, sir.

Uddalaka: Be it so, my son... Bring a fruit from this Nyagrodha tree.

Svetaketu: Here it is, sir.

Uddalaka: Break it.

Svetaketu: It is broken, sir.

Uddalaka: What do you see there?

Svetaketu: These extremely small seeds, sir.

Uddalaka: Break one of them.

Svetaketu: It is broken, sir.

Uddalaka: What do you see there?

Svetaketu: Nothing, sir.

Uddalaka: My son, the subtle essence you do not see, of that very essence the great Nyagrodha tree exists. Believe it, my son, That which is the subtle essence That all this has its being. That is Reality. That is the Self. That thou art, O Svetaketu.

Svetaketu: Please tell me more about the Self, sir.

Uddalaka: Be it so, my child. Just as a robber having led away a man blindfolded might leave him in a desolate place with hands tied, and as this man in that helpless state would turn to every direction and out for help, and as there-upon someone would rescue him and show him the way in every direction, and then by asking his way from village to village as the man would return home at last; similarly, a person who follows a true teacher gains the knowledge of the Self and becomes free.

The Vedantic view of reality does not rest as much upon an inquiry into the external universe as on an investigation into the inner nature of man. The fundamental difference between the subject and the object, the knower and the known, has been the clue in its search for reality. The chief instrument of investigation has been introspection rather than observation. Just as the external things, including the physical body, fall into the category of object, so does the mind. The mind is the knower within, for its movements are observed by the self, the knower *per se*. The self is beyond the body, the senses and even the mind, since the observer must be distinct from the observed. This distinction between the self and the mind has hardly been noticed by Western thinkers.

Though the subject and the object, the knower and the known, are related to each

¹² Vide *Brahma-Sutras*, II: 2. 20, Com.

¹⁴ III: 28.

¹³ *Mandukya Upanishad Karika*, II: 33, Com.

¹⁵ VI (Adapted).

er, yet the object is not real in the use in which the subject is. The object is variable, the subject is constant. The self remains one and the same despite all variations of the world, the body, the senses, and the mind. Being aloof from objects of experience it is unaffected by birth, growth, pain, pleasure, decay, and death, which belong to them. In waking hours, dreams, and dreamless sleep, diverse objects, external and internal, appear and disappear before the witnessing self without contaminating it in the least. 'The luminous self neither rises nor sets. It does not wax or wane. It shines of itself and illumines all else without any aid.'¹⁶ Moreover, it prevails as the transcendental Self beyond egoism, beyond the duality of the self and the other self. The seer perceives all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings. In the relative plane the non-dual Self is apparently bifurcated into the subject and the object, in other words, into spirit and matter. So these are the two different aspects of the one fundamental Reality. The object rests on the subject, as if it were smoke on fire. Just as fire does not depend on smoke, even so the subject shines as the transcendental Reality after the object disappears. Everything but the self fails. The self stays throughout. It does not contradict itself nor is contradicted by anything.

The existence of the object depends on the existence of the subject. Every form of existence presupposes the knowing self. Without postulating the self-intelligent power nothing can be affirmed or denied. Consciousness belongs to the knower as its very essence, and not to the known. So

the subject is self-aware, while the object is bereft of all consciousness. It is the subject that makes the object real. Being self-luminous the subject is self-evident. Whoever doubts his own existence? A person may doubt or deny the existence of everything else, including God, but not of himself. Even in denying himself he has to affirm himself. So the innermost self, the witness, is the first thing real. And we have seen that it is beyond contradiction. So the self is self-existent, and consequently identical with pure existence, the supreme cosmic principle. Again, consciousness is not an attribute or function or state of the self, but its very nature; the self is pure consciousness, awareness itself. So it follows that pure existence is identical with pure consciousness. Sankara observes, 'Many and diverse are the genera with their species, sentient and insentient. Through successive stages they are all included in one Supreme Existence, Pure Intelligence.'¹⁷

The self is the dearest of all, 'This self is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else and is innermost.'¹⁸ Anything that is dear is dear for the sake of self. So says Yajnavalkya to his wife, Maitreyi, 'It is not for the sake of the husband, my beloved, that the husband is dear, but for the sake of the self he is dear. It is not for the sake of the wife, my beloved, that the wife is dear, but for the sake of the self she is dear. It is not for the sake of the sons, my beloved, that the sons are dear, but for the sake of the self they are dear. It is not for the sake of wealth, my beloved, that wealth is dear, but for the sake of the self it is dear...It is not for the sake of anything, my beloved, that anything is dear, but for the sake of the self it is dear.'¹⁹ The self is the dearest of all, because it is the one source of all joy. It is bliss itself. That which gives joy is

dear to man. So we conclude that pure existence is not only pure consciousness but also pure bliss. Pure existence, pure consciousness, and pure bliss are identical. The Supreme Reality is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-chid-ananda).

From the absolute standpoint Reality (Brahman) is 'One only without a second'. From the viewpoint of the finite self under the spell of ajnana, the universe of multiple beings and things and its Ruler (Isvara) have a relational existence which prevails until the finite self realizes his identity with Brahman. All relativity, multiplicity, and difference belong to the realm of appearance, being superimposed on Brahman through ajnana. They disappear when Brahman, their substratum, is realized, just as the illusory snake disappears when the rope, mistaken for the snake, is found. Brahman is the substratum of manifoldness from the viewpoint of appearance. As far as the finite self is concerned, Vedanta recognizes the apparent reality of the manifold universe and also degrees of that reality. There is a difference in the realm of appearance

between the waking and the dream states even though from the standpoint of the absolute both are entirely false. There is a difference in the realm of appearance between the illusory snake and the snake that can bite, even though from the standpoint of the absolute both are entirely false. Thus Vedanta considers three major orders of existence:²⁰

(1) Absolute existence (paramarthi sattvam), the non-dual Brahman.

(2) Empirical existence (vyavahari sattvam), the domain of relativity, which persists for the finite self until he realizes the non-dual Brahman.

(3) Illusory existence (pratibhasika sattvam), such as a mirage, which is erroneous and serves no practical purpose.

The last two belong to the realm of appearance. The empirical world is not more real than the empirical self, and both depend on Isvara, the all-encompassing Ruler of the subjective and the objective. The empirical existence is universal. The illusory existence is due to false perception by the empirical self concerned.

TO THE SOCIAL REFORMERS

'Platform speeches have been made by the thousand, denunciations in volumes after volumes have been hurled upon the devoted head of the Hindu race and its civilization, and yet no good practical result has been achieved; and where is the reason for that? The reason is not hard to find. It is in the denunciation itself. Denunciation is not at all the way to do good.

Have no word of condemnation, even for the most superstitious and the most irrational of its institutions, for they also must have served some good in the past. Remember always, that there is not in the world any other country whose institutions are really better in their aims and objects than the institutions of this land. Even those customs that are now appearing to be positive evils, have been positively life-giving in times past, and if we have to remove these, we must not do so with curses, but with blessings and gratitude for the glorious work these customs have done for the preservation of our race.'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

¹⁶ *Drig-drishya-Viveka*, 5.

¹⁷ *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, II: 4. 9, Com.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I: 4. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, II: 4. 5.

²⁰ *Vide Vedanta Paribhasha*, II.

B

Ostentation, arrogance, and self conceit, anger as also harshness and ignorance, belong to one who is born, O Partha, for an Asura state. XVI. 4.

The divine state is deemed to make for liberation, the asura for bondage XVI. 5. *Nishkama-karma* is among personal virtues in that the doer has no selfish ends. One can do *nishkama-karma* in prohibitive acts. Corrupt official life or blackmarketing cannot be done in the *nishkama* way. One does an improper act without any selfish object. There are acts which are authorized or at any rate permitted. Both these kinds of actions have purposes. The action is to do them with a sense of duty alone in the spirit of sacrifice, without any personal ends to serve. Yajna is Vishnu according to a Vedic text. In commenting the verse

याज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत् लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
'ajnartha' is interpreted by the venerable Commentator by 'for the sake of Yajnu' and translators translate it for the sake of sacrifice; I render it 'in the spirit of sacrifice.' In any case it is not used in sense of Vedic sacrificial rite.

This matter does not rest with chapter alone. Throughout the Gita there are references to virtues which the sadhaka is adjured to practise in life. An exhaustive enumeration of the moral qualities referred to in the Gita will require citing a good fraction of it. It is enough to refer to a few of them:

अहंकारः = who has no sense of mine.
अकारः = who is not under the sense of I.
अलाभसन्तुष्टः = content with what one gets unasked.
निःस्पृहः = detached.
निःस्पृहः = beyond dualities.
निःस्पृहः = who is without any hate or quarrel.
निःस्पृहः = pure-souled.

विजितात्मा = who has conquered Self.

समदर्शनः = equal-minded.

सर्वभूतेहितैस्तः = devoted to the good of all.

विगतेश्चाभयक्रोधः = from whom has passed desire, fear and anger.

प्रशान्तः = extremely calm and serene.

वश्यात्मा = of controlled self.

दृढव्रतः = firm in his vows and observances.

पुण्यकर्मणः = virtuous and holy in conduct.

अद्वेषासर्वभूतानां = hating none.

मैत्र = friendly.

करुण = compassionate.

न ह्यप्यति न द्वेष्टि = neither rejoices nor hates.

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः = unruffled in mind over sorrows.

सुखेषुविगतस्पृहः = with no desire for enjoyments.

समःशत्रौ च मित्रे च = equiminded towards friend and foe, etc.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ vi. 29.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति । vi. 30.

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ vi. 31.

With the heart concentrated by Yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things, he beholds the self in all beings and the beings in the Self. VI. 29.

He who sees Me in all things, and sees all things in Me, he never becomes separated from Me, nor do I become separated from him. VI. 30.

He who being established in unity, worships Me, who am dwelling in all beings, whatever his mode of life, that Yogi abides in Me. VI. 31.

I will not go on adding.

So the criticism of the *Gita* as being still in rites and ceremonies of the Vedic type and that it does not stress morality as of the essence of the good life is wholly wrong.

The *Gita* is high Hinduism but of other literatures we shall speak later.

(to be continued)

THE UNWALLED CITY OF SPIRIT

By C. T. K. CHARI

'The Unwalled City of Spirit' is not just a plea for Mysticism. It is the assertion of the supremacy of Mysticism over any and every system of philosophy.—Eds.

The exquisite phrase is Ruysbroeck's. And there cannot be much doubt about the conjecture that it was inspired by Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1327), the 'father of German mysticism,' ranked by Dean Inge as 'next to Plotinus the greatest philosopher-mystic,' by Tauler (c. 1300-1361), who was himself a great contemplative, as 'a man of prodigious learning too profoundly versed in the subtleties of God and nature-wisdom for many of the scholars of his day rightly to understand him,' and by Görres (Cf. his *Die Christliche Mystik*, 5 vols; and the French translation, *La Mystique Divine*, 1854.) as 'une figure chrétienne presque mythique.' Tauler, Ruysbroeck (c. 1293-1381) and Suso, (c. 1295-1365) all members of the Brotherhood of the Friends of God, drew freely upon the actual words, sayings and sermons of Eckhart, notwithstanding his excommunication by the Bull of John XXII in 1329. The German *Meister* has often invited comparison with the great *Acarya* of Advaita philosophy — Śāṅkara. Notable studies are Max Muller's Gifford Lectures *Theosophy or Psychological Religion* (1892) and Rudolf Otto's *Mysticism: East and West* (1932). Max Muller, perhaps more frankly than Otto, stated the case for Eckhart by suggesting that 'A study of the Upanishads is the best preparation for understanding him.' Eckhart's 'formal declarations,' Evelyn Underhill admitted (*The Mystics of the Church*, p. 134), 'can hardly be reconciled with Christianity,' at least of the institutionalized variety one imagines. Eckhart and Śāṅkara expounded the characteristic tenet of mystical philosophy that the essential Godhead is indetermi-

nate, *nirguna*, devoid of qualities or predicates. Eckhart called it the *Grund*, *Bo* *Wurzel* (Ground, Base, Root). It is neither this nor that; it is the Being without being (*das Wesen ohne Wesen*). It is word (*Ungewortet*). 'Neti, neti,' is the only possible description of it according to Śāṅkara. Boehme, Tauler and Suso were in substantial agreement with Eckhart. The *Urground* (Primordial Ground), Boehme (1575-1624) maintained, is all Silence, Repose, Eternity, Peace. 'This Atman is silent,' Śāṅkara taught.

The dialectic of mysticism has received a patronizing treatment in the hands of modern scholars. One frequently hears that the supreme achievement of Hegel was consigning the twin delusions of the 'Ultimately Unknowable' and the 'Absolutely Indeterminate' to a common grave. The proposition that 'something is ultimately unknowable,' by the very terms of its assertion, contradicts itself. All our experience implies a beyond, an unknown related to the known. But to be at once continuous with experience, the beyond cannot be a sheer 'Unknowable.' There may be questions we have not answered, problems we have not solved, but we cannot assign limits to knowledge without transcending them, at least in principle. Similarly an absolute negation of all attributes or determinations stultifies itself. Unqualified mysticism, like an unqualified agnosticism, makes metaphysics, the study of Ultimate Reality, a virtual impossibility for it is futile to attempt to study that which *ex hypothesi* is without determination of any sort, the pure neutrum, 'the white in which all cows are black'. E

maintained that Categories are *Denk-Bestimmungen*, determinations of Thought. He supposed to have made metaphysics in the highest sense possible even if he did nothing else. Facts by being known are tested with rationality and reason by being real is embodied in fact. Many inpathetic modern expositions of Oriental mysticism have a pronounced Hegelian flavour. In the anxiety to come to terms with Hegelianism or Neo-Hegelianism, one does not stop to ask what sort of mysticism can possibly accommodate. At best a tentative mysticism' as Prof. W. E. Hocking has called it¹, trying to soften the denunciation by Hegel, Croce and Gentile. Each that is not definitely characterized may be revealed in an anticipatory mystical rapport with reality. As a 'practical attitude', mysticism has a certain priority over the philosophic accomplishment at any time accessible'.² The description of reality as one, immediate, ineffable is 'a psychological report (and a true one)' but, when as 'a metaphysical statement', is false.³

I have recently expressed the opinion in the *Philosophical Quarterly*, July, 1951, (pp. 59-73) that no mysticism worthy of the name can be content with the tentative precarious position assigned to it by idealist idealism. I have argued that the ontological denial of the unrestricted validity of the Law of Excluded Middle or *tertium non datur*, with the sort of logical indeterminateness that it seems to involve, provides a clue to mystical dialectics. The denial, on technical grounds, of the unres-

tricted validity of the law in modern mathematical logic finds a counterpart in mystical philosophy: the mystical denial is surer of itself. Mysticism is a more thorough-going empiricism than the current European logical empiricism: it insists that any metaphysic that cannot be directly tested or verified is meaningless. The mystic's claim to an immediate experience of ultimate realities is not less respectable than the scientist's claim to sensory verification or the artist's claim to aesthetic validation. The admission that the language coordinated to mystical experience entails an epistemological and ontological indeterminateness is no more patently nonsensical than the technical admission that a trichotomous logic, with a third value 'indeterminable' (I) besides 'true' (T) and 'false' (F), can be coordinated to, say, quantum physics. (Cf. H. Reichenbach, *Philosophic Foundations of Quantum Mechanics*, University of California Press, 1946; and my article 'Mysticism and the Language of Paradox' in *Prabuddha Bharata*, June 1951.)

I shall not argue the point here from the angle of modern symbolic logic but shall attempt to show what is involved in the ontological denial of the unrestricted validity of the *tertium non datur* if we set out from a 'coherence theory' of truth. Prof. Blanshard, who has given a very persuasive rendering of the theory (*The Nature of Thought*, George Allen & Unwin, 1948, 2 vols) opines that a fundamental denial of the Law of Excluded Middle will be suicidal. 'What thought then has to work

with is an x which is neither a nor $not-a$. And...under such a condition it plainly cannot start. What it is called upon to conceive is inconceivable.' (*Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 257.) If, however, we do not suspend the law, thought will construct under it a system that proves satisfactory. We are told that our ideal of knowledge does not, and cannot, go beyond a self-coherent system every part of which is mediated in turn by all the others and assigned by them its appropriate place. Denial of a significant system is meaningless; for negation, as an organon of knowledge, has for its presupposition and goal a system. If we deny the entire fabric of knowledge, we have nothing left against which the negation can be significant. (B Bosanquet, *Logic*, Vol I, Oxford, 1911, pp. 301-302.) Negation is but a dialectical moment in the ever-growing, concrete, self-coherent system of knowledge.

Now the ultimate denial of the 'Laws of Thought' may wreck a too ambitiously conceived speculative philosophy, but that is not an *a priori* reason for supposing that the laws are ultimate. The ontological denial of the unrestricted validity of the *tertium non datur* does not mean that of the two alternatives, 'The Law ultimately operates in Reality' and 'The Law ultimately does not operate in Reality', we vote for the latter; that would be to retain the law while impeaching it. The denial signifies rather that we surrender both alternatives as unambiguous descriptions or demands of Reality in its highest reaches. A serious ambiguity is introduced into metaphysical categories, affirmation and negation become equivocal in a more radical sense than the 'Coherence theory' allows if besides a (the 'tautology' of idealistic logic), $not-a$ (the 'pure negation' of idealistic logic) and the 'dialectical synthe-

sis' of a and $not-a$ (the 'identity difference' of idealistic Logic) there is ontological possibility *neither a nor not-a* nor their 'dialectical synthesis' a and $not-a$. The admission that thought can operate with so weird a possibility, that 'what it is called upon to conceive is inconceivable,' only illustrates how impotent it can become in dealing with its own soul. The ontologically 'indeterminable' can become an 'assertable' in any ordinary sense. The 'logico-centric predicament' (i.e. our inability to deny that logical postulates are valid of Reality without at the same time assuming them), of which Prof. Blanshard speaks, is not inescapable if experience inhabits a wider realm than thought and involves ultimate situations which a , $not a$, and any 'dialectical synthesis' of them, must *all* be denied, situations in which Reality cannot be unambiguously exhibited as a 'self-coherent intelligible' whole. The agnosticism this entails is an agnosticism of *thought* not an agnosticism of *experience*. No transcendence of consciousness is implied but an inscrutable transcendence in consciousness. I maintain that this sort of transcendence is the real driving force behind all creative inspiration and discovery. Speculative analysis at any and every stage is possible; judgments are indefinitely corrigible, because we *know* that all descriptions of Reality are equivocal and irremediable. The mystical contention is that consciousness or awareness extends into 'depths' where our principal categories are subject to 'indeterminable' limitations. The essence of mystical dialectic is not just this equivocal ego with a body, clothes, name, face, beginning and ending in time. In so far as I know myself as all this, I am other than what I know myself to be and yet

¹ See his essay contributed to *Contemporary American Philosophy*, Vol. I.

² See Hocking's early article "Mysticism seen through its psychology" in *Mind*, January, 1914, p. 42. Italics not mine.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 43. Italics not mine. Cf. Hocking's *Types of Philosophy* (Scribner's, N. Y., 1929), pp. XXXIII and his Hibbert Lectures *Living Religions and a World Faith* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1940).

arely different. The Self is the 'Wholly other' (*das ganz Andere*) not subject to the categories of identity and difference and any possible 'synthesis' of them that thought can construct and make intelligible of itself. The mystical 'paradoxes' stem from impossible or inadmissible questions but from questions which are both possible and admissible. The source of all problems transcends every conceivable solution. I suggest that 'Illusion' is little more than a crude characterization of the ontological situation. *Anirvacanīya* or 'undefinable' is a more rigorous statement of it. Prof. Hocking has said that mysticism is 'eloquent in psychology' but 'stammerer in metaphysics.' If I am right, all articulate and communicable knowledge is a stammering; it cannot give ultimate truth and yet presupposes it. The mystic, when he tries to communicate his insight, can only stammer; he is the first person to realize this and not his idealistic critic. Boehme wrote: 'I can but stammer of great mysteries like a child that is learning to speak; so very little can the earthly tongue express of that which the spirit comprehends.' (Cited by Evelyn Underhill, *The Mystics of the Church*, p. 217) With all his stammering, however, Boehme conveyed some hint of a spiritual experience that cannot be reached by thought at whatever dialectical level it functions.

It is instructive to re-examine, from the point of view I have sketched, some of the utterances of Meister Eckhart. His *Wüsteheit* is no Spencerian 'Unknowable.' To the Platonists, Eckhart was convinced that thought and reason permeate the world. In the Alexandrian language, he speaks of the Ideas not only as many but as one, the *logos* in which all things are received by the Father. But the very emptiness of the insight brings home the

conviction that all insight is rooted in mystery; a mystery not only for us but *per se*. The very distinctions on which knowledge rests—subject and object, thought and being, the is and the ought to be—are transcended in the *essentia* or *Wesen* of the Godhead. If the world of Ideas is *Wort* (the Word), the Godhead or the Absolute is *Ungewortet* (Wordless). In his sermon on 'The Divine Being' (*Meister Eckhart*, Pfeiffer's translation, adapted by C. De B. Evans, Vol. I, Watkins, London, 1924, p. 54), Eckhart says: 'No man can tell of God what exactly He is.' 'What a man knows he knows in its cause or in its mode or in its effect. But in these respects God remains unknown, for He is the first. Further He is modeless, i.e., unconditioned. And He is without effect, that is, in His mysterious stillness. Here He abides apart from names that are given to Him.' 'God transcends being. Nothing that has being, time, place, is proper to God.' (*Ibid.*, p. 210) 'God stands as high above being as an angel above a gnat.' In the tract on 'The Drowning' (*Ibid.*, p. 370) Eckhart exclaims: 'O unfathomable void, bottomless to thy creatures and thine own self...'

Eckhart's teaching concerning God is matched by his teaching concerning the soul. The soul, he maintains, is of high estate. There is something in it higher than all its modes—perception, memory, understanding: a synteresis, a spark, a spiritual light, a tabernacle, an imprint of divinity, something a-temporal and unextended, without *here* and *now*. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 32, 41-42, 73, 75, 81, 84, 164, 172, 237, 246.) It is neither this nor that; it is something more exalted. (*Ibid.*, pp. 36-38.) 'Our least interior act is higher and nobler than our grandest outward one and yet our loftiest interior act halts in God's unveiled presence in the soul.' (*Ibid.*, p. 45) Ruysbroeck in the *Spiegel der Ewigher Salicheit* says that 'when manifesting Himself, the Father elevates soul above the reason, in the Void without image. There the soul is simple, pure and without any content, and

in this pure vacuity, the Father brings forth His divine light. In this light, neither the reason, nor the senses nor observation have any share.' (cited by Leuba *Mind*, Jan 1905, p. 24.)

The time is past when we could invoke a naively conceived 'subconscious' or 'unconscious' as an explanation of these mystical utterances. No longer can we write with the complacency of Delacroix: 'Une force que la Sainte appelle l' action divine, la grâce divine, et que la psychologie ramène à l'activité subconsciente...' ('A force which the saint calls divine action, divine grace, and which psychology brings back to the activity of the subconscious...') *Études d' Histoire et de Psychologie du Mysticisme: Les grands Mystiques Chrétiens*, Alcan, Paris, 1908, p. 10) The 'subconscious' has proved to be more inscrutable than psychologists and meta-physicians ever bargained for. Leuba's explanation of the mystical experience of 'un vrai mélange de l'Amant et de l'Amante' ('a true blending of the Lover and the Beloved', Mme. Guyon's confession) as an 'erotomania...in the service of lofty ideal ends' (*Mind*, *op. cit.*, p. 18) begs the question. The recent 'parapsychological' researches into human personality, according to so sober an investigator as Dr. S. G. Soal, are but a tortuous path to the truth that 'Man is more than a physical organism responding to stimuli—that while living in this world he is yet in contact with an extra-sensory order of existence whose relations to time and space transcend those of the world of matter.' (Introduction to Dr. J. B. Rhine's *Myers Memorial Lecture, Telepathy and Human Personality*, S. P. R., London, 1951, p. 8.) G. N. M. Tyrrell in his devastating criticism of current ideologies has pronounced (*Homo Faber*, Methuen, 1951, p. 38) that the source of supernormally acquired knowledge lies 'outside the spatial world and beyond the reach of experimental control. Very likely it also lies outside the reach of our comprehension.' Approaches to mysticism in the past have been too timorous, more swayed by a

dread of the 'occult,' and of 'getting to wrong company' (as Prof. Allison P put it), than by anything else. Dr. Martine Summers in his book *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism* (Rider, London, 1950, p. 59) has urged that 'the time over-ripe' for a study of mysticism is its ranges including the supernormal.

The perplexities and problems of our day group themselves round the Certainty of Awareness. The uneasy denial it emphasize its elusiveness. Its or nature and destiny excite and baffle curiosity. The mystic, by repudiating all bounded horizons discloses the inevitable limitations of scientific, logical and even physical analysis. We are Dwellers in the Unwalled City of Spirit. The soul, according to Eckhart, is created 'for good great, so high, that she cannot rest in any place all the time she is hastening past modes to eternal good, to God who is her goal.' (C. De B. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 141.) According to Ruysbroeck, she chooses the 'Wayless' and mounts to higher and higher levels of awareness, too curious to rest until she has found her Source. Eckhart tells that if God were to give Himself to soul wholly in time, she would be veiled (*Op. cit.*, p. 77.) So He gives her Himself in eternity and the height of her knowledge and perception is to know and understand in agnosia and a-perception. (*Ibid.*, p. 67-68.) 'God who is nameless is ineffable and in ground the soul too is ineffable.' (*Ibid.*, p. 67-68.)

I submit that the gleam has not departed from mysticism. The names of great mystics have not died on the lips of men. In our scientific age, tired of its garrulousness, it craves for the deeper wisdom which it can teach it that the *civitas mundi* is the *Civitas Dei*.

A primary pre-requisite for such vital developments is the restoration of our classics to a place of honour in our educational system, and the planning and steady pursuit of their study and interpretation in the light of present requirements. This is work which can legitimately claim a larger measure of support from our present government than from its predecessor, and it is no small disappointment to us that our efforts in this direction have as yet borne no fruit. When we last met at Bombay in November 1949 we adopted a Resolution urging the Union Government to establish an All-India Indological Research Institute at a suitable centre at an early date.

We may not underrate the financial difficulties of government, but may point out that these difficulties do not, as they should not, stand in the way of the pursuit of schemes, scientific and technical, considered essential, and that the unceremonious abandonment of this particular proposal bespeaks a radically unsound attitude to the important studies in which this Conference is most interested.

The collection and preservation of ancient manuscripts is another subject that requires to be handled at the Union Government level to ensure early action and proper coordination of the work done in different parts of the country. A modest resolution making concrete recommendations towards the establishment of a Manuscripts Survey of India along the lines of the other scientific departments of the Central Government has remained a dead letter.

Turning to the questions of the medium of instruction in University education, the common national language, Niladri Sastri observed that we should have no hesitation in accepting Hindi without any reservation as the national language of the future, and consequently the medium of exchange for all advanced knowledge among the Universities and States of India.

Viewing the progress of research work in different centres in India, Prof. Sastri referred to the post-war revival of Indic studies in the West, the institution of a Sanskrit Professorship at the Teheran University, the announcement of an Indological Professorship in Indonesia, the starting of a Chair of Indology in the Benaras Hindu University, a similar venture in Mysore,

and the continued activity of the many Research Institutes, Manuscripts Libraries and University Departments. Commendable mention was made of Dr. S. M. Katre's lexicographical undertaking at the Deccan College Research Institute at Poona, the work of the Vaidika Samsodhana Mandal, Poona, and Prof. I. J. S. Taraporewala's publication, *The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra*. Regarding the main work of Dr. V. Raghavan at the Madras University, the New Catalogus Catalogorum, he referred to the excellent reception that its first volume evoked from scholars and said that further work had been 'steadily pursued under the competent and energetic guidance of Dr. V. Raghavan.'

He continued:

'All honour to the University of Madras for having essayed this stupendous task under the impetus given by the late Mahamahopadhyaya Kuppaswami Sastri, whose high standard of scholarship and precision is being ably maintained by his loyal disciple Dr. V. Raghavan. But to ensure the successful completion in a reasonable time of this comprehensive and critical Bibliography, systematic recurring aid should be forthcoming from the Central and Provincial governments, and perhaps also from the UNESCO organisation. It is necessary that such aid should be offered early to the Madras University, rather than that it should wait for an application from that body.'

Bringing his address to a close, the President who is the Conference's elected representative on the Central Archaeological Advisory Board, made the following important observations on the work of the Archaeological Survey of India:

'This Conference has a vital interest in the progress of Indian Archaeology. And it views with some concern the handicaps under which the Government Department of Archaeology seems to have been functioning in recent years. Dr. Wheeler did good work in the excavation of selected sites and the training of younger men in up-to-date methods of excavation but for the rest of it, he strangled epigraphy whose value for Indian history he had perhaps little chance of realising, and conservation was totally neglected. The sphere of work of the Superintendents of Circles was unduly cir-

cumscribed and there ensued an undue centralization of excavation and publication. Publication has suffered most, because government presses which are flooded with political work have no time for academic publications, and the obstacles placed by finance and audit in the way of printing archaeological publications in private presses are said to be insuperable. Again, there is a besetting uncertainty of personnel even at the top which hampers steady planning and work. The problem of integrating the archaeological departments of former 'Indian States' with the Union department has apparently not been faced and solved. Above all, the budget of the department is totally inadequate; the allotment is so low as to leave little for field work of various kinds after the payment of salaries. The whole question deserves to be looked into at expert level, not by a hurriedly imported foreigner who knows little of our conditions and requirements, but by a body of knowledgeable persons from within the country. The standing Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology is ready to hand for the purpose. We are glad to note that the plan of bringing into existence a National Central Museum in different stages has gained the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislature. We hope that nothing will happen to interrupt the execution of the plan hereafter, and that in the course of a few years we shall have a Museum which will be the equal of the best National Museums of the world.'

IV

The Conference went into the thirteen permanent Sections, and the two additional Sections for Hindi and Urdu. In the Vedic, there were 33 papers; in the Iranian, 7; in classic Sanskrit 43; in Islamic 5; in Arabic and Persian 10; in Pali and Buddhism 9; in Prakrit and Jainism 6; in History 43; in Archaeology 10; in Indian Linguistics 17; in Dravidian Culture 8; in Religion and Philosophy 45; in Technical Sciences and Arts 17; and in Hindi and Urdu, 8 and 6.

In addition to Sectional meetings, there were two public lectures illustrated with slides, one of which was delivered by Sri Krishna Dev, Patna, on the recent Mauryan excavations near Patna.

In the general assembly there were two public symposia on the Place of Classics in the National Educational System and the Shaping and Development of National Language. The former was presided over by the U. P. Minister of Education, the Hon. Mr. Sampurnanand, and General President, Dr. S. K. De, Pt. V. Kateswara Dikshitar, Dr. V. Raghavan, S. M. Katre, Prof. K. C. Chattopadhyay and Rev. C. Bulcke stressed the value of classics and pleaded for the provision of adequate facilities for the study of Sanskrit by all Indians. Sir Har Govinda Misra who presided over the second symposium on Hindi, and whose address was circulated in Sanskrit, Hindi and English, laid stress on the role that Sanskrit had to play in the shaping of the Rashtrabhasha. He said:

'It is our bounden duty to introduce a syllabus or of at least the elements of Sanskrit language and literature as compulsory subjects in our schools and colleges... A compulsory study of Sanskrit alone would make Hindi live in all the non-Hindi areas in the closest brotherly friendship with the other regional languages of India.'

Prof. S. K. Belvalkar, veteran Sanskritist of Poona, made a closely argued out-look against forcibly foisting a poor bazaar talk on a nation. This was opposed by Prof. K. C. Chattopadhyaya. Dr. Arya Sarma, a Hindi-native working in a Hindi area, recounted the difficulties of spreading Hindi and asked for its standardisation and revision of its grammar. Baburam Saksena saw the reasonableness of the above demand and accepted that the future and new vocabulary had to be based on a Sanskritic basis. Dr. Dharendra Vaidya thought that Hindi should grow to its own increasing needs by itself and that effort to bring upon it the influences of regional languages would mean its extinction. Opposing the forcing of Hindi on non-Hindi areas, Dr. Goda Varma also asked for

plified grammar, at least for the non-Indi areas.

In the nights, entertainments were provided for the delegates: the Jnana Varani Sabha of the Sanskrit Dept. of the University put on boards the Sanskrit drama 'Venisambhara'; staff-members of the Marris College of Music gave recitals of Hindusthani music and Kathak dance; the University Hindi Dept. staged 'Jandagupta Vikramaditya' in Hindi.

V

At its concluding meeting, the Conference recommended important Indian undertakings of magnitude, the Poona critical edition of the *Mahabharata* and the Vedic Index of Vishveshwaranand Vedic Research Institute to the UNESCO for assistance.

The Conference reiterated its Bombay resolution and request to Govt. of India to start a Central Indological Institute and to institute a full fledged Manuscript Survey of India.

By another resolution, the Conference appealed to the Govt. of Ceylon to start a Buddhist Academy.

The Conference congratulated the Rajas and Bihar Governments for starting Research Institutes under Government auspices.

By a further resolution, the Conference appealed to the Government at the Centre and the States to provide for Sanskrit education from the earliest stages of the school.

VI

The Conference accepted the invitation of the Gujarat Vidya Sabha to hold its nineteenth session at Ahmedabad in 1953.

Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Professor of Linguistics, Calcutta University, was elected General President for the Ahmedabad session. Dr. A. S. Altekar, Patna, was elected Vice-President, and Dr. R. N. Dandekar, Poona, and Dr. V. Raghavan, Madras, General Secretaries.

The following scholars will preside over the different sections: Vedic: Dr. Raghu Vira; Iranian: M. F. Kanga; Classical Sanskrit: Prof. R. D. Karmarkar; Islamic culture: N. A. Nadvi; Arabic and Persian: M. G. Zubeid Ahmed; Pali and Buddhism: N. K. Bhagavat; Prakrit and Jainism: Kamta Prasad Jain; History: U. N. Ghoshal; Archaeology: Amalananda Ghosh; Indian Linguistics: C. R. Sankaran; Dravidian Culture: Dr. C. Achyuta Menon; Religion and Philosophy: Dr. Mohan Singh; Technical Sciences and Fine Arts: Dr. Goetz.

VII

Exhibitions and Excursions usually form part of the regular programmes of the sessions. There was an exhibition of Sanskrit and other manuscripts, and also of Indian paintings. An excursion to the nearby archaeological site of Bhadoi had to be cancelled owing to some last minute difficulty. As pointed out already, the meeting of the Conference at different centres in India affords rare opportunity for scholars to visit some of the famous historic sites, monuments of artistic and archaeological value, and shrines and holy places of national importance which lie in the neighbourhood or en route. The writer cannot forget his visit to Aurangabad, Ellora, Devagiri and the Ajanta caves at the end of the Hyderabad session. The Darbhanga session facilitated a visit to the ruins of the monastic university of Nalanda. The Somnath Sanskrit Conference gave a rare opportunity to visit Girnar famous for religion as well as archaeology and holy Dwaraka. While this time, many went up to Haridwar and Hrishikesh, the writer covered Prayag, Banaras, and Saranath on one side and Sanchi and Bhilsa on another.

VIII

Lucknow itself had some attraction. The Gomati flowing by the side of the

University was enjoyable. The Lucknow Museum is rich in sculptures and inscriptions, and has a large collection of Mathura sculptures of the Kushanas of the first two centuries of the Christian era. To those interested in music and dance, Lucknow is an important place. The present writer visited the Marris college of Music and gave a talk on the value and interest of research in the literary history of Indian music. The last of the Oudh Nawabs, Wajid Ali Shah was himself a musician and a composer of high attainments, his Thumris being still popular. A building worth seeing in Lucknow is the Imambara, built during a famine for the sake of relief to the people, by Nawab Asaf. It is a vast, imposing building, having many labyrinths and dark passages; bereft of any wood-work, its huge main hall is considered to be the largest vaulted structure in the world.

IX

A devout desire for dharma and keen archaeological interest took the writer to Allahabad. After the religious duties at the Antarvedi, the confluence of the sleepy dark waters of Yamuna and the whitish speeding current of Ganga immortalised in the descriptions of Kalidasa, and the Akshayavata underneath the Fort (which encloses an Asokan pillar too,) and a visit to the sacred site where Bharadvaja's Asrama stood, the writer went round the Allahabad Municipal Museum where Rai Bahadur B. M. Vyas had thrown together a vast and varied collection with an enthusiasm hard to be found among any in the archaeological and scholarly field itself. The cramped up Museum contains also personal souvenirs presented by Prime Minister Nehru, but the sculptural and numismatic treasures here form a boon to workers. Among curiosities stored here is a piece of pliable stone-slab.

X

Kasi or Mahasmasana or Anandakana is the very heart of Hindu India. Religious observances here cannot but be gone through in a mood of poignant mixed feelings. As one comes round the present shrine of Visvesvara, one sees the side of its wall and part of its mandapa built over by Aurangazeb as a mosque; one is reminded of the many destructions of the old shrine here by Muhammedans and its repeated reconstruction by Narayana Bhatta and Raja Todar Mall, and others. The celebrated Narayana Bhatta indeed refers to in his *Tristhalisetu* to periods when, owing to the iconoclastic vandalism of Muslims, there was no shrine, and pilgrims all the same went round the sacred site of the shrine. In the endless ghats and temples of the holiest city of the country a few could hardly be omitted even in a flying visit, and among these the writer included the temple of Hanuman established by the famous Tulasidas.

XI

Saranath or Rishipattana lies very near Saranath in whose deer-park, the Buddha preached his first sermon and promulgated the wheel, Dharmachakra, Saranath which lion-capital has supplied the symbol to India. Here did the Buddha teach the middle path between extreme attachment and extreme torture of senses, the noble eightfold path, the chain of suffering and the means of its removal. In a prediction of his at the same place, Asoka warns members of the Sangha against fomenting any schism in the Order. The ancient monasteries have been unearthed here; the sculptural finds are arranged in the Museum in situ; there was evidently a temple also in the same locality, for only a whole shed filled with fragmentary finds of Brahmanic sculptures, but a head sculpture of Siva as the destroyer

ihakasura unearthed at Saranath is served in the museum. Among the additions that the Maha-Bodhi Society and Modern Buddhists have done may be mentioned the neat and simple Chinese temple, the Mula-gandha-kuti-vihara enshrining Adha-relics from Taxila, Nagarjunada and Mirpurkhas and containing frescoes and paintings of the Buddha's life,—all of which enthusiastic work of modern Buddhists evoked in the present writer's mind a recollection of the sad and neglected condition of a Hindu site like Kaladi and the apathy of the Hindu followers of a teacher like Sankara.

XII

Having finished Agra on the onward journey to Lucknow, the writer came down to the states of Gwalior and Bhopal to see Bhilsa and Sanchi. The antiquity of the Buddhist monuments of Sanchi go to the time of Asoka, whose pillar edict here, as one at Saranath, warns the monks against schismatic activities. The Stupa at Bhilsa stands on a small hill, very near the present Railway station of the same name, thanks to the labour and care of successive archaeologists, Cunningham, Maisey, Marshall and others, the Stupa stands now in good a restoration as possible; the broken fragments have also been gathered in a museum in situ. The three huge volumes of illustrations reproducing the entire monument in all its parts and commentary thereon by Marshall, Foucher and Majumdar published and presented by the Govt. of Bhopal in its important libraries bespeak the care the State has been bestowing on this site which occupies a leading place in the history of Indian art. The Stupa itself preserved the relics of the two chief pupils of the Buddha, Sariputta and Moggallana, who have recently been so much in the news, and for which the Maha-Bodhi Society built on the foreground of the same

hill a modern temple which, despite the desire to embody some of the local architectural motifs and designs, fails to harmonise with the Stupa. The structures of the site come up to the Gupta times and the best and oldest part of the work on the main Stupa and its four gateways, embodying carvings on sandstone of scenes from Buddha's life and the Jatakas, was done in the period of the Sungas in the centuries immediately preceding Christ. The fine carvings have reproduced in the smallest compass a whole civilization, and to a student not merely of sculpture, but of social conditions, vehicles, dress, ornaments, music, dance etc., they afford ample materials. As the writer unwillingly walked down the steps of the hill to hurry to the neighbouring Bhilsa, his feeling was one of exhilaration, like that of one who had realised a great ambition or reached one of the land-marks of his career.

XIII

In its great old days, Sanchi was part of the great Vidisa (Bhilsa), a capital of the Sungas, the renowned seat of a king, as Kalidasa says in his Meghasandesa; it was here that Kalidasa's hero Agnimitra, and the Sudraka of Bana's Kadambari ruled. There is little doubt that Kalidasa sojourned in this region for sometime and as the writer wandered over the place and laid himself in the cool dark waters of the Betwa here, his heart, in wistful imagination, like the poet's cloud, travelled over the lines of the Megha sandesa on the Dasarna country and the rippled waters of the Vetravati which the poet asks the cloud to drink from, as from the beloved's face with playful brows.

The old Vidisa whose older importance was later eclipsed by Ujjain, must have extended from the Sanchi site to the site of the confluence of the two rivers Betwa (Vetravati) and Bes, the latter of which

gives the name Besnagar to the locality. The Vetravati winds its way along Sanchi. Four miles from the present township of Bhilsa is the double hill called Udayagiri, which, with its twenty caves, carvings and inscriptions, was an important place in the Gupta times; on the rear of the hill, on the topmost platform is found the basement of a Gupta temple, and when one looks down from here towards the Bes skirting the hill, one can very well imagine the picturesque town which once flourished here; and two miles from the same Bhilsa, in the fork of the Bes and Vetravati, stands the famous Heliodorus column, testifying to the existence of a populous Besnagar in 150 B. C. at this sacred sangam.

The Udayagiri hills contain twenty caves, including a couple of Jain and Buddhist monuments. They belong to the Gupta age and are valuable for history, literature, religion and iconography. According to one of the epigraphs here, King Chandragupta II Vikramaditya himself visited Udayagiri in the company of a poet of Pataliputra, Kausta Saba. The most famous is the Varaha cave (no. 5), where we have the scene of the Lord's Boar incarnation carved in appropriately large dimensions, and represents the most impressive and best preserved work in these hills. Next in importance would come the cave (no. 13) where lies the figure of Vishnu Seshasayi, which is unfortunately cut away on the face. The Amrita-mathana scene on the top of the door of cave 19 is a rare and noteworthy piece of work. The repeated representation of Devi Mahishasura-mardani with twelve arms and the buffalo-demon, but standing on foot and

not riding a lion as either in Mahabharata or Bana's Chandi Sataka, and always accompanied by the representation of a Sapta-matrikas is significant for the history of Devi-cult, showing an earlier phase. The rock of Udayagiri comes off in slabs and this has unfortunately led to the deterioration of all the work here, except that in the Varaha cave.

The Heliodorus column is of greater cultural significance and is a standing monument of the attraction which Hinduism held for the foreign Greeks settled on Indian soil. The monument is a Garuda-stamp set up in honour of God Vasudeva. It bears an informing Pali inscription which says that Heliodorus, the son of Diya (Diya a native of Taxila) came as an ambassador from Maharaja Antialikita (the Greek name of Antialkidas) to the Sunga King Bhadrabhadra, son of Kasi in the fourteenth year of the latter's reign; Heliodorus calls himself further, in this inscription, a Bhavavata and says that three are the steps to immortality, Self-control, Sacrifice, Vigilance, the passage echoing, as has been rightly pointed out¹, one in the Sanatanism of the Mahabharata.

The spell that Hinduism cast on foreigners and its inclusive zeal in time immemorial antiquity were indeed appropriate thoughts with which one could come home. Sometimes there was also the other thought—how desirable and necessary it is for the new national Government of India to make special facilities available for scholars and votaries of culture to visit the great centres of ancient Indian cultural activity, not only in this far-off country, but in the neighbouring countries of Greater India where once India reigned as a magnificent cultural empire!

¹ H. C. Roychoudhuri, J. of the As. Soc. Bengal, 1922, p. 269, and Political History of India, p. 253 and K. Balasubrahmanya Iyer, Journal of Oriental Research, Vol. XV. p. 136.

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

By SWAMI MAITHILYANANDA

Even great intellectuals often evince a specially blind prejudice against religious symbols. They are, however, ready to accept and use any number of symbols in different spheres of life. They devotedly salute a national flag but come down heroically with their sarcasms and denunciations upon the devotee's thing of the heart, the idol he worships or the means or aids of his spiritual practices!

Which Science or art can do without symbols? Mathematics, which is the basic necessity of all sciences, cannot move a step without symbols. If a philosopher opens his mouth he speaks symbols. Why, what is a word one speaks, in love or hate, inspiration or despair?

Swami Maithilyananda, an ex-Editor of the PRABUDDHA BHARATA (1935-1937) explains, in this short article, the significance of religious symbols in relation to spiritual life.—Eds.

all people the Hindus are, in the language of Sister Nivedita, apparently most, and at heart the least, idolatrous. The use of the application of their symbols is fire-centred, like the fire in opals. Those who speak of the symbols used in their worship as being so many idols should know the attitude and philosophy of the Hindus towards symbolism. By symbols the Hindus understand the visible signs of the invisible which they represent. They mean to them some definite representations of God under some forms perceptible by the senses. They put their symbols under two classes, namely, *Pratikas* which mean things more or less satisfactory as substitutes for God and *Pratimas* which mean images. Of the two types of symbols indicate those which are placed before a worshipper as the immediate and apparent objects of worship, and the representative of the invisible God. In the case of *Pratikas* a worshipper has to fix his mind with devotion to those which are not God, taking them to be God. Sri Ramana Maharishi has made it clear in his *Ma-sutras* that not in the symbol is the Self to be contemplated, for the worshipper should not view symbols as being the Self.

In the Hindu scriptures various *Pratikas* have been prescribed to different worshippers. Mind, Akasa, Aditya, and Name are regarded as some of the symbolic representations of God. But the Hindu philosophers with whom the terms God and the Self are synonymous ask people not to attach to symbols the idea of God or the Self. Because we cannot apprehend God or the Self in the symbols on the ground of the worshipper being the same as the symbols. In worship the symbols are to be viewed as God or the Self and not in the reverse way, because it is only by regarding an inferior thing as a superior one that we can advance in spirituality. The goal of a worshipper is to get rid of the idea of differentiation and to see God or the Self in everything. Hence the worship of God is to be superinduced on the symbols of God, on account of the exaltation bestowed on the symbols thereby. In the preliminary stages of spiritual growth our mind cannot grasp pure Spirit and so requires before it some definite object. Hence the Hindus not only take the aid of *Pratikas* but that of *Pratimas* or images also.

Now the image worship of the Hindus

has been much misunderstood and it has always been a target of indiscriminate criticism. The Hindu images that have been worshipped not only by the ignorant masses but by hosts of philosophers and saints are not what they are ordinarily understood to be. To remove the doubt about the image worship of the Hindus, we quote below a significant passage from the works of Sir John Woodroffe:

'The mind cannot seize pure Spirit any more than (to use the simile of an Indian author) a pair of tongs can seize the hair. The mind, however, necessarily has before it some definite object, and one of such objects is the image or emblem. At the same time, the Hindu image is something more than a mere aid to devotion such as is the case in general as regards images in the Catholic ritual. For, by the 'life-giving' (*prana-pratishtha*) ceremony the life of the Devata or Divinity is invoked into the image. Deity is all-pervading and therefore cannot come or go. The image, like everything else is already an appearance of Deity immanent in it, in the particular form or mould of earth, stone, metal, wood or whatever other substance it may be. Therefore, 'invocation' (*Avahana*) and 'Dismissal' (*Visarjana*) in the Ritual by which the Deity is invoked 'to be present' and bid 'to depart' mean this—that the immanence of Deity in the object of worship is recognized, kept present before, and ultimately released from the mind of the worshipper. In fact, the Deity is there, ritual or no ritual. By the ritual the Deity is not only there in fact, but is so for the consciousness of the worshipper whose mind is transformed into a Divine mould. The Deity does not move, but the mind of the worshipper does so. It is the particular modification, a *Vritti* of the mind which comes and goes. Personally, I believe that 'Idolatry' in its strictest literal sense is not to be found anywhere.'

The truth of this statement is well-known to all Hindu worshippers.

The worship of God by means of the syllable Om has been retained at every stage of religious growth by the Hindus. The syllable has been taken up by almost

all the Hindu worshippers and it has been manipulated to mean all the different ideas about God. Round about this syllable various doctrines and philosophies have sprung up simultaneously with numerous religious practices. The Hindus believe that this phenomenal universe is the product of an eternal and inexpressible principle known as the *Sphota*, which is the essential material of all ideas and names. This *Sphota* is the principle with which God has evolved Himself out as the phenomenal universe. The syllable Om is regarded as the only symbol-representative of the *Sphota*, the manifest as Logos or Word. It may be asked why the Hindus emphasize this syllable only to signify God. While commenting on Patanjali's *Yoga-saphorisms*, especially in the place where Patanjali declares that Om is the manifesting word of God, Swami Vivekananda answers this pertinent question and his arguments are convincing in this connection:

'There are hundreds of words for God. Every thought is connected with a hundred words, the idea, God, is connected with hundred words, and each one stands as a symbol for God. Very good. But there must be a generalisation among all those words, a substratum, some common ground of all the symbols, and that which is the common ground will be the best, and will really represent them all. In making a sound we use the larynx and the palate as a sounding board. Is there any material sound of which all other sounds must be manifestations, one which is the most natural sound? Om (Aum) is a sound, the basis of all sounds. The letter, A, is the root sound, the key, pronounced without touching any part of the tongue or palate, M represents the last sound in the series, being produced by the closed lip, the U rolls from the very root to the end of the sounding board of the mouth. Thus, Om represents the whole phenomena of sound producing. As such, it must be the natural symbol, the matrix of all the various sounds.'

It denotes the whole range and possibility of all the words that can be made.'

It is now obvious why the syllable Om has been held so sacred and regarded as the greatest sound-symbol for Godhead.

A Hindu worshipper takes the help of material symbols in the forms of the mukras or geometrical figures representing the ideal, but as he advances, he makes use of the sound-symbols to call up the divine idea, side by side with material symbols or without them. The sound-symbols are technically known as Mantras which mean to bring in spiritual progress and ultimately salvation to those who meditate on them. A Mantra is Deity in its form, that is as sound. The Deity and Mantra are therefore one. A Mantra, however, is not a prayer which may be uttered in any form and in any language that the worshipper chooses. A Mantra does not merely stand for or symbolize the Deity, but it is a mere conventional label for the Deity. A worshipper has to realize the Deity in and through the Mantra he practices so the sound-symbols are not merely symbols but more than that.

In recent times of India's religious history, it was Sri Ramakrishna who, more than anybody else, showed in his life that symbols were not without meaning and that they could very well be used in the path of one's spiritual practices. Dr. Gualtherus Mees, in an article published in the *Asia-Bharati Quarterly*, observed long ago:

'It is one of the supreme achievements of Sri Ramakrishna that he opened the eyes of the 19th and 20th century world to the deep significance of religious symbolism, and that he demonstrated that symbols are not mere empty forms, but partake of divine life in all its fulness.'

Ramakrishna used to say that as a fruit or a toy-elephant reminds one of

the real fruit and the living animal, so do images worshipped remind one of God who is formless and eternal. Once addressing Keshab Chandra Sen, he said:

'Why do these images raise the idea of mud and clay, stone and straw in your mind? Why can you not realize the presense of the eternal, blissful, all-conscious Mother in these forms? Know these images to be concretized forms of the eternal and formless essence of all sentieney.'

Sri Ramakrishna felt the stone image of Kali he used to worship, as possessed of consciousness. In his own words we note here some of his experiences which prove the supreme significance of various symbols in one's religious life and its strivings. As regards the image of Kali he worshipped, he observed:

'I actually felt Her breath on my hand. At night when the room was lighted, I never saw Her divine form cast any shadow on the walls, even though I looked closely. From my own room I could hear Her going to the upper storey of the temple with the delight of a girl, Her anklets jingling. To see it I were not mistaken, I would follow and find Her standing with flowing hair on the balcony of the first floor, looking either at Calcutta or out over the Ganges.'

About the metal image of Ramlala or the child Rama which was given to Sri Ramakrishna by a devotee of Rama, named Jatadhari, he said:

'I saw Ramlala as vividly as I see you all—now dancing gracefully before me, now springing on my back, or insisting on being taken up in my arms. Sometimes I would hold him on my lap. He would not remain there, but run to the fields in the sun, pluck flowers from thorny bushes, or jump into the Ganges. I would remonstrate saying, "Don't run in the sun, your feet will be blistered. Don't remain so long in water, you will catch cold and get fever". But Ramlala would turn a deaf ear. He would fix his beautiful eyes on me and smile, or like a naughty boy, he would go on with his pranks, or pout his lips or make faces at me. Sometimes I would

lose my temper and cry, "Wait, you naughty boy, I am going to beat you black and blue." I would drag him away, and diverting him with various toys, ask him to play inside the room. But sometimes I lost patience and slapped him. With tearful eyes and trembling lips he would look at me. Oh, what pain I would feel then for having punished him! I would take him in my lap and console him. All these actually happened. One day I was going to bathe. Ramlala insisted on accompanying me. I took him with me. But he would not come out of the water nor did he heed my remonstrances. Then I got angry, and pressing him under the water said, "Now play in it as much as you like." Ah, I saw him struggling for breath! Then repenting of my act I took him up in my arms. Another incident pained me greatly, and I wept bitterly for it. He insisted on having something which I could not supply. To divert him, I gave him some parched rice not well husked. As he was chewing them I found his tender tongue was scratched. The sight was too much for me. I took him on my lap and cried out, "Mother Kausalya used to feed you with cream or butter with the greatest care, and I was so thoughtless as to give you this coarse stuff!"'

These incidents are sufficient to show how the symbols used in right earnest and with proper spirit could elevate our spiritual consciousness.

Once Sri Ramakrishna underwent a course of spiritual practice by constant meditation on the character of Hanuman, the devotee of Sri Rama. Then he began to forget his identity totally and his daily

life and style of food resembled those of Hanuman. He did not feign them, it came naturally to him. He used to tie a cloth round the waist, letting a portion of it hang down in the form of a tail, and used to jump from place to place instead of walking. He used to live on fruits and roots only at that time, and those he preferred to eat without peeling. He used to pass then most of his time on trees, calling out in a solemn voice, 'Raghuvir!'. His eyes then looked restless like those of a monkey, and most wonderful of all, his coccyx enlarged by about an inch. On the completion of that course of spiritual practice, he gradually resumed the former life of his coccyx.

Like all veils, symbols bring us vision and at the same time the limiting visions. Unless and until one can grasp the pure Spirit without the help of all material symbols play a very useful part, because we do not know in what guise the Truth may reveal itself to us. Symbols, if properly studied, give us a glimpse of the dreams and imageries of various races of the world. The true significance of religious symbols can properly be understood when we probe deep into the secrets of the inner world working differently in different minds of religious aspirants.

'Suppose there is an error in worshipping the clay image; doesn't God know that through it He alone is being invoked? He will be pleased with that very worship. Even if the image is made of clay, there is need for that sort of worship. God Himself has provided different forms of worship. He who is the Lord of the universe has arranged all these forms to suit different men in different stages of knowledge.'

The mother cooks different dishes to suit the stomachs of her different children.'

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

By SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

Translated from original Bengali

(continued from the previous issue)

PART TWO

CHAPTER TWENTY

SEEING THE SRI SAILA AND THE COMING OF GOVINDA

The next morning Ramanuja along with his disciples left the village Ashtasahasra Kanchipura. They reached there at noon, had the darsana of Sri Varadaraja, considered themselves blessed. Then they met Kanchipurna and were much glorified. After passing three days there, they went to the sacred place, Kapila. They finished their ablutions etc. and that very day reached the foot of Sri Saila. Very great was Ramanuja's joy at the sight of the Saila. For a long time he remained standing with fixed gaze at this Vaikuntha Parth. Tears of joy began to roll down his cheeks. He thought, 'Ah, this is that place where Sri Hari Himself is residing along with his divine consort Lakshmi. O me! the heavenly beauty of the place! the accumulated virtues of earth are all in the form of this hillock. Upon this Mount of great virtues Narayana and Lakshmi are residing. I won't defile this place by climbing over there with this impure body. Everyday I shall look at it from here and be blessed by thus purifying my impure body and mind. Thus resolved, I began to live at the foot of Sri Saila it.

Hearing of the advent of Ramanuja at Kanchi, Vithaldeva, the king of that part of the country, came to have his darsana along with his courtiers. On his very piteous implorings that he might be accepted as a disciple, the kind-hearted Yatiraja

accepted him as one after making him observe the purificatory rites. As an offering to the Guru, Vithaldeva made a gift of Elamandiya, a vast tract of land to Ramanuja. Yatiraja in his turn made a gift of the same land to the poor Brahmins and was much pleased in doing so.

In the meantime, all the Sadhus and ascetics of Sri Saila came to know of Yatiraja's presence there and naturally became very eager to see him. When they heard that for fear of touching it with his feet, Yatiraja had resolved not to climb the hill, they all came in crowds to him and in great humility said, 'O great-souled one, if great ones like you do not climb the hill for fear of touching it with their feet, then common ordinary men also will behave in the same way. They will say, "When such a pure soul as the great Ramanuja did not climb the hill for fear of touching it with his feet, then what to speak of us? We are by the very nature impure." Thus even the worshippers too will not appear before the Lord. Therefore, you kindly make up your mind to climb the hill without any delay. Again, the hearts of great ones like you are the real temples of Sri Hari. There He is being always worshipped with the supreme nectar that devotion is. Devotion is the only object dear to Sri Hari. Narayana is ever residing in that heart where there is devotion. This is why Yudhishtira says to Vidura:

Nov. 1951]

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

भवद्विधा भागवतास्तीर्थीभूताः स्वयम्प्रभो ।

तीर्थीकुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि स्वान्तःस्थेन गदाभूता ॥

'The pilgrimages attain purity only because great ones like you go to the places of pilgrimage.'

* Accepting these modest words of the high souls as a behest, Ramanuja along with his disciples proceeded to climb up the hill.

As he was climbing the heights of the hill, he felt hungry and thirsty and became tired. Presently there appeared the aged, serenely wise and supremely devoted Sailapurna with Prasada and Charanamrita of the Lord from the top of the hill in his hand and entreated Yatiraja to accept them. Seeing that this Rishi-like great man had carried the consecrated food for him Yatiraja exclaimed, 'O Mahatman, why have you done this act of impropriety? It has been very wrong of you, a great teacher of men that you are, to undertake all these troubles for an insignificant servant like me. An ordinary boy could have done it at your order'. 'Yatipati,' said Sailapurna on hearing that, 'I too had thought like that and accordingly searched for a boy; but finding none less in attainments than I, I myself had to stand this burden of carrying this'. Being exceedingly astonished at such humility of Sailapurna, said Ramanuja, 'Revered Sir, today my eye of knowledge has been opened. I am blessed to have learnt this attitude of humility.'

With a heart surging with intense devotion he took the dust of the sage Purna's feet, and then along with his disciples partook of the Prasada, which served to remove the entire fatigue of travel. After climbing the hill for some time more, they found themselves in front of the temple of Venkatanatha, the consort of Sri. Anant-

acharya, his one disciple, who was a denizen of the Mount, came there and prostrated before him. Ramanuja was extremely glad to see him and blessed him profusely. Then after finishing the circumambulation round the temple, he appeared before Sri Venkatanatha and deep love began to shed tears of joy. He lost his outward consciousness. The priest of the temple gave him the holy water Prasada in great reverence. He shared things with his disciples in great joy. At the darsana of the presiding Deity of the place, he saw the other deities enshrined there and then took ablutions in the lot of holy water and was very happy in doing so. He passed three nights over there.

In the meantime, Govinda, the devoted disciple of Sailapurna and Ramanuja's own cousin came and joined him. Great love and delight he embraced his boyhood friend and the saviour of his life. It has been mentioned previously that after being reconverted to Vaishnava religion by Sailapurna, Govinda went to Ramana. While living there with him for a few days, Govinda felt so intensely sick for his devotion that Yatiraja could have rest only by sending him back to his Guru. From that time onward Govinda had been with Sailapurna alone. So very intense was his devotion for the service to his Guru that he had no relish for anything else whatsoever. He was as if a boy of five.

Coming down from the top of the hill, at the request of Sailapurna, Ramanuja lived at his house for an year. The high-sage Sailapurna would every day read the Ramayana with him. On hearing his beautiful and deep exposition, Yatiraja's yearning to know about it was inflamed. That one year he finished studying the entire Ramayana under the guidance of

at man and deemed himself greatly fortunate. While residing there he was much astonished to observe Govinda's way of life and behaviour. One day he found him arranging the bed of his Guru and then lying upon it. Surprised and sorry at the sight of this, Yatiraja submitted the fact to Sailapurna; the latter at once called Govinda and asked, 'You lay on my bed! do you know what happens to one who lies on the bed of his Guru?' 'One who lies on the bed of the Guru suffers eternal damnation', replied Govinda calmly. 'Why did you act like that in spite of your knowing all this?', enquired Purna. 'I lie on your bed quite wishing to go to heaven. Only to test if the bed has been made comfortable, if sleep would easily come to me when you lie down on the bed, every day. I am in the habit of lying down once on your bed after I have made it ready. However, know that in the end I shall have to go to hell for this. If by my going to hell a little of ease and comfort can be afforded to you, I consider it more desirable than living in heaven.' Yatiraja was simply amazed at this wonderful devotion of Govinda to his Guru. Being very much ashamed of the unjust attitude he had against his cousin due to ignorance, Yatiraja begged pardon of him.

On another occasion, Ramanuja found Govinda dragging a snake forcibly after thrusting his finger into its mouth, which made the snake almost dead with pain. Purna after so doing, and finishing his bath, Govinda came to Yatiraja, the latter enquired in surprise, 'Brother, why did you do like that? Is it not the act of a lunatic to thrust a finger into the mouth of a snake? It is only through sheer luck that the snake's blood has not become poisoned. By behaving like a lad you threw yourself into danger, and that innocent creature too lying there almost dead. A kind man like you should not inflict pain on any

creature whatsoever.' At this Govinda replied, 'Brother, while going to eat some thorny matter, the snake had a thorn stuck to its throat and it was tossing about in pain. So I thrust my finger into its mouth and picked out the thorn. Now its pain is not so acute as it was formerly. Only due to exhaustion it looks lifeless. After some time, it will be quite alright. Don't worry about that.' Ramanuja was just dumb-founded at this extreme instance of compassion to creatures. After this incident, his love towards Govinda became profounder.

By the end of the year Ramanuja had finished the studying of the *Ramayana*. Now, when he wanted to pay proper presents to Sailapurna, his preceptor, and take leave of him, the large-hearted guru said, 'Ramanuja, my child, if you have any desire, please tell me. I will try to fulfil that if it is not beyond my capacity'. At this Yatiraja said, 'O Mahatman, please give unto me your godly disciple Govinda. This is my only prayer'. So hearing, Purna at once made a gift to Ramanuja of his own dearest disciple. At this regaining of Govinda, Ramanuja's joy was great.

Without any more delay, Ramanuja went to Solinghur (or Chola Simhapura) along with his disciples and was greatly delighted to have the Darsana of the Lord Nrisimhadeva there. From there he went to Tirukkalikundram where he visited the deities and took ablutions and returned to Kanchipurna. After having the Darsana of Varadaraja, Yatiraja went to Kanchipurna, and after relating to him Govinda's devotion to his Guru and his acts of mercy to creatures, he said, 'O high-souled one, you kindly bless my cousin and make him all the more devoted to his Guru and to doing good to creatures.' His face lighted up with a smile, said Kanchipurna, 'Your desires will always be fulfilled; on him can never befall any misfortune to whom you mean prosperity.'

Marking the paleness and discolouration in the face of Govinda, who was nearby, Kanchipurna said, 'Yatiraja, for want of service to the Guru, the moon of Govinda's face has turned pale. You send him to Sri Sailapurna.' At these words Ramanuja at once asked him to go back to his Guru. Govinda took the easiest route and in a short time reached the residence of his Guru situated at the foot of the hill. On hearing of Govinda's return, Purna did not even once cast his glance at him. The noon time passed away; all of them finished their meals. Purna did not call Govinda for meals. The third watch of the day passed away. Govinda was sitting at the outer gate unfed. Unable to bear this, the soft-hearted wife of Purna told her husband, 'You may talk or not with Govinda; you ask the child to take his food.' 'I am not duty-bound to feed the horse that has been sold away. He should now be brought up by the new master only,' replied the husband. On hearing

this Govinda who was still unfed came back to Kanchipurna in a taciturn mood and complaining the feet of Ramanuja said, 'Yatiraja, don't you kindly address me any more as your brother; I heard from the lips of my previous master that you alone are my father now. Order me what I have to do.' Finding him tired and pale because of fasting the day long and weary of travel, Ramanuja first removed his weariness by making him take his bath and food. From that time onward, Govinda began to serve his new Master with the same zealous care and profound devotion as he used to do for Sailapurna.

They passed three nights at Kanchipurna. Then they all reached the Ashtasahasra Grama and accepted the service of Yajra. After passing one night there Ramanuja returned along with Govinda to Srirangam. He had the Darsana of Sri Rangana swami; saw his own Gurus and then returned paired to his monastery.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

INDOLOGY IN INDIA

In his Presidential address to the 16th session of the All India Oriental Conference which met at Lucknow on October 3, '51, Prof. K. A. Nilakantha Sastri, Retired Professor of History and Archaeology, University of Madras, stressed upon the supreme importance of researches in Indology in the following words:

'India has most to gain for herself and for the world by maintaining her identity, the ethos of her own time-honoured culture, and by renovating its moorings in the basic values of *satya*, *dharma*, *ahimsa*, *asanga* and so on which have been impaired but by no means snapped by generations of foreign rule. She must regain her freedom of spirit and seek out her own solutions of her problems, material and moral, instead of running after alien models and depending too much on

foreign aid. A primary pre-requisite for vital developments is the restoration of our classics to a place of honour in our educational system and the planning and pursuit of their study and interpretation in the light of the present requirements.

Then the Professor had to refer to certain facts which will dishearten every serious student of Indology everywhere in the world. He said,

'This is a work which can legitimately demand a larger measure of support from our Government than from its predecessor. It is no small disappointment to us that the efforts in this direction have as yet borne little fruit. When we last met at Bombay in November, 1949, we adopted a resolution urging the Union Government to establish an all India Indological Research Institute at an early date, suggesting the appointm-

a representative committee to work out the details of a scheme for such an Institute and offering our full co-operation in the effort. The Government were apparently impressed by our plea and appointed a committee to go into the question. But sometime later, to an enquiry when the first meeting of the committee would be convened, our General Secretary got the answer that, owing to financial stringency, Government had decided to dissolve the committee. We may not underrate the financial difficulties of the Government, but may point out that these difficulties do not, as they should not, stand in the way of the pursuit of schemes, scientific and technical, considered essential, and that this uncereceremonious abandonment of this particular proposal bespeaks a radically unsound attitude to the important studies in which this conference is most interested.

It indeed speaks highly of the Government of India that they have managed to set up national scientific institutes during the most difficult times. But it is very unfortunate that of all things Indology should have received such a step-motherly treatment at the hands of the Government of India. An India, which is to evince adequate appreciation of the importance of the science of values, in which Indology fundamentally is, is in all probability heading towards a lop-sided development, which has been the most serious curse of civilizations.

We have to understand that Indology is a special trust with India and India should exercise her wilful right of self-determination in the matter of according the respect its due honoured place. High seriousness in every civilized country are the merits of Indology and many countries have their own national Indological Research Institutes. Only in India we do not seem to have sufficient awareness of the value of our heritage, and *shraddha* for it. If we understand it, no national plan for India can be spiritually sound as it takes sufficient cognizance of the needs of the nation, its traditions, ideals, traditions, fortes, and responsibilities. Indology ropes up all such important sub-

jects, the proper study of which will effectively inform the nation in regard to such essentials and fundamentals. Properly understood, Indology holds the secret of not only India's success but also the know-how of the safe emergence of the world from its present difficulties.

When, however, we take the realities of the situation under consideration, one question poses itself: if the Government of India could not yet manage to set up the All India Indological Research Institute, should Indology go to the wall in India? In fact, we prefer to view the situation rather as a challenge to the sincerity, devotion and selflessness of the Indian scholars who are engaged in this great work and the existing Research Institutes of the land which have been doing good work in their own way. One may hope, better time and counsel will prevail in the future with the Government of India as far as Indology is concerned. But in the meantime the nation will expect of her scholars energetic and sustained devotion to the subject.

In America specially, and in other countries of the West too, rich people cultivate the habit of putting up huge endowments for researches. This not only lessens the pressure on the national exchequer but also keeps the research institutes autonomous and free from unnecessary Governmental control and interference. Can it not be expected that rich people in India will emulate this commendable habit of their counterpart in other countries? We also believe that if a half of the amount required to start an All India Indological Research Institute would come from the private sources, the Government will surely come forth with the other half. But in any case the initiative for raising endowments also should come from the Government of India. And if the endowments do not come forth, the Government should find the money to set up the Institute at an early date. 21. 10. 51

LIBRARY MANUAL BY S. R. RANGANATHAN AND K. M. SIVARAMAN, INDIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ENGLISH SERIES 3, DELHI INDIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, G. BLUNT & SONS, LONDON, 1951, PP. 215, PRICE, RS. 8, SH. 12, S. 4.

In eight chapters the authors have suitably summarised the earlier and essential works on Library Science by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan such as *Five Laws of Library Science, Reference Service and Bibliography, Classified Catalogue Code, Library Administration, Colon Classification*, etc., for the guidance of 'non-professional and quasi-professional men who will be manning most of the public libraries of the land in the next few years.' Until the right type of professional men are available, men of unskilled ability will have to be depended upon. This book is mainly meant for such men and will be of immense value to them.

To preserve the knowledge already acquired, to disseminate education, literacy and culture, libraries should be thrown open to the public in a spirit of service and without the least barrier. When we view the library from the perspective of its fundamental purposiveness we can adequately understand the five basic laws of its functioning as enunciated by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan: (1) Books are for use. (2) Every reader his book. (3) Every book its reader. (4) Save the time of the reader. (5) Library is a growing organism. The first law of the library science is that 'Books are for use.' If it is so, every reader must have his book, and every book must have its reader. Now to save the time and meet the necessities of the readers, books should be systematically classified. The library is a growing organism and it should be treated as such by making adequate provision beforehand for its further growth. The late Prof. Sri. S. Kuppaswami Sastri clothed the five laws in Sanskrit in the following manner:

ग्रन्थालयो सदासेवी पञ्चसूत्रीपरायणः ।

ग्रन्था अभ्येतुमेते च सर्वेभ्यः स्वस्वमाप्नुयुः ॥

अभ्येतुः समयं शेषेदालयो नित्यमेव च ।

वर्धिष्युरेष चिन्मूर्तिः पञ्चसूत्रो सदा जयेत् ॥

All the abovementioned laws are discussed in the first chapter.

The second chapter explains fully the vital work

in a library, called Reference Service. This is a very brief summary of the book named, *Reference Service and Bibliography*.

The third chapter 'Circulation Work' deals with the daily routine of circulating books, study without waste of time for both readers and the library-staff providing open access and the system of issue.

To save the time of readers the library-staff should find time to attend to each reader individually. That means not only more staff but also a method of standardization, simplification of material, specification and procedures. This is briefly indicated in chapter four, named, 'Work behind the screen', which comprises several sub-headings viz., Book selection, book ordering, periodical selection work, accessioning, maintenance work, accounts and files.

Chapters five and six deal with classification and cataloguing respectively. Chapter five gives 'ready-made class numbers for the subjects which are likely to figure in the collections of any such public library'. The class numbers have been devised in accordance with both Colon Classification and Decimal Classification. Among various systems of classification the Colon Classification is the only system which was invented in India and that by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. Though it is of recent origin, being invented in 1933, it has already secured an honoured place among the systems of the world. The Colon System has special provisions for subjects of Indian origin and interest, such as the various branches of Vedas, Hindu Sastras, and Indian Philosophy and Culture. It has some more elements of universal applicability than the other systems of the world. A British librarian rightly observes, 'every subject brings its own colon number in its pocket'.

A library catalogue contains two parts: the classified part and the alphabetical part. A brief account of the method of construction of a catalogue will be found in chapter six. Chapter seven is devoted to the planning of library building and materials for office use. Chapter eight is a glossary of library terms with their Sanskrit equivalents. This most interesting chapter of the book proves one thing: that Sanskrit can lend itself to any modern linguistic necessity provided it is handled by one who is enlivened by the language.

conscious of its living power. Writers on science in Indian languages will find this immensely helpful.

Believe that a careful and a thorough study of this book will enable even a non-professional with minimum academic education to handle the work of a library easily because the authors have

given in this book the very essence of their life-work in this branch of study, in which they are real pioneers in India. In this book will be found the substance of more than half a dozen books which are prescribed for diploma and degree course in library science in the Indian Universities.

BRAHMACHARI GADADHARACHAITANYA

NEWS AND REPORTS

**THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
SHISHUMANGAL PRATISHTHAN**
99, LANSLOWNE ROAD, CALCUTTA 26

REPORT FOR 1950

It is one of the premier Maternity Hospitals in Calcutta and has stepped into its nineteenth year. During the year under review, the new building on the second and third floors of the extension hospital were opened. The institution maintains 138 free beds and caters for thousands of patients under a great strain. The most important activity of the institution has been the giving of antenatal care to thousands of expectant mothers mainly through its outdoor department. In the indoor hospitals serious antenatal cases are admitted for treatment. The total number of cases registered in the outdoor section was 3,096, the old cases treated being 8,505. In the indoor section 437 new cases were admitted during the year and yearly the total number of beds daily occupied were 4,219. As regards 'Hospital confinement', 38 beds were reserved for patients in the General wards (free) and 24 beds in the paying wards and 24 beds in the indoor section. The 3,919 deliveries have been attended to during the year, while the total number of beds occupied by mothers and children were 21,105 respectively. The total number of gynaecological cases treated during the year were 6,456 in the outdoor section and 267 in the indoor section.

The institution also renders preventive care to patients and follows them up for at least a couple

of years. There is a laboratory attached to the hospital where pathological examinations are conducted.

The Pratishthan also provides facilities to deserving women of respectable families, particularly widows, for training in midwifery and there is also an arrangement for training educationally deficient women in midwifery as *dhatris*. 5 senior and 9 junior midwives and 4 *dhatris* passed in the respective examinations during the year under review.

The authorities of the institution offer their sincere thanks and gratitude to all their donors, sympathisers and supporters of all these years and appeal to all of them to continue their help in future. The following are the urgent needs for the construction work and donations in memory of dear and near ones may be made to any of them:

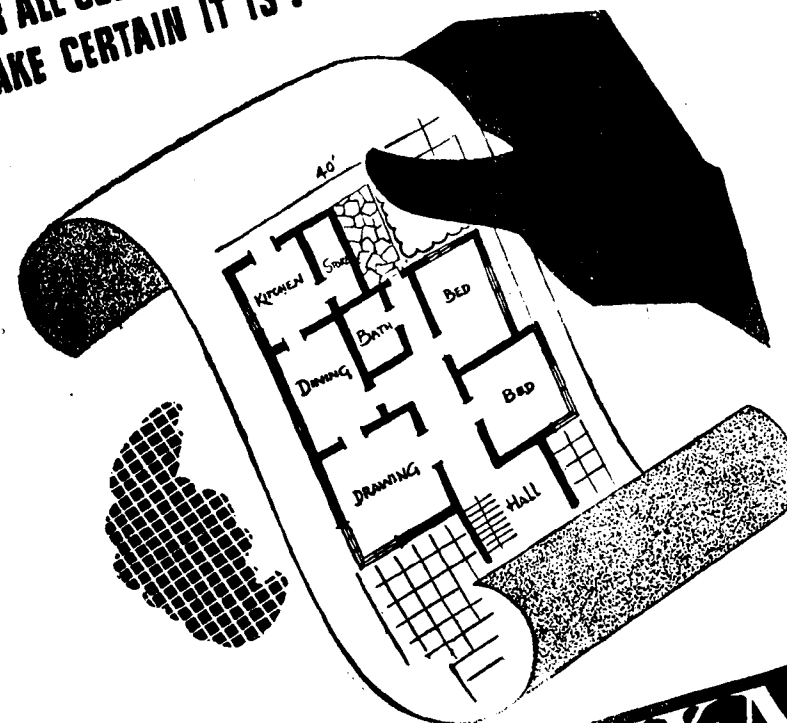
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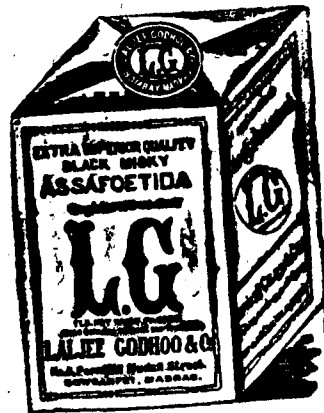
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at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4. Printed by: K. Nataraja Iyer at the R. N. K. Press, Ltd.
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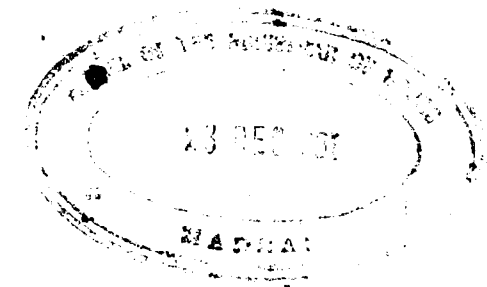
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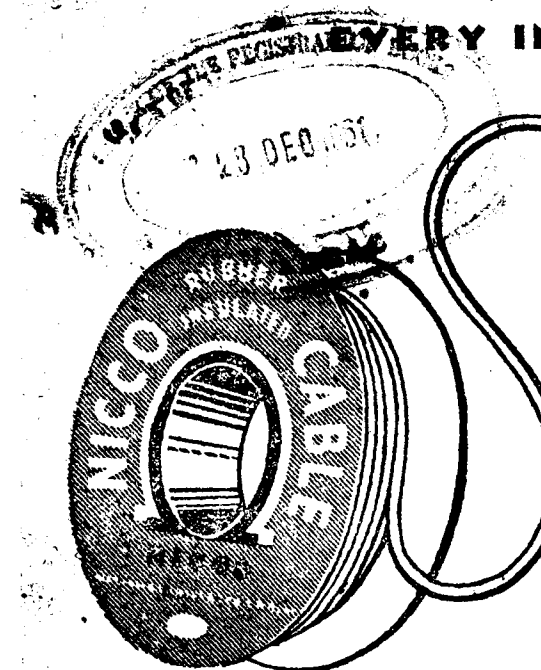
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... Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

Swami Vivekananda

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VOL. XXXVIII

DECEMBER 1951

No. 8

A LETTER OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Sri Hari, My Refuge

ALMOH.
6. 10. 19

MY DEAR—

I knew all the information from your letter dated 27th September. I was very glad to learn that you were regularly doing japa and meditation in the Hari-sal chamber. In this way you should along with others every day practise meditation, ja bhajana and scriptural study. From these will gradually accrue great good: Nothing takes place suddenly, everything comes about gradually. Those whom you take to the cause of some hindrance on your path now, in time those very ones will prove to your great helpers. That you are happy at their prosperity is what it ought to be. Why should you become bad?

Always discuss topics on Sri Ramakrishna. Live in a supremely pure disposition and inspire others to do so. Divine ideas easily arise in pure hearts, and the mind becomes blessed. The grace of Sri Ramakrishna descends upon young boys very so for their minds are not yet smeared by the things of the world. They are, as it were, pure milk which boils over by little heating. Diluted milk takes a long time to boil. Likewise the minds of the young boys get inspired with even a little discourse regarding God. However much one may instruct the worldly-minded they never get enthused. You must take great care of the young boys and place before them the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna.

Have you got the copies of *Kathamrita (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna)* Master Mahashaya? If not, you should procure them. If you write to Master Mahashaya, he may send you the books at half price. By reading the *Kathamrita*, you will know much about the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna.

M— Bhattacharyya is a good man. He helps a lot in our Mission work.

Go on working absolutely whole-heartedly. Do not worry about anything whatsoever. The Lord will make everything all right. Practise meditation and contemplation regularly. Pray intensely for Prema and Bhakti. If you do not keep your mind on bliss, bliss will come of itself. In whatever state the Lord keeps one, that alone is good. Only do not forget Him, whatever be the predicament you may be in. Happiness and misery come and go, these are not eternal. God alone is eternal. Try to be the owner of the eternal treasure. If you get restless with happiness and misery, how will you be able to gain the eternal treasure? Looking upon Him alone you must go through enduring all sorts of conditions. The bliss will come of itself. What more to write. My good wishes.

All is well here. Your welfare is solicited.

SRI TURIYANANDA



PERMEATION OF THE IDEAL OF SERVICE IN THE HINDU SCHEME OF LIFE (A)

VEDIC (including Upanishadic) REALIZATIONS AND THE FORMULATION OF HINDU SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

We have traced in these columns¹ the origin of the ideal of service. We seek to show that once discovered, the ideal was never lost to the Hindus: it lived through the ages and permeated the entire scheme of Hindu life in a way that is amazing.

Up to this day this ideal happily continues to be one of the strongest notes of the music of the *sanatana dharma*, eternal religion, notwithstanding the ever so many historical crises this nation has passed through. During the passage of the millenniums this ideal has not only not lost its spiritual quality and social applicability, it went on giving effective orientations at the hands of seers and prophets, until at last after giving its most wondrous and effective orientation in the hands of Ramakrishna-ekananda, it stands out today as

one sovereign saving gospel for this wildered and tension-ridden humanity. With its firm roots deep down in the Vedas it stands sturdy like an impregnable and light-house in this troubled ocean of life. Without the application of this gospel to the ideal in every walk of life, there is no salvation, nay, no future for humanity, except a most ignoble, ugly and horrible one. We say this categorically. So the essence of this ideal.

How the ideal of service got permeated in the Hindu scheme of life is a unique

history. Much to the contrary of general surface-notions of some foreigners, along with being robust idealists (being incorrigible believers in liberation), Hindus have always been profound realists. *Kama* (physical enjoyment) has an honoured place by the side of *moksha* (spiritual liberation) and *artha* (economic pursuits) by the side of *dharma* (spiritual pursuit) in their scheme of values. In its ultimate connotation, their realism is, however, more than a mere empiricism of gross sense-data. Their epistemology includes an organ of knowledge which can be described only as the coevalness with the dissolution of the mind. This process of knowing gave them a direct access to reality knowing which they became the only genuine realists *par excellence* of the world. As an off-shoot of that realism their empiricism viewed metempsychosis² as a process of experimentation and becoming—a shadow becoming—of the soul into that One that it already was.

We must not forget that the content of Advaita has been almost the very first spiritual realisation of the Hindus. In the very Samhita portion of the *Rig-veda* we have the following momentous declarations:

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ।

Rg. I. 164. 46.

What exists is One, the sages call it in various ways, Agni, Yama, and Matarishvan.

एजद्धुवं पत्यते विश्वमेकं चरत्पतत्रि विपुणं वि जातम् ।

Rg. III. 54. 8.

¹ Vide, September-October-November '51 editorials.

² The idea of transmigration of soul can be traced to the *Rig-veda*. For helpful discussion, vide, *in in Pre-Upanishadic Vedic Literature*, By H. G. Narahari M.A. M. Litt, Adyar Library, Madras, Chapter-X; and *A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy*, By R. D. Ranade, Oriental Agency, Poona, 1926, p.p. 147-52.

'The One rules over all that is unmoving and that moves, that walks or flies, being differently born.

अजस्य नामावध्येकमर्पितं यस्मिन्विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्युः ।

Rg. X. 82. 6.

'The one is placed in the nave of the unborn where all beings rested.

आनीदवातं स्वयया तदेकं तस्माद्वान्यत्र परः किंचनास ।

Rg. X. 129. 2.

The One breathed breathlessly by itself, other than it there nothing since has been.

In the *Rig-veda-Samhita* itself we have the registration of another unique experience of the Aryans about the soul's relation with the Oversoul. They realised that behind the facade of the fleeting transmutations of the psycho-physical continuum of man, every man, there was the other aspect, which eats not but looks on :

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते ।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभि चाकशीति ॥

Rg. I. 164. 20.

Two birds, bound one to the other in close friendship, perch on the self-same tree. One of them eats the fruits of the tree with relish, while the other looks on without eating.

As we come to the Upanishads we see the wondrous sight of the mighty surging waves of abundant realizations bathing the serene summits of reality. We also find here the ultimate end of the Indo-Aryan way of life (or for that matter, of human life) on earth discovered and clearly defined for all times, in the context of the realization of the ultimate truth. This was a tremendous achievement of the Aryans, of which there is hardly any parallel in the world history. Neither economics nor politics determined the patterns of the Hindu social institutions; it was the impact of such realizations as shine gloriously in the following:

स वा अयमात्मा सर्वेषां भूतानामधिपतिः, सर्वेषां भूतानां राजा; तद्यथा रथनाभौ च रथनेमौ चाराः सर्वे समर्पिताः,

एवमेवास्मिन्नात्मनि सर्वाणि भूतानि, सर्वे देवाः, सर्वे लोकः सर्वे प्राणाः, सर्व एत आत्मानः समर्पिताः ।

Brihadaranyaka Up. II. 5.

The same Self is the ruler of all beings as the King of all beings. Just as all spokes are fixed in the nave and the felloe of the chariot-wheel, even so are all beings, gods, all worlds, all organs and all—the (individual) selves fixed in this Self.

आत्मैवाधस्ताद् आत्मोपरिष्ठाद् आत्मा पश्चाद् आत्मा पुरस्ताद् आत्मा दक्षिणत आत्मोत्तरत आत्मैवेदं सर्वमिति । स वा एवं पश्यन्नेवं मन्वान एवं विजानन् आत्मरतिरात्मकीड आ मिथुन आत्मानन्दः स स्वराद् भवति ।

Chhandogya Up. VII. 25

The Self alone is below, the Self is above, the Self is behind, the Self is before, the Self is to the right, the Self is to the left, the Self is all that exists. One who sees thus, thinks thus, and understands thus, loves the Self, and rejoices in the Self, enjoys the presence of Self, and rejoices in the Self. He attains perfect freedom.

ॐ ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् । तदेवाभ्युक्ता । सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । यो वेद निहितं गुहायां परमे व्योमन् । सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कालान् सह । ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति ।

Taittiriya Up. II

'He who realizes Brahman attains the Supreme. With reference to that very fact it has been declared: "Brahman is Existence, Intelligence, Infinity; he who realizes it, treasured in the cave (of the heart), in the highest ether, fulfils all wants together Brahman the omniscient.'

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।

Svetasvatara Up. VI.

God, who is one only, is hidden in all beings. He is all-pervading, and is the inner self of all creatures.

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद् विजानतः ।

तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

Isa Up.

What delusion, what sorrow is there for the wise man who sees the unity of existence and perceives all beings as his own Self!

एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शान्तं नेतरेषां

Katha Up. V

(That) one (Supreme) Ruler, the Soul of all beings, who makes His one form manifold,—those wise men who perceive Him as existing in their own self, to them belong eternal happiness, and to none else.

ह्येतद् ब्रह्म, अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

Mandukya Up. 2.

For truly, everything is Brahman. And this Self within (Atman) is Brahman.

चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः ।

सु भूतेषु विचित्य धीरा प्रेत्यास्मान्नोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥

Kena Up. II, 5.

For one who has realized It, here in this world, there is true life. For one who has not, great is the destruction. Discerning the Atman in every single being, the wise man rises from sense life, and attains immortality.

We have to remember that the ideal of service in India drew its nourishment from the very core of these life-shaking realizations. None can possibly truly understand the trends of Hindu Sociology unless he pursues his studies in the context of the Upanishadic (including Upanishadic) spiritual revelations and experiences. After having realized the truths, the seers grew anxious to bring home these truths to the community. Perfectly convinced of the supreme value of the treasures in their keeping, they desired to socialise them. But here they faced the problem of the many-ness of the truth. They also found out that Truth, which already pervades all that exists, could be socialized only by guiding all men onward, slowly but surely.

Realists that they were, in the impact of these realisations they not only acknowledged with an incontrovertible conviction that theirs is also the realisation 'तत् त्वम् असि', 'तु thou art. *Chhandogya Up.* VI. 8. 7) but in their essential spiritual core, all men may aught that exists, were equal, for the very One (सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म Verily, all is Brahman. *Chhandogya Up.* III. 14. 1); and also sagaciously, honestly apprehended

the truth of the palpable inequalities—physical, mental and moral—and the consequent special peculiar necessities of different men in different levels of being.

We have to trace the complexities of the Hindu sociology to this double realism of the Hindu social scientists. No other religion has abhorred straight-jacketism with so much light, creativity and consistency than Hinduism. Hinduism is in fact a unique fusion of super-idealism (which in its own way is the purest realism) and hyper-realism (which in its own way is again the purest idealism). This made the Hindus from the beginning of their history great planners of life. If today the pursuit after liberation is to the Hindu sailing in one's own boat in a perfectly chartered ocean, it is because the planners of salvation surveyed this life and mapped it up with such thoroughness that, given the understanding, they need not go for new crazes for solving the 'modern' difficulties. Men, according to their inner makeup, necessities, endowments and qualities came to have different modes of life with different duties and privileges. Every man's path connected him on the one hand with his ultimate goal of life—which was equal for all ultimately—realisation of the Divine in man, his liberation; and to the society, on the other, for the welfare of which he had to exert himself to his utmost.

As far as the aspiration part of the life's quest was concerned all were equal. But according to the psycho-physical requirements of men of different levels, necessity part of peoples' lives had to differ. It was found out that, given particular care, a group of people could discharge their duties so well that, they went a step forward towards their goal of life, liberation, while contributing in the process a service to the society, which was conducive

to helping other groups of people in going a step nearer to their liberation, the common goal of all men. It was also discovered that a grant of certain specific privileges to different groups of people was to the best interest of the society. But these privileges could be given only if the particular duties assigned them were fully carried out. The fundamental link of one group of people with another was a group's particular duties determined by its psycho-physical capacities. In helping itself by proper observance of its duties (as a prize of which the society granted it certain privileges) a group helped other groups and the entire society went ahead materially and spiritually. One who wholeheartedly

observed *svadharma* could not help spiritual progress. This is Varnashrama dharma

And this Varnashrama dharma is one of the most superb service-schemes, ever conceived of in human history. The ideal of service, as conceived and laid out in the Varnashrama dharma forms the warp and woof of Hindu sociology. When Swami Vivekananda says that 'service' is one of the national ideals of India, he points out this fundamental of Hindu sociology. It will be our endeavour to bare here this aspect of Hindu sociology which is hardly ever stressed upon by occidental writers on Hinduism. Even Indian writers on Hinduism seldom adequate stress on this point, the supreme importance of which we shall come to show

(to be continued)

³ Western authors have often, due to lack insight, if not deliberately, misrepresented the aspect of Hinduism. Dr. John McKenzie in his *Hindu Ethics* has definitely misrepresented the 'service' aspect of Hinduism. The reply P. V. Kane gives to this serious omission and allegation: Dr. McKenzie will be of great interest to all, anxious for correct representation of Hindu thought. 'Hindu Ethics' by Dr. McKenzie, I am sorry to say, is marred by the unsympathetic, and supercilious attitude of a Christian missionary. Its keynote is perverse inasmuch as the foundation of the author's criticism is the notion that one is not really moral unless one is engaged in active social service. There is very little warrant for this hypothesis in well-known works on Ethics. To expose the fallacies of Principal McKenzie's work would require a volume. But a few words may be said here. The particular brand of active social service the learned author has in view is difficult to follow. I would like to make him a present of the following lines from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on Social Service: "The term social service is a comparatively new one in Great Britain. If it has been used previously in the twentieth century, it would have meant *philanthropy* and charity in the ordinary sense." If the learned author means that the ancient India never insisted on universal philanthropy and charity, he has read the Indian literature in vain. Every householder was called upon by the Hindu Sastra to offer food according to his ability to students, ascetics and to all beings including the...chandalas, even dogs and crows. Every Brahmana who could teach had to do so without demanding any beforehand. Maths were established in every part of India for expounding religious books, feeding students and the poor. There are *annasatras* even now where hundreds are fed every day. The necessity arose through out the ages for a Poor Law in India with its attendant evils, well portrayed in Dickens' famous master-piece 'Oliver Twist'. The above were some of the different aspects of philanthropy and charity which are now dubbed social service. In the 3rd century B. C. Asoka established hospitals not only for men but even for beasts, and *Yajnavalkya-smriti* I. 209. equates free nursing of sick persons with gifts of cows. The learned Professor asks with an air of triumph and condemnation of all Indian morality (p. 251) 'Is there anything comparable to the movement of Francis of Assisi initiated and led?' The learned author has fallen into the frequent error of comparing a movement of the 13th century with Indian ideas over two thousand years old. As I shall quote words from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "It would be an anachronism to think of Francis as a philanthropist or social worker or a revivalist preacher, though he fulfilled the function of all these. Before everything he was an ascetic and mystic." The particular brands of social service that are now in vogue are mainly due to the ravages of imperialism and extreme capitalistic tendencies. vide. *History of Dharmasastras*, Vol II. Part I, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1941, p. 3 and 4.

SRI SRI SARADA DEVI

By SATIS CHANDRA CHATTERJEE, M.A., Ph.D.

'Do not make any distinction between Sri Ramakrishna and me. ... Sri Ramakrishna is everything—both Guru and Ishtam. He is all in all,' said Sri Sarada Devi. This short article by Dr. Satis Chandra Chatterjee,—Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University and the author of a number of standard works on Indian Philosophy—in effect, throws light on this aspect of the life of the Holy Mother, whose Birth Centenary will be celebrated during the period between December 1953 and December 1954 everywhere in India and in different countries of the world.—Ed.

In the history of the human race it is often found that an incarnation of God appears on the face of the earth whenever the moral exigencies of the world require God comes down to the world in the form of a superman and lives among men when any part of human society faces per moral degeneration and spiritual bankruptcy and urgently needs their rehabilitation. It is in this way that He re-establishes the moral and spiritual order in the world when that is threatened by wicked and evil forces, and is on the verge of complete disruption and destruction. Though born as the son of man, a divine incarnation is not bound by the laws which govern the lives of ordinary men. The life of an ordinary man is almost wholly governed by the laws of heredity and environment. His life is the product of bodily and mental traits which he inherits from his parents, and of the influences which his family, society and country exert on him. In the beginning of his life there is in him no knowledge or clear understanding of the truth about his own self, God and the world, and his place and action in it. An incarnation of God, on the other hand, seems to transcend the ordinary laws of human life. He comes to the world, lives and acts in it according to his own laws. In early life he is found to have some sort of consciousness of reality, self and God, and an understanding of his life's mission in the world. He seems to know that other souls are born in the world as his companions and followers,

and also to recognise them as his co-workers in fulfilling the mission of his life. Above all, the divine incarnation is found in some cases to possess full knowledge about his divine consort whose constant care, co-operation and devotion would make his life and mission in the world a complete success. Sri Ramakrishna was such an incarnation of God, and Sri Saradamani Devi—the 'Holy Mother'—his divine consort.

Born in a poor Brahmin family of West Bengal, Sarada Devi was married to Sri Ramakrishna at the age of five in the hope that marriage would cure his divine madness. As a married girl, she manifested the highest virtues of an ideal Hindu wife. Simplicity, modesty and shyness shone like three gems on her person and lent additional charm to the beauty of her character. Shyness was, as it were, the very garment which covered her body from head to foot and from early youth to old age. While staying with Sri Ramakrishna at the temple-house of Dakshineswar, nobody could see her face, so shy and modest she was. But though shy and modest by nature, Sarada Devi could defy all conventions and face all dangers when the call of duty and the emergency of circumstances required it. She walked miles and miles from her village home along solitary and infested roads to join her husband at Dakshineswar when he was reported to have gone mad. Devotion to the ordinary duties of a good housewife such as cooking food, nursing the sick, etc., was another

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prominent feature of her life. Sincere and selfless love and affection for all her relatives, unswerving devotion and loyal service to superiors, and unlimited patience and forbearance in the midst of the difficulties and discomforts of family life were some of the abiding traits of her conduct and character. She would conquer hate by love, aggression by affection. Above all, an intrinsic purity of character, a tenderness of heart and an unselfish will to do good to others mark her out as an embodiment of the ideal of Indian womanhood.

Although married, Sarada Devi lived the life of a self-contained saint. Her marriage was but the formal union between Sri Ramakrishna, the divine man, and his divine consort, and it was destined to reach its consummation in the spiritual union or identification between them. It was the union of spirit with spirit and was completely free from all taints of bodily or physical relationship and from all carnal desires and passions. Her married life was a dedicated life—a life which was centred in the thought of Ramakrishna, elated by the utterance of the name of Ramakrishna, and haloed by the constant remembrance of Ramakrishna. In other words, it was a life which by virtue of its perfect purity and transparency fully reflected the divinity that stood before her as a guiding star. Evidences of her saintliness might be found in all the thoughts, words and deeds of her mature life. One day while she was travelling on foot through a long and lonely tract of land to meet Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar, a dacoit who lived at a distance from there came up and intercepted her, with the obvious intent of committing robbery. But the gentle look and affectionate words of Sarada Devi pacified his greed, purified his mind and transformed his whole being. The man who came to rob, remained to

admire and returned to pray and worship her. On another occasion while she was living at Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna asked her if she wished that their marriage be consummated. 'Why should I wish that? I have come only to help you in your spiritual life',—was Sarada Devi's simple and gentle answer. We need not multiply such instances. What has been said here is sufficient to convince one of her saintliness and selflessness. Those who had the good fortune to sit at her feet, see her face, and hear her sweet and affectionate words, know for themselves what saintliness is, and how it looks and beams blessings on all it looks at.

Sarada Devi appears in full glory in her later life as the 'Holy Mother' of the Ramakrishna order. With the passing away of the immortal soul of Sri Ramakrishna from the mortal frame and the material world, she manifested to the full the divine Motherhood that was latent in her in the past. The innate saintliness that was characteristic of her and the kindly divine light that was ever guiding her, are the main factors which contributed towards this consummation. Sri Ramakrishna looked upon her as the veritable manifestation of the divine Mother and often used to give expression to this extraordinary view in her presence and to inspire her confidence. Once while massaging the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi suddenly looked up and asked him: 'How do you look upon me?' The spontaneous and astounding answer of Sri Ramakrishna was: 'The Mother who is worshipped at the temple, and the mother who gave birth to this body is now massaging my feet. I look upon you as the very manifestation of Motherhood'. What is more important and more significant in this connection is Sri Ramakrishna's performance of the worship of mother Kali at one Kali puja night. At this night Sri Ramakrishna worshipped

the divine Mother in the body of a woman, and that rare blessed woman was Sri Sarada Devi. The vision which Sri Ramakrishna constantly had in the past, namely that every woman is a manifestation of the other divine, was thus realised and demonstrated in fact. Having finished the worship in such unprecedented form and manner, Sri Ramakrishna prostrated himself before the embodied Deity and offered to her the fruits of all his austerities, a rosary, himself and everything he had in the world. The divine Mother in her person being thus awakened, Sarada Devi attained the full height of her stature and assumed the role of the 'Holy Mother' for all of us. Subsequently she carried out the mission of Sri Ramakrishna for the moral uplift and spiritual enlightenment of mankind. She looked upon all the young disciples and monks of Sri Ramakrishna as her own children. Many of them turned to her for counsel, advice and guidance. It was upon her decision and with her

blessing that Swami Vivekananda went out to America to represent Hinduism at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893. But all this is as it should be. What is rather unusual, though not unexpected, is that Sarada Devi treated all men and women as her own sons and daughters, and felt their joys and sorrows as much as a mother would do. Above all, her attitude towards those who sought shelter with her and were sincerely devoted to her was no less godly than that of the holiest of the Holy. She would fain forgive our faults and failings, vices and sins, and give us her blessings, no sooner than we would look up to her for help or do the slightest act of service to God or to her holy self. Sarada Devi as Mahamaya or the divine Mother has saved and even now saves many a lost soul who have turned to her for help and guidance. May the 'Holy Mother' guide us like a beacon light in the fearful ocean of life and help us to cross the sea of sins and miseries.

POWER OF SPIRITUAL VIBRATION

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

SUBSTANCE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S OBSERVATION ON VIBRATIONS IN RAJAYOGA
According to the philosophers of India, the whole universe is composed of two materials, one of which they call *Akasha*. It is the omnipresent, all-penetrating existence. Everything that has form, everything that is the result of combination is evolved out of this *Akasha*. It is *Akasha* that becomes the air, the liquids, the solids. It is *Akasha* that becomes the sun, the earth, the moon, the stars, the comets; it is *Akasha* that becomes the human body, the animal body, the plants, every form

that we see, everything that can be sensed, everything that exists.

By what power is this *Akasha* manufactured into this Universe? By the power of *Prana*. Just as *Akasha* is the infinite, omnipresent material of this universe, so is this *Prana* the infinite, omnipresent manifesting power of this universe. It is *Prana* that is manifesting as motion; it is *Prana* that is manifesting as gravitation, as magnetism. It is *Prana* that is manifesting as the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought force. From thought down to the lowest force, everything is but a mani-

festation of *Prana*. The sum total of all forces in the universe, mental or physical, when resolved back to their original state, is called *Prana*.

We see sects in every country who have attempted the control of *Prana*. In this country there are Mind-healers, Faith-healers, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, Hypnotists, etc.;...we find at the back of each of this control of *Prana*, whether they know it or not. They make use of a force which is fundamentally the same as that used by the yogi—*Prana*.

Gain control of this vital force and you gain control of the body. It is possible to control *Prana* in every part of the body and it is even possible to influence others. If your body is in a certain state of tension, there may be a tendency to produce the same condition in others. For example, if you are strong and healthy, those who live with you have a tendency to be strong. On the other hand, if you are sickly, those around you will receive this influence from you. When the healer seeks to cure an ill person, his first idea is to transfer his own health to the other, but that is a most primitive way of thinking. A strong man may actually make a weak man a little stronger, whether he consciously tries or not. Again, a man, although far from healthy himself, can bring health to another. That is because he can increase the rate of vibration of his own *Prana* until it can be transmitted to another. But this depends on purity.

The pure man who has the power to bring his own *Prana* into a certain state of vibration, can arouse a similar state of vibration in others. We see this demonstrated in everyday life. I am engaged right now in bringing my mind into a certain state of mental vibration. The

greater my success, the more you will be affected by what I say. The more ear I am, the more you will derive from the lecture. If I lack enthusiasm, so will you lack interest. The great leaders, the world-movers and shakers, have learned how to bring their *Prana* into a high state of vibration, so that others are drawn towards them and led to think as they think.

THE MEANING OF VIBRATION

Now what do we mean by vibration? A lady was talking to her friend. She said: 'When you are awake you are in a certain state of vibration; when you dream you are in another; when you are rested after a good sleep you are in another; when you are angry, feel irritable, frown, or happy and laugh, these are states of vibration. Some people get on your nerves and you may do the same to them. You may not like the vibrations of some people, may be all to them, as they do to yours.'

The listener lost her patience. 'If you use that word vibration again, she said, 'I'll scream.' But the speaker, undaunted, simply remarked 'Even your scream will be a state of vibration.'

Now let us discuss the subject a little more seriously. Instead of screaming, perhaps we may find ways and means to make our vibrations spiritual and harmonious, not only for ourselves but also for those with whom we associate.

Vibration is motion within a body which reaches out and brings reaction in other bodies coming in contact with it. We receive through our senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, all vibrations. Sound, heat, light, gas, liquid, solid, sun, moon, stars, earth, all are vibrations of their own. Again, our

ate in different ways at different times, that our reactions also differ.

Modern scientific thought has revolutionized our conception of matter. An atom is no longer held to be the ultimate constituent, but is itself composed of electrons, protons, photons, neutrons etc.—all forms of electrical waves. That is what the 'wizards' of science definitely declare. What was once considered as inert matter is now known to be 'a structure of energy units, revolving with immense velocity in space-time.' Some eminent thinkers go so far as to say, 'The universe begins to move more like a great thought than a great machine.' and, again 'The stuff of the world is mind-stuff.'

Here we find an echo of Hindu cosmological theory, which declares that both matter and mind are products of a much finer material, of which the mind is a subtle product and physical matter a grosser one.

EXPERIMENTS OF PROF. J. C. BOSE

During our college days we were struck by some of the delicate experiments made by physicists trained in the school of the great scientist, Sir J. C. Bose. With the use of supersensitive instruments he had demonstrated that a piece of so-called 'dead' sheet metal, plant fibre and animal cells react to outside stimuli in more or less the same way, the difference being in degree, not in kind. Most enchanting were the experiments made with sensitive plants, particularly the mimosa, the leaves of which droop at the slightest touch. They move, more or less, as human beings do to heat, cuts, abrasions, alcohol and poison. Professor Bose found that plants have a system of nervous system, and even indicate things akin to 'mental responses,' indicating the tendency to get drunk. When

Professor Bose lectured in London, it is reported that George Bernard Shaw, the great vegetarian, felt extremely uncomfortable when the scientist demonstrated that, on being pinched and pierced, raw carrots gave violet electric signals, corresponding to man's cries of 'help.' The scientist remarked that he was demonstrating experimentally, what his Hindu ancestors called the 'One Principle of Life,' which pulsates and vibrates in manifold forms throughout the entire universe.

THE THREE GUNAS OR COSMIC FORCES

How did the ancient Hindus discover this Living Principle? Intuitively or physically? Diving into the very depths of their being, and into the nature of things, the seers discovered the infinite power of the Supreme Spirit, hidden in the gunas, or cosmic forces—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. In symbolic language they expressed their experience of this infinite power:

'There is one unborn female, the Mother, which produces manifold offspring. The one Power, consisting of three fold cosmic forces, brings the manifold universe into being.'

According to the Hindu cosmologists, on the relative plane there are two principles, the first is the sentient or pure Spiritual Principle, and the second, the insentient power or force in which the sentient spirit is immanent.

In the great hymns of the *Rig-Veda* we read: 'Motionless did the Supreme Spirit vibrate alone in its own glory. Beyond that nothing did exist. Creative then became the glory with self-sustaining principle below and creative energy above.'

Thus did Prana manifest itself and the whole cosmic process come into being. Through the action and interaction of Akasha, the omnipresent, subtlest material substance, and Prana, the cosmic energy, there came into being the ego, mind, senses

and what we call matter—both cosmic and individual. Thus we find that the One Infinite Spirit immanent in everything manifests itself as the Cosmic Being—Ishwara—possessing a subtle and a gross body, and as also the individual soul, putting on the coverings of a subtle body and a gross body. All bodies, gross or subtle, are products of Akasha, acted on by Prana, the cosmic energy; and just as we have our own individual body, which is part of the great cosmic body, so do we have our little individual minds which are part of the all-pervading cosmic mind. Both the individual and cosmic body and mind are vibrating with the cosmic energy called Prana. Conscious of intense cosmic vibration, the seer of the Upanishads declares: 'Whatever exists in this universe vibrates within the Prana.'

The nature of this cosmic energy is to move. What appears to be static is only a low state of vibration; what appears dynamic is moving at an intense rate of vibration. The Sanskrit word *Jagat* (Universe) is derived from the root *Gam*, which means 'to move', to change, to swing to and fro, to vibrate. The universe is in a constant state of vibration, and, says Swami Vivekananda very rightly:

'It is the Prana that is manifesting as motion; it is Prana that is manifesting as gravitation, as magnetism, as electricity, as light. It is the Prana that is manifesting as the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought force.'

It is very important for us to remember that our mind, with its faculties of thinking, feeling and willing, is a substance. Our thoughts, emotions and willings are like waves in the mind and are things as real, if not more so, as physical matter, and these states of mind are vibrations of one rate or another. Can the rate of vibration be controlled?

The Upanishads tell us that there are three rates of vibration, modes, corresponding to three colours, white, red and black. Black stands for Tamas, or dull forces. These forces produce darkness, negligence and delusion. Red stands for Rajas, intense forces of passion and desire; greed and worldly activity; enterprise and action, marked by restlessness and dissatisfaction. White indicates Sattva, harmonious forces of purity which bring about knowledge, compassion, righteousness and devotion.

PLATO AND THE GUNAS

Now these ideas are strange to western minds, but they were familiar to Plato, the ancient Greek Philosopher. In his *Republic* he speaks of three active principles which he calls Epithumia, Thumos and Logistikon, which correspond in that order with Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. The force, Epithumia, he says, is a multiplicity of blind appetites or desires which dominate the votaries of sensuous enjoyment and whose chief aim is the gratification of animal appetites. Thumos, like the Rajas, dominates the man of action who works with frenzied zeal for distinction, worldly position and power; grasping and greedy, such a man is filled with restlessness and unhappiness. Logistikon, like Sattva, presents the rational elements characterizing the philosopher sage: detachment, moderation, purity and harmony.

These three types of forces are at work within us at all times. When we say one has too much Tamas we mean that the dull, dark forces overshadow, for the time being, the other two types. When a person is ruled by passion and desire we say that Rajas is predominant. If his mind is peaceful and harmonious, if he seems

he detached himself from worldly desires, we say that Sattva rules. These are the three Gunas.

HOW TO REALIZE THE SPIRIT WHICH IS BEYOND GUNAS

Now the ultimate goal of spiritual life is to go beyond the Gunas and realize the Supreme, Transcendent Spirit. In order to reach this state one must have more and more of Sattva, the harmonious element. One must live morally, trying to be pure in thought, word and deed. Body, mind and soul must be purified. As the teacher in the Upanishad says: 'Practice self-control, purity, compassion.' Patanjali speaks of the necessity for practising non-injury, helpfulness, non-covetousness, chastity, independence on others, cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study and self-surrender to the Supreme Spirit as steps to meditation leading to spiritual realisation. Once we become established in the moral life we conquer dullness and tension. We become more and more harmonious and steady and can help others to rise also. Now vibrations of the impure man are harmful to him as well as to others. They affect him like poison fumes and may affect others, bringing depression, restlessness and unsteadiness. On the other hand the finer vibrations of the pure person benefit him and those who come in touch with him. Sattva is the stepping stone to the Transcendental State.

VIBRATIONS—GOOD AND BAD

In the life of Ramakrishna we read how he was unable to drink a cup of water brought to him by an apparently decent-looking man, who, it was discovered, was living an impure life. Swami Vivekananda tells how, when his own vibrations were pure, the Master could not take food from

his hands. Vivekananda himself was a man of shining purity, there was nothing impure in his life, but sometimes he had to associate with various types of people and the evil vibrations of some of them seemed for a while to stick to him so that there arose occasions when the Master could not but feel the contamination.

Vibrations can be changed, the impure can become pure. Whenever we find that rajas or tamas is predominating in our lives we can learn to tune ourselves to the harmony of sattva and gradually change our vibrations so that we become holy, and gradually established in purity.

The God-man's loving vibrations have a transforming power that awakens the latent spiritual consciousness of others.

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF ILLUMINED SOULS

About the seventh century of the Christian Era was born Sankaracharya—the great philosopher and mystic who revived the Hindu Religion. In the course of his wanderings he went to a place where he met a learned and pious Brahmin who was very unhappy because his only son was deaf and dumb. But the boy's face was luminous and blissful, and Sankara asked him: 'Who are you?' The boy then spoke for the first time in his life: 'I am neither a human being nor a god, neither a householder nor a student.' Sankara knew that a great soul was inhabiting that body and asked the father to give him the boy for he would never be happy in the life of the world. With the inner vision of one who has acquired the highest knowledge, Sankara told his disciples that this Brahmin boy had been taken by his mother to the river. While she bathed she gave the little one to the care of a yogi who was sitting

on the bank, but the Yogi in the course of his meditation forgot all about the child, who fell into the water and was drowned. The mother was disconsolate. Feeling pity for her and deep remorse, the Yogi gave up his own body and entered into the child's body. It was the touch of Sankara that brought out the potentiality of this illumined soul.

A spiritual life is far more than a moral life. The practice of moral qualities is only the first step. Along with that we must have Japam, the repetition of the divine name with meditation on the Supreme Spirit, which ultimately helps us in experiencing the Spiritual Reality, the Soul of souls. Without this realization it is impossible for us to be free from worldly desires and attain the highest purity.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Sri Krishna declares:

'The objects of the senses fall away from a moral man practising abstinence, but not the taste for them, but even that taste falls away when the Supreme Spirit is realized.'

During the height of spiritual realization the soul transcends the Gunas and becomes free from desires. It is after this experience that perfect purity is attained and vibrations are fully spiritualized. However to the extent one attains illumination and is established in moral qualities, to that extent one feels inner harmony and peace and is able to radiate vibrations for the benefit of others. The fully illumined alone possess the mighty spiritual power capable of transforming many. They have become clear channels for the flow of Divine Grace.

There are many types and degrees of spiritual power. There are the silent, illumined souls who, by their spiritual vibrations, thoughts and emotions fertilize

the mental world and make it easier for others to live a truly spiritual life. These are the dynamic ones who become actively engaged in promoting the welfare of others. We know only those who, by their powerful vibrations, influence mankind in a tangible way. Patanjali, in one of his aphorisms says:

'In the presence of one who is established in non-injury, love, sympathy, compassion, enmities will cease.'

Buddha's compassion was based on Supreme Illumination. A foolish man, knowing that Buddha observed the principle of love which commends the return of good for evil, came to him and abused him. Buddha was silent, pitying the man folly. When the man had finished Buddha asked him: 'Son, if a man declines to accept a present made to him, to whom would it belong?' 'To the man who offered it,' was the reply. Then said the Buddha quietly: 'I decline to accept your abuse. A wise man who reproaches a virtuous one is like a man who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person.' The abuser turned away ashamed. Later he came back and took refuge in the Buddha.

As pointed out already, the God-Man's loving vibrations have a transforming power that awakens the latent spiritual consciousness of others. Divini, the great poet of his time happened to hear a sermon by St. Francis of Assisi. 'What foolish raving is this,' he thought in his arrogance, but as the saint spoke the poet was fascinated by the beauty of the message. He went down on his knees before him and begged: 'Peace, oh give me peace!' The Saint said—'Arise come with us, brother Pacus, brother of peace.' The touch of the Saint eventually worked a great change in him and thereafter his writings reflect

face of mind that he had never known before.

God-men attain a remarkable degree of purity so that they become channels for the flow of divine energy into other human beings. Once Swami Vivekananda felt the force of this power in him even during the lifetime of his Master. 'Come, touch me' he said to a brother monk, and the monk experienced an electric shock and felt tremendous transformation taking place in him. But Vivekananda was warned by Sri Ramakrishna not to waste this precious energy until he had gathered enough for himself.

HOW TO SPIRITUALIZE OURSELVES AND OUR VIBRATIONS

How can we spiritualize our vibrations? We are like radio sets and must tune ourselves rightly. If we let ourselves become dull, we are at the mercy of dull vibrations. If we are tuned tensely, we are a prey to distorted forces. If, on the other hand, we learn the secret of creating harmonious vibrations within ourselves, we get unlimi-

ted help from harmonious cosmic forces and can rise higher and higher. We must learn to tune ourselves through spiritual disciplines until we reach that spiritual consciousness which transcends all vibrations.

By living a life of purity, under the influence of Sattva, a spiritual aspirant attains cheerfulness of mind, concentration, conquest of the organs, and fitness for the realization of the Self. After the attainment of Self-knowledge on the transcendental plane, when the illumined soul returns to the phenomenal world he is a completely transformed personality possessing tremendous purity and spiritual vibrations which may transform others.

If we wish to grow in spirit ourselves and wish others also to do the same, let us follow in the footsteps of illumined souls, undergo strict moral and spiritual practices with intelligence, diligence and resignation to the will of the Supreme Spirit. Let us be moral and spiritual in every sense of the terms.

BHAGAVAD-GITA—NISHKAMA KARMA—MORALITY

DHARMA PRECEPTS IN SRUTIS AND SMRITIS

By T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI

(continued from the previous issue)

Varuna, the king, is dharmapati and enforces departure from the path of dharma.

Dharmic life is taken as given in the Vedas. At the time of the Gita and at the time of the Buddha there was a code of conduct, already well-established. Neither Krishna nor the Buddha evolved new dharma from the depths of their own

mind. (See Kern's *Manual of Indian Buddhism* page 68 et seq.)

विरजा; विपाप्मा (Sinless) occur in the Vedic prayer, indicating that sin and the opposite were known or treated as known.

For the root of all dharma, *Isa* says

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।

तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

Who so sees all beings in himself and himself in all others has nothing to protect or conceal or to turn in disgust from.

Kena has in the *santi* आत्मनि निरते ये धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु. That implies that certain virtues are invariably in the *Atmani nirata* and prays that the sadhaka may have those virtues. At the end there is reference to तपो दमः कर्म सत्यम्.

Katha says that God's grace will not be his who has not refrained from evil life whose mind is not at peace and serene. नाविरतो दुश्चरितो नाशान्तो नासमाहितः । नाशान्तमानसः are negative indicatives of positive qualities required for obtaining grace. इन्द्रियाणि वदयानि ब्रह्मचर्यं, अक्रतुः वीतशोकः etc.

Prasna speaks of तपः ब्रह्मचर्यं न येषु जिह्ममनृतं माया.

Mundaka is not unlike *Katha* and speaks of austerity, chastity and purity of character as required for grace.

Mandukya is wholly metaphysical in character.

Taittiriya assumes *dharma* as known and is content to say *satyam vada* and *dharma* stressing both by a direction that they are not to be neglected: *satyan-na pramaditavyam, dharman na pramaditavyam*. There comes a stage when dharmic conduct has become so ingrained in his nature that the doubt never arises in his mind whether he had not done right or had done anything wrong.

When any doubt arises as to conduct in any matter you follow what is approved by Brahmanas, who are thoughtful and are well conducted and are not cruelly disposed and are attached to dharmic life. *Kena* and *Taittiriya* seem to say that dharma is well-known and need not be defined except

when doubt arises and then it is to be settled by men of godly life.

I do not touch on the longer Upanishads. Even in the Vedic texts we have the desire expressed of becoming *Viraja* and *Vipra*.

When we come to the smritis and epics the texts are numerous.

Two writers of smritis have explicitly stated what the *Taittiriya Upanishad* implies.

Visvamitra says that what Aryas accept approvingly is dharma and what they condemn is adharma. यमार्याः क्रियमाणं हि प्रशंसन् मवेदिनः । सो धर्मः यं विगर्हन्ति तमधर्मं प्रचक्षते ॥

Apastamba expands that idea by saying dharma and adharma do not proclaim themselves. Nor do the devas nor gandharvas nor the departed ancestors tell us, this dharma and this adharma. Then he adds in nearly the same words as Visvamitra put in prose that what the good men approve is dharma and what they condemn is adharma.

Dharma in some of its aspects is universal. It is and was and will be guide of human conduct in all climes and ages.

Brihashpati lays down:

दया क्षमानसूया च शौचानायासमंगलम् ।

अकार्ष्ण्यमस्पृहत्वं सर्वसाधारणानि च ॥

and proceeds to define his own terms:

Daya is help in danger to one who may be friend or foe or relation or stranger.

kshama, forgiveness, is not being angry or hurting another even when subjected to physical or mental evil or when unexpected calamities happen.

anasuya is never decrying merit where it exists, praising even when the merit is of a high order and never dwelling with relish on others' foibles.

Saucham or purity is avoidance of bad acts, association with the virtuous and devotion to one's own duty.

Anayasa is not tiring oneself too much in doing virtuous acts.

Mangalam is praiseworthy conduct and distance from blameworthy acts.

Akarpanyam, unmiserliness, is giving nothing every day, be it ever so little. *Aspriha* is contentment with what one gets without comparing oneself to a more prosperous neighbour and pining over the difference.

These are the definitions of Brihashpati himself of the virtues that he prescribed. Vishnu says :

क्षमा सत्यं दमः शौचं दानमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
अहिंसा गुरुश्रुषा तीर्थनुसरणं दया ॥
आर्जवं लोभशून्यत्वं देवब्राह्मणपूजनम् ।
अनभ्यसृया च तथा धर्मः सामान्य उच्यते ॥

Satyam is defined as truthspeaking without thereby hurting another.

Damah is self-control.

Indriyanigraha is control over the senses.

Ahimsa needs no definition now.

Gurusushra is hearkening the words of elders and service to them.

Tirthanusaranam is pilgrimage to holy places or waters.

Arjavam is straightforwardness.

Lobhasunyatvam is absence of greed.

Devabrahmana-pujanam is worship of gods and respectful treatment of holy men.

These are universal dharma.

The *Mahabharata* says :

सत्यं दमस्तपः शौचं संतोषो हीः क्षमार्जवम् ।
ज्ञानं शमो दया ध्यानमेवं धर्मः सनातनः ॥
आनृशंस्यमहिंसा चाप्रमादः संविभाषिता ।
श्राद्धकर्मतिथेयं च सत्यमक्रोध एव च ॥
स्वेषु दारेषु संतोषः शौचं नित्यानसूयता ।
आत्मज्ञानं तितिक्षा च धर्मः साधारणो नृप ॥

nanam is knowledge

ama is peace, serenity of mind

hyanam is one pointed contemplation,

emptying the mind of all distractions.

Anrisamsyam is desistance from cruelty.

Samvibhagita is the quality and practice of just or equal division of things.

Sraddhakarma is pious discharge of duty to the manes or departed ancestors.

Atitheya is hospitality to new arrivals.

Akrodha is absence of wrath.

Sveshu dareshu santoshah is contentment in one's own wife and steadfast loyalty to her.

Atmajnanam is knowing one's own self in its full essence or knowledge of the supreme Atman.

These come under dharma of all time.

Devala says :

शौचं दानं तपः श्रद्धा गुरुसेवा दया क्षमा ।
विज्ञानं विनयः सत्यमिति धर्मसमुच्चयः ।

Vijnanam is full knowledge of the secular and sacred variety or wisdom.

Vinaya is both discipline and humility.

Tapah is austerity, disciplining the body by fasts and observance of vows.

Sraddha is devotion in a good cause.

These sum up dharma.

Yajnavalkya says :

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
दानं दमो दया क्षान्तिः सर्वेषां धर्मसाधनम् ॥

Lastly Manu has reference to many of the qualities above set forth in different contexts. I have already referred to Adhyaya VI. of the *Gita*. Most of the above are cited by Madhusudana Sarasvati in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

It seems to me that it is varnadharma that distinguishes Hinduism from Buddhism. I will not here discuss its validity. Men are unequal in fact in intellectual and moral endowments. They are spiritually equal. The social system may rest on the inequality but with recognition of spiritual equality in essential matters or it may be built on theoretic equality but recognising the differences for practical purposes. Hin-

duism represents one type. Islam represents the other.

But it should be noted—what is usually forgotten—that the highest disciplines are open to all. For a discussion of salvation and its discipline being open to all, see *Paribhasha of Viramitrodaya* page 35 in the footnote. *Bhagavad-Gita* recognises it.

Lastly the golden precept is in the smritis also. Devala :

भूयतां धर्मसर्वस्वं श्रुत्वा चैवावधार्यताम् ।
आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषां न समाचरेत् ।

Listen to the full weight of dharma and having listened, fix it firmly in your mind. What you consider injurious to yourself do not do unto others.

Daksha in effect says the same thing

यथैवात्मा परस्तद्वत् द्रष्टव्यः सुखमिच्छता ।
सुखदुःखानि तुल्यानि यथात्मनि तथापरे ॥

Even as yourself is another. So must you think if you seek your own happiness. Joys and sorrows are similar in the case of others as much as in your own.

Manu also says it, (See. XII, 118, 125).

The above is a small fraction of what there is on dharma. What I have written is taken from *Viramitrodaya*.

I wonder whether you can add anything to what has been said. Cataloguing and defining is in the very texture of the Indian mind in which should be included Buddhists also. So many kinds of sons, so many kinds of marriages, so many kinds of virtues, grouping them under *manasa*, *vachika* and *kayika* varieties are all peculiarly Indian. Every writer says these are *saधारण* dharma. Today they apply as ever they did.

No human society is perfect in the sense that it practises all the virtues which its great men preach. In the degree in which these virtues are practised is the level of the society high or low. Above a certain degree of practice, is security not perfect but fair. Below it there is no security for

any one. Those who work selfishly their own security must know that, except by the maintenance of a certain degree of fairness in human relations, what seems security for them may turn out to be no security, everything being lost in general insecurity they have been instrumental in producing.

Precepts abound. Practice must lag behind precepts.

Kingdom of God remains a beautiful dream. Sometime ago there was a description of a community centre in Sundarl that seemed as perfect a society as a man can hope to have.

The consequences of evil-doing are slow in materialising that many escape death and all note how they died in perity. They do not always escape in present life. If there is any fault in religion, they do not escape. They pay for it in another life according to sin and in another world according to other consequences pursue and at last overtake the doer. Consequences are not escaped from or evaded.

Society is as high or tall as its collective virtues. That a dharmic life is the straight and the only path is its merit and its glory. You are alone your friend and you are your enemy. No part of morality is omitted in Hinduism but its positive belief in God involves certain additional sadhanas as in all other religions, except Buddhism. But even in it is Samsara though it degrades the soul and says nothing of God.

Dharma was, is and will always be the ideal of Hindu life. That evil is not rooted out by evil is a very hard lesson to learn for *rajas*. Whether we shall stand by sin or shall yield to *rajas* is our choice. Sin is not wholly possible in politics making the lesson of the *Gita*. Dharma-Yuga in the last resort is perhaps unavoidable

TEACHINGS OF THE NINE SAGES

SRIMAD BHAGAVATA

By T. A. KRISHNAMACHARYA

INTRODUCTORY

It is a matter of gratification for all of us to know that the essential principles of Hindu Dharma (religion) have been in vogue from time immemorial and that they will continue to be in force for eternity. There have been many dynamic spiritual leaders in the past: there are many, unexposed to public gaze and fame, in the present; and thousands more will rise in this land of rich spiritual heritage in the future. The one common feature in all these is that they affirmed what the five Vedas (I include Puranas and Itihasas in the body of Vedas) and the authority of the Vedas themselves) and the *Pancharatras* laid down. Indeed, this affirmation is the hall-mark of the spiritual worth of the teacher concerned. But this is forgotten by many and in the place of one's loyalty and in the selfish desire to bask in the light of one's chosen teacher, one is prone, in these days, to foist on the leader all sorts of revolutionary ideas which are as far from spiritual truth as darkness is from light.

In contrast to the modern habit of inventing startling doctrines as the unique teaching of this particular spiritual leader or teacher, our modest ancients—teachers and students alike—took pride in basing the thoughts enunciated on the firm rock of Tradition which goes back in a preceptorial way to God who is truthful. The reverse process by which one accords his thoughts the status of truth and Truth the status of a fashionable now-a-days was unknown to our ancients. Even Sri Krishna, the fountain-head of all Divine manifestations thought it fit to quote three or four episodes from the past to buttress his

teachings to that King among devotees, Sri Uddhavaswami; and the present subject furnishes another striking instance of this modest bearing on the part of our teachers of a past age. For the inquirer was Vasudeva, father of Sri Krishna, the teacher was Narada, the eternal companion of the Lord, the authority cited by the latter were the nine sages, sons of Rishabha, an avatara of Lord and the seeker of knowledge in the earlier episode was the monarch, Nimi, one in Janaka line far famed for its devotional wisdom. May humility be our first lesson from this course of events!

In the scheme of *Srimad Bhagavata* laid down in Book II of that scripture, the subject Mukti (liberation) is dealt with in Book XI. The entire work of *Srimad Bhagavata* comprises twelve books and with the exception of the first two which clear grounds, each of the rest deals with one subject. The final twelfth book treats of Asraya (support) that is God who is the basis of the preceding nine subjects including liberation and who owns all these nine as His attributes नव लक्षण लक्षितं 'God who is indicated by nine attributes.'

What an illuminating commentary this on the Gita-words ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहम् XIV. 27. 'For I am the basis of Brahman.'

Truth is not God; truth finds its basis in God. Truth is one of the noble qualities that are born solely out of one's love to God.

यस्यास्ति भक्तिर्भगवत्यकिञ्चना सर्वैर्गुणैस्तत्र समासते सुराः ।
हरावभक्तस्य कुतो महद्गुणा मनोरथेनासति धावतो बहिः ॥

Srimad Bhagavatam, V. xviii. 12.

'In the pure mind of those cherishing unselfish love towards Hari (God) the deities with all their noble qualities abide (inspiring such a

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TEACHINGS OF THE NINE SAGES

2

mind with every virtue) How can there be any qualities of great men in those not loving Hari and whose fancy-filled mind, therefore, (turned on bodily attachments) wanders about towards every external ephemeral worldly joy?'

But more of this later. The subject liberation is dealt with in this book, first, in brief giving out the fundamentals of Hindu Dharma, in the form of a dialogue between the nine Sages and the monarch Nimi and then in detail by Sri Krishna Himself to his dearest devotee, Uddhavaswami. I shall endeavour to give the main principles of the teachings of the nine Sages.

Sage Narada and Vasudeva: Sage Narada used to come and stay frequently in Dwarka for the purpose of directly serving and worshipping Sri Krishna. And this is no wonder. Surrounded as all are by death, who will neglect to use his mind and limbs during his brief sojourn on earth, to worship that Eternal of eternals, the adored of the deities themselves. On one such visit Sage Narada went to Vasudeva's house. Vasudeva, who knew that while the worship of deities is productive of good mixed with evil, that of Krishna-Bhaktas is productive of unalloyed welfare, fell at Narada's feet and worshipped them. Deities' gifts are what man desires, out of his own poor judgment while Bhaktas know the real need of the afflicted and help according to their judgment. Vasudeva, therefore, asked Narada to be enlightened on the Dharma which delights Bhagavan (God with all auspicious qualities) and which incidentally removes the afflictions of embodied life.

Vasudeva knew his limitations: how in his past life, he threw away a hard penance on the prayer for a child like God, how he did not ask for God-knowledge and how, as a result, though having Bhagavan

as his son, he was not yet versed in the Bhagavata Dharma or the course of life towards God, as God, which alone incidentally releases one from the cyclic life. So Narada was pleased at the inquiry relating to Bhagavata Dharma as its expounder pleases God and purifies the listeners and learners. He did not give out his teaching as his personal opinion even as the mode of doing; he began to recite an ancient episode containing a dialogue between the nine Sages, sons of Rishabha and Nimi, King Videha. Rishabha, an avatara of Lord Krishna, had 100 sons, the eldest of whom was the great Bharata, after whom the land is named. Nine others became rulers of the nine surrounding lands; eighty became Brahmins versed in the lore of Karma; and the remaining nine became Munis or Sages adepts in the knowledge of Atman or spiritual self. They are named Kavi, Hari, Antariksha, Prabuddha, Ekapalayana, Avirhotra, Drumila, Chamunda and Karabhajana. These nine sages are the very body of Bhagavan, being under His absolute disposal and as such, not different from Him.

Nimi Jayanti Samvada: Once they came impelled by God, to a sacrifice which Nimi was performing in Bharata-varsha. Knowing the sages to be devotees of Lord of Vaikuntha (Narayana) by their customary signs, the monarch welcomed and worshipped them with becoming mode. He made the following two inquiries.

'I know you are Narayana's devotees and attendants; you move about the world for the purpose of purifying their denizens

दुर्लभो मानुषो देहो देहिनां क्षणमद्भुतः ।

तत्रापि दुर्लभं मन्ये वैकुण्ठप्रियदर्शनम् ॥

Srimad Bhagavatam, XI. ii.

"This human body is rarely attained by jivas (souls) and even when attained it breaks down in a moment. In this rare human life too it is rarer still for one to meet those who are beloved of Vishnu, the Lord of Vaikuntha."

Therefore O sinless Sages, I request you to me of the absolute well-being that could all the jivas. In this life even half a minute of association with the righteous and the wise is a great treasure and I want to put it to the greatest purpose. Please explain also if I am fit to hear these righteous duties called the Bhagavata Dharma with which unborn Sri Krishna was so pleased as to give the practising suppliant the relish of even His transcendental Shyamasundara figure. Thus requested the nine sages replied with joy for the benefit of the king and all living beings.

Absolute well-being: First, the question about the absolute well-being of all living beings is answered. This unalloyed well-being is manifested in us by the constant remembrance of our relation to God expressed in devotional practices every day of our life. We can have sentient relations with God only when we are conscious centres like Him who is the one All Conscious Centre for the simple reason that darkness does not consort with light. But we are suffering from the delusion that we are the body and that our existence is co-extensive with the birth and death of our body, that which did not exist before birth and that we are extinct with the death of body and mind. This delusion breeds fear at the inevitable prospect of having to face a tremendous void some day or other and all our best successful efforts for material well-being are tinged with this fear of death. But God himself is afraid to approach the all-conscious God and during the time we are in intimate communion with Him,

here and hereafter, we are unaware of what fear is, not to speak of the sorrows of matter. Thus uninterrupted devotion and loving practices towards God is our sole absolute well-being. As a by-product of such loving communion with all-conscious God helps us recover our self-knowledge that we are conscious centres or specks and not the material mind which is part and parcel of a material body.

Bhagavata Dharma: Now this intimate communion with God which alone is Upasana (practice) and which is called Bhagavata Dharma is taken up for consideration. It is called Bhagavata Dharma because it was taught by Bhagavan Himself (God), being the most secret knowledge. While Manu and others laid down the rules of conduct as to castes and stations of life, Bhagavan Himself taught this course of Bhakti (love) as none else is competent to talk about the nature of God and the nature of unalloyed souls. Being thus directly God-given this path of love knows no obstruction, no sliding from. A person may be utterly ignorant of Sruti or Smriti; yet if he is loyal to this Bhagavata path, he is the upasana for a brief period in a day, he is sure to reach the goal. For his very upasana is his goal and it has the ability to enlarge itself gradually to the full life of the suppliant.

Steeped in efforts to secure the material well-being for ages past, we are, by habit, disposed to such actions and any violent disturbance of the actions themselves is doomed to failure. But Bhagavata Dharma, to be speedy and effective, must spread beyond the periods of upasana. To meet this situation, a consigning of all actions, secular and spiritual, to God is first laid down. In fact this is the fundamental element of Bhagavata Dharma.

कायेन वाचा मनसेन्द्रियैर्वा बुद्ध्यात्मना वानुसृतस्वभावात् ।
करोति यद् यद् सकलं परस्मै नारायणायेति समर्पयेत्तत् ॥

Srimad Bhagavatam XI. ii. 36.

'Whatever one does by word, deed and thought, decisive or indecisive or under the force of haunting habit one should consign unto the great God, Narayana'.

It may interest my readers to know that the verse recited by thousands of Hindus at the end of every religious rite with a slight modification has *Srimad Bhagavata* for its source; and if a majority have not far advanced in this Dharma it is because the consigning is merely vocal and not mental even when it is uttered. A question may be asked: what exactly is the significance of the act of consigning? To illustrate: in a factory or in office the work of a particular individual may as a fact yield fruits far in excess of the actual remuneration paid to him: yet he does all work for his master and the remuneration he gets is at the will of such master. Here it is good to remember the parable of the Master and the servants in St. Matthew of the *New Testament* which is very nearly the example aforesaid. In the same manner all work and its returns are for God. This is what is called consigning work and its fruit to God.

But this misappropriation of one's work and fruit for oneself is the result of false knowledge which can be excluded only by right knowledge. What is the need for Bhagavata Dharma which is a total love-impelled activity towards God? The answer is found in the following sloka which is an epitome of the entire teaching on Bhagavata Dharma. Within its short compass are found the disease, the symptom, the cause and the cure.

भयं द्वितीयाभिनिवेशतः स्याद्रीशादपेतस्य विपर्ययोऽस्मृतिः ।
तन्माययातो बुध आभजेत्तं भक्त्यैक्येशं गुरुदेवतात्मा ॥

Srimad Bhagavatam, XI. ii. 37.

'Fear (of death and of all else resulting therefrom) is occasioned by the sense of Ego which is the bodily principle second to unalloyed spiritual stuff we are. How do we forget the spiritual stuff that we are? The answer is: by turning away from God; therefore, causes this forgetfulness on our part. He does this through His power called Maya (as punishment for our egoism and turning away from Him.) Hence the seers centre themselves totally in His worship—a worship with love exclusively bestowed on Him on our Guru (preceptor) who is verily Himself.'

The disease is forgetfulness of our unalloyed spiritual stuff: the symptoms are the egoism which mistakes the body for our self and the consequent fear; the cure is caused by our turning away from God with the inevitable consequence of being caught in Maya which is the delusion of potency of God and the cure is a total devotion of worship of God with love exclusively bestowed upon Him and on our Acharya (preceptor) who must be looked upon as God.

What is the peculiarity in this love towards God and preceptor that makes it superior even to knowledge? The great Sage Shirdi says: संसृतिरेषामभक्तिं स्यान्नान्नात् कारणादि

'It is abhakti (non-devotion to God) and Ajnana (want of knowledge) that is the cause of our cyclic life of fear and misery.

Sri Sankaracharya gives the answer which is also the explanation of the last words in the above sloka देवतात्मा. It is to be found in his Gita-Bhashya to sloka 10 of Chapter VI, commenting on the words मच्चित्तो.....मत्पर. His commentary is:

'While a lover may always think of a woman but never regard her as supreme and he may regard his king or deity Mahadev as supreme (and not think of the latter at times), a Bhakti-yogin on the other hand thinks of Sri Krishna (God) with love at the same time regards Sri Krishna as supreme being.'

Herein lies the secret. The major aspect of God alone will not help us to

r fear and miseries ; and love bestowed any other object but God is equally erless in this respect. It is only that who can inspire in us a love of the ore and intensity of a lover towards beloved and a respect as great as that has towards his King or deity Mahaa, who can strengthen that life of tender, which alone is the remedy for disease. Surrender without love and without surrender are both futile. this loving surrender or surrendering, the wise got over the two-fold delus of *dehatmabhava* (the idea that the y is the self) and the enjoyer-mood idea that he is the independent yer). Both these ideas are evanescent dream-stuff and must be rejected as when they rise without any reser-on.

adhana-Bhakti: How to attain to this ng surrender or surrendering love is a considered. The path is known as *hana-Bhakti* and the goal, *Sadhya-kti*. The first and the easiest step is to n to God's stories recited by a qualified her. I have to digress a little on the ect of a qualified teacher. It is need-to state that he must admit God of ite auspicious qualities as the absolute est: else he digs the very ground er his feet. Another inexorable condi-is that he should not have 'agents' to k for his material welfare; in other ls, he should have thrown himself pletely on the mercy of God for his -*Kshema* (needs and security). The wing sloka from *Hari-Bhakti-Rasam-Sindhu* describes, the nine steps to na to God, the summum bonum of gavata Dharma:

आदौ भद्रा ततः साधुसङ्गोऽथ भजनक्रिया ।
ततोऽनर्थनिवृत्तिः स्यात्ततो निष्ठा रुचिस्ततः ॥

अथासक्तिस्ततो भावः ततः प्रेमाऽभ्युदयति ।
साधकानामयं प्रेम्णः प्रादुर्भावो भवेत् क्रमः ॥

First, belief in a Personal God with all auspicious qualities present in all phases of existence, *Paramarthika* and *Vyavaharika* (absolute and relative); second, intercourse with the devotees of such a God; third, acts of worship; fourth, desisting from sense enjoyments; fifth, contemplation; sixth, relish of God; seventh, a craving for Him; eighth, the loving mood, and ninth, super-exalted love called *Prema* which can only be felt and not described in words.

In this ladder Satsangh or association with devotees corresponds to *Sravana* or hearing God's glories, for in their conclave nothing but God's stories will be heard. Then the aspirant moves higher up in the process of casting away his egoism or *dehatma* delusion. He participates in congregational singing of God's holy names and ultimately himself takes the lead in singing without any fear of being mocked at. Thus ridding himself of egoism, he easily casts off attachments which are its adjuncts. Once the aspirant is beyond the gravitational pull of the senses and sense-objects, he is safe on the Godward path, provided ofcourse, he began his journey with the faith in the absolute existence of a God with all auspicious qualities and with whom, therefore, he can establish relations.

Sadhya-Bhakti: Now is described *Sadhya-Bhakti* i.e., the state of the devotee who has attained *Prema* or exalted love towards God. This can be reached by the Vedic path or by the way of a natural capacity for passionate attachment coupled with grace of God. In the teaching of the nine sages, the first path alone is given; in Sri Krishna's precepts to Uddhavaswami the latter is explained. This is but appropriate as Sri Krishna alone can know the force of His Grace. However the characteristics of *Prema-Bhakti* attained by both paths

are the same. The Bhakta, possessed by *Prema*, his heart melting in devotion, sometimes laughs, at other times weeps, sings and dances; being quite out of the way of sense-ridden world, he looks, as if mad. In intimate communion with God, he is exhilarated; in separation he sometimes weeps; at other times, mentally and physically embraces the sentient and nonsentient creation; yet at other times, he bows to every existent thing in the thought that they constitute the body of God—whether it is the five elements, planets, living beings, directions, trees, rivers seas etc.. Thus this supreme knowledge is only a phase of the supreme Bhakti-mood. Being himself the body of God, he sometimes identifies himself with Him, yet another mood of *Prema-Bhakti* in *Vipra-lambha* or separation of lovers.

मुहुरवलोकित मण्डनलीला ।

मधुरिपुरहमिति भावनशीला ॥

Jayadeva's *Ashtapadi*, XII. 4.

'She decorates herself in a manner fit for love sports and often look at herself in mental absorption in such sports. In such concentration she gets the nature wherein she thinks

that she is yourself' (Maid's description Sri Radha Devi's condition to Sri Krishna

Here *Srimad Bhagavata* is an illuminating commentary on the Antary Brahmana of *Brihadaranyaka Upanis* (III. vii. 22) which ends with 'He who within Atman, whom the Atman does know, whose body is Atman, who (therefore) rules Atman from within, He Paramatman, Antaryamin, Achyuta (perishable).' And the great God-real Bhakta, Nammalvar gives out the fruit of his experience as such Bhakta in following verse from *Tiruvoymozhi*:

திடலிகும்பெரிவளி நீர்நிலமிவையிசைப்
படர்பொருள்முழு வதுமாய் அவையவைதெ
உடல்மிசையுமிரெனக் கரந்தெங்கும் பரந்து
கடர்மிகு சுருதியுள் இவையுண்டகரனே.

I.

'He who is within the tangible elements their presiding deities having entered through the Jivatman who has fashioned universe out of these elements, who pervades in all His fullness each and every one of these created things and beings even as the body and who, at the same time transcends these sentient and insentient creations who destroying, withdraws all creations Himself, He is the supreme God pointed out by the effulgent *Srutis* (Vedas)' (I. i.

(to be cont.)

RAMAYANA-TRIVENI—VĀLI

By DR. V. RAGHAVAN

Under the caption, *RAMAYANA—TRIVENI*, the All India Radio, Madras, had happily conceived recently of a series of three sets of Talks on characters, episodes and ideas in the *Ramayana* as dealt with by Valmiki, Kambar and Tulasidas. Five of these Talks were delivered by Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Sanskrit Dept., University of Madras, and they are published here serially by courtesy of the AIR, Madras.—Eds.

The Kishkindha kanda occupies the central place in the story of the *Ramayana*; it is the *Garbha-sandhi* in the course of the theme, in which the hero acquires an ally and sights hope of success. The circum-

stances under which Rama secures in kanda the alliance of Sugriva, namely killing of Vali, have, by the controversy involved therein, given this book of epic a special importance. Modern c

fear, ancient Sanskrit writers themselves felt an uneasiness about the *Vali-vadha*. Art from some of the commentators who have expended all their ingenuity, in interpreting this act, poets early and late, at and small, Vyasa, Bhavabhuti, Mayur, Abhinanda and Kshemendra have marked directly or indirectly about the counter not being altogether free from criticism. While the last word on the controversy cannot be said, whether one is with the orthodox or with the critical, it is the more difficult to tackle the question of the comparative light thrown on it by different authors, and assess, on this idea, the relative merits of the different authors. It is essentially wrong to institute comparisons among authors who lived at different distances of time from one another, each wrote, each under his own contemporary social and religious milieu. Valmiki's Ramayana is the ancient original; and on two other Sanskrit poems on the same story, Kambar drew for his *Navataram*. From Valmiki, Kambar and many others, Tulasi drew his material. Valmiki, as he expressly says, recorded the things as he saw them, like a fruit on his tree. No doubt the idea of Rama being an Avatara of God is inseparable from his mind, but the characters are drawn by the poet mostly on human lines. At the time when Kambar wrote, this was hardly possible, for Rama was the full Godhead. The inevitable devotional orientation reduced the touching off of any of the apparently darker shades in Valmiki's original. It is not possible to cite a stray change or innovation thus effected and acclaim the later work as grander or more dramatic. Tulasi lived still later had before him a

further ramified Rama cult, a more fervent practice of devotion, so that his *Rama-charita-manasa* became a rhapsody, more akin to the musical outpourings of a Rama-intoxicated soul like Tyagaraja. Indeed Tyagaraja has a few fancies which never occurred to Kambar or Tulasi, but all these improvisations on the original do not exalt them above the archetype. For that matter even in regard to devotion, half a dozen lines of the Sage draw your tears and throw your hairs on end much quicker.

When Rama came on the scene, the figures that were striding the heroic stage were of a colossal nature: Parasurama who had mowed a thousand-armed Arjuna and extirpated kings for twenty-one generations, Vali who, everyday, swept across from sea to sea, west to east and south to north, and the ten-headed Ravana who shook the three worlds. Unfortunately the extraordinary strength of these led them to commit acts of extreme cruelty, and heroism and chivalry had themselves to be rehabilitated by one who could, despite his immense power, say *आनृशंस्यं परो धर्मः* - Nonviolence is the greater virtue - and *सत्येनायुधमालभे* - I bear arms for Truth. The atrocities of Ravana led directly to the appearance of Rama; Vali was not so heinous, but he bore a certain kinship and alliance with Ravana that necessitated his removal too.

Vali's prowess was something which reduced Ravana himself to a pigmy. Vali not only killed Dundubhi,* a monstrous buffalo-demon of whom the very ocean and Himalayas were afraid, but flung his huge carcass a *yojana* afar. Golabha, a Gandharva, he engaged night and day for fifteen years and finished off. Vali had

two other engagements more significant for our story: the one in which Ravana was humiliated and the other in which the demon Mayavi was accounted for. The former, referred to only in the Uttarakanda, led to a pact of close friendship between Vali and Ravana. In effect, this means Vali was ignoring, if not conniving at, the depredations of Ravana and his hordes in the country round Vali's own headquarters, nay under his very nose.

The other engagement between Vali and Mayavi brings into fuller view the personality of the monkey-king. Vali and Sugriva, sons of Riksharajas, were living like brothers, the former ruling from Kishkindha and the latter attending upon him dutifully. Mayavi called Vali to battle; pursued by Vali, Mayavi ran into a subterranean cave; asking Sugriva to wait at the cave-mouth, Vali went in; after the passage of a year, which Kambar makes 28 months, flow of blood and tumult of Rakshasas were in evidence, and assuming that Vali was killed, Sugriva turned a boulder against the cave-mouth to prevent Mayavi's exit, returned to the capital, and at the instance of the councillors, accepted kingship of Kishkindha. It is significant that in the all-round touching up of the epic characters that Kambar had to do, he made Sugriva all the more righteous and worthy of Rama's choice as friend, not only by laying special stress on the pressure that the ministers brought upon Sugriva, but also by making Sugriva say first that he would rush against Mayavi to avenge his brother's death and by assigning the act of rolling a boulder on to the cave-mouth to Sugriva's attendants. But soon Vali, the victor in the encounter, came out, called out for his brother, pushed aside the boulder and reached the capital. Seeing

Sugriva sitting on his throne, he got infuriated in the extreme. Sugriva explained and begged pardon, but without exhibiting either nobility or brotherly feeling, Vali drove Sugriva away with a bare garment. And Vali started his cruel chase of his fleeing brother. This extreme and relentless vindictiveness, and the general display of his giant prowess which upset the peace and normal life of the neighbourhood effectively alienated the sympathies of everybody. Sage Matanga had cursed Vali and his followers against entering *asrama*, which, incidentally gave an asylum to Sugriva. Emissaries of Vali were constantly prowling about to fall upon Sugriva and his four followers. So much so, the whole locality was in favour of the valiant younger brother. There was hardly any choice for Rama. Kabandha offered to help Rama with his knowledge, stressed that Rama stood in need of a friend, and Sugriva was that effective friend. In fact, Kabandha's account of Sugriva produced such an impression on Rama that Rama spoke of Sugriva as *dharmatma* and was impatient to see him. The two entered into a pact of friendship before fire, and the high importance that Valmiki attached to friendship reveals, at this juncture, some special stress on Tulasi. This choice of Sugriva smooth and imperceptibly fits in with the elements of the story, the fact that Sugriva and party had seen Sita being borne off by air and possessed the piece of garland and jewels thrown down by her, and the fact that Vali was a friend of the enemy Ravana.

In the very first mention of Vali Hanuman, Valmiki describes him as *क्रूर, क्रूरदर्शन*. To this cruelty and mortal vindictiveness, Vali added a more heinous

* According to the *Vahnipurana*, Dundubhi and Mayavi were the sons of Maya and thus brothers-in-law of Ravana.

for fear it which brought him close to the main any other hero of the epic, and classified him as a villainous being those to be removed by the operation of the mission on which the hero had appeared in Ikshvaku's race. After deriding out Sugriva, Vali appropriated his younger brother's wife, Ruma. That this was a, what an excess of Vali was not casual, that, however, though not of such proportions as in the case of Ravana, it was fairly characteristic of Vali, as is made out of Valmiki's mention of this great feud with Mayavi as one due to a curse, the curse—तेन तस्य महद्वैरं स्वीकृतं विभुतं पुरा। It is of the part of Rama's mission of Dharma to salvage not only the domestic felicity of the ideal *Bhratra*, but also the purity of sexual relationship both of which were endangered in Kishkindha and Lanka. So, it is not when he sympathizes with a co-sufferer that he acts Rama when he hears of Sugriva's deriding; it is indignation at another glaring case of immorality. Kambar lays considerable stress on this and effectively underlines the contrast between the elder brother who gave up a kingdom for a younger brother, and he who drove away the younger and took his wife too, and it is out of this that the putting down of Ravana and safeguarding of Dharma came as the sole *avatara-karya* of Rama: *st: க்கமலம் உற சிவப்ப இத்தரை மிசை உறல், his மாக்கல், மறத்தை வீட்டுதல் அன்றியே அறிது that முண்டேர்.* Hence is it that when from the death-bed Vali parades his crudition in the Rama sastra, Rama quotes the Smriti, which lays down that for the incest *Kshetra* Vali was doing, while yet Sugriva is living, the punishment is death: *तस्य दण्डो न्दुःस्मृतः।*

to then deriding Rama for having shot Ravana down without his knowledge, Vali tries to lead that he is a monkey. Rama replies that if Vali was a monkey to whom

higher human standards applied not, he was merely hunted down as an animal prey in game. It is remarked that this reply of Rama 'lacks tenderness and truth', 'is unworthy of the character of Rama' and that Kambar avoids it. One of the additions made by Kambar is Lakshmana's critical observations on the worth of Sugriva and his friendship, which are only transferred from Sugriva's mouth in the context of Vibhishana's acceptance in Valmiki. In Rama's reply to Lakshmana here, Kambar makes Rama say that after all their standards cannot apply to mere monkeys of no discrimination: *இந்தைய எல்லகின் ஒழுக்ககளைப் போசலாமோ?* As however this is a specious defence of Vali, Kambar adds a point in Rama's reply not mentioned by Valmiki, viz. that even among animals examples like Gajendra and Jatayus, showing a higher sense, are not wanting.

The story that Vali, according to a boon of Siva as Kambar gives, or by the miraculous power of the golden garland given to him by Indra, as Govindaraja says, drew to himself part or whole of an open adversary is found in Kambar, but not in Valmiki. The legend arose evidently to justify Rama's act in this incident but, on the contrary, it tends to belittle the unimpaired glory of Rama's prowess. Is he who, in the moment when his 'disarmed and fatigued foe could be ticked off with an arrow, let him off, asking him to come on the morrow re-armed and rejuvenated, to be afraid of such a loss of his strength? Who knows, the Lord who came not only to chastise but also to bless wanted to give a chance to Ravana to repent and surrender! And if Ravana surrendered, nothing would have pleased the *Saranagata-vatsala* more. For did he not declare that even if Ravana came, he would receive protection—

यदि वा रावणः स्वयम्. Therefore it is not possible to make much of the sentiment that Kambar expresses through Lakshmana's supplement to Rama's reply, that if Rama came out of his hiding, Vali might offer surrender. Rama would have welcomed Vali, for, as it is, he did not discharge his deadly dart till the very end.

But Vali would make no such surrender. It was not as if Tara, whom he himself glorifies as an omniscient, *Sarvajna*, did not enlighten him in time about the arrival of Rama, his pact with Sugriva and of Rama's own search for Ravana. Elated with his own strength, bellicose at the slightest provocation, and relentlessly intent on finishing off his younger brother, he ignored the advice which, on his death-bed later, he praises as the *Tara-mata* that never goes wrong. Hence, when Vali says, as part of his accusation of Rama that had he known, he would have brought Ravana and Sita with least effort, he was merely indulging in a rhetorical boast.

Vali was always a strong character. Any softer aspect about him, such as the endearing talk with Sugriva, we are able to see only after his fall. Even here, as Valmiki depicts him, he reveals his original trait in his final heart to heart talk with his son in which, with no faith in Sugriva, he asks Angada not to love or hate but follow a middle path.

But how did this strong character finally accept Rama's words and become silent? While we are yet wrangling, Vali himself was satisfied. Vali not only accepted that

Rama was a superior being and one inferior like him ought not to carry on wrangling with him, but actually said that he verily courted death at Rama's hand *त्वतो हि वधमाकांक्षन्!* We have obviously to take it that as Rama stood in front, drawing his full form, and Vali lay in his last gasp, the entrancing personality cast its intangible spell on the latter. This Kambar seizes and expatiates upon further. In the Rama's *Paratva* is brought in by Kambar in more than one significant context in this episode. Kambar makes Vali's realization of the divine presence more completely explicit.

In Tulasi, the Kanda itself is short, the present episode brief; and in the time that Tulasi dwells on Vali, he sees this devotional end completely and makes Vali, like some of the Asura-character in the *Bhagavata*, court death at the Lord's hands for his quicker salvation. To Tulasi's Vali says: 'even if Rama kills me he will still be my lord.'

जौ कदाचि मोहि मारहिं तौ पुनि होउँ सनाथ ।

Vali's wordy dispute with Rama was but only on the face, the heart was full of love:

हृदय प्रीति मुखवचन कठोरा

And it is with firm devotion to Rama that Vali gives up his life, after pointing out that in all his future births, he shall be a devotee of Rama:

जेहि जोनि जन्मउँ कर्मबस, तहे रामपद अनुराग
राम चरणद्विप्रतिकरि, बलि कीन्ह तनुत्याग ।

'The discontented brahmins perish, so also the contented kings.

'Little streams are filled with only a small quantity of water. The palms of a mouse are filled with only a small quantity. A coward is soon gratified with acquisitions that are small.'

'Never occupy the intermediate, the low, or the lowest station! Blaze up! It is better to blaze up for a moment than to smoke for ever and ever!' *The Mahabharata*

THE HOLY MOTHER

By K. SUBRAHMANYAM M. A.

The sceptic, prying, trying, defying and altar-shy temper of our 'modern' age won't allow us to approach the Divine in a traditional fashion. Not that we have done away with all genuflections. We hold our 'pinch of incense' as tightly between our finger-tips as ever. Our knee-bending, however, is all the time before the sky-scrappers of our own conceits. But the visiting Divine has other facts. By becoming the branch of the Vine It holds out bunches of luscious grapes within our idle reach. And, forsooth, the grapes in the mouth were never sour!

Professor K. Subrahmanyam, — Vice-Principal, Madura College, Mathurai, South India — with his instinct of a successful teacher, who specially understands the difficulties and the necessities of the young, has brought home by a few deft strokes of his pen, that mellow but striking aspect of the Holy Mother's life and character, which is indeed her forte. — Eds

The reader is not called upon in this article to participate in a ritual of hagiography prevalent among the members of a particular sect, those who are specially devoted to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, only on that account, to Sri Saradadevi Devi. He is welcome to withhold his pinch of incense, for his own particular reason, which may happen to be only his mental picture of himself, as a hard-boiled, red-headed man immune from irrational excesses of facile reverence for others. He may pause to ask himself if there is anything of precious truth to be gathered from the acknowledged facts of her life, whether he may not enrich his own being with an infusion of the essence of the personality whom Providence made in a unique manner the wife of the Paramahansa. He need not attach any special value to the fact that Sri Ramakrishna set her in the lap of the Devi and offered her his worship, or soon after she had come to live with him at Dakshineswar. One need not take note of the apparent miracle that, when youthful Gadadhar's elders were weary of their so-far fruitless search for a bride for him, he directed them to her as a fruit 'marked with a straw' for his sake. But from a study of the very unusual form of devotion in which she stood to him, can we not fit ourselves in any manner? There is a popular belief among the Hindus that a half of the spiritual merit of an act done by the husband belongs to

the wife. A little knowledge of life teaches us that this is no mere arithmetical allocation of property in the region of the spirit, where arithmetic does not apply and individual possessions dissolve and lose the demarcations of ownership. The plain truth learnt by householders from their experience is that no course of life can be followed leading to the acquisition of spiritual merit, if the wife is not a cheerful and eager partner in their quest. It has been said that 'the more there are that seek the way of God, the easier it is to find it'. But the one person whose company is indispensable is one's own wife. It is not, on that account, necessary that the wife should be a 'Jnani', or a professing Vedantin. We recall the rebuke administered by Sri Ramakrishna when 'M' told him at the first meeting:—'I am afraid she (M's wife) is ignorant.' 'And you are a man of knowledge!' said the Master in mocking irony. But it is necessary that the wife should make no claim on the husband which will make the main quest of her husband's life more difficult for him to pursue. Beyond this, positive help, born out of love and understanding, is partnership indeed!

The Hindu wife inherits a tradition of self-abnegation which, because it is in the very air she breathes, does not seem to her an unusual virtue for which she is entitled to credit. The Holy Mother undertook her adventurous journey on foot all the way

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THE HOLY MOTHER

from Jayarambati to Dakshineswar because, forsooth, she had been told that her husband had turned mad! This would have provided a ground for divorce in other communities. But, for her, as a Hindu wife, there was no choice in the matter: her place was by her husband's side and, if he was in an abnormal state of mind, the greater was his need of her! The spirit that actuated that first journey was also what actuated the whole of her life's journey.

A visitor to Dakshineswar will see what manner of a place the Nahabat, the music-tower, is in which she lived as long as the Master was at the temple. To live in the Nahabat is little different from voluntary incarceration—so cramped is the space. And what manner of a life she led there—her sole occupation being to cook for the Master and satisfy his abnormal and unreasonable hunger, because his physiological condition was governed by the psychic storms he passed through; often to provide food at very short notice out of an almost empty larder for the never-ending stream of disciples and visitors! This was no life full of pleasant diversions, such as gay women are supposed to desire. When the Master had to be removed to Calcutta after his final illness had become pronounced, but before he had come to occupy the Cossipore Garden house, she lived in conditions which made the normal hours of sleep unavailable to her and which made normal movement an impossibility. All this was sacrifice enough, even if we can forget the basic sacrifice of her life, the surrender of what are supposed to be the normal and legitimate indulgences of married life.

There is an incident concerning the Master and his kinsman-attendant at Dakshineswar which has a deep import. The latter, after a long period of self-effacement and drudgery in the service of the Master, began to ask himself why he

should not, after the due preparatory spiritual practices, set up for a spiritual teacher on his own. While his mind was in this phase, he was following the Master one day in the Dakshineswar grounds carrying the water-pot for the holy Ganges whom many had come to recognize as what he was. Suddenly the Master seemed to the follower to be enveloped in glory to be transfigured and to move in an unearthly atmosphere. While the attendant was still wondering at what appeared before him, his gaze happened to turn upon his own person, only to behold the same unearthly radiance wrapping him around. This was recognised to be a lesson it was meant to be by the erstwhile frustrated disciple and there was no longer a sense of frustration in him.

The Glory that the true Hindu quester seeks has no frontiers of individuality to partition it among many. It is no stretch of fields with many ridges dividing it, your field from mine. It exists, indivisible, not an assemblage of parts. We know that the lamp burns, where there is a flame at the tip of the wick—all other things, the oil and the bowl that hold the wick and the stick with which we impel it, all finding their fulfilment in that flame. They together are the lamp and in the truest of senses it is only the lamp as a whole that can shed its radiance. Every one of us seeks to be the tip of the flame and will agree to be no lesser part of the whole—thereby only asserting darkness which is in each of us. 'I am the vine, ye are the branches', said Jesus. How few of us have the humility and patience to submit to be the branches deriving our own life and health from the central stalk and serving also to secure the life and health of that stalk in the measure assigned to us. The life of the Holy Mother is an object-lesson in the stern discipline of being a branch.

PSYCHOLOGY OF BRAHMACHARYA

By ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

ब्रह्मचर्यप्रतिष्ठायां वीर्यलाभः ।

the establishment of continence energy gained' Patanjali
sex and gold are worldliness'

Sri Ramakrishna

In the mirage and fleeting show, dream image that is our earthly pilgrimage, at times dawns the gracious moment in a flash, in an intuitive vision, we seem to grasp the key of life and immortality, the answer to the riddles of the universe, the fulfilment of the purpose of existence. These are rare and precious moments in our life. These moments, if caught and utilised properly, can be the moments of our second birth, which is the birth that takes us to the Unseen Beyond life, that gives us unshakable conviction, experiential certainty of spiritual reality, human values and the imponderables of Life Divine.

Mental calm and vigour, will-power and strength, irresistible and invincible energy when man has passed from the life of the first-born to the stage of the twice-born or *dwijahood*. The chick in the shell enclosed within its prison walls; it cannot see the light outside; it cannot fly to the glorious sky outside. But once the chick breaks the shell it becomes part of the outer universe and is the real bird of the sky and the air. Similarly man is not free, nor he is fully and really Man, until he has broken the fetters of his heart, mind through self-control, self-purification and Self-knowledge. The secret of the second birth, the esoteric of spiritual strength and the psychology of the sublimation of sex is all found in one great word of Indian theology, BRAHMACHARYA. The word seems to connote the idea that the path towards the attainment of Brahman, the Supreme Reality, is through chastity. The

path that leads to the attainment of Brahman is Brahmacharya.

According to Sankaracharya, Brahmajñana or the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality is unattainable without strict observance of Brahmacharya. According to Patanjali Brahmacharya is essential for the union of *jivatma* with *paramatma*, of the soul with the Over-soul. According to the last great prophet of India, Sri Ramakrishna and his greatest disciple, Vivekananda, worldliness and root of sinfulness are nothing but sex and gold '*kama-kanchana*'. This teaching tallies with the basic monastic traditions, in Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity that the vows of chastity, voluntary poverty are essential for the attainment of spiritual perfection.

In the Upanishads, and various other Indian scriptures it has been unequivocally laid down that Brahmacharya or chastity is the *conditio sine qua non* of spiritual perfection. Buddha's teachings on this subject, as it could be made out from the Pitakas, from the *Dhammapada* and from the various Hinayana and Mahayana scriptures is identical. The teachings of Jesus and Christian scriptures most clearly lay down that only the pure in heart can see God, reach God, realise God.

Even without going into the authority of the scriptures and prophets of various religions, anyone who has a little bit of introspection to turn the mental searchlight inwards and study and know one's own physical, psychical and spiritual mechanism, can clearly detect the psychological laws that govern the attainment and maintenance or the perfection implicit in Brahmacharya or Chaste virginity. It is so transparently clear that there is the biological animal instinct that blindly, and with some sort of irresistible unconscious drive, drag and pull human beings into

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PSYCHOLOGY OF BRAHMACHARYA

sense pleasures, of which the concentrated essence is biological sex. This law of biological sex is blind, more blind in men than in animals, because Mother Nature controls the limits of sex-life in brute animals, whereas it is left to be regulated through reason and will in human beings, because man is believed to be a 'rational animal'. If reason subserves passions and emotions centering around sex-instinct then man is more blind than the brutes and his original sanctity, divinity and purity are all dragged down into the mire through strong habits formed through repetition of sensual acts, protracted to years. He misses his own aim, human purpose, his supreme good by being a slave to his animal nature. This is what the Upanishad says:

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतत्सौ सम्परीक्ष्य विचिन्तयिषीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो

योगक्षेमाद् वृणीते ॥

Both the good and the pleasant approach man; the wise one discriminates the two having examined them (well). Yea, the wise man prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through avarice and attachment.

Katha. I. ii, 2.

Yes, there comes a stage when a man has to make a deliberate choice between a life given to sense-pleasures that weakens, wears out and finally stifles and kills spiritual life or a rational life wherein the real good of man will be attained which gradually weakens and finally eliminates what is still left of lust, sex-thirst and passion-flames. For, it is again certain that when a man through a series of exercises and practices has gradually withdrawn from the sense-pleasures and the allurements of sex he reaches nearer his Goal which is the Realisation of the Self. When this Self is seen, glimpsed at and realised, then what is still left of the *trishna* of burning and all-consuming thirst after pleasures, also drops away. Here says the *Gita*:

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।

रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ II. 59.

Objects fall away from the abstinent leaving the longing behind. But his longing also ceases, who sees the Supreme.

This eternal conflict between the law of flesh and the urge of the spirit, of the biological animal, of the tiger and ape in man and the higher Self, the angel and god in us, could be felt, accurately recorded, studied by any meditative and self-reflexing mind. This tension and tug-of-war between divine Self and animal selfishness between Love and lust, between Purity and filth, continues in our lives until the spirit gains the upper hand and finally gets complete victory over the other. There is a passage in the epistles of St. Paul wherein he tersely and incisively depicts the struggle between the law of Mind and the law of flesh. Says St. Paul:

'The good I would like to do that I do not but the evil I hate that I continue to do. I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of which is in my body. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I may serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.' (Epistle to the Romans. VII. 19-25)

In this spiritual combat, this strong tug-of-war between the sexual thirst and the spiritual urge, the vast majority of mankind surrender to the 'law of flesh.' There are still a large number who are alternately between lust and love, between sex-selfishness and selfless drive towards Self-realisation. There is then a third category of human beings who are determined to fight this battle once and for ever and subjugate the 'law of flesh' to the 'law of spirit' who have no more the doubting and wavering mind, who are one with the Spirit of the Universe, whose souls have become one with the Over-soul, whose *jivatma* have become one with the *Paramatma*, whose shadowy existence has found po-

ver, integration, meaning in life and un-
ling creative dynamism in God. Among
se rare and privileged souls, who at-
hed the conquest of the lower self
ough the Higher Self, of sense-sex-pas-
is through Truth-Thought-Bliss—*Satchi-
anda*, are some who are known to
pory. Among them are the Buddhas
l Christs; among them are Sankara-
rya, Ramakrishna, Thomas Aquinas
l a few others. It is from their lives
l teachings that an earnest soul, desirous
entering the sanctuary of the esoteric of
hmacharya or chastity, should learn
l study.

et is an undeniable fact that mental con-
centration, steady meditation, self-purifica-
on, self-control and Self-realisation develop
man in proportion to the degree of victory
has won over the sex instinct. Realisa-
on of God is impossible without complete
ptery over sex and sex-instincts. This is
teaching of saints, prophets and sages
have gone the Godward way. Sri
nakrishna, the latest Master of spiri-
tuality for Mankind has left no doubt or
iguity with regard to this point. Says
Master:

To be able to realise God, one must practise
absolute continence. Sages like Sukadev
are examples of *urddhva-ceta*. Their chastity
was absolutely unbroken. There is another
class, who previously have had discharges of
semen but who later on have controlled them.
A man controlling the seminal fluid for twelve
years develops a special power. He grows a
new inner nerve called the nerve of memory.
Through that nerve he remembers all, he
understands all.

he esoteric of spiritual power born out
conservation of sex-energy is known to
votaries of secret wisdom and *Sakti
bhana*. The Orphic mysteries of ancient
reece, the Sakti Sadhana in India and
ous schools of esoteric wisdom in Egypt,
na and Tibet teach the same doctrine
we can conquer the venom of the sex-
tent, the sword of venus, by constant

practice and thought. Seminal fluid is the
concentrated essence of virility and physico-
psychico-spiritual strength. Hence it is
that Patanjali says that through the obser-
vance of chastity is attained power and
virility. The Upanishads say that those
who aspire after reaching and realising
Brahman observe Brahmacharya, meaning
that Brahmacharya was the royal path
leading one to God. Chastity is all
strength, all-light, all-immortality, whereas
sexual weakness means mind-weakness
body-weakness and spirit-weakness.

By mere suppression and repression no
problem is solved. The procreative urge
of sex is transferred to creative channels of
Self-realised Self-expression in Religion,
Philosophy, Literature, Art, Poetry, Fine
Arts, Social Service etc., only through
sublimation. If sex energy and seminal
fluid flows downward, man is an animal;
if it flows upwards, evaporates into the
super-conscious states of mind and will,
then man is no more a man, but an angel.
His intellect sharpens like a razor blade;
his will-power becomes indomitable, un-
beatable and invincible. Man really rejoins
the Supreme Reality, soul is united with
God, *jivatma* becomes one with *Paramatma*
through the royal path of *Brahmacharya*.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see
God,' says Lord Jesus. From this God-
vision one is enabled to see all things and
becomes omniscient as were the Buddhas
and Christs. As knowledge is power,
through chastity one becomes omnipotent,
holding the laws of Nature under his
thumb. When the virtue of chastity is
perfected the intellect of man becomes
subtle; his sensitivity and nerves refined
and delicate, his body adamant and tran-
slucent out of the invaluable treasure stored
in him through chastity.

From immemorial traditions both in the
West and the East the monks, *sanyasins*,
bhikhus, *nirgranthas* and all the detached

souls were vowed down to the stringent
rules of chastity. The ancient Pythogo-
rians, Neo-Platonists, Essenes, Hindu monks
and Buddhist Bhikhus, the various mona-
stic orders of the Catholic Church and
innumerable examples of those who observe
voluntary chastity for the attainment of
higher perfection are there before our
minds to convince us of the truth of what
has been said above.

Very stringent laws for those who are
bent upon the fullest manifestation of the
Divinity implanted in them are found in
the Buddhistic, Christian and other reli-
gious books and in the teachings of many
a spiritual master. In the monastic rules
of Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism and
Hinduism there are detailed information
regarding the diet, dress, gait, mental
concentration, modesty, studiousness etc.,
through which one becomes a perfect monk,
reaches the highest stage of Self-realisation
through the light and power derived from
continence, chastity, virginity, *Brahma-
charya* kept unsullied and inviolate for
years.

The path that leads one to the creativity
of Spirit is Brahmacharya or sex-sublim-
ation. The path leading to procreation is

sex. A creative mind is ever on the move
exploring the unfathomable depths of con-
sciousness and inner life, growing from
strength to strength. A creative mind
wedlocked to Divine Truth and Love
Divine. A creative mind has relished a
realised Sat-Chit-Ananda and there is
more relapsing to the frivolous sense-intec-
cations and trivial sex-joys of earthly life.
A creative mind, if marries and enjoys sex
there it ends. Its wings are clipped and
there is no more chance of soaring into
spacious blue ethereal skies, wherein only
the pure in heart enter.

The legacy of the power, invincibility
and miracles of Brahmacharya as taught
by our ancient *rishis* has again been li-
and taught in our age by Sri Ramakrishna
and the great Vivekananda. Going through
their teachings one rediscovers anew
whole psychological process that enable
an Indian young man or woman to re-
cover the inner Divinity through the royal
road of Brahmacharya, which is the sym-
bol and substance of that renunciation
which leads men to Self-realisation, the
crucifixion that leads to resurrection, the
winter that heralds the spring song of Love
Divine and Service of Man.

LIFE OF SRI RAMANUJA

By SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

(continued from the previous issue)

PART TWO

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

GOVINDA'S SANNYASA

Govinda was not in the least grieved at
the behaviour of his own maternal uncle
Sailapurna. Rather he came to understand
that the idea behind such conduct of this
great soul was to dedicate him fully in the
hands of Ramanuja. Thenceforth he applied
himself fully in the service of Yatiraja.

Within a day or two he found out all
the new Master needed of him. Because
of this knowledge he would perform
work in such perfect order that all
other disciples of Yatiraja would be struck
with wonder at the sight of that. One
so happened that all began to praise

very highly for his efficiency in serving. On hearing that Govinda said, 'Yes, my qualities do naturally merit such adoration'. At this the praisers took him to be elated with pride. When they brought him to the notice of Yatiraja, he called Govinda near him and asked, 'My child, why are praising you at the sight of your good qualities; but should you on that account show off your pride?' Govinda replied, 'O great soul, this creature, blinded by delusion has attained this human birth after travelling through three hundred and twenty laks of births and there too in this present birth after many such births he got astray and was about to fall. Your excessive kindness is the cause of my redemption. Whatever good propensities I may have in me is all yours, for, I am naturally sluggish and low minded. Therefore, praising the good qualities in me is just praising yourself alone; this is why I spoke that'. All were simply captivated to this.

Another day early in the morning Govinda was sitting, without finishing his morning duties, at the outer gate of a prostitute's house like a bewitched man. Seeing the fellow students informed Yatiraja of his strange behaviour of his. He called Govinda near him and enquired, 'Why were you sitting at the door of a prostitute's ink of attending to your morning duties?' At that woman was singing the tales of the *Mayana* in a very sweet voice. I was listening to the entire piece with a view to dilapidate the whole. This is why my morning duties have yet not been done,' Govinda said. All were charmed at the simplicity of his mental attitude and his total devotion.

On the meantime there came one day Govinda's mother and said to Ramanuja, 'My child, Govinda's partner in Dharma has now attained puberty; so, please bid him to keep the Dharma by his wife,

for he won't go if I ask him to. When I informed him previously of this he said "You may bring my wife to me when after finishing my services to Yatiraja I shall get leisure for me." But, my child, upto this day I looked in vain for his leisure. He would always be busy with some work or other.' Hearing all these Ramanuja called him by his side and said, 'My child, after relinquishing the quality of inertia you share with your wife a single bed.' Govinda accepted the behests of his Guru in great obedience. That night he lay down by the side of his wife and passed away the night in various spiritual talks. Dyutimati, Govinda's mother, heard about all their conversations from her daughter-in-law and went to Ramanuja and intimated him all about it. At this Yatiraja took Govinda aside, and said 'I asked you to lie down with your wife in a single bed in order to preserve her Dharma. You didn't act accordingly. What is the reason for that?' Govinda replied, 'Great one, you ordered me to lie down with my wife after relinquishing the quality of *tamas*. I have acted accordingly alone, but as soon as I relinquish *tamas*, the Antaryamin seated in the heart flashes forth. Where is the chance for all base tendencies like sensuality in the face of such manifestation?'

Ramanuja was much surprised to hear that. He kept quiet for some time and then said, 'Govinda, if such be the state of your mind, it is your duty to take Sannyasa without any delay whatsoever, for if you remain in an Ashrama, you have to behave like an Ashrami; such is the injunction of the Sastras. So if you have been able to establish your mastery over your senses, then it is proper for you to take Sannyasa.'

Extremely glad on hearing this, said Govinda, 'Just this moment I am ready for that'. Without any loss of time, Yatiraja, with the consent of Dyutimati,

mother of Govinda, first purified him with the five-fold markings and then by a gift of the staff and the Kamandalu, elevated him to the position of a Paramahansa. Looking at the divine beauty of this new Sannyasin, his face effulgent with supreme knowledge, his lotus eyes bedecked with tears of love, a visible manifestation of pure knowledge and devotion,—Yatiraja gave him the name Mannatha. Ramanuja himself used to be addressed by his disciples by that name. He gave his own name because of his intense affection for him. But Govinda, the compassionate Sannyasin, entirely free of even the slightest trace of ego, a manifestation of Sattva, lustrous like the morning sun, pure like the dew drop, charming like a blooming flower, his heart tinged with love for God, his child-like nature like that of Sanaka and others, —was the ideal of *dasya-bhakti* (devotion of the attitude of the servant). How could he adopt the attitude of 'I am He' relinquishing that of the servitude? When he would by no means agree to be addressed by the name of his Master, Ramanuja

translated the name into Tamil 'Empermanar'; then joining the first and the last part made it Embar; and this came to be the new name for Govinda. The renowned Monastery by the name Embar Math which is to be found in Jagannathakshetra was built by Ramanuja and named after Govinda's name.

At that time, in all twentyfour disciples were staying in the Srirangam Math of Ramanuja. They were learned, detached and devout souls. They knew all the Vedas and the Dravidaprabandhamala by heart. They used to be called Simhasanadhipati and Pithadhipatis. It seems that the Gaudi Vaishnavas gave the title Goswami to the disciples of Sri Chaitanya in imitation of them. We have mentioned before the names of Dasarathi, Kuresa, Sundarabahu, Chotanambi, Saumyanarayana, Yajur murti, Govinda, who were his chief disciples. Surrounded by these disciples and expounding the subtle truths about devotion and the Sastras, in great joy Ramanuja began to stay at his own monastery.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

FOR PEACE THAT WE SEEK BUT BANISH

In this terribly agitated world—where a mad scramble for raw materials goes on specially among the more materially prosperous and technologically advanced nations, where what is called the 'exploitation of the natural resources' is being overdone in various countries with a thoroughness that is frightening, where 'more production ho!' is the cry of the day even in regard to atomic weapons, where people seem to have lost all sense of the optimum limit of necessities, where the drive for selfish search for gain and surfeit has attained complete mastery over all persuasions of larger issues, where every noble instrument of larger good is inexorably reduced to contrivances for suicidal and mean profits of the wicked 'I' of persons, communities or nations, where we the humanity even while trembling on the verge of an ignoble destruction do not stop subverting our own good—what we

require to day are a few voices, clear, sober, selfless, seeing, consoling and inspiring. These voices, must come to pierce all the separating walls that have tariffed us with. These voices must flash over the darkening clouds as lightning of hopes in this conspiring world. These voices must impart to us a sense of wholeness, largeness, compactness and intimacy of the entire human family.

In the message from Mr. Jaime Tori Bodet, Director-General of Unesco, for the United Nations Day, 24 October 1951 occur the following urgent words:

'If we try to imagine the conditions of people not in glimpses, but, as we should, in broad light of human destiny, we must reflect that the population of the world increases five hundred million every thirty years. Three thousand million human beings will inhabit this world in the year 2,000.'

have to be fed, clothed, housed and educated. They ought to be able to enjoy the human rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of 10 December 1948. What do we propose to do for them? Here we are dealing, not with imaginary speculations, but with the lives of our own children in less than fifty years time.'

In the April 1951 editorial of the *Vedanta Kesari* we made a similar plea:

'We must not behave as though we were the last group of men living in this planet their last days and so we could do any amount of squandering and spoiling. We have to learn to take into consideration in our plans that there lies before us an unlimited expanse of time, when unnumbered generations will come to live on this planet. They all too will have to depend solely on the potentialities of the Mother Earth. This very important factor, of consideration for the future, is universally ignored by the humanity at large. The more scientifically advanced a nation is, the greater is its tendency to ignore the necessities of the future. But it is high time we learnt to feel with an amount of intensity, that the necessity of conserving every grain of the sources of production is only too great for making our lives sensible and beautiful. When we do not know how to take care for the unborn tomorrows, our todays are lived in a sort of unenlightened smallness and unredeemed blindness. And this blindness can powerfully

disturb social cohesion by creating widespread sense of insecurity among men, resulting into all kinds of atrocious, selfish practices, subversive to social cohesion.'

The main trend of our argument was this: the condition-precedent of world-peace, as we understand it, is social cohesion. Genuine social cohesion can be brought about only by providing for each and every one's reasonable necessities and by training him in correct aspiration towards the spiritual fulfilment of the fundamental purpose of life. The four measures, essential for supplying reasonable necessities to all human beings all over the world, are: 1. Rationalization of production on one world level, 2. Elimination of privileges, 3. Humanization of distribution, and, 4. Simplification of requirements.

When we go far enough into the details of these measures we find that none of them can be sufficiently and effectively realised unless 'renunciation and service' as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, are made the abiding principles of civilized life everywhere in this world.

In our editorial-serial begun in August 1950, we have been working out the details of this thesis in relation to the most modern and exacting problems of the humanity. 20-10-51.

THIS CHALLENGE TO THE HINDUS

Is untouchability a thing of the past in India to-day?

True, the practice of untouchability in any form has been declared a crime in the Indian Constitution. No doubt temple doors have also been opened to the 'untouchables.' They have also been guaranteed certain privileges in matters of education and services. In the context of Hindu social obscurantism these are no mean achievements. But the fact is, though untouchability is theoretically dead in India, the curse lives on surreptitiously. This is what Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, the Premier of Kashmir, said addressing the Congress Session at New Delhi on October 19, '51,

'...I had occasion to go to a Harijan colony, in Ahmedabad and I told the Harijans there

how much the Congress had done for them. I told them how the Congress had opened the doors of the temples for them. But the Harijan leaders there did not seem to be satisfied over all this. They told me "Sheikh Sahib, you are right. The doors of the temples have been opened, but the doors of the minds of the caste Hindus are still shut on us. We are not enamoured of the temple doors having been opened for us, we want the doors of the minds of the people to be opened."

With due respect to the Harijan leaders referred to by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah we must say that there is an awful exaggeration in the words 'the minds of the caste Hindus are still shut on us', for these words give an impression as though time has not moved in India and that all the social reforms in India as regards

untouchability have been contentless. It is good for all concerned to take adequate note of the truth of facts. There are numberless people among the 'caste-Hindus' who have been actively working for the removal of this curse of untouchability root and branch, and there are a number of organisations which have been doing sustained and sincere work in this regard. The deadliest blows on untouchability have always come from the caste-Hindus. But this is not to say that *all* the caste-Hindus have removed this sin from their minds. They do practise it yet in diverse ways in different places. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar referred to a certain horrible fact in the course of debate in the Indian Parliament on June 1 '51. He said:

'...Recently in a place near Thana in Bombay, it was reported that there was trouble going on between the caste-Hindus and the Scheduled castes over taking of water from a particular well. With the help of the police, the Scheduled castes were able to secure their rights to take water from that well along with caste-Hindus. The caste-Hindus did not like it and two days ago there was a report in the Bombay Press that some Hindus incited some of their men to drop into the well some kind of poisonous weeds, with the result that the water was poisoned and some of the Scheduled-caste people who drank the water suffered from the effect of the poison.'

If this is a statement of facts—we believe Dr. Ambedkar did not surely exaggerate things—we make bold to say, much misery is there yet in store for the Hindus of this land. Those community-people who could bring themselves to poison the waters of the well in order to maintain their hideous caste-superiority would not be spared the retributions of destiny. Nemesis will be coming dancing upon them. They will see one day the wheel come full circle. Let intelligent people repent, expiate and beware betimes.

In another statement dated October 11, '51, Dr. Ambedkar made the following charge:

'What is the position of the Scheduled Caste today? So far as I see, it is the same as before. The same old tyranny, the same old oppression, the same old discrimination which existed before exists now and perhaps in a worse form. I can refer to hundreds of

cases where people from the Scheduled Caste round about Delhi and adjoining places come to me with their tales of woe against the caste Hindus and against the Police. They have refused to register their complaints, render them any help. I have been wondering whether there is any other parallel in the world to the condition of the Scheduled Castes in India.'

If the Police really refused to register complaints of a particular community, was indeed a serious case against the Police. And Dr. Ambedkar's indignation was not then wholly unjustified. The Governments of the States should promptly look into the truth of such affairs and do the needful.

Nevertheless, it is indeed astounding that Dr. Ambedkar does not see any change in the position of the Scheduled castes in India today. Or perhaps it is astounding! When he says that discrimination against the Scheduled castes is in rather a worse form today, we find he is proving himself more devoted to propaganda than to truth. The learned Doctor should remember that, that he made the first Law Minister of Independent India is, in itself, a significant incident in the social history of India. Without recognising the truth of the situation no one can effectively work for the genuine and planned improvement of the situation.

All told, the fact remains that though an attenuated form the curse of untouchability still lingers on surreptitiously. This is a challenge which the Hindus, specially the young Hindus, must take. The entire psyche of the Hindu society must be thoroughly cleansed up even of the last vestige of this age-old sin. Hindus have not to learn any new lesson for this. They have only to put into practice some of the tenets of their own religion. The gospel of *samadarsana* has to be brought to bear social reform. The truths of Vedanta must incarnate themselves in the details of the life of society. The erstwhile 'untouchables' should be made to feel that not a sane mind of their co-religionists is shut against them. There must be an unprecedented renaissance of human relations in India. We must hear it spontaneously said in ringing tones that all minds are open to

Hindus of all sections must realise the fact that by unreserved owning of a brother as a brother they will only add to their own strength. If not, they will always remain back-benchers in this world. A recognition of a brother as a brother could be done with all sincerity and *addha* and not in a casual supercilious manner. When complaints are made that the scheduled castes are not receiving respectful treatment at the hands of the unsympathetic higher castes, the orthodox section has a trite homily to advance: 'Get rid of your inferiority-complex!', they advise. Yes, inferiority complex is a thing which should be got rid of by any means having it, and that at the earliest opportunity. But those who deliver this kind of advice are also morally bound to examine their minds to see how little they have succeeded in getting rid of the demon superiority-complex. Any complex is a blot for any mind for it impedes the ideal functioning of that apparatus by virtue of which man is a superior animal.

The temptation the scheduled castes must avoid. Certain privileges have been granted them in the amendment of the constitution. They should make very judicious use of these privileges. Nothing separates man from man like privileges. At this stage, however, the nation has done well to grant those who are backward, an opportunity to come up. But the backward classes should make it a point to get rid of these privileges as early as possible. They should not hug these privileges for all time to come, because that will prevent their psychological merger in the wider society-politic of the society. They should remember that they can go forward only by growing these privileges.

During his last visit to Madras in March 1951, Dr. S. Chandrasekharan, Professor of Geophysics in the University of Chicago, was asked whether in American Universities there was any discrimination in favour of students belonging to backward sections of the community.

Dr. Chandrasekharan said that Americans are firmly believed in providing equal opportunities, but would never countenance lowering

of standards. If a Negro candidate was offered a post on the ground that he belonged to a backward community, he would deem it an insult and would reject it. What the Negro wanted was equal opportunities but not the application to him of a standard different from that applied to other American citizens.' (Reported in *The Hindu* March 21, 1951)

Those in India who consider themselves backward classes will do well to find here an ideal worthy of emulation. Enjoying special privileges is like living in a hospital. No healthy man or community should ever like to make the hospital a permanent home, whatever the facilities. But not to give that essential special care to that individual or community who badly requires it, cannot also be to the interest of the nation at large.

In a sense the term 'backward class' is meaningless, for the backwardness localised in a particular class, in fact, bespeaks more of the backwardness of the nation as a whole, than of some unfortunate class. Those classes or individuals who have not learnt how to grant human dignity to fellow humans can never be considered to be forward classes by any stretch of imagination. Therefore backwardness anywhere in the society is a stigma on the very soul of the society, a genuine concern for every sober individual of the society.

Every conscientious Hindu, therefore, should in his own locus resolutely fight the last vestiges of this obstinate sin of untouchability, practised in any gross or subtle form. Every covert action which helps prolonging the life of this sin should be exposed to effective criticism and opprobrium of the Society.

The 'backward classes' and specially their leaders will do well to recognise full-heartedly and without any reservation all the sustained, sincere and effective efforts that are being made for their good, by so many individuals and organisations. It is not good for any individual, community or nation to deny the truth. Cleverness does not pay in the long run. What pay are goodness, patience and invincible self-reliance.

22. 10. 51.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDU HOLY BOOKS: CHANDI AND GITA WITH MUSINGS ON WAR AND ECHO OF MILTON'S PARADISE LOST. BY BHUBAN MOHAN BANERJI, M.A., Ph.D., LL.D., L. S. SC. (LOND.). PUBLISHED FROM 63, KAILAS BOSE STREET, CALCUTTA 6., Pp. 108, PRICE RS. 2-8-0.

Professor Bhuban Mohan Banerji has to be congratulated on his gifts for felicitous versification and simplicity of style. The work under review is a devout performance purporting to present in English verse the substance of the Gita and Chandi, the two of the greatest productions in the spiritual literature of India. The translation bears the impress of a sincerely devout soul. The main teachings of the two scriptures are compressed remarkably and are placed in appropriate setting. The work is very useful to those who are denied the good luck of knowing Sanskrit. The other smaller peices on 'Two famous Kali worshippers,' 'Musings on War' and 'Echo of Milton's Paradise Lost' are all interesting in their own way revealing the author's reflections on the devotional history of Bengal and world-affairs in general. There is no doubt that as a sincere record of a devout soul's thoughts and longings the work by Bhuban Mohan Banerji possesses great value.

SANSKRIT—ENGLISH

VEDANTAKARIKAVALI OF BUCHCHI VENKATACHARYA, EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY PANDIT V. KRISHNAMACHARYA. THE ADYAR LIBRARY, MADRAS. RS. 5/-

The *Vedantakarika* of Surapuram Buchchi Venkatacharya is a metrical epitome of the philosophy of Visishtadvaita. 'In order to facilitate the readers in understanding the subject correctly', says the translator (P. vi), 'an easy gloss in Sanskrit and a translation in English have been added.' Judged in respect of this aim, his treatment of the subject deserves high praise. The gloss is as lucid as it is simple, and the translation is clear and happy. In consequence the work is a substantial contribution to philosophy, and proves very useful as a basis to study in a direct and simple fashion the fundamentals of Visishtadvaita.

Visishtadvaita attempts to furnish a universal philosophy of religion consistent with the progress of history. The God of religion is neither an integration of all parts and things, nor a speculative 'Absolute'. God—through whose grace alone the humanity can be saved—creates in order to redeem humanity. He is transcendent in the sense that he has a *svarupa*, eternally everywhere. He is also immanent in the sense that he is ever present in the cosmos, from matter to spirit, and helps all individuals in their struggle towards

perfection. The individual has a place in cosmic scheme of existence. He retains the power of progress or regress, and is therefore responsible for his actions. Liberation means that the individual may eventually become so transformed as to embody the perfection of God and thus become immortal through unitive love of the Divine.

The problems and ways of knowing receive treatment in 3 chapters dealing with pratyak anumana and sabda. The last 7 chapters deal with prakriti, kala, nitya-vibhuti, dharma-bh jnana, jiva, Isvara and adravya.

We welcome this publication and commend it to all lovers of Indian philosophy.

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

THE ALANKARA SAMGRAHA OF AMRITANANDA YOGIN, EDITED BY PANDIT V. KRISHNAMACHARYA AND K. RAMACHANDRA SARMA. ADYAR LIBRARY SERIES ADYAR. RS. 9/-

It is not known how the Sannyasi Amritananda Yogin, devotee of Siva, came to write this work on poetics and dramaturgy; nor how he came to such intimate contact with the royal house of Vengi, with Prince Manva, son of Bhakti, who refer frequently to him in high terms in the introduction of this work. Equally intriguing is the identity of this patron who is evidently a Telugu Coda but has not yet been authenticated by graphical evidences. The suggestion has been made that Manva might be Manmaganda God of Kanchi and this has been adopted in the introduction to this edition. As the work is quoted by Gauraranya, it should be earlier than 1450 A.D.

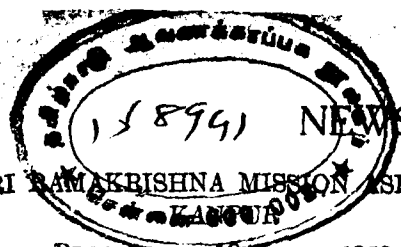
The work was probably popular in Telugu and Kannada areas, and during a particular period only do many manuscripts of this work testify to this, but Jain Bhandars too prove its popularity.

The work was first published in 1887 in Calcutta, and that edition had only five chapters. There are some manuscripts which go beyond those five chapters and out of the nearly thirty manuscripts noted in the *New Catalogus Catalogorum*, twelve have been used by the Adyar Library for the present edition of the whole work in eleven chapters.

The work is a useful compendium bringing together topics of both poetics and dramaturgy. Most of its material is derivative, being found in *Bhavaprakasa* and *Sahitya-darpana*, to mention only the well known ones. Still the work is without its striking points, e.g. the auspicious significances of the different letters of the alphabet, the minor poetic varieties pertaining to the classical court-panegyrics, and the classification of poetries.

The edition carries the usual complement of Introduction and Indices.

V. RAGHAI



NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAM,

KANCHI
REPORT FOR 1949 AND 1950

This institution, which was started in 1920, has a hospital, a school, a library and reading room and maintains two athletic clubs. The Ramakrishna Mission Hospital is administering to the medical needs of the needy and poor and is well equipped with Allopathic, Homeopathic and Surgical sections. The total number of patients, including a large number of refugees, treated here were 76,636 during 1949 and 84,682 during 1950. The Ramakrishna Mission school was recognised as a Junior High school in 1947 and as a Higher Secondary School in the 1950-51 session and there were 246 boys in the school at the end of 1950. Attached to the school is a small library and reading room. The Vivekananda Institute and Sri Vivekananda Vyayamshala are the two athletic clubs run by the Ashram and Vyayamshala is mainly for the students.

The growing work of the dispensary urgently demands the need of a spacious operation theatre and necessary equipment and these will cost Rs. 15,000/-. The school requires Rs. 12,000/- to pay loan in the building fund; Rs. 20,000/- towards permanent fund; Rs. 15,000/- for 6 rooms and Rs. 10,000/- for a Hall. While thanking all their donors, subscribers and sympathisers the authorities of the Ashrama appeal to them all to extend their help in future also and to meet the above mentioned urgent needs.

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REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1950

MATH

Library and Free-Reading Room:

The Library and free Reading Room attached to the Math were regularly conducted during the

year. Total number of books in the Library was 1742 and the total number issues during the year was 2260. 24 Magazines and 3 daily newspapers were regularly received.

MISSION

(1) Charitable Dispensaries:

Three charitable dispensaries under this Mission were duly conducted during the year 1950. The total number of patients treated in the dispensaries is 66,045.

(2) Vivekananda Homeopathic Medical School:

There were 7 students in the school during the year 1950. Out of these students 5 were residents of the Mission and 2 were outsiders. Of these 5 resident students, 2 were supplied free boarding from the Mission. Two of these students passed the Final Examination.

(3) Saradananda Students Home, Bankura:

There were 10 students in the Home during 1950. Of these 3 were allowed partly free boarding and lodging. One of these students appeared in the last Matriculation Examination and has passed in the 2nd division.

(4) Ramharipur R. K. Mission extended M. F. School:

The School was duly conducted during the year 1950. The total number of students in the School during the year was 161 including 1 girl student.

(5) Medical Relief:

Antimalarial drugs like quinine, Paludrine were distributed to 152 persons during the year.

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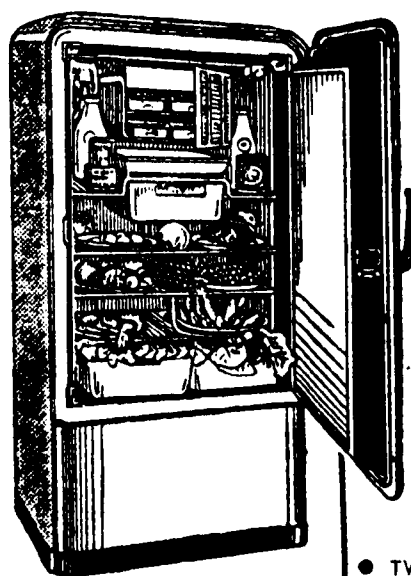
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